PAST AND PRESENT TRENDS IN LITERARY TRANSLATION STUDIES

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SUMMARY

This thesis looks at a number of important theories of literary translation and shows that John Dryden's triadic division of translations into *metaphrase, paraphrase* and *imitation* has been central to the theory of literary translation studies right to the present day. Indeed, the ideas of the French *belles infidèles*, the German Romantics, Ezra Pound and much contemporary writing on translation fit into Dryden's paradigm.

Only in recent years do we find ideas which challenge this dominance. Now we can find translation studied as a principal force in the development of literatures. Its mystical element has been examined. Translation can be political. Indeed, translation is increasingly seen as a central human activity.

RESUMO

Essa tese estuda várias idéias sobre tradução literária e mostra que a divisão tríplica que John Dryden fez de tradução em *metáfrase, paráfrase* e *imitação* tem sido central no estudo da tradução literária até hoje. As idéias das *belles infidèles* francesas, dos pre-Românticos alemães, de Ezra Pound e dos muitos dos escritos atuais sobre tradução se encaixam no paradigma de Dryden.

Só nos últimos anos encontramos idéias novas que desafiam essa dominação. Hoje em dia encontramos a tradução estudada como força motriz no desenvolvimento de literaturas. Analisa-se seu aspecto místico . A tradução também pode ser política. De fato, a tradução é vista cada vez mais como uma atividade humana central.

COMISSÃO JULGADORA

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For this last half Year I have been troubled with the disease (as I may call it) of Translation ...

John Dryden, Introduction to *Poems from Sylvae*.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like the children at Jacob's well (which was deep), without a bucket or something to draw with: or as that person mentioned by Esay, to whom when a sealed book was delivered with this motion, "Read this, I pray thee"; he was fain to make his answer, "I cannot, for it is sealed".

Translators' Introduction to *The Holy Bible, King James Edition.*

Chapter 1 --- Introduction

(i) Metaphors and Literary Translation

A good point of entry to a study of literary translation is to look at the metaphors used by commentators and critics. Theo Hermans' essay, "Images and Translation: Metaphors and Images in the Renaissance Discourse on Translation" (1), contrasts the metaphors used by early Renaissance translators, who saw the translator in a servile role, playing an inferior part to the stronger original writer, with those used by writers after 1650. From 1550 to 1650 the dominating images are of following the exact footsteps of the author, of the translator as servant or slave, and of the work of the translator as being vastly inferior to the original -- the reverse side of a tapestry, or candle light compared to sunlight. Also, there are frequent references to the translator having a social role as he serves the common good by providing access to foreign works. After 1650, particularly after Denham's praise of Fanshawe's declining "the servile path" in *To Sir Richard Fanshawe upon his Translation of Pastor Fido* (2), the type of image changes considerably. Now we find images of the translator preserving the flame of the original, of adding something of his own to preserve the essence of the original. The translator is no longer a servant; he is now a friend and advisor who may have a remarkable affinity with the original author.

Elsewhere, the status of the translator also varies enormously. Some of the most positive images come from German late eighteenth and early nineteenth century writers. The translator is seen as an esoteric semi-God, the "morning star" (3), a prophet, a guide to Utopia who will make German literature the centre of higher artistic creation and provide it with infinite possibilities through his introduction of the forms and the ideas of the great literatures of the world (4).

The *Translators' Introduction* to the *Authorised Version of the Bible* of 1611 sees the translator as he who takes off the cover and provides the light:

> Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat in the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water... (5)

By contrast, among the most common images of translation in the last two centuries have been those of someone who is a misfit, or of someone who is preventing the light from entering. Heine believed a translator tried to "stuff

sunbeams" (6). Virginia Woolf read Russian and Greek works in translation and thought she was wearing the wrong pair of glasses or that there was a mist between herself and the page (7). On another occasion she emphasised this idea of loss. When you read a translation of the great Russian writers, you feel

> like men deprived by an earthquake or railway accident not only of all their clothes but also of something subtler and more important - their manners, the idiosyncrasies of their characters (8).

In the same vein, Yehuda Amichai thought that reading poetry in translation was like kissing a woman through a veil, putting a filter between the author and the original (9).

For Mme. de Staël the translator is a musician who plays a piece written for another instrument (10). Cecil Day Lewis wrote that Pope played Homer on a flagelo and Dr. Johnson played him on a bassoon (11). The translator is a photographer who takes a picture of a painting in a gallery (12) or who takes a picture of a statue (13) , or he is a blind man in an art gallery (14) .

Robert Lowell sees mosty translators as taxidermists who will lose the vitality of the original (15). Robert Frost believes poetry is "what is lost in translation" (16). Shelley's "violet in the crucible" is another famous image:

> Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour (17).

The Italian pun *traduttori -- traditori* (translator-traitor) has become proverbial. More subtle is Roger Zuber's French punning *sourcier-sorcier* (source finder and sorcerer) (18).

Images of translations not fitting the original are common. Probably the best-known are Benjamin's images of the original and the translation as the "fruit and its skin" (19) -- the "skin" of a good translation will fit the original -- and of the translation as loose clothes, "enveloping the original like a royal robe with ample folds" (20).

Benjamin's other image is of the "birth pangs" (21) of translation resulting from the marriage of the original and new languages. But the family status of translation varies: it "should rather be the brother than the son of the original" (22), or it can even be the husband (23).

Peculiarly twentieth century interests come across in contemporary metaphors. The translator is a transplant surgeon (24); he is giving the translated text a blood transfusion (25); he is undergoing psychoanalysis (26); in the act of translation he encounters "the other" (27); and he is a "character in search of himself" (28). Translation metaphors may date very quickly: the following belongs to a brief period after the Second World War:

> At its furthest reach, such wholescale translation may be likened to American aircraft carriers being sold for scrap metal and towed to Japan, whence they will return to us in the form of toy pistols for small Americans to brandish on the streets of small towns (29).

Lope de Vega called the translator a "horse smuggler" (30). His professions have now been updated: he is an actor (31), a craftsman (32), a cook (33), a florist (34), a "chameleon poet" (35) and a composer rearranging another composer's work (36). Translation is a "jungle gym" (37), a game of tennis (38) or football (39), "resurrection but not of the body" (40). And we still find the renaissance images of translation such as pouring liquid from one container to another (41), of the translator as an artist (42), and of the "sympathy" between author and translator (43).

Classical images abound. The translator is as vain as Narcissus (44), as changeable as Proteus (45), and the paper on which the translation is written is a bed of Procrustes (46). He is as crafty as Sisyfus, and, in the same way that the water flowed away from Tantalus when he tried to drink it, he suffers fron a desire which is impossible to satisfy (47).

"Trans-" neologisms are common. The prolific translator has been called a "Don Juan transfornicator" (48). Augusto and Haroldo de Campos give us *transcriação, transparadisação, transluminação, transluciferação mefistofáustica* as well as the more mundane *recriação* and *reimaginação* (49). Kiman Friar, in *Modern Greek Poetry*, complements these terms with *transport, transmission, transposition, transplant, transformation, transmutation, transcendence* and *transsubstanciation* (50).

And the famous seventeenth century French translator, Perrot d'Ablancourt, was called a *traducorreteur* (51).

Catford and Nida, insisting that the content of the original can be transferred to the translation, use box diagrams and images of railway wagons. "What is important in the hauling of freight is not what goods are loaded onto what wagons nor the particular order in which the wagons are connected to one another, but that all the contents get to their destination. The same is true of translation" (52).

Metaphors, then, give us an idea of the enormous number of ways in which translation is described. But common to the great majority of them is the discussion between form and content. This goes right back to Cicero, who translated Plato's *Protagoras* and other Greek documents into Latin. He declared:

> What men like you ... call fidelity in translation, the learned term pestilent minuteness ... it is hard to preserve in a translation the charm of expressions which in another language are most felicitous ... If I render word for word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity I alter anything in the order or wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator (53).

At the end of the fourth century, when Jerome was commissioned by Pope Damascus to produce a Latin version of the Bible, he also favoured a facilitating version and tried to translate "sense for sense and not word for word". In his *Preface* he foresaw the criticism he was to receive:

> Who is there, whether learned or unlearned, who, when he takes up the volume in his hands and discovers that when he reads therein does not agree with what he is accustomed to, will not break out at once in a loud voice and call me a sacrilegious forger, for daring to add something to the ancient books, to make changes and corrections in them ? (54)

(ii) **The Plan of the Thesis**

The basic precept of this thesis is that the discussion between literal translation and freer translation has been the main concern of commentators on literary translation right from Cicero and Jerome up until the present day. However, in recent years, the study of literary translation has taken on much wider limits and can be seen as a key to contrasting approaches to literary studies. This thesis will examine both traditional and contemporary approaches to literary translation.

Chapter 2 will look at translation in the Augustan era in England, where society to a great extent modelled itself on classical values and where most of the major literary figures translated from the Classics. The main focus of this chapter will be on John Dryden, the most important commentator on translation in this period. Dryden first set out the triadic division of translation into *metaphrase* (word for word translation), *paraphrase* (freer translation) and *imitation*. The terms used nowadays are slightly different, but many contemporary writers still follow this division.

Chapter 3 will compare the theory behind the *belles infidèles*, the French translations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with German ideas on translations and the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. While French writers demanded that everything be sacrificed to *beauté* and *clarté*, the German writers favoured adapting foreign patterns into the German through translation, thereby broadening the range of German literature.

Ezra Pound, undoubtedly the most important figure in literary translation in the English speaking world in the twentieth century, is the subject of Chapter 4. Pound "made his translations new"; he updated them; he changed their emphasis; the result of his "translations" was often a new poem. Much modern translation follows on from Pound and the translator will often stamp his personality on the translation. The importance given by Pound to translation also contrasts with the English Romantic concept of translation. For Pound, translation is central to literature; for the Romantics, it is peripheral, at several removes from the divine inspiration of the poet. This long chapter also includes a discussion of the argument between Matthew Arnold and F.H. Newman in 1861. Arnold, seen by some as a precursor of Pound in matters of translation, thought Homer should be given a nineteenth century feeling of nobility and criticised Newman's archaizing version of the *Iliad*.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 look at other twentieth century writings on translation. Chapter 5 concentrates on the great number of commentators on literary translation who follow the ideas of Dryden and Pound.

Chapter 6 studies the writings on translation of Jorge Luis Borges, Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man and Henri Meschonnic. Certain themes are common to a number of these authors: the myth of Babel and the Kabalistic dream of a world language; the centrality of form in translation; the influence translation can have on a culture; and translation as a way of deconstructing a text.

Chapter 7 describes the work of two groups of scholars for whom translation is also central to understanding literature. The first group, centred on Israel and the Low Countries, sees translation as an integral part of the literary system. In certain literatures and at certain times translation will play a central role and will be responsible for introducing new forms from abroad. On other occasions, and very frequently in established literatures, translation will play a peripheral role. The Göttingen group, though not emphasising the idea of literature as a system and not insisting on studying just the translated texts, share many of the precepts of the Low Countries group. Their main interest is with cultural transfer through translation. A translation may either be adapted to the target culture or carry elements from the source culture to the target culture.

Chapter 8 concentrates on translation theory in Brazil. This area has been dominated in recent years by Augusto and Haroldo de Campos. Their translations and theory of translation seem to form a definite contemporary Brazilian approach to translation. In his M.A. dissertation and Ph. D. thesis, Jorge Wanderley outlines the characteristics of this group, *os Concretistas* , and contrasts their translations with those of modernist poets and those of the *Geração de 45* (55). Little other scholarly work in the area of literary translation studies has been done in Brazil, a situation which is shared with most countries.

These then, are the limits of my thesis, which, I feel, covers the main theories of literary translation. There are other areas of peripheral interest I do not cover. I do not investigate the classical discussion of imitation, linguistic and semiotic

approaches to translation, and I do not describe research into hermeneutics and translation (56).

My thesis does not analyse translations themselves, except in Chapter 4, on Ezra Pound's ideas on translation. These ideas can be best seen through examining his translations. The basic concern of this work is not to analyse translations but to look at the the ideas behind the translations. The analysis of the translations belongs to the area of translatability, very adequately described by Jorge Wanderley:

> Cabe aqui comentar o fato de que questões como ser ou não a poesia intraduzível, ou ser mais ou menos traduzível ou ainda estar melhor ou pior esta ou aquela tradução; questões como estar ou não obedecido um critério de severidade ou rigor, ou estar ou não adotado um critério geral de liberdade - e mesmo rebeldia - ante o texto original; questões como as da realização ou não de uma tradução que se inscreva (ou não) na história da tradução de determinados textos, ou ainda questões referentes a análises, avaliações e comentários acerca do processo específico empregado neste ou naquele caso -- são todas questões referentes à TRADUZIBILIDADE (57).

The great majority of what has been written on literary translation has been written on poetry. Studies of translations of prose works are few and far between, and the study of the translation of drama is still in its infancy (58). I therefore make no apology for concentrating on comments made about the translation of poetry. Moreover, I use the term literary translation very loosely. Chapter 3 deals with d'Ablancourt's French translations of Roman histories; Chapter 6 includes comments on the translations of the works of Freud and Plato. Indeed, a central point of this chapter is Meschonnic's claim that the Bible is primarily a work of literature.

I also make no apologies for mixing references from a large number of different languages. By its very nature, a study of translation will necessarily cross national and cultural boundaries. A work concentrating on the way one language is translated into another would belong to the area of translatability, which is not, as mentioned, the subject of this thesis.

What, then, is the contribution that this thesis can make to the study of literary translation ? Firstly, I believe that it looks at this area in a new and fresh way, contrasting recent developments with traditional approaches. Other general works on literary translation take rather different lines. In *After Babel* (59), George Steiner's main idea is that of the hermeneutics of the translation process. Louis Kelly, in *The True Interpreter* (60), suggests that the ideal approach is one which modifies a linguistic approach such as that of Catford or Nida with hermeneutics. Susan Bassnett's *Translation Studies* (61) is a general survey of theory on translation but does not include the two groups of authors I look at in Chapters 6 and 7.

The second important contribution of this thesis is to look at the theory of literary translation from a Brazilian angle. I hope that this study may help provide a basis for the careful study of literary translation in Brazil and may help launch other studies on literary translation.

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In *After Babel*, Oxford University Press, 1975, George Steiner develops the ideas of hermeneutics applied to translation. "This view of translation as a hermeneutic of trust (*élancement*), of penetration, of embodiment, and of restitution, will allow us to overcome the sterile triadic model which has dominated the history and theory of the subject", p.303.

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CHAPTER 2

TRANSLATION AND THE AUGUSTAN AGE

Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus interpres.

Nor word for word too faithfully translate.

Horace, *Ars Poetica.*

Chapter 2 -- Translation and the Augustan Age

(i) Introduction

The Augustan period, (approximately 1680 - 1750) is perhaps the only period in English literature in which all the major poets take an active interest in literary translation. It is the age of the most famous translations into English: Dryden's *Aeneid* and Pope's *Iliad*. And, most important for us, it saw the first attempts at theorising the art of literary translation.

Translation had for a long time been an integral part of English literature, but had often existed under different guises. Common practice was to translate, update or adapt the works of other writers and insert them into the new work with no reference to the source. A story that already existed in another language was often retold. In the late fifteenth century Caxton printed English versions of Latin and French tales. Before him Chaucer introduced many contemporary styles and themes of European literature into English. Amongst them were the French *ballade*, the *romance* from Boccaccio and the animal fable, the *fabliau*, from Flanders. Chaucer also translated *The Romaunt of the Rose*, and Boethius' *De consolatione philosophie*. Such adaptions of foreign works were vital in establishing the roots of English literature. Wyatt's and Surrey's imitations of Petrarch's sonnets estabished the sonnet form in English. And of course Shakespeare, like most contemporary dramatists, was a great borrower. Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch's Lives*, (itself a translation), was his source for the Roman tragedies; and many of his comedies and tragedies were based on now-forgotten minor plays (1).

The potential translator was beset by logistical problems. Even after Caxton's invention of the printing press in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, books still remained scarce. Chaucer's Clerk's library of twenty volumes would have been considered numerous and there were no public libraries or collections available to the would-be scholar. Sir Thomas Elyot recounts that he was interested in a book of Alexander Seneres and began to translate it "albeit I could not so perform mine enterprise as I might have done if the owner had not importunately called for his book , whereby I was constrained to leave some part of the book untranslated" (2).

In the sixteenth century we first encounter the notion of the public duty of the translator. Fortescue and Udall state that the work of the translator is of particular service to the state (3). Richard Taverner writes that he translated part of the *Chilades* by Erasmus by " the love I bear to the furtherance and adornment of my country" (4). John Brede , in his *Dedication* to his translation of the *History of Quintus Curtius*, said that his intention was to promote English into the top division

of languages. He translated "so that we Englishmen might be found as forward in that behalf as other nations which have brought all worthy histories into their natural languages" (5). Indeed, we even find a number of late sixteenth century commentators arguing for better compensation for translators.

Allied to the improvement of English literature through the introduction of foreign models is the improvement and extension of English vocabulary through the introduction of new terminology, drawn especially from Latin. In the *Preface* to *The Governor* Sir Thomas Elyot connects translation and the movement to increase vocabulary (6). Later in the century Peele praises the translator Harrington:

> well-lettr'd and discreet
> That hath so purely naturalized
> Strange words, and made them all free
> denizens (7).

Yet there was no general acceptance of these so-called "inkhorn" terms. The Cambridge scholar Sir John Cheke favoured adapting Anglo-Saxon terms and would allow no words but such as were pure English" (8). However, many "inkhorn" terms were soon part of a wider vocabulary. Richard Willes, in his *Preface* to the 1577 edition of Eden's *History of Travel in the West and East Indies*, criticised such inkhorn terms as "domination, ponderous, ditionaries (sic), portentous, destructive, despicable, solicitable, obsequious, homicide, imbibed, antiques, prodigious" for "smelling too much of the Latin"(9).

Throughout the sixteenth century and into the seven-teenth century a growing middle-class provided a market for an increasing number of translations, the most important of which were Gavin Douglas' Scots dialect *Aeneid* (1525), greatly admired by Ezra Pound; Sir Thomas Hoby's *The Book of the Courtier* (1561), from the Italian of Castiglione; Arthur Golding's *Ovid* (1567); Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch's Lives* (1579), as mentioned, used frequently by Shakespeare; Harrington's *Ariosto* (1591); John Florio's *Montaigne* (1603); Philemon Holland's *Plutarch's Morals* (1603); and Thomas Shelton's *Don Quixote* (1612) (10). Indeed, for Pound, this was the golden period of English (and Scots) translation (11).

But it is not until the very end of the sixteenth century that we find the first theoretical comments on translation. The comments of George Chapman (1559-1634) in the *Prefaces* to his translations of Homer often anticipate those of Augustan writers. In his first Homeric translation, *Seaven Bookes of the Iliad* (1598), Chapman emphasises the sensitivity to the style of the original which the translator must have:

> The worth of a skillful translator is to observe the figures and formes of speech proposed in his author, his true sence of height, and to adorne them with figures and formes of oration fitted to the originall in the same tongue to which they were translated (12).

T.R. Steiner, in *English Translation Theory, 1650 - 1800*, states that this initial statement of Chapman's says that "translation is straightforward linguistic mimesis, relatively easy to achieve" (13). However, Chapman's additions of 1609 and 1611 to his *Prefaces* make translation sound a rather more difficult task. They point, according to Steiner, to "a rare art of poetic translation", rejecting both literal translations and the contemporary trend to paraphrase in which the translator "explained" the meaning. For Chapman, this kind of translation contained too much "Art", here meaning "rationalisation", and misses the "Nature" of the original. Anticipating Denham and Dryden, the translator must reach the "Spirit" of the original author. Chapman believed he himself had this metaphysical non-intellectual link with Homer:

> Meditating of me, a sweet gale
> Brought me upon thee; and thou didst inherit
> My true sense, for the time then, in my spirit,
> And I invisibly, went prompting thee
> Those four greens where thou didst English me (14).

This extract from *The Tears of Peace* is typical of much of Chapman's writing. Steiner writes: The prefatory panegyrics, spreading from page to page, evidence in prose and verse Chapman's "earnest and ingenious love of (Homer)". "Of all books extant in all kinds, Homer is the first and the best." "He is a world, from which all education can be derived. Merely to enumerate his virtues 'The world doth need / Another Homer...to rehearse...them"(15).

(ii) **John Denham** (1615 - 1669)

The next important figure to pave the way for Dryden's influential theories on translation was the Royalist poet Sir John Denham. Denham was at the centre of a group of literary figures which included Abraham Cowley, Sir Richard Fanshawe, Sir Edward Sherburne and Thomas Stanley. During the period of the Commonwealth (1649 -1660) all were forced to spend time abroad and found themselves forming a literary circle in Paris. Contact with foreign cultures naturally fostered an interest in translation. Denham himself translated the *Aeneid*. But his most interesting comments on translation come in his poem To Sir *Richard Fanshawe upon his Translation of Pastor Fido* (1648). The poem is of such interest that it should be quoted in full.

> Such is our Pride, our Folly, or our Fate,
> That few but such as cannot write, Translate.
> But what in them is want of Art, or voice,
> In thee is either modesty or Choice.
> Whiles this great piece, restor'd by thee doth stand
> Free from the blemish of an artless hand.
> Secure of Fame, thou justly dost esteem

Less honour to create, than to redeem.
Nor ought a genius less than his that writ,
Attempt Translation; for transplanted wit,
All the defects of air and soil doth share,
And colder brains like colder climates are:
In vain they toil, since nothing can beget
A vital spirit, but a vital heat.
That servile path thou nobly dost decline
Of tracing word by word, and line by line.
Those are the labour'd births of slavish brains,
Not the effects of poetry, but Pains;
Cheap vulgar arts, whose narrowness affords
No flight for thoughts, but poorly sticks at words.
A new and nobler way thou dost pursue
To make Translations and translators too.
They but preserve the Ashes, thou the Flame,
True to his sense, but truer to his Fame.
Foording his current, where thou find'st it low
Let'st in thine own to make it rise and flow;
Wisely restoring whatsoever grace
It lost by change of Time, or tongues , or Place.
Nor fetter'd to his Numbers, and his Times,
Betray'st his Musick to unhappy Rimes,
Nor are the nerves of his compacted strength
Stretch'd and dissolv'd into unsinewed length:
Yet after all, (lest we should think it thine)
Thy spirit to his circle dost confine.
New names, new dressings and the modern cast,
Some scenes, some persons alter'd, had out-faced
The world, it were thy work; for we have known
Some thank't and prais'd for what was less their own.
That Masters hands which to the life can trace
The airs, the lines, and features of a face,
May with a free and bolder stroke express
A varyed posture, or a flattering Dress;
He could have made those like, who made the rest,
But that he knew his own design was best (16).

This poem contains many elements that will set the tone of Augustan translation and comments on translation. Denham praises Fanshawe for not following "the servile path" of most other translations. This kind of literal translation fails to bring any kind of "vital heat" to the poem and therefore cannot restore the "vital spirit". On the other hand, Fanshawe, in his "new way", does manage to

preserve the "flame". To do this, alterations are necessary. When he finds the original "low", he lets in his own "current," to make it "rise and flow". Denham also emphasises the melody of the translated poem and he compliments Fanshawe on not betraying "his Musick to unhappy rhymes". Yet despite the liberties he takes, this is not Fanshawe's poem; he confines himself to the author's "circle"; the poem is still that of Guarini. The metaphor of the painter, frequently to be used by Augustan translators, summarises the qualities of Fanshawe's translation. By using "a free and bolder stroke", he has been more able to express the subtleties of the original than if he had made a photographic copy.

The other important theoretical work by Denham is his *Preface* to his translation of Virgil's *Second Book of the Aeneid* (1656). Here he repeats many of his earlier points -- it is" a vulgar err in translating poets, to affect being Fidus Interpres". This belongs more to those who "deal in matters of Fact or Faith." The business of the translator of poetry is not to "translate Language into Language, but Poesie into Poesie: & Poesie is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one Language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a capuut mortuum" (17). The "spirit" is of great importance, but the "apparel" must not be forgotten. Denham thinks Virgil should be fitted out in that of the present day Englishman. Using contemporary English would be much more natural than giving him false archaisms. This idea of making the Classical author into a contemporary of the translator continued right through the Augustan period and is very common amongst modern translators. William Guthrie (1708-1770) took this point of view to extremes when translating Cicero. Having decided that if Cicero were alive and living in England, he would speak in the manner of an English Member of Parliament. Guthrie therefore spent some three years at the House of Commons attending debates in order to discover the exact type of language appropriate for the Latin poet.

Denham is careful to insist that the "sense" of his translation is that of Virgil and not his own:

> Where my expressions are not so full as his, either our Language, or my Art were defective (but I rather suspect myself); but where mine are fuller than his, they are but the impressions which the often reading of him, hath left upon my thoughts; so that if they are not his own conceptions, they are at least the results of them; and if (being conscious of making him speak worse then he did in almost every line) I err in endeavouring sometimes to make him speak better; I hope it will be judged an error on the right hand, and such a one as may deserve pardon, if not imitation (18).

The "sense" may not actually be changed but may be enlarged, amplified, improved and extended.

(iii) **John Dryden (1631-1700) and Augustan Translation**

Dr. Johnson offers us the key to the importance of translation for the Augustans:

> There is a time when nations emerging from barbarity, and falling into regular subordination, gain leisure to grow wise, and feel the shame of ignorance and the craving pain of unsatisfied curiosity. To this hunger of the mind plain sense is grateful, that which fills the void removes uneasiness, and to be free from pain for a while is pleasure; but repletion generates fastidiousness, a saturated intellect soon becomes luxurious, and knowledge finds no willing reception till it is recommended by artificial diction. Thus it will be found in the progress of learning that in all nations the first writers are simple and that every age improves in elegance (19).

Thus we can see the awareness the Augustans had that their period was one of improvement of society, that their world was superior to that of the barbarity of medieval England, and that they had emerged from the excesses of Renaissance feeling to form a stable and organised society. But how can this society be prevented from a sickly self-satisfaction ? How can the national culture be reinvigorated? Only by the introduction of foreign models. The solution followed was to follow Classical models in literature, language and culture as a whole. Latin and Greek authors were models for the Augustans. English grammars and dictionaries, culminating in Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* in 1755, followed Classsical models. And translation, of course, was the means through which English society could draw on these "superior" societies.

John Dryden, probably the most influential figure in the world of English letters in the second half of the seventeenth century, published the most interesting and important comments in this period on the translation of poetry. Nearly half of Dryden's published work consisted of translations and it is to his Prefaces to these translations that we must look in order to examine his ideas on translation. His preface to *Ovid's Epistles* (1680) sets out many of the terms and points of reference to be used by writers on translation theory in subsequent centuries. He states that there are three possible kinds of translation. Firstly, *metaphrase*, "turning an Author word by word and line by line, from one language to another" (20). This , he says, was the way in which Ben Jonson translated Horace's *Art of Poetry*.

Secondly, there is *paraphrase*, or "translation with latitude", "where the author is kept in view by the translator...but his words are not so strictly followed as the sense; and that too is to be amplified, but not altered" (21). As an example, he gives Waller's translation of Virgil's *Fourth Aeneid*.

Thirdly, there is *imitation*, where "the translator (if now he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and the sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and taking only some general hints from the original, to run division on the ground work, as he pleases" (22). Examples of *imitation* which he gives are Cowley's *Odes* of Pindar and Horace.

Dryden advises against the first kind of translation. " 'Tis almost impossible to translate verbally, and well, at the same time" (23). It is particularly difficult to find one-word equivalents for the dense Latin vocabulary. Dryden makes the comparison of "dancing on ropes with fettered legs: a man may shun a fall by using caution; but the gracefulness of motion is not to be expected: and when we have said the best of it, 'tis but a foolish task; for no sober man would put himself into a danger for the applause of escaping without breaking his neck" (24).

Dryden then examines the imitations of Denham (Virgil's *Second Aeneid*) and Cowley (Pindar's *Odes*). He says that perhaps in the case of Pindar -- "a dark writer, to want connection, to soar out of sight, and leave his reader at a gaze" (25) -- Cowley may have been right in making a none too literal translation. "His genius is too strong to bear a chain, and, Samson-like he shakes it off" (26). However, with Virgil, or Ovid, or other more intelligible writers, an imitation could no longer be called the work of the original author, it is rather "the most advantageous way for a translator to show himself" (27). Dryden agrees with Denham in the *Preface* of his translation of the *Second Aeneid*: "Poetry is of subtle a spirit, that, in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a capuut mortuum" (28). But this seems to Dryden more an argument against literal translation than one in favour of imitation.

Dryden favours the middle way and sets out his argument. Most important of all, the translator must be a poet and master of both the author's language and his own. He must also be completely familiar with his author's individual characteristics and must attempt to associate himself with the author "to conform our genius to his, to give his thought ... the same turn" (29). The translator must also attempt to approximate his style to that of the original. However, this may not always be easy. An exact translation of a beautiful expression may produce a barbarous result. Therefore, the translator may have to choose another expression which does not destroy the sense. It is also not necessary that "words and lines should be confined to the measure of the original" (30). But one thing the translator must not do is to change the sense of the author. "If the fancy of Ovid be luxuriant, 'tis his character to be so,and if I retrench it, he is no longer Ovid" (31). Should any of the apparently superfluous parts an author's work be omitted by the translator ? Dryden's answer is

no; he makes a comparison with painting: the painter copying from life has "no privilege to alter features and lineaments under pretence that his picture will be better" (32).

Yet as Dryden's translating career progressed, he began to break some of his own rules. In his *Preface to Sylvae*, a collection of translations from Theocritus, Horace, Virgil and Lucretius, he says: "I have many times exceeded my commission; for I have both added and omitted, and even sometimes very boldly made such expositions of my authors, as no Dutch commentators will forgive me. Perhaps, in such passages I have thought that I discovered some beauty yet undiscovered by these pedants which none but a poet could have found" (33). Dryden takes on the role of an interpreter for the reader; the original sense is no longer "inviolable". Writing of Virgil"...where I leave his commentators, it may be I understand him better" (34). In the following passage from the *Preface to Sylvae*, Dryden gives his very pragmatic reasons for the changes he makes:

> Where I have taken away some of their expressions and cut them shorter, it may be possible that on this consideration, that what was beautiful in the Greek or Latin, wou'd not appear so shining in the English: and where I have enlarg'd them, I desire the false Criticks wou'd not always think these thoughts are wholly mine, but that either they are secretly in the Poet, or may be fairly deduc'd from him ... or at least, if both these considerations should fail, that my own is of a piece with his, and that if he were living,and an Englishman, they are such, as he wou'd probably have written (35).

Now Dryden believes the translator can "improve" on the original. " 'Tis one thing to draw the outlines true, the features like, the proportions exact, the coloring itself tolerable; and another thing to make all these graceful, by the posture, the shadowings, and, chiefly, by the spirit which animates the whole" (36). T.R.Steiner suggests two reasons for the change in Dryden. Firstly, that "translation is more complex than he had previously thought and that a wider range of procedures might be appropriate" (37). And secondly, "he began to be even more concerned with "pleasing" an audience and with the" pleasure" of translator and reader and much less interested in any systematisation of translation. This awareness of the audience can be noted from the *Sylvae* onwards. In his *Dedication to the Aenis* (1697), Dryden comments: "the best way to please the best Judges, is not to translate a Poet literally" (38).

Dryden's subsequent translations show varied styles. His versions of Juvenal and Persius are near paraphrase "because it was not possible for us, or any man to have made it pleasant in any other way" (39). Ovid in *Examen Poeticum* (1693) is translated as closely as he had been in the Epistles. Dryden's Virgil of 1697 is between metaphrase and paraphrase, despite some omissions and alterations to the

text. Commenting on these omissions and alterations in the *Dedication to the Aenis* (1697), he says, "Yet the omissions, I hope, are of but circumstance, and such as would have no grace in English; and the additions ... not stuck into him, but growing out of him" (40). He also mentions that the density of Latin forces him to leave something out, or, in order not to do so, to make a triple rhyme. When translating Chaucer into contemporary English in *Fables, Ancient and Modern* (1700), he explains the reasons for the changes he makes. He omitted what was unnecessary and added "where I thought my Author was deficient, and had not given his Thoughts their true Lustre, for want of words in the beginning of our Language" (41). Considerations for his audience are uppermost when he answers critics who think that he should not have translated Chaucer out of veneration for "his old language". He argues that as the writer's aim is to be understood, he restored lost words for the sake of the modern reader: " to perpetuate his memory, or at least refresh it, amongst my countrymen" (42). And it seems quite natural to Dryden to make a translation into the same language: After certain periods of Time, the Fame of Great Wits should be renewed" (43). He hopes that "Another Poet, in another Age, may take the same Liberty with my Writings" (44). As far as I know, no twentieth century translator has attempted an updated version of Dryden, though, of course, there is much less difference between our English and that of Dryden than between Dryden's English and that of Chaucer.

Throughout his Prefaces it is taken for granted that Latin and Greek are innately superior to modern languages such as French, English and Italian. Virgil "flourished in an Age when his Language was brought to its last perfection" with its "Propriety of Thought, Elegance of Words and Harmony of Numbers" (45). He emphasises the difficulty he had in translating Virgil's "inexhaustible supply of words" (46). The solution was often to coin new English words from the Latin.

> ... when I want at home, I must seek abroad. if sound words are not of our growth and manufacture, who shall hinder me to import them from a foreign Country ? I carry not out the treasure of the Nation, which is never to return: but what I bring from Italy, I spend in England: *Here* it remains and here it circulates; for if the Coyn be good, it will pass from one hand to another,. I trade with both the Living and the Dead, for the enrichment of our Native Language ... Poetry requires Ornament, and that is not to be had from our old Teuton monosyllables; therefore if I find any Elegant Word in a Classick author, I propose to be Naturaliz'd, by using it myself: and if the Publick approves of it, the Bill passes (47).

The suitability of a language for a particular kind of literary work is another question raised by Dryden. The heavier and more ponderous English is more appropriate for heroic poetry, whereas French and Italian are "not strong with sinews" (48). French has "the nimbleness of a Greyhound, but not the bulk and body

of a Mastiff". Lighter and "more trifling", French is better for sonnets, madrigals and elegies than for the stateliness of heroic poetry (49).

Finally, Dryden pays great attention to the stylistic problems of the translator. In the *Dedication of the Aenis* he comments on translating the technical features of Virgil. Again, underlying all that Dryden says, there is the assumption that Latin is a superior language to English. In melodic terms, it is the equal number of vowels and consonants that makes Latin so pleasing to the ears. By contrast, English is a language that is "overstocked with consonants" (50). Dryden's problem was how to make this harsh language sound sweet. We have already seen his interest in using Latinate vocabulary. Another strategy is to avoid using caesuras, so as not to add extra breaks in an already rough language. A further technique was never to allow one vowel sound to run on to another except when ellipsis could occur, as with pronouns. And in his translation of the *Aeneid*, Dryden even tries to improve on Virgil by avoiding hemistichs, loose half-lines, of which Virgil left a number, presumably, according to Dryden, by mistake (51).

(iv) **Other Models: Abraham Cowley (1618 - 1667)**

Let us now try to fit the translations of other late seventeenth and early eighteenth century translators into the parameters laid out by Dryden. A contrasting model can be found in Cowley's translation of the *Pindarique Odes*, mentioned by Dryden as an example of imitation, though Dryden accepts that in the case of Pindar imitation was probably the best solution. Cowley's comments on translation come from his *Preface* to his translation of the *Pindarique Odes*, which became the manifesto of many of the freer "libertine" translators of the latter seventeenth century.

Cowley begins his *Preface* by saying that if Pindar were translated word for word, "it would by thought *one mad man* had translated *another*; as may appear, when a person who understands not the *Original*, reads the verbal Traduction of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving" (52). What is the best way of bringing Pindar to the contemporary English reader ? It is not just to add rhyme, for rhyme alone without the addition of "Wit" and the "Spirit of Poetry" "would make it ten times more distracted than it is in Prose" (53). What do the "Wit" and the "Spirit of Poetry which Cowley refers to consist of ? One element is adapting the local and contemporary references made in the original. The solution of the "Grammarians and the Criticks" has been to reduce Pindar's verses into regular feet, a failure, according to Cowley.

Cowley admits that a translation can never be an improvement on the original. He uses the common painting metaphor: "I never saw a copy better than

the Original" (54), and a "ballistic" metaphor: "for men resolving in no case to shoot beyond the mark, it is a thousand to one if they shoot not short of it" (55). Cowley has decided to try "something better" with Pindar's *Odes*. This he tentatively calls "imitating". He takes a deliberately free hand: "I have in these *Odes* of Pindar taken, left out, and added what I please" (56). His aim is not to "let the Reader know precisely what he spoke" but "what was his way and manner of speaking" (57).

(v) **Roscommon's** *Essay on Translated Verse*

According to Alexander Fraser Tytler, Roscommon's *Essay on Translation* (1684) was written to "prescribe bounds" to the "increasing license", to try to bring translation of poetry back nearer the original author, away from free imitations (58). Like Denham's *To Sir Richard Fanshawe upon his Translation of Pastor Fido*, the Earl of Roscommon's (1633-1685) *Essay on Translated Verse* is actually in verse. Roscommon begins by making a distinction between translating and creative writing:

> 'Tis true, Composing is the Nobler Part,
> But good Translation is no Easie Art;
> For the materials have long since been found,
> Yet both your Fancy and your Hands are bound,
> And by improving what was writ before,
> Invention labours less, but Judgement more (59).

Translation is different to creative writing, not inferior.

Like Dryden, Roscommon believes in a very close relationship between the translator and the original author; the two should form a "Sympathetick Bond". And the prospective translator should look for an author with whom he has this empathy:

> Each poet with a different Talent writes,
> One Praises, One instructs, Another Bites.
> Horace did ne're aspire to Epick Bays,
> Nor lofty Maro stoop to Lyrick Lays.
> Examine how your Humour is inclin'd,
> And which the Ruling Passion of your Mind;
> The seek a Poet who your way do's bend,
> And chuse an author as you chuse a friend;
> United by this Sympathetick Bond,
> You grow Familiar, Intimate, And Fond.
> Your Thoughts, Your Words, your Stiles, your Souls agree,
> No longer his Interpreter, but He.

The translator must always attempt to avoid unpleasant effects and must always please the audience. It is not enough to be didactic; the reader must be delighted:

Yet 'tis not all to have a Subject Good;
It must Delight us when 'tis understood.
He that brings fulsome Objects to my view
(As many Old have done, and many New)
With nauseous Images my Fancy fills,
And all goes down like Oxymel of Squills.

There are definite parallels between the advice that Roscommon gives and that Dryden gives in his latter translations. Indeed, Dryden acknowledges Roscommon. In the following passage, Roscommon recommends translating into contemporary English and mentions the possibility of leaving some things out but warns against additions, though not forbidding them.

Words in one Language Elegantly us'd
Will hardly in another be excus'd,
And some that Rome admir'd in Caesar's Time
May neither suit our Genius nor our Clime.
The Genuine Sence, intelligibly Told,
Shews a Translator both discreet and Bold.
Excursions are inexpiably Bad,
And 'tis much safer to leave out than add.

It is always best to follow the original author:

Your Author will always be the best advice;
Fall when he falls, ands when he rises, rise.

Roscommon advises the translator to value the metre and individual sounds; indeed, "sound" may be more important than "meaning":

Affected Noise is the most wretched Thing
That to Contempt can Empty Scribblers bring.
Vowels and Accents, Regularly plac'd
On even Syllables, and still the Last,
The gross innumerable Faults abound,
In spight of non sense never fail of Sound.

Finally, Roscommon pays homage to Classical cultures. By adapting the ideas of ancient Greece and Rome, the culture of England can be greatly improved:

But now that Phoebus and the sacred Nine
With all their Beams our blest Island shine,
Why should not we their ancient rites restore
And be what Rome or Athens were before ?

(vi) **Alexander Pope (1688 - 1744)**

Roscommon's appeal to good sense and measure is very evident in Pope's comments on translation, most of which are contained in his *Preface to the Iliad* (1715). He describes the qualities he looks for when translating. The most important is the "Fire of the Poem", the correct "tone" (60). Writing of Homer, "Where his diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where he is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterred from imitating him by fear of incurring the Censure of a meer *English* Critick" (61). For Pope, few translators are subtle enough to do this; some are "swell'd into Fustian in a proud confidence of the Sublime" ; others are "sunk into *Flatness* in a cold and Timorous Notion of *Simplicity* (62). The simplicity Pope recommends is what he refers to as a biblical simplicity. He believes that the nearest approximation to Homer's style is that of the *King James Version of the Bible*; therefore the translator may attempt to use " several of those general Phrases and Manners of Expression, which have attain'd a veneration even in our Language from their use in the *Old Testament* " (63).

Pope gives practical advice to translators: "*Moral Sentences* and *Proverbial Speeches*" must be given with an air of complete unadorned simplicity -- paraphrase must be avoided at all cost. "*Graecisms* and old Words after the manner of Milton" might be included in a translation which requires an "Antique Cast" (64). Likewise, all modern terms of war should be avoided in order to make the text more "venerable". Unlike Dryden and Roscommon, Pope does not favour a general use of contemporary English.

Pope then specifies the techniques the translator should use to translate Homer's compound epithets and repetitions. For the former he recommends "English compounds", where possible, such as "cloud-compelling Jove", and where they are not possible, circumlocutions such as "The lofty Mountain shakes His waving woods" for *einosífullos* (65).The frequently repeated epithets, e.g., Apollo as *ekebólos* or "far-shooting" should be translated differently according to the circumstances. Where Apollo is presented as a God in person, the epithet would refer to his darts and bow, and where the effects of the sun are described, the epithet should make use of the allegorical meaning of Apollo as the sun God. Furthermore, "Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual Repetition of the same Epithets which we find in Homer and which, tho' it might be accomodated to the ear of those Times, is by no means so to ours; But one may wait for opportunities of placing them, where they derive an additional Beauty from the Occasions on which they are employed; and in doing this properly a Translator may at once shew his Fancy and his Judgement" (66).

Similar skill is required from a translator when handling Homer's repetitions. When they come close together, the translator may vary them, but "it is a question whether a profess'd translator be authorized to omit any" (67). The path Pope recommends is that of as exact a translation as possible. Circumlocution should be avoided -- it will lose the "Spirit of the Ancient" as will "a servile dull adherence to the letter"; the "Spirit of the Original" is all-important (68).

(vii) **Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouslee) (1747 - 1814)**

Possibly the first work in English completely devoted to analysing translation was that of the Scots barrister, Alexander Fraser Tytler. His *Essay on the Principles of Translation*, originally a collection of papers read to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, was published anonymously in 1790. According to the unnamed author of the Introduction to the Everyman edition, "This essay is an admirably typical dissertation on the classic art of poetic translation, and of literary style, as the eighteenth century understood it" (69).

Tytler begins with his three principles, his "laws" of translation.

> I. That the Translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work.
>
> II. That the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original.
>
> III. That the Translation should have all the ease of original composition (70).

These commonplace generalisations would be difficult to contest for any eighteenth, or for that matter, twentieth, century translator or writer on translation.

But it is when we look at the development of Tytler's argument that we find more controversial points. At the beginning of Chapter 3 he asks whether "it is allowable in any case to add to the ideas of the original what may appear to give greater force or illustration; or to take from them what may seem to weaken them from redundancy" (71). His answer is yes, but "with the greatest caution", thus agreeing with Dryden, (p.23 above) and contrasting with Roscommon's recommendation that:

> Your Author will always be the best Advice;
> Fall when he falls, and when he rises, rise (71).

Tytler believes:

> it is the duty of a poetical translator, never to suffer the original to fall. He must maintain with him a perpetual contest of genius; he must attend him in his highest flights, and soar, if he can, beyond him: and

> when he perceives, at any time, a diminution of his powers, when he sees a drooping wing, he must raise him on his own pinions" (73).

To support this view, he quotes M. Delille, the French translator of Virgil's *Georgics*: "Il faut être quelquefois supérieur à son original, parce qu'on lui est très inférieur" (74) and Thomas Franklin (1721 - 1784), poet, translator, and Cambridge Professor of Greek:

> Unlike an author like a mistress warms,
> How shall we hide his faults , or taste his charms
> How all his modest, latent beauties find;
> How trace each lovelier feature of the mind;
> Soften each blemish, and each grace improve
> And treat him with the dignity of love ?

Tytler gives examples of appropriate additions and omissions. A "beautiful idea" may be added: "In this translation there is one most beautiful idea superadded by Bourne ... which wonderfully improves upon the original thought" (76). A slightly erotic reference must be taken out: "His translation (Pope's of Homer) has ... with much propriety, left out the compliment to the nurse's waist altogether". Dryden should have omitted the "vulgar and nauseous" "spews a flood" (77). But Pope is again able to upgrade Homer on another of the few occasions he falls below himself. When Homer offends by "introducing low images and puerile allusions" , these defects are "veiled over or altogether removed" by Pope (78).

Although he allows for additions and repetitions, Tytler condemns alterations. He implies that Dryden took translation too near paraphrase: "A judicious spirit of criticism was now wanting"; and he also criticises the French translator d'Ablancourt's liberality (79). It is improper "to sacrifice either the sense or manner of the original, if these can be preserved consistently with purity of expression, to a fancied ease or superior gracefulness of composition" (80). D"Ablancourt's versions are "admirable, so long as we forbear to compare them with the originals" (81).

Tytler takes a similarly "conservative" position on the updating of references in the work translated. He ridicules the position of Guthrie (see above p.20) and Denham (see above pp. 18-21), who both favoured updating references, with unhappy examples from Echard's translations of Terence and Plautus. Echard creates a "Lord Chief Justice" of Athens, who says "I will send him to Bridewell", a London prison. Greeks and Romans use contemporary English oaths: "'Fore George; Blood and 'ounds; Gadzookers; 'Sbuddikins; By the Lord Harry" (82). They make reference to the yet unpublished Bible, the yet uninvented gunpowder and the Battle of La Hague, fought in 1692 A.D. !

In other areas Tytler agrees with the standard Augustan ideas. Like Dryden (see above p.22) and Roscommon (see above pp. 26-27), he agrees that there must be a deep link between the translator and the original; "he must adopt the very soul of the author, which must speak through his own organs" (83). The idea of the balanced contest of skills seen above (p.30) can also be found in the following quotation: "He only is perfectly accomplished for the duty of a translator who possesses a genius akin to that of the original author" (84). Generally the best writers are "those writers who have composed original works of the same species with those they have translated" (85). Tytler gives the *Timaeus* of Plato translated by Cicero as an example. But this is not always the case. Tytler mentions poor translations made by well-known authors. Voltaire's translation of *Hamlet* hardly does Shakespeare justice, and the translation of *Don Quixote* by the novelist Tobias Smollett is compared unfavourably with that of Motteux.

Another point on which Tytler echoes Dryden is in the fact that each language will have its own different qualities. English does not have the brevity of Latin; it cannot use the inversions of Latin and Greek; and although it is not incapable of ellipsis, it "does not admit of it to the same degree as the Latin" (86). These particular features of a language lead Tytler to make a subrule:

> This imitation must always be regulated by the native or genius of the original and not of the translation (87).

(viii) **Augustan and Twentieth Century Ideas on Translation**

All translations date, but Augustan translations seem to the modern reader much more of period pieces than many earlier translations. We have little sympathy with the Augustan sense of propriety; we find the overwhelming Augustan self-confidence annoying; we cringe at their "improvements" of Homer and Virgil; and we find heroic couplets deadly monotonous. We admire Dryden's *Aeneid* and Pope's *Iliad* as sophisticated examples of Augustan verse but don't read them as translations of Virgil and Homer. Yet when we look at the central concerns and metaphors of Augustan translators, we find them very similar to our own.

As with most twentieth century translators, there is a general consensus that a word-for-word translation can never reach the heart of the original. Many of the metaphors which have become the commonplaces of articles on literary translation nowadays originate in this period. Denham tells us that if we follow "the servile path" we will only produce a "capuut mortuum". This kind of translation is for Dryden like "dancing on a rope with fettered legs", and "a good poet is no more like himself, in a dull translation, than his carcass would be to his living body". The translator must try to capture Chapman's "Spirit", Denham's "Flame" and Pope's "Fire". Indeed, as will be seen in Chapter 5, twentieth century views on translation are still dominated to a great extent by Augustan thought. It even seems that many

writers have followed this very "servile path" and are unable to escape this strait-jacket.

Augustan translators discuss problems of style. Roscommon comments on the problem of using Latin metre; Dryden describes techniques of capturing comparable sound qualities to the Latin; Pope emphasises the importance of following the tone of the original. Most commentators recommend translating into contemporary English. Only Tytler criticises this, though Pope has certain reservations where a more formal vocabulary is required. However, no Augustan translators regard the form of the original as sacrosanct and none of them think that the translator must do all he can to reproduce this form in English. Although English translators do not support D"Ablancourt, who, as will be seen in the next chapter, gave himself complete freedom to improve and alter whatever he wanted, they do, in general, support a judicious amount of omission and alteration, usually when the author fails to obey the Augustan ideals of genteel behaviour. There is little sympathy for the strict adherence to the text of William Cowper, who, in his *Preface to The Iliad of Homer* (1791), wrote: "I have omitted nothing; I have invented nothing" (88).

Augustan translators are sensitive to individual authors. What is true when translating one author is not necessarily true when translating another. Cowley admits that he would not have treated other authors as freely as he did Pindar. In the *Preface to Sylvae* Dryden comments on the different techniques he used to translate Lucretius, Horace and Theocritus.

As well as being sensitive to the author, the translator must have a veneration for him and feel a close link to him. This is Roscommon's "Sympathetick Bond", Francklin's "secret sympathy", Tytler's "genius akin". Indeed, Tytler even insists that the translator should "adapt the very soul of his author". Their relationship has changed in the twentieth century. With Pound's influence the emphasis is often much more on the translator. The original can be a mere starting point for the translator's recreation.

Other characteristics of Augustan translation are not shared by modern translation. As mentioned earlier (pp. 16-17), many sixteenth century writers believed that translation would enrich English language and literature through the introduction of Classical models and new vocabulary. We find these ideas particularly in the work of Dryden (see above p. 24).

Augustan translators have a very clear concern for the reader. The growing middle-class in England in the late seventeenth century provided an audience hungry for "knowledge". Patronage and sales of poems enabled poets to live in style. It has become almost proverbial that the profits from subscriptions to his *Iliad*

allowed Pope to buy a mansion in Twickenham. Such a dependence on the audience led to a certain commercial blandness. Roscommon recommends against offending the taste of the audience. Tytler criticises Dryden for not removing all "vulgarity" from his translations. The last word, (as so often does), rests with Dr. Johnson:

> The purpose of the writer is to be read, and the criticism which would destroy the power of pleasing must be blown aside. Pope wrote for his own age and his own nation: he knew that it was necessary to colour the images and point the sentiments of his author; he therefore made him graceful, but lost him some of his sublimity (89).

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CHAPTER 3

LES BELLES INFIDELES AND THE GERMAN TRADITION

Ist jeder Übersetzer ein Prophet in seinem Volks.

Every translator is a prophet among his people.

Goethe

Chapter 3 -- *Les Belles Infidèles* and the German Tradition

The last chapter showed the tendency of Augustan translators towards very free versions, libertine, as they were called, but this tendency stopped short of endorsing total freedom for the translator. This chapter will look at seventeenth century translation in France, the apogee of the *belles infidèles*, when French translators, in order to achieve clarity of expression and harmony of sound, often made considerable additions, alterations and omissions in their translations. Although this was the dominant mode of translation in France right through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I shall concentrate on the work of Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt (1606-1664), whose translations of Tacitus, Arrian, Thucydides, Lucian and Xenophon were of great importance in determining the concept of *belles infidèles*. The second part of this chapter will analyse ideas on translation in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Germany, where translation was of great importance in helping to unify the German nation. Most German commentators favoured a completely opposite type of translation to the *belles infidèles*, a translation which would keep as near as possible to the morphological and syntactical patterns of the original.

(i) *Les Belles Infidèles*

In the translations of d'Ablancourt and his followers we find a cult of the beautiful, which, to a large extent, consisted of *raison* and *clarté*. Roger Zuber remarks:

> L'essential de leur oeuvre est, pour la posterité, leur désir de beauté (1).

When d'Ablancourt had to choose between two expressions, he would always choose "la plus claire" because this would be "la plus belle" (2). Beauty consisted of the elimination of all kinds of obscurity. Zuber even links this *beauté* with a "quête du bonheur": a beautiful, pure text would be able to give its readers "l'âme éprise de beauté, l'apaisement et le repos" (3).

Allied to this belief is the idea that the French language is not inferior to the Classical languages and that it had its own qualities and possibilities of reaching a kind of perfection, higher even than that of Latin and Greek. Antoine le Maistre, translator of Saint Bernard and Saint Augustine, certainly believed that French could match Latin and Greek step for step:

> Il faut tâcher de rendre beauté pour beauté et figure pour figure; d'imiter le style de l'auteur, et d'en approcher le plus près qu'on pourra: varier les figures et les locutions, et enfin rendre notre traduction un tableau et une représentation au vif de la pièce que l'on traduit: en sorte que l'on puisse dire que le françois est aussi beau que le latin, et citer avec assurance le françois au lieu du latin (4).

Indeed, Zuber shows that d'Ablancourt took enormous care over the construction of his sentences. Of course, translating into prose, he did not use rhyme, but he was very worried about the rhythm, often using sentences or clauses with the twelve syllables of the alexandrine to give texts a noble quality; and these would be varied with pentameters, to give "cette dignité sans tension, qui garantit la *douceur* du style" (5) and an occasional octosyllable to introduce a surprise. In addition, assonance and repetition were often used.

The concept of equivalence amongst seventeenth and eighteenth century French translators was certainly very different to our twentieth century interpretation of this term. The translation had to create a similar *impression* in the reader as the original would have done, and the least successful way of doing this would be to make a literal translation. This would sound awkward and unclear. It would be much better to make changes so that the translation would not grate on the ears and that everything could be understood clearly. Only by making these changes might the translator create this similar *impression*. As the translator Boileau said:

> les licences qu'il a prises ne sont-elles pas une forme plus haute de fidelité ? (6)

Let us now look at some of the changes d'Ablancourt makes to his *Tacitus*. He makes changes to improve the style:

> J'ay adjousté ces deux lignes, non seulement pour faire l'opposition entière dont l'Autheur a oublié un membre, mais pour lier ce qui précède avec ce qui suit, car cela fait un hiatus (7).

He may make additions for the sake of *clarté*.

> Ces mots sont tirez du reste de l'histoire pour éclaircir le sujet.
>
> Ce sont les deux choses ... que j'ay adjoustées pour servir de quelque éclarcissement à la matière.
>
> J'ay éclarcy cette Histoire par trois ou quatre mots de Sénèque que j'ay mis en marge (8).

Changes are often made to attenuate many of the less polite references in Classical texts. The drunkenness and homosexual practices of the Macedonians, Nero's rape of Britannicus and the adultery of Agrippinus and Pallas are all euphemised, e.g., "Néron avait abusé plusieurs fois ... de Brittanicus" (9). Indeed, d'Ablancourt was even called a "Tradcorreteur" (10).

Sometimes the customs of Greece and Rome must fit into those of polite French society. In *Arrien* (1646), Alexander's lieutenant cannot possibly address the great leader familiarly, as he does in the Greek. His request must be subject to the rules of etiquette: "Pardonnez-leur ce désir qui est naturel à tous les hommes..." (11). Likewise, Classical terms can only be introduced into French with great care:

> il fallait respecter l'usage, et "prenoi(t) bien garde à ne point choquer la délicatesse de (sa) langue par des termes barbares et estrangers"(12).

Any faulty logic in the original is clarified.. Why did Alexander have such confidence in his doctor ? Because he "l'avait toujours accompagné dès sa jeunesse" (13). D'Ablancourt must supply us with the reason. Characters' behaviour must also be consistent with their social position. D'Ablancourt suppresses Germanicus' anger when he is dying as this would contrast with his noble bearing.

So, the aims of D'Ablancourt are to avoid obscurity and ambiguity and to prevent any possible confusion for the reader of the text. In the words of Roger Zuber:

> Tacite s'embrouille-t-il dans la géographie ? D'Ablancourt vient à son secours et rectifie les faits. Arrien confond-t-il la Syrie et l'Assyrie ? Le Français n'oublie pas de rétablir le texte. Les contradictions, les légendes, les problèmes historiques sont pour son esprit toujours en éveil, l'ocassion d'affirmer sa maîtrise (14).

And d'Ablancourt generally met with praise inside France:

> Les erudits ... considéraient les traductions libres d'Ablancourt non comme une trahison commise envers les anciens, mais comme un service qu'il leur rendit (15)

Indeed, for the critics of the day, there was no separation between form and content. Expression, which had to be clear and elegant, was an integral part of the meaning of a work.

D'Ablancourt seems very proud of the "improvements" he makes. In his *Preface* to *Thucydide* he remarks:

> Car ce n'est pas tant icy le portrait de Thucydide, que Thucydide luy mesme, qui est passé dans un autre corps comme par une espèce de

> Metempsycose, est de Grec est devenu François, sans se pouvoir plaindre comme un défaut de resemblance, quand il paroistroit moins défectueux, non plus qu'un malade feroit de son Medecin, qui par la force de ses remedes luy auroit donné de la santé et da la vigeur (16).

To show how general this concept of translation was, let us look at the comments of La Ménardière, writing of his translation of Pliny (1643):

> J'ay etudié nôtre Autheur, ses sentiments et son genie. Et lors que j'ay cru les connoître, j'ay pris toute la matière dont il a fait sa harangue, et suivant toujours son ordre, je luy ai donné la forme que j'ay estimé convenable aux qualitez de Trajan et à celles de l'Orateur qui celebre ses loüanges (17).

Finally, the French translators show a general disparagement of word-for-word translations. In a letter to his friend Conrart, d'Ablancourt mentions his dislike of "cette superstition judaïque, qui suit la lettre et quitte l'esprit". Translating an author in this way will only show half of his eloquence and will betray and dishonour him: "c'est dépouiller un homme de bonne maison que nous avons fait semblant de faire loger dans la nôtre" (18).

To close this section, we can look at a letter from Descartes to a well-known translator of this period, Guez de Balzac:

> ... avant la civilisation, avec son avarice, son ambition et son hypocrisie, il existait une éloquence naturelle, ayant "qualque chose de divin", "provenant de l'abondance du bon sens, et du zele de la vérité. Porté par de grands hommes, elle a amené les sociétés a se civiliser. Elle s'est corrompue par le barreau et l'exagération des harangues: de la bouche des sages, elle est passé au service des gens, du comun, sous la forme du sophisme. Au lieu de la générosité militante des orateurs, on n'eut plus, pour la server, que de méchants hommes (19).

The *clarté* and *beauté* of translations such as those of d'Ablancourt thus takes on an almost divine quality. Through this complete transparency of language European civilisation can return to a natural purity.

(ii) **The German Tradition -- The Morning Star**

Right from Luther's translation of the Bible (1530), which provided a written norm for the various dialects of German, thereby laying the foundations for the future national literature, translation has played a vital role in German literature. Indeed, Wieland's and Eschenburg's translations of Shakespeare and those of A. W. Schlegel and Dorothea Tieck (1797-1833) and Voss's translations of Homer *Odyssey*

(1781) and *Iliad* (1793) into hexameters are considered works which helped to found modern German literature.

Contact with foreign models was thought necessary if German literature was to develop. From "the many-sided contact with what is foreign" (20), initially Classical literature, then English and French and Spanish and Italian works, German literature would develop its own characteristics. It would, according to August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767-1845), take the best from other literatures and at the same time assert its own independence. George Steiner describes the peculiar situation of German language and literature:

> Gradually the German language created those models of shared sensibility from which the nation-state could evolve. When that state entered modern history, a late arrival burdened with myths and surrounded by an alien, partially hostile Europe, it carried with it a sharpened, defensive sense of unique perspective. To the German temper, its own *Weltansicht* seemed a special vision, whose foundations and expressive genius lay in the language. Reflecting on the drastic extremes of German history, on the apparently fatal attempts of the German nation to break out of the ring or more urbane, or, in the east, more primitive cultures, German philosophers of history thought of their language as a peculiarly isolating yet numinous factor (21).

The desire and willingness to translate the literatures of foreign cultures into German has another advantage: German becomes a "kind of world language and a repository for the literature of the world". Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) writes:

> Our nation may be destined, because of its respect for what is foreign and its nature, which is one of mediation, to carry all the treasures of foreign arts and scholarship together with its own, in its language, to unite them into a great historical whole, so to speak, which would be preserved in the centre and heart of Europe, so that, with the help of our language, whatever beauty the most different times have brought forth can be enjoyed by all the people, as purely and as perfectly as is possible for a foreigner (22).

German writers also see translation as enormously valuable to the development of the individual. For Johann Breitinger (1701 - 1776), it is the best way to learn to think. By translating you acquire almost unnoticed the ability to think correctly and to express your thoughts with emphasis and to your advantage (23). Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767 - 1835) views translation as a way of bringing experiences to the individual that he would never have had contact with. Both individual and nation will experience something nobler and more complex.

The translator is also described in a very distinctive way. We find none of the debasement of the translator which is so commonly found elsewhere. Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) sees the translator as the innovator of new forms. For Herder he is the "morning star" of a new era in literature (24). Goethe sees him as "the mediator in this general spiritual commerce" who has

> chosen it as his trade to advance the interchange. For whatever one may say about the deficiencies of translation, it is and remains one of the most dignified enterprises in the general commerce of the world. The Koran says, "God has given every nation a prophet in his own language". Thus every translator is a prophet among his people (25).

Translation itself, according to A.W. Schlegel, is "true writing, ... higher artistic creation", whose

> aim is to combine the merits of all different nations, to think with them and feel with them, and so to create a cosmopolitan centre for mankind (26).

The translator is the prophet, the messenger, the chosen one. No wonder Novalis (1772 - 1801) even exalts translation above original writing:

> One translates out of true love for the beautiful and the literature of the nation. To translate is to produce literature, just as the writing of one's own work is -- and it is more difficult, more rare (27).

The nationalistic element we find in German ideas on translation often has a distinctly anti-French element: French translators Frenchify everything; they have a complete lack of sensitivity to the original. Novalis classifies Bürger's iambic Homer, Pope's Homer and all French translations as "travesties" (28). A.W. Schlegel says that the translator should preserve the "noble rust" of the original, but

> Only a former Frenchman could unfeelingly polish this away in descriptions or translations, merely so that he might show the world a shining penny with all the more self-gratification (29).

Humboldt says that the French have not benefitted from their translations of Classical works:

> ... not the slightest shred of the spirit of antiquity has entered the nation with them, indeed not that even the national understanding of them ... has increased in the least (30).

There is a general consensus of the special characteristics of the German language. Mme. de Staël (1766-1817) mentions the reciprocities of the German language and people in *De l'Allemagne* (1810) (31). She attempts to correlate the metaphysical element of the German character, its poetic instinct and national divisions with the convoluted German syntax. By contrast, French directness was expressed in the less complicated structure of the French language (32). This

correlation between language and thought was the central idea of Humboldt's thinking: each language has its own particular *Weltanschauung*. This view of language can be seen in a much more extreme form in an earlier work. In *Sprachphilosophie* (1772) (33), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744 - 1803) states that the purity of each language reflects its national identity. In order to keep its purity, a language should be preserved from bastardizing or corrupt forms from outside. If not, both the language and the people will suffer decline. Herder takes a more conservative view than other writers mentioned in this chapter: translation should only try to introduce purer linguistic forms, such as those found in Classical languages .

(iii) **The Different Kinds of Translation**

The tripartite division of translation made by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 - 1832) shows translation as an evolutionary process in a nation. Firstly, there will be a simple prosaic translation of a given work in order to acquaint readers with the foreign work. Luther's Bible is an example of this kind of translation. Then the translator will appropriate the foreign content and write a work of his own based on these imported ideas. Imitations and parodies fall into this category, as do many French works. As illustrations Goethe mentions the works of the Abbé Jacques Delille and the German translator, Wieland.

The third kind is the highest form of translation. The aim of the translator is an *interlinear* version, one that attempts to make the original identical with the translation, but at the same time to leave its foreignness apparent. This is the sublime translation:

> A translation which attempts to identify itself with the original in the end comes close to an interlinear version and greatly enhances our understanding of the original; this in turn leads us, compels us as it were, towards the source text and so the circle is closed at last. Inside it the coming together of the foreign and the native, unknown approximation and the known, keep moving towards each other (34).

Such translations are Voss's translations of Homer, which introduced the hexameter into German, and his translations of Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare and Calderón. Goethe also praises the translations of the Viennese Orientalist Joseph von Hammer from the Persian of Firdausi and other Persian poets.

The third kind of translation may be the ideal, but it is not always the appropriate type.

> If you want to influence the masses, a simple translation is always best. Critical translations vying with the original are really of use only for conversations conducted by the learned among themselves (35).

A young pupil may mock a strange sounding translation and be discouraged from looking further into the work. Schleiermacher remarks that a simple translation may be the most appropriate for the large number of people who merely want to enjoy foreign works (36). Goethe mentions the enormous success of Wieland's Shakespeare and says that this has now been improved on by Johann Eschenburg. He recommends a cumulative approach beginning with a simple prosaic translation but eventually aiming at the critical translation, the ideal. A.W.Schlegel develops this idea:

> The desire follows the satisfaction of basic needs; now the best in the field is no longer good enough for us ...

Like Goethe, A.W.Schlegel uses sublime metaphors to describe what is eventually aimed at:

> If it were possible to recreate his (Shakespeare's) work faithfully and yet at the same time poetically, to follow the letter of his meaning step by step and yet to catch part of the innumerable, indescribable marvels which lie not in the letter, but float above it like a breath of the spirit ! It is worth a try (37).

Humboldt and Schleiermacher also emphasise the value of the cumulative approach but with a slightly different slant. Humboldt says that as the translator can capture only part of the spirit of the original, the reader who cannot read the original should read as many "images as possible of the original spirit" (38). Schleiermacher envisages "the transplantation of whole literatures into a language" (39). And only by comparing translations can the reader discriminate between good and bad.

The bases for Schleiermacher's essay, "Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens" (1813) (On the Different Methods of Translating) are mentioned by Goethe in the same year. He says that in translation there are two alternatives. One requires that

> the author of a foreign work be brought across to us in such a way that we look on him as ours; the other requires that we should go across to what is foreign and adapt ourselves to its conditions; its use of language, its peculiarities (40).

Schleiermacher elaborates on these two ways of translating. In the first, the translator leaves the reader in peace and moves the author towards the reader; in other words, the translation should sound fluent in the target language, here German. In the second, the translator leaves the author in peace and moves the

reader towards him; i.e., the foreign forms of the original will be transferred into German. For Schleiermacher there is no middle way: either the translator must make the Latin author into a German for the German audience, or he must take the German readers to the world of the Latin poet.

> The first translation will be perfect when one can say that if the author had learnt German as well as the translator had learnt Latin he would not have translated the work he originally wrote any differently than the translator has done. But the second, which does not show the author as himself would have translated, but as he is, a German, would have originally written in German, can have no other means of perfection than if it could be certified that, could all German readers be changed into experts, the original would have meant exactly the same to them as what the translation means to them now -- that the author has changed himself into a German (41).

Although at the beginning of the essay Schleiermacher seems to favour neither type, he later comes down firmly on the side of the second type. This can be seen in the terminology he uses. The first type he calls *dolmetschen*, mere *interpreting*, the second *übersetzen*, *recreation* in the mother tongue. Herder had previously made a similar distinction: *übersetzung* -- that which aimed at fusion with the original, and *übersetzung* -- that which attempted to accomodate the foreign work comfortably in the native language (42).

Dolmetschen, the *interpreting* type of translating, is easier and will appeal to a wider public; it therefore seems more attractive.

> Who would not rather sire children who are their parents' pure effigy, and not bastards ? Who would unwillingly force himself to appear in movements less light and elegant than those he is capable of, to seem brutal and stiff, at least at times, and to shock the reader as much as is necessary to keep him aware of what he is doing ? (43)

The task of making the reader feel that he has something foreign before him is difficult, but if successful, the translator will let "the greater lightness and naturalness of the original shine through everywhere", and, in alchemical imagery typical of Schleiermacher, the translator will

> dissolve speech down to its very core, separate from that the part played by language, and let this core, as if through a new and almost chemical process, continue with the essence and the power of another language (44).

(iv) **Schleiermacher's Influence**

Schleiermacher's schematic description is of enormous importance in the history of the theory of literary translation. His advocating the "difficult" translation, the translation which tries to reproduce the form of the original, has influenced succeeding generations of translators. In Chapter 6 we shall see that the type of translation Walter Benjamin advocates closely follows that which Schleiermacher supports. Another interesting follower of Schleiermacher is the Spanish philosopher and writer, José Ortega y Gasset (1883 - 1955).

Although it was written more than a hundred years after the death of the German writers on translation, Ortega y Gasset's essay "Misterio y Esplendor de la Traducción" (45) shows considerable influence from the German translation school. Translation is so attractive because of the impossibility of ever achieving a perfect version. Inventing such impossible projects is typical of mankind.

> La historia universal nos hace ver la incesante e inagotable capacidad del hombre para inventar proyectos irrealizables...
> Lo único que no logra nunca el hombre es, precisamente, lo que se propone (46).

This now makes sense of the impossibility of translation.

> no es una objección contra el posible esplendor de la faena traductora declarar su imposibilidad. Al contrario este carácter le presta la más sublime filiación y nos hace entrever que tiene sentido (47).

Like Goethe and Humboldt, Ortega y Gasset believes that different translations of the same work are useful if we wish to clearly see the formal qualities of a work. He also extends Schleiermacher's idea that the translator should translate the formal qualities of the original author, making the translation sound strange and foreign.

> Lo decisivo es que, al traducir, procuremos salir de nuestra lengua a las ajenas y no al revés, que es lo que suele hacerse (48).

The reader must be made aware of this,that he will be reading an "ugly" translation, but this kind of translation

> le va a hacer de verdad transmigrar dentro del pobre hombre Platón que hace veinticuatro siglos se esforzó a su modo por sostenerse sobre el haz de la vida (49).

We can and need to learn from ancient writers. We need them because of their differences from ourselves:

> y la traducción debe subrayar su carácter exótico y distante, haciéndolo con tal inteligible (50).

And like the German writers, Ortega y Gasset underlines the importance of translation for the individual writer. He should not "menospreciar la ocupación de traducir" and should

> complementar su obra personal con alguna versión de lo antiguo, medio o contemporáneo (51).

Only in this way, by valuing the art of translation and making it into a specialised area of study, will it be possible to increase "fabulosamente nuestra red de vías inteligentes" (52).

(v) **Summary**

Chapter 2 gave us one axis for a classification of translations: Dryden's tripartite division between *metaphrase, paraphrase* and *imitation*. Chapter 3 has given us another axis: that of the French seventeenth and eighteenth century style of translation, Schleiermacher's first type -- a facilitating translation, one which will seem totally natural in the target language, as if it were an original work written the target language -- contrasting with that of Schleiermacher's second type -- the translation which retains morphological and syntactic features of the source language, and which may sound strange and awkward as it tries to bring features of the foreign language into the target literature.

We can connect the two axes. Schleiermacher's second type, the translation which retains the foreign features, will be a close word for word translation, belonging to Dryden's *metaphrase* category. Its awkwardness will be that which Dryden criticised when commenting on such translations (53). In a similar way, the translator of a facilitating translation must take certain liberties with the original text in order to make his translation sound pleasant to the ear. This type of translation would fit into Dryden's *paraphrase* type of translation.

However, Dryden and Schleiermacher describe the types of translations in very different ways. Dryden, the Augustans and the French translators consider literal translations the work of labouring drudges; a translation **must** sound natural in the target language. On the other hand, Schleiermacher and the Germans consider this kind of translation the true kind; this kind of translation, embodying the form of the original, will increase the range and powers of the German language, will bring languages closer together and will be the sublime work of the translator. By contrast, the ordinary, unexceptional translation is the one that sounds natural in the target language.

Nevertheless, the two kinds of translation need not be mutually incompatible. Goethe thought that a work could be first introduced into a language in a facilitating translation, and then, when it was already familiar, another translation, or other translations, might try to introduce its formal features into the target language.

References

For complete references to the quotation on the title page see Note 25.

1. *Les* Belles Infidèles *et la formation du goût classique*, Roger Zuber. Armand Colin, Paris, 1968. P.338.

2. Ibid., p.338.

3. Ibid., p.411.

4. In ibid., p.151-2.

5. Ibid., p.354.

6. In ibid., p.284.

7. In ibid., p.356.

8. In ibid., p.337

9. In ibid., p.294.

10. By Boilliau in ibid., p.192.

11. In ibid., p.293.

12. Ibid., p.296.

13. Ibid., p.309.

14. Ibid., p.189.

15. Ibid., p.192.

16. In ibid., p.382.

17. In ibid., p.82.

18. In ibid., p.380.

19. Undated letter in ibid., p.393.

20. "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens" (1813), Friedrich Schleiermacher, as printed in *Sämtliche Werke, Dritte Abteilung (Zur Philosophie), Band II.* Reimar, Berlin, 1938. Reprinted in *Das Problem des Übersetzens,* Hans Joachim Störig. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1969, p.69: "... nur durch die vielseitigste Berührung mit dem fremden recht frisch gedeihen und ihre Kraft volkommen entwikkeln kann". Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, André Lefevere. Van Gorcum, Amsterdam, 1977. P.88.

21. *After Babel,* George Steiner. Oxford University Press, 1975. Pp. 85-86.

22. "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens", op. cit. . In *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.69. "Und damit scheint zusammenzutreffen, dass wegen seiner Achtung für das fremde und seiner vermittelnden Natur unser Volk bestimmt sein mag, alle Schäze fremder Wissenschaft und Kunst mit seinen eigenen zugleich in seiner Sprache gleichsam zu einem grossen geschichtlichen Ganzen zu vereinigen, das im Mittelpunkt und Herzen von Europa verwahrt werde, damit nun durch Hülfe unserer Sprache, was die verschiedensten Zeiten gebracht haben, jeder so rein und volkommen geniessen könne, als es dem Fremdling nur möglich ist". Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition,* op. cit., p.88.

23. In *Kritische Dichtkunst*, Johann Jacob Breitinger. Mekler, Stuttgart, 1966. Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.23.

24. *Fragmente (1766-67)*, Johann Gottfried Herder, as reprinted in *Sämtliche Werke.* Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, Berlin, 1877. Translation in *Translating Literature*: *The German Tradition,* op. cit., p.32.

25. *German Romance*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, in *Schriften zur Literatur.* In *Sämtliche Werke,Band 14.* Artemis-Verlags-AG, Zürich, 1977. P.933:

" Und so ist jeder Übersetzer anzusehen, dass er sich als Vermittler dieses allgemein-geistigen Handels bemüht und den Wechseltausch zu befördern sich zum Geschäft macht. Denn was man auch von der Unzulänglichkeit des Übersetzens sagen mag, so ist und bleibt es doch eines der wichtigsten und würdigsten Geschäfte in dem allgemeinen Weltverkehr."

Der Koran sagt: "Gott hat jedem Volke einen Propheten gegeben in seiner eigenen Sprache". So ist jeder Übersetzer ein Prophet in seinem Volke." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition,* op. cit., p.39.

26. *Geschichte der romantischen Literatur*, A.W.Schlegel, in *Kritische Schriften und Briefe*, ed. Edgar Lohner. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1962-67. Vol. IV, 1965, p.36. "Er ist auf nichts Geringeres, als die Vorzüge der verschiedensten Nationalitäten zu vereinigen, sich in alle hineinzudenken und hineinzufühlen, und so einen Kosmopolitischen Mittelpunkt für den menschlichen Geist zu stiften". Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.54.

27. From a letter to A. W. Schlegel, printed in *Novalis, Werke und Briefe*, ed. Alfred Kelletat. Winkler, München, 1968. P.632. "Man übersetzt aus echter Liebe zum Schönen und zur vaterländischen Literatur. Übersetzen ist so gut dichten, als eigne Werke zustande bringen -- und schwerer, seltener". Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.65.

28. *Blüthenstaub*, Novalis, in *Athenäum*, p.88-89. Reprinted in *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.33: "Sie fallen leicht ins Travestiren, wie Bürgers Homer in Jamben, Popens Homer, die Französischen Übersetzungen ingesamt". Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit. ,p.64.

29. *Dante -- über die Göttliche Komödie* , A.W.Schlegel, in *Sprache und Poetik*, included in *Kritische Schriften und Briefe I*, ed. Edgar Lohner, p.86. "Nur etwa ehemaliger Franzose konnte das in Darstellungen oder Übersetzungen gefühllos wegpolieren, um den nunmehr blanken Schaupfennig der Welt desto selbstgefälliger anzubieten". Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.48. It is easy to see here the roots of the extreme nationalism which was to have disastrous consequences for Germany in the twentieth century.

30. "Einleitung zu Aeschylos *Agamemnon* metrisch übersetzt von Wilhelm von Humboldt", Wilhelm von Humboldt. In *Gesammelte Schriften 1.* Abteilung Band 8. Behr, Berlin, 1909. cit.. In *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.83-4: "dennoch auch noch nicht das Mindeste des antiken Geistes mit ihnen auf die Nation übergegangen ist, ja nicht einmal das nationelle Verstehen derselben ... dadurch im geringsten gewonnen hat ?" Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p. 43.

31. *De l'Allegmagne* (1817), Mme. de Staël. Hachette, Paris, 1958-60.

32. This paragraph follows George Steiner in *After Babel*, op. cit.,. pp. 78-79.

33. *Sprachphilosophie*, (1772), Johann Gottfried Herder.

34. *West-östlicher Divan* (1819), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, reprinted in *Sämtliche Werke*, Band 3, p.557. "Eine Übersetzung, die sich mit dem Original zu identifizieren strebt, nähert sich zuletzt der Interlinearversion und erleichtert höchlich das Verständnis des Originals, hiedurch werden wir an den Grundtext hinangeführt, ja getrieben, und so ist denn zuletzt der ganze Zirkel abgeschlossen, in welchem sich die Annäherung des Fremden und Einheimischen, des Bekannten und Unbekannten bewegt."

35. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1811-1814), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, as reprinted in *Sämtliche Werke,* Band 10, p.541. "Für die Menge, auf die gewirkt werden soll, bleibt eine schlichte Übertragung immer die beste. Jene kritischen Übersetzungen, die mit dem Original wetteifern, dienen eigentlich nur zur Unterhaltung der Gelehrten untereinander." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.37.

36. "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens" op. cit. . In *Das Problem des Übersetzens,* p.67. "Das Uebersetzen aus dem ersten Gesichtspunkt ist eine Sache des Bedürfnisses für ein Volk, von dem nur ein kleiner Theil sich eine hinreichende Kenntniss fremder Sprachen verschaffen kann, ein grösserer aber Sinn hat für den Genuss fremder Werke." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition,* op. cit., p.87.

37. *Etwas über Wilhelm Shakespeare bei Gelegenheit Wilhelm Meistens* (1796), A.W.Schlegel, in *Sprache und Poetik.* Included in *Kritische Schriften und Briefe I*, ed. Edgar Lohner, 1962. P.101. "Nach der Befriedigung des Bedürfnisses tut sich der Hang zum Wohlleben hervor; jetzt ist das Beste in diesem Fache nicht mehr zu gut für uns. Wenn es nun möglich wäre, ihn treu und zugleich poetisch nachzubilden, Schritt vor Schritt dem Buchstaben des Sinnes zu folgen, und doch einen Teil der unzähligen, unbeschreiblichen Schönheiten, die nicht in Buchstaben liegen, die wie ein geistiger Hauch über ihm schweben, zu erhaschen ! Es gilt einen Versuch." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition* , op. cit., p.50.

38. "Einleitung zu Aeschylos *Agamemnon* metrisch übersetzt von Wilhelm von Humboldt", op.cit. In *Das Problem des Übersetzens,* op.cit., p.87. "Es sind eben so viel Bilder desselben Geistes." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition,* op. cit., p.45.

39. "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens". op. cit., . In *Das Problem des Übersetzens,* op. cit., p.57: "ein Verpflanzen ganzer Litteraturen in eine Sprache..." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op.cit., p.80.

40. *Zu brüderliche Andeken Wielands*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, in *Sämtliche Werke*. In *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.35. "Es gibt zwei Übersetzungmaximen: die eine verlangt, dass der Autor einer fremden Nation zu uns herüber gebracht werde, dergestalt, dass wir ihn als den Unsrigen ansehen können; die andere hingegen macht an uns die Forderung, dass wir uns zu dem Fremden hinüber begeben und uns in seine Zustände, seine Sprachweise, seine Eigenheiten finden sollen." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.39.

41. "Ueber die verschiedened Methoden des Uebersetzens", op. cit, . In *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, p.48. "Die erste Uebersezung wird vollkommen sein in ihrer Art, wenn man sagen kann, hätte der Autor eben so gut deutsch gelernt, wie der Uebersetzer römisch, so würde er sein ursprünglich römisch abgefasstes Werk nicht anders übersezt haben, als der Uebersetzer wirklich getan. Die andere aber, indem sie den Verfasser nicht zeigt, wie er selbst wurde übersezt, sondern wie er ursprünglich als Deutscher deutsch würde geschrieben haben, hat wol schwerlich einen andern Maasstab der Vollendung, als wenn man versichern könnte, wenn die deutschen Leser insgesammt sich in Kenner und Zeitgenossen des Verfassers verwandeln liessen, so würde ihnen das Werk selbst ganz dasselbe geworden sein, was ihnen jetzt, da der Verfasser sich in einen Deutschen verwandelt hat, die Uebersezung ist. Diese Methode haben offenbar alle die jenigen im Auge, welche sich der Formel bedienen, man soll einen Autor so übersezen, wie er selbst würde deutsch geschrieben haben." Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.74.

42. In *After Babel*, op. cit., p.265.

43. "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens", op. cit. . *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, p.55. Wer möchte nicht lieber Kinder erzeugen, die das väterliche Geschlecht rein darstellen, als Blendlinge ? Wer wird sich gern auflegen, in minder leichten und anmuthigenen Bewegungen sich zu zeigen als er wol könnte, und bisweilen wenigstens schroff und steif zu erscheinen, um dem Leser so anstössig zu werden als nöthig ist damit er das Bewusstsein der Sache nicht verliere ?" Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p.79.

44. Ibid., . In *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.60: "kann er sich anmaassen die Rede bis in ihr innerstes aufzulösen, den Antheil der Sprache daran auszuscheiden, und durch einen neuen gleichsam chemischen Prozess sich das innerste derselben verbinden zu lassen mit dem Wesen und der Kraft einer andern Sprache ?" Translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition*, op. cit., p. 82.

45. "Misterio y Esplendor de la Traducción", José Ortega y Gasset, in *Obras Completas de José Ortega y Gasset*, Vol. 5. Revista de Occidente, Madrid, 1947.

46. Ibid., p.439.

47. Ibid., p.439.

48. Ibid., p.452.

49. Ibid., p.451.

50. Ibid., p.451.

51. Ibid., p.451.

52. Ibid., p.451.

53. "Dancing on a rope with fettered legs". See Chapter 2, p. 22.

CHAPTER 4

EZRA POUND -- MAKE IT NEW!

I, too, am a translated man. I have been borne across. *It is generally believed that something is always lost in translation; I cling to the notion -- and use, in evidence, the success of Fitzgerald - Khayyam -- that something can be gained.*

Salman Rushdie, *Shame.*

CHAPTER 4 -- EZRA POUND --- MAKE IT NEW !

(i) Pound on Translation

The major figure in translation of poetry in the English speaking world in the twentieth century is undoubtedly Ezra Pound (1885 - 1972). This chapter will examine Pound's comments on the importance of translation, analyse his own various types of translation, contrast Pound's concept of translation with that of the Shelley and that of the Victorians and look at Pound's influence on the translation of poetry in this century.

For Pound, translation is central to the act of writing poetry and understanding literature. It is excellent training for the would-be poet:

> Translation is likewise good training. If you find that your original "wobbles" when you try to rewrite it. The meaning of the poem can not "wobble" (1).

Pound believes that the quality of translation reflects the quality of poetry in a literary period:

> A great age of literature is perhaps always a great age of translations; or follows it (2).

Pound thinks that the greatest age of translation in English poetry was the period between Chaucer and Shakespeare, when English poetry was alive with adaptations from European languages.

> After this period (Chaucer) English literature lives on translation, it is fed by translation; every new exuberance, every new heave is stimulated by translation, every allegedly great age is an age of translations, beginning with Geoffery Chaucer, translator of the *Romaunt of the Rose,* paraphraser of Virgil and Ovid, condenser of the old stories he had found in Latin, French and Italian (3).

Translations are an an excellent way for the scholar to study the development of poetry in a language:

> He (the reader) can study the whole local development, or, we had better say, the sequence of local fashions in British verse by studying the translations of the race ... since 1650 (4).

Knowledge of foreign languages is vital to education. All educated men should have the knowledge of at least one foreign language. In "How to Read" Pound makes a comparison with science:

> Modern science has always been multi-lingual and the good scientist would not be bothered to limit himself to one language (5).

We live in a world where languages and cultures are continually influencing each other:

> A master may be continually expanding his own tongue, rendering it fit to bear some change hitherto borne only by some other alien tongue ... While Proust is learning Henry James, preparatory to breaking through certain paste-board partitions, the whole American speech is churning and chugging, and every tongue is doing likewise (6).

What can and cannot be translated ? Pound's famous definition of three elements in poetry the translator can aim at gives us a clue. Firstly, there is *melopoeia*

> wherein the words are charged, over and above their plain meaning, with some musical quality, which directs the bearing or end of that meaning ... It is practically impossible to transfer or translate it from one language to another.

Secondly, there is *phanopoeia*

> which is the casting of images upon the imagination.

Thirdly, there is *logopoeia*,

> the dance of the intellect among words ... special habits of usage, of the context we *expec*t to find with the word, its usual concomitants of its known acceptances, and its ironical play (7).

Logopoeia does not translate, though it may be paraphrased. Sometimes an equivalent may be found and sometimes not.

Pound makes a strong attack on Robert Browning for attempting to transfer the patterns of Greek, its *logopoeia*, into English in his translation of Aeschylus. In "Early Translations of Homer" Pound comments:

> Inversions of sentence order in an uninflected language like English are not, simply and utterly *are not* any sort of equivalent for inversions and peturbations of order in a language inflected as Greek and Latin are inflected (8).

Pound finds the inverted word order of Browning's translation quite "unreadable".

> ...this man is Agamemnon,
> My husband, dead, the work of this right hand,here,
> Age, of a just artificer: so things are (9).

He generalises his criticism of English translators of Greek:

> It seems to me that English translators have gone wide in two ways, first in trying to keep every adjective, when obviously many adjectives in the original have only melodic value, secondly they have been deaved with syntax; have wasted time, involved their English, trying to evolve first a definite logical structure for the Greek and secondly to preserve it, *and all its grammatical relations* in English (10).

Pound is most virulent towards Milton:

> The quality of translations declined in measure as the translators ceased to be absorbed in the subject matter of their original. They ended in the "Miltonian" cliché; in the stock and stilted phraseology of the usual English verse as it has come down to us (11).

In Pound's concept of translation not everything in the original can be kept, and the syntax of the target language should not be influenced by that of the original language. One of the most important elements if that the translator should add his voice to that of the poet. Pound scholar Hugh Kenner describes Pound's concept of recreation:

> The same clairvoyant absorbtion of another world is presupposed; the English poet must absorb the ambience of the text into his blood before he can render it woth authority; and when he has done that, what he writes is a poem of his own following the contours of the poem before him (12).

Indeed, translation is central to Pound's work. George Steiner writes:

> The whole of Pound's work may be seen as an act of translation, as the appropriation to an idiom radically his own of a fantastic ragbag of languages, cultural legacies, historical echoes, stylistic models. "To consider Pound's original work and his translation separately," notes Eliot,"would be a mistake, a mistake which implies a greater mistake about the nature of translation". Pound has been the master jackdaw in the museum and scrap heap of civilisation, the courier between far places of the mind, the contriver of a chaotic patchwork of values which, on decisive occasion, and by some great gift of irascible love, fuse into strange coherence (13).

(ii) **Translation and the** *Cantos*

Use of fragments of other writers has been an important trend in twentieth-century writing. Indeed, two of the most important works of the twentieth-century, *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*, are both based to a large extent on direct or indirect references to other works. Pound's *Cantos* show the "jackdaw" element in Pound's creative process at work. Snippets of writers from many ages and cultures, sometimes whole poems in translation, paraphrase or in the original occur throughout the *Cantos*. Just to give a few examples (14): *Canto XX* opens with scraps of verse in the Provençal of Bernard de Ventadour and the Latin of Catullus. Most of *Canto XXXVI* is a translation of Guido Cavalcanti's *Donna mi Prega*. Quotations from Homer, Dante and Ovid frequently appear. *Canto XXXIX* draws directly on *The Odyssey*, Dante's *Paradiso* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. *Canto LII* contains the translation of a section of *The Chinese Book of Rites*. *Cantos LIII* to *LXI* translate from the *Histoire générale de la Chine ou Annales de cet empire* by the eighteenth century Jesuit scholar Père Joseph Anne-Marie de Moyriac de Mailla. *Canto LVI* draws on two poems by Li Po. *Canto LIX* quotes from the Latin of another Jesuit sinologist, Père Lacharne.

Frequently languages are juxtaposed:

Canto LXXVIII

Odysseus is the man who
"saw many cities of men and learnt their minds":
many men's manners videt et urbes
πολυμητισ
ce rusé personnage, Otis (15).

In addition, *Cantos LII - LXXI* and the *Pisan Cantos, LXXIV - LXXXIV*, contain frequent untranslated hieroglyphics.

What conclusions can we draw from this kind of translation ? Firstly, it is unconventional. We are used to seeing a translation as an individual unit, labelled as a "translation" with references to the writer of the original and the translator. Including referenceless translations as part of a greater whole breaks down the conventions of isolating languages into watertight compartments. One language, and therefore one culture, will mingle with another. The use of so many languages, references and quotations in such a way gives the *Cantos* much of their universality, though ironically it makes them less comprehensible. Their form shows us that Pound's views are not just limited to one culture, but can be applied to the entire human race. His references range from Confucius to Homer; from American banking to troubadour love; through English, French, Italian, Provençal, Greek, Latin, Chinese.

Another conclusion we can draw from this kind of translation is that Pound is returning to the translation of the age of Chaucer he admired so much. Like Chaucer and his contemporaries, he borrows, copies, translates, and adapts with little worry about references.

But what about the actual act of translation in the *Cantos* ? At times foreign works are quoted in the original, at times in translation. Does this have any significance ? I have discovered two possible views. In his essay *A Man of No Fortune*, Forrest Read suggests that translation is a light, a clarification.

> The message of Tiresias comes to Odysseus-Pound in *Canto XLVII*. We have noted that Circe spoke in *Canto XXXIX*, telling Odysseus he must seek advice from Tiresias before he could return home. We have noted further that Circe spoke in Greek and was then unintelligible. Now in *Canto XLVII* the Greek appears translated, signifying that the advice has been digested (16).

Donald W. Evans, in "Ezra Pound as Prison Poet", takes the view that leaving something untranslated is a way of obfuscating or hiding, and translating is an act of clarification. Writing on the *Pisan Cantos*, he says:

> The process includes a searching of the soul in which Pound habitually lapses into French to disguise what might otherwise seem like self-pity or unseemly emotion (17).

But does translation necessarily clarify ? Might it not disguise and hinder our comprehension even more ? Surely a translator may merely give us the illusion of having understood the original by bringing it into a language we know. The translator can always twist the original the way he wishes, and, if we don't understand the language in which the original was written, we are at his mercy. And of course, two translations of the same work can be completely different. In the *Cantos* Pound translates Cavalcanti's *Donna mi Prega* in *Canto XXXVI*. He had already made a translation of the poem in *Personae*. George Dekker comments on the difference between the two versions. The *Cantos* version is more solemn and more literal than the earlier version, At the same time the *Cantos* version is more difficult to understand:

> The translation into English is more obscure than the original in any version, and the "Partial Explanation" (in Pound's essay on Cavalcanti) contributes no light on the meaning...(18)

For Dekker the central quality which the translation communicates is the "impenetrability" of Cavalcanti's poem for the modern reader. Is not this "impenetrability" one of ther central themes of the *Cantos* ? How many readers,

even after prolonged study, can comprehend the mass of references and quotations? Pound himself points towards a deliberate obscurity:

> If we never write anything save what is already understood, the field of understanding will never be extended. One demands the right, now and again, to write for a few people with special interests and whose curiosity reaches into greater detail (19).

Dekker concentrates his argument around the "impenetrability" of the translation of *Donna mi Prega* in *Canto XXXVI*, but can we not extend his argument and say that translation in general in the *Cantos* emphasises this idea of "impenetrability" and difficulty of comprehension ? We need translations to understand many sections of the *Cantos*. But when these translations come along, rather than taking us to the heart of the original, they add another layer of indefiniteness , of mystery, as we cannot be sure of the proximity of the translation to the original. Indeed, as the *Cantos* progress, translation gives way to direct quotation, emphasising the problems of finding an adequate translation.

(iii) **Breaking the Pentameter**

Let us now move from the subtleties of translation in the *Cantos* to Pound's more obvious translations, remembering George Steiner's remarks, however, as there is no clear boundary between translation and original work in Pound's poetry.

In a letter to William Carlos Williams Pound wrote:

> Sometimes I use the rules of Spanish, Anglo-Saxon and Greek metric that are not common in the English of Milton's or Miss Austen's day (20).

Pound felt that English verse was over-dependent on the iambic pentameter and in order to "break the pentameter" he looked to metre and rhyme schemes from Old English (Anglo-Saxon) and non-English poetry. In *The Seafarer*, he translates the Anglo-Saxon poem into modern English but attempts to retain the original Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse. His translation begins:

> May I for my own self song's truth reckon
> Journey's jargon, how I in harsh days
> Hardship endured oft.
> Bitter breast-cares have I abided,
> Known on my keel many a care's hold,
> And dire sea-surge, and there I oft spent
> Narrow nightwatch nigh the ship's head
> While she tossed close to cliffs...(21)

Like most of Pound's translations,*The Seafarer* has been criticised for its large number of inaccuracies. Donald Davie quotes a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* on 25th June 1954 in which Kenneth Sisam says that Pound wrongly translates *steam* (it should be *seabird*) for the *stern* of a ship; *byrig* (*towns*) for berries; and, amongst others, *thurh* (*through, in*) for *tomb* (22).

But counting Pound's errors may be too facile a strategy. Old English scholar Michael Alexander suggests a more complex approach. He admits that as a translation in "the examination of the word" Pound's *Seafarer* is a non-starter (23) and is aware of the large number of quite basic errors. But a literal translation is not what Pound is aiming at. Alexander takes a second look at some of Pound's "errors". He translates

> wuniath tha wacran and thas woruld healdath,
> brucath thurh bisgo. Blaed is gehnaeged...

as

> Waneth the watch, but the world holdeth.
> Tomb hideth trouble. The blade is layed low.

But the real meaning of this passage is "the weaker men and possess this world; they enjoy it by means of their labour; honour is brought low..." (24). As mentioned above, *thurh* (*through*) was translated as *tomb*. Other mistakes were *wacran* (*feebler*) given as a form of *wacu* (*watch*) and *blaed* (*honour*) as *blade*. Yet in poetic terms the translation is successful. *Watch, tomb,* and *blade* sound short, rough and Anglo-Saxonic. *Blade* can even be seen as a synecdoche for heroic glory. Pound is much more concerned with reproducing the effect of being a seafarer than the exact meaning of every single word.

In defence of Pound's distance from the "original", we can say that the "original" is in itself an extended form of the Anglo-Saxon poem in which Christian elements were added by monks. Pound takes away these references and restores it to its original pagan state. And the feeling the poem gives us reflects the character of the poet/translator. We can see *The Seafarer* as one of the many personae for the young Pound, showing us his "restlessness, isolation, contempt for the comfortable, pride in self-reliance, belief in one's star, dreams of an ideal company" (25), an early twentieth century equivalent of the Anglo-Saxon lordless adventurer.

Pound uses the original to express his own feelings, making the original seafarer close to us and yet distant at the same time. To achieve this, the language of the poem must remain as near Old English as possible but at the same time be comprehensible to the modern reader. Pound attempts

> the minimum modernisation of the Old English to accomodate it to modern understanding ... He breaks the mould, gets beneath the reader's guard by his dislocation of conventional responses ... one is

> forced to consider the Old English not as notation but as actual speech, so refractory are its patterns. The pastness, the uncompromising difference of the past appears; and yet what it says is intelligible, dynamic, even compelling (26).

This is achieved through Pound's attempt to maintain the Anglo-Saxon rhythms and the value of the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary:

> Pound has written *wrecan* , *blead* , and *monath* into modern sentences, punning on their meanings with a cunning that subverts the steady one-to-one relationship with the original text that is expected of translation. The motive is perhaps a magical one, that the original virtue of the word should survive. This challenges the common idea that a translator should write what the original author would have written had he been alive today (27).

Certainly Pound's *Seafarer* has helped to revive interest in alliterative verse in English. T.S.Eliot remarked that it is

> perhaps ... the only successful piece of alliterative verse ever written in modern English (28).

Alliterative verse is nowadays the basis of much of the work of contemporary poets like Ted Hughes, George Macbeth, Thom Gunn and Seamus Heaney.

Pound's magpie mind found another very important picking in the Japanese *haiku* poem: a short poem of seventeen syllables in which an initial statement is qualified by a metaphor drawn from nature. One of Pound's most famous poems, *In a Station of the Metro,* follows this pattern, though the number of syllables is increased.

> The apparition of the faces in a crowd ;
> Petals on a wet black bough.

In *The Japanese Tradition in British and American Poetry,*Earl Miner states that this superpository form was the basis of a large number of poems or sections of poems of Pound's during his *imagisme* or vorticist period (30). *April, Gentildonna* , the" Chinese" poem *Liu Ch'e, Alba* and the comic piece *The Bath-Tub* are examples from *Lustra* (1916). In the *Cantos* this superpository form is frequently used: nature images qualify previous statements in the middle and at the end of *Canto XVII*, and at the end of *Cantos III, XXI* and *CXX. Canto XVII* ends

> Thither Borso, when they shot the barbed arrow at him,
> And Carmagnola, between the two columns,
> Sigismundo, after a wreck in Dalmatia.
> Sunset like a grasshopper flying (31)

A more common use of this technique in the *Cantos* is, according to Miner, "to focus the meaning of a number of lines in one sudden image" (32). He gives examples from *Cantos XI, XXXVI* and *XXIX*

> *Drift of weed in the bay :*
> She seking a guide, a mentor,
> He aspires to a career with honour
> To step in the tracks of his elders;
> a greater comprehension (33).

Miner greatly admires Pound's ability to adapt the *haiku* technique to English:

> The discovery of this technique in a poetic form written in a language he did not know is one of the insights of Pound's genius (34).

In his translations of the Provençal poet Arnaut Daniel, (*Canzoni of Ezra Pound* (1911)), whose poems were originally set to music, Pound introduces new patterns of rhyme into English. Augusto de Campos, in his Introduction to his translations of Arnaut Daniel and Raimbaur d'Aurenga, describes the different rhymes (35). The most common technique is that of *coblas dissolutas* -- the first line of one stanza rhymes with the first line of the second stanza: the second line rhymes with the second line and so on. For example, in poem XI, *En Brun Brisant Temps Braas*, the rhyme scheme is ABCDEFGH , ABCDEFGH, ABCDEFGH, etc. .

Five poems have rhymes which Augusto de Campos calls *semi-dissolutas*. These rhyme within the stanza and from one stanza to the next, e.g., poem VII is ABCDEEFGH, ABCDEEFGH, etc. . In poem XVIII, the *Sextina*, the *rimas dissolutas* change position from one stanza to the next -- the rhyme words, the same in every stanza, *intra, ongla, arma, verga, oncle, cambra,* move on one in each stanza -- ABCDEF, BCDEFA, CDEFAB, etc. . Three poems, I, III, and XVIII are *coblas singulares*. Every line of each stanza ends with the same rhyme. Thus poem I is AAAAAAAA, BBBBBBBB , etc. . In poem II there are *coblas doblas*: the same rhyme appears in each pair of stanzas and subsequently these rhymes change position -- AABBCDDC in the first two stanzas to BBDDCAAC in stanzas 3 and 4 and finally DDAACBBC in stanzas 5 and 6.

Now let us look at one of Pound's translations to see how he adapts Arnaut Daniel's rhyme scheme into English and tries to follow the sound of the Provençal. I have chosen the first three stanzas of poem VIII, which follows the *semi-dissoluta* pattern, with rhymes from one stanza to another and within the same stanza. I quote the first three stanzas:

Autet

Autet e bas entrels prims fuoills
Son nou de flors li ram eil renc
E noi ten mut bec ni gola
Nuills auzels, anz braia e chanta
Cadahus
En son us;
per joi qu'ai d'els e del tems
Chant, mas amors mi asauta
Quils motz ab lo son acorda

Lieu o grazisc e a mos huoills,
Que per lor conoissensam venc.
Jois, qu'adreich auci e fola
L'ira qu'ieu n'agui e l'anta,
Er va sus
Qui qu'en mus,
D'Amor don sui fis e frems;
C'ab lieis c'al cor m'azauta
Sui liatz ab ferma corda.

Merces, Amores, c'aras m'acuoills !
Tart fi mo, mas en grat m'o prenc,
Car si m'art dinz la meola
Lo fuocs non vuoill que s'escanta;
Mas pel us
Estauc clus
Que d'autrui joi fant greus gems
E pustell ai'en sa gauta
Cel c'ab lieie si desacorda.

Autet e bas entrels prims fuoills

Now high and low, where leaves renew,
Come buds on bough and spalliard pleach
And no beak nor throat is muted;
Auzel each in tune contrasted
Letteth loose
Wriblis spruce.
Joy for them and spring would set
Song on me, but Love assaileth
me and sets my words t'his dancing.

I thank my god and my eyes too,
since through them the perceptions reach,
Porters of joys that have refuted
Every ache and shame that I've tasted;
They reduce
Pains, and noose
Me in Amor's corded net.
Her beauty in me prevaileth
Till bonds seem but joys advancing.

My thanks, Amor, that I win through;
The long delays I naught impeach;
Though flame's in my marrow rooted
I'd not quench it, well't hath lasted,
Burns profuse
Held recluse
Lest knaves know our hearts are met,
Murrain on the mouth that aileth,
So he finds her not entrancing (36).

The sense of the English is difficult to follow, not helped by obscure archaisms like *wriblis* and *spalliard pleach*. However, Pound deliberately concentrated on the melodic element to the exclusion of semantic correctness:

> (The troubadors') triumph is, as I have said, in an art somewhere between literature and music; if I have succeeded in indicating some of the properties of the latter, I have also let the former go by the board (37).

(iv) **Translating the Classics**

This section will concentrate on *Homage to Sextus Propertius* and *The Women of Trachis*. In these translations Pound does not concentrate on the sound or metrical qualities of the original but rather alters the author's vantage point to such an extent that we almost have a new poem.

In his essay "Date Line" (38), Pound lists translation as one of the forms of criticism. Unfortunately, he never elaborates on this bare statement and it is to American critic R.P. Blackmur that we must turn for the statement to be filled out. Speaking of Pound's *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, he says:

> what the translation emphasizes, what it excludes, and in what it differs in relation to the Latin -- is as necessary to appreciate as the craftsmanship (39).

In his *Homage to Sextus Propertius* Pound translates, or often paraphrases, passages taken from Books II and III of Sextus Propertius' elegies. These passages often do not follow the Latin order. Says Blackmur:

> He arranges, omits, condenses and occasionally adds to the Latin for his own purposes: of homage, of new rendering and of criticism (40).

Here Pound takes on a new mask, as he had done in *A Lume Spento* (1908) and *Personae* (1909) , where he wrote poems in the style of many major contemporary and late nineteenth century poets. *Le Fraisne* was written in the style of Yeats; *Anima Sola* and *Ballad for Gloom*, Swinburne; *Oltre la Torre: Rolando* and *Ballad Rosalind*, William Morris; *Fair Helena, by Rackham* and *Camaraderie*, Rossetti and Browning. Pound uses the Propertius mask to give his view on the world in 1917. He wrote that his *Homage to Sextus Propertius*

> presents certain emotions as vital to men faced with the infinite and ineffable imbecility of the British Empire as they were to Propertius some centuries earlier, when, faced with the infinite and ineffable imbecility of the Roman Empire. These emotions are given largely, but not entirely, in Propertius' own terms (41).

Like Propertius, Pound stresses the relationship of the artist to an unappreciative society, contrasting the artist's private world of beauty with the demands of society, though perhaps Pound gives less emphasis thanPropertius to his concern for his relationship with his mistress and more to that of the role of the responsible artist in society, as can be found in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920).

J.P.Sullivan emphasises this element in Pound's *Homage to Propertius*:

> The stress on the relation of the artist to society, the vindication of the private poetic morality against public compulsions, whether these be the demands of government or promises of fame and fortune, is what Pound saw as the important element in Propertius and this is the critical burden of the *Homage* (42).

A number of critics have emphasised the language of Pound's *Homage*. R.P. Blackmur compares the opening in the original in H.E. Butler's prose translation and in Pound's version.

Propertius:

> a valeat Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis !
> exactus tenur pumice versus est --
> quo me Fama levat terra sublimis et a me
> mata coronatis Musa triumphat equis,
> et mecum curru parvi vecantur Amores
> scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas.

quid frustra missis in me certatis habendis ?
non data ad Masas Currere lata via.

Butler:

... Away with the man who keeps Phoebus tarrying among the weapons of war ! Let verse run smoothly, polished with fine pumice. 'Tis by such verse as this that fame lifts me aloft from earth, and the Muse, my daughter, triumphs with garlanded steeds, and tiny loves ride with me in my chariot, and a throng of writers follow my wheels. Why strive ye against me vainly with loosened reins ? Narrow is the path that leadeth to the Muses.

Pound:

Out-weariers of Apollo will, as we know, continue their Martian generalities.
We have kept our erasers in order,
A new-fangled chariot follows the flower-hung horses;
A young muse with young loves clustered about her ascends with me into the ether...
And there is no high road to the Muses (43).

Pound's version is clearly more modern and colloquial, with terms like *new-fangled* and references like *We have kept our erasers in order;* it also does not follow the original word for word. Butler's version is more literal. *Narrow is the path that leads to the Muses* is much closer to *non data ad Musas currere lata via* than *And there is no high road to the Muses.* Blackmur finds Butler's version stilted and awkward, mixing different archaic styles in an attempt to create a Latinness. He praises the greater directness of Pound's *Homage*; he says that it has a "tough elegance", which is great enough to "surpass what might have been the insuperable difficulties of a loose metrical form and a highly conventional subject matter" (44). For Blackmur, this, then, is the critical act Pound performs in the *Homage* -- not so much a change of emphasis in the content, but a strengthening of the language to give it a twentieth century economy and hardness and to make it more appealing to the modern reader.

In his second book on Pound, *Pound*, in the Fontana Modern Masters series, Donald Davie looks at the *Homage* from a rather different angle. The language used is not particularly modern or sharp or forceful. Rather than being a model of how to translate,

it is a deliberate model of how not to ! ... it deliberately and consistently incorporates mistranslations ... (45)

The kind of mistranslations are those of the *babu*, the native who attempts to ape, usually unsuccessfully, the colonial culture. Davie gives a number of examples both of vocabulary and of syntax:

> Death why tardily come ?
> Have you contemplated Juno's Pelasgian temples ?
> Sailor , of winds; a plowman, concerning his oxen;
> Soldier, the ennumeration of wounds, the sheep-feeder, of ewes (46);

As the Indian *babu* adapts Englishisms to his own native speech, so the English *babus* trained to rule the Empire from their Public Schools where Latin and Greek were the most important subjects studied and where Classical values were the most respected, adapted Latinisms, like those Pound uses, to their own speech and writing. The strength of the connection between 1917 Britain and Ancient Rome is crystallised in the style of language that Pound uses:

> Thus it appears that by wholly transposing "imperialism" into language, into the texture of style ... Pound has effected a far more wounding and penetrating critique of imperialism in general than he could have done by fabricating consciously a schematic correspondence between himself and Propertius, the Roman Empire and the British (47).

Homage to Sextus Propertius sparked off considerable criticism from Latin scholars, who found it hopelessly inaccurate "as a translation". Replying to such an attack by Chicago Latin Professor, W.G. Hale, Pound states that he is not attempting a translation, "let alone literal translation. My job was to bring a dead man to life". He accuses Hale of being "an example of why Latin poets are not read, wrapping (Propertius) in verbosity, ignoring English and bowdlerising such expressions as *virgo tacta* , giving *my lady touched my words*, whereas Pound gives *devirginated young ladies* (48). By contrast, Pound's translations are full of life and energy. Blackmur writes:

> Readers who have consulted the classics only in metrical translation, must have often been struck by the commonplaces of great poets. Most poetry is on commonplace themes, amd the freshness, what the poet supplies, is in the language ... it is the freshness of Mr. Pound's language ... that makes his translations excellent poetry (49).

Pound's *Women of Trachis* has this similar critical element. The emphasis of Pound's adaptation of Sophocles' tragedy is on the unity of the Greek world. Heracles' cry:

> SPLENDOUR,
> IT ALL COHERES

is capitalised and a footnote is added: "This is the key phrase for which the play exists" (50). Also, the role of Deianeira is given less importance. English classicist H.A. Mason believes that "Pound emphasises the male principle in heaven and earth, in father and in Son, and has understressed the female principle in the Wife and the Goddess of Love" (51).

The same critic puts forwards a strong argument for the positive values of Pound's translation. Pound has translated *Women of Trachis* into "something", giving a coherent view of the ancient Greek world through modern eyes. This is infinitely better than the dull "literal" translations, accurate prose paraphrases which "play safe" but which miss the poetic qualities and dramatic tension: "When such translations are offered without apology, there is a presumption that the translator found the original as dull as we find his translation" (52). The only way to translate is creatively: "Am I right in contending that to make any sense of the original is to take creative decisions, and to refuse to take them is to betray incapacity to face Greek poetry or the want of necessary imagination ?" (53) If the translator does not bring himself, his relationship with his own society, "his own sense of tragedy in modern life" (54) to the original, the result will be artificial, weak and flaccid (55).

(v) **The Chinese Poems**

A common form of contemporary translation of poetry is translation in collaboration. A practising poet will translate together with a specialist in the language he is translating from or make a "poem" from the language specialist's literal translation. *The Oxford Book of Verse in English Translation* (56) contains a number of twentieth century translations in collaboration, mostly from lesser known languages: Persian, Hungarian, Polish, Icelandic and Russian. In Brazil we have seen Augusto and Haroldo de Campos collaborating with Russian Professor Boris Schnaiderman to produce *Maiakovski: Poemas* (57) and *Poesia Russa Moderna* (58). Among Pound's translations, there are reworkings of Indian poems already translated into English and Egyptian poems translated into Italian. But his most famous reworkings are his Chinese poems. In 1912 the widow of sinologist Ernest Fenellosa gave Pound her husband's manuscript notebooks. These contained translations of Noh plays, poems of Confucius, and the Cathay poems, a collection of Chinese poems from the second to tenth centuries, most of which were by the fifth century poet, Li Po. The poems which Pound made from Fenellosa's manuscripts, some of which apppear as extracts in the *Cantos* , have been widely praised. One of the most famous of the *Cathay* (1915) poems is *The Beautiful Toilet.*

Blue, blue, is the grass about the river
And the willows have overflowed the close garden.
And within, the mistress, in the midmost of her youth
White, white of face, hesitates, passing the door.
Slender, she puts forth a slender hand.

> And she was a courtesan in the old days
> And she has married a sot,
> Who now goes drunkenly out
> And leaves her too much alone (59).

For Hugh Kenner, Pound is "amazingly convincing at making the Chinese poet's world his own" (60). Charles Tomlinson praises the translation of the extract from the Chinese Book of Rites which appears in *Canto LII*, where Pound "gives us in magnificent processions rhythms something English and something irreducibly foreign and distant" (61). Ford Madox Ford shares this opinion: "The poems in *Cathay* are things of a supreme beauty. What poetry should be, that they are. And if a new breath of imagery and handling can do anything for our poets, that new breath these poems bring..."(62).

As Tomlinson remarks, the *Cathay* poems contain a distance and strangeness yet seem homely and near. Poems about parting, loneliness, separation, yearning for past youth, beauty and innocence are themes very appropriate to the times of the First World War. As in *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, experience of war finds reflection in a distant past literature.

May we not be just a little suspicious of the almost universal praise of *Cathay*? Can we not ask what right critics have to judge a translation of an original they don't understand ? The critics mentioned above all praise the bringing over of a foreign exotic unknown culture into English. George Steiner differs, believing that Pound's translations from the Chinese, as much as those of Arthur Waley and those of Judith Gautier into French, share the same simplified conventional view:

> the more remote the linguistic-cultural source, the easier it is to achieve a summary penetration and transfer of stylized, codified markers (63).

The fact that there was no established canon of Chinese poetry in English and no pre-conceived ideas of what Chinese poetry should be like in English made it possible for Pound to "invent" Chinese poetry in English, to borrow the well-known phrase of T.S. Eliot (64). Steiner argues that when the languages in contact in a translation have had much more contact, when the characteristics of the languages are common property, when the cultural norms of the other culture are known, successful translations are much more difficult to achieve. "Translucencies are much more difficult at close quarters" (65). A *Cathay* from French might sink into commonplace and cliché.

Perhaps the best adjudicator is Professor of Chinese, Wai-lim Yip:

> One can easily excommunicate Pound from the forbidden city of Chinese Studies but it seems clear that in his dealings with *Cathay*,

> even when he is given only the barest details, he is able to get into the central concerns of the original author by what we may perhaps call a kind of clairvoyance ... (no other translation) has assumed so interesting and unique a position as *Cathay* in the history of English translation of Chinese poetry (66).

Pound returned to Chinese poetry some forty years later when, after learning some Chinese, he translated *The Classic Anthology Defined by Confucius*. Here we find him using very different techniques for each poem he translates. No. 145 sounds distinctly Elizabethan:

> Marsh bank, lotus rank
> and a ladye;
> Heart ache and to lie awake
> and a-fevered.
> Marsh edge, valerian in sedge
> and a ladye;
> Hard head she hath.
> I lie a-bed
> afflicted.
> Marsh bank, lotus rank
> a ladye,
> Straight as an altar stone her
> loveliness,
> I lie in restlessness
> all the night
> comfortless (67).

No. 187 seems hillbilly:

> Yaller bird, yaller bird, let my corn
> alone,
> Yaller bird, let my crawps alone,
> These folks here won't let me eat,
> I wanna go back whaar I can meet
> the folks I used to know at home,
> I got a home an' I wanna git
> goin'(68).

No. 117 reminds me of a negro spiritual:

> Oh, the pods keep a sproutin'
> upon the pepper tree,
> The sprouts keep a risin'
> and the big pods hangin' down,

the pods keep a growin'
For a strong man on his own (69).

No. 246 has distinct echoes of Burns:

Tough grow the rushes, oh !
No passing kine breaks down
their clumsy wads, and blades so glossy growin'.
Our brothers all be here at call
assembled as to rule
wherefore lay down the mat, the mat
and bring the old man his stool (70).

Comparing Pound's translations from the Chinese with those of Arthur ey, Donald Davie says that Waley takes it for granted that the translator is a lerniser -- he will use a modern idiom when translating from a past idiom as :h as when translating from a contemporary idiom. By contrast, when translating alcanti, Pound looks for the most appropriate English idiom. For example, when slating Cavalcanti, Pound asks himself:

> In what period of English sensibility, as we have it recorded and dated for us in extant literary monuments from our past, were Englishmen nearest to entertaining these perceptions ... ? (71)

To translate Cavalcanti, Pound uses "a synthetic pastiche based on a similar period of the English past"(72). Thus we can see *The Classic Anthology as Defined by Confucius* as a paradigm for the rest of Pound's translations. With each translation Pound must choose not only the most appropriate English idiom but also the particular tone he will take. There is no single idiom or tone to do general duty. The Provençal translations from Arnaut Daniel concentrate purely on the musical qualities of language; the *babu* Davie considers characteristic of *Homage to Sextus Propertius* is highly ironical; *The Women of Trachis* is modern and slangy; the modern idiom brings the distant references of *Cathay* nearer; and the "adjusted" Anglo-Saxon of *The Seafarer* takes the modern reader back to the Anglo-Saxon world. Davie believes Pound's attempt to find a suitable idiom (and I would like to continue to add "tone") for each work translated is in complete conflict with the view that "each generation must translate the Classics anew", (see Dryden, above, p.24), that the contemporary idiom is the most appropriate for any translation.

(vi) **Pound and Shelley**

The centrality of translation to Pound's work may be thrown into clearer relief by comparison with the translations and comments on translation of Shelley. In total contrast to the German Romantics, translation was not given great importance by the English Romantics; of the main Romantic poets only Shelley translated extensively. But despite his wide range of translations from Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, German and French, Shelley always considered translation a peripheral activity. In *A Defence of Poetry* (1821) Shelley describes the creative gift, the force of the imagination, which is poetry. But translation can never capture this. It is something second hand, far removed from the full creative force of life:

> it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower -- and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel (73).

Timothy Webb, in his study of Shelley's translations, *The Violet in the Crucible*, paraphrases this passage:

> the attempt to transmute poetry from one language to another is inevitably doomed to failure. This notion that poetry cannot be transferred from one language to another is closely linked to Shelley's belief that poetry was essentially as organic and natural as a flower. The particular beauty of a given flower cannot be recreated -- it can only be imitated (74).

Shelley always felt that a translation, however good it might be , would always be an inadequate copy of the original. Writing of his own version of scenes from Goethe's *Faust*:

> I feel how imperfect a representation, even with all the licence I assume to figure to myself how Göthe (sic) wd. (sic) have written in English, my words convey (75).

Only a translation in a different medium might approach the feeling of the original. Of the etchings by Moritz Retzsch in an English version of *Faust* Shelley remarked:

> What etchings those are! I am never satisfied with looking at them. I feel it is the only sort of translation of which *Faust* is susceptible (76).

By contrast, to translate *Faust* into another language will only be to put a "grey veil" over it; the translation will produce only an "imperfect shadow" of the original (77).

Translation is thus relegated to a supporting role in the creative process, but one which does have considerable importance. Translation disciplines Shelley's

mind, gives him ideas which may be subsequently filled out, and acts as a way of keeping his creative faculties "ticking over" while waiting for a moment of true poetic inspiration. It keeps the uninspired poet from despair. In 1818 he writes:

> I am employed just now having little better to do, in translating into my fainting & inefficent periods the divine eloquence of Plato's *Symposium* (78).

Shortly afterwards he writes:

> I have lately found myself totally incapable of original composition. I employed my mornings, therefore, in translating the *Symposium*. (79)

Webb strikes a parallel with William Cowper, whose translations were impelled by "a mind that abhorred a vacuum as its chief bane" (80). Cowper's cousin J.Johnson remarked that the progress of Cowper's *Iliad* "was singularly medicinal to his mind" (81).

Webb devotes large sections of his book to describing the influence of Shelley's translations on his original work. He summarises the influence as follows:

> Shelley's oral translation of *Prometheus Bound* was probably a major stimulus towards the conception of *Prometheus Unbound;* the *Hymn to Mercury* inspired *The Witch of Atlas* and considerable portions of *With a Guitar, to Jane*; Dante's *Convito* inspired portions of *Epipsychidion*, as did Shelley's Italian translation of parts of his own *Prometheus*; Plato's Asher epigram was important both for *Adonais* and for *The Triumph of Life*; Bion's *Lament for Adonais* was the basis of *Adonais*; Shelley's reading and translation of Dante influenced the versification and ideas of *The Triumph of Life* (82).

Tied to the more formal framework of translation, Shelley was able to tame his volatility. As Thomas Jefferson Hogg writes in his biography of Shelley:

> he must be tied up fast to something of a firmer nature ... he always required a prop (83).

Finally, translation is an exercise in accuracy and detail. Webb refutes the traditionally held belief that Shelley was careless in composition by quoting Hogg:

> he had rarely applied himself as strenuously to conquer all the other difficulties of his art, as he patiently laboured to penetrate the mysteries of metre in the state wherein it exists entire and can alone be attained -- in one of the classical languages (84).

And from examining Shelley's manuscripts Webb states that Shelley often made careful revisions of his translations. Webb believes that the greater clarity of Shelley's latter work may have been due the the disciplining influence of translation.

So Pound and Shelley are at opposing ends of our spectrum of translators. For Shelley, the Romantic, waiting and longing for the moment of ecstatic creation when the poet rules the world, translation must always be at one remove from the source. It can be a useful activity or pastime, but little more. But for Pound, *the craftsman, or , to use the label Pound gave to Cavalcanti -- "il miglior fabbro" -- for* Pound himself (85), translation is all-important. Like the sculptor or the wood-carver, Pound chips and moulds, taking advantage of his long years of familiarirty with foreign forms and ideas, to build a poem.

(vii) Pound, Arnold and the Victorians, and Translation after Pound

Further light can be shed on Pound if we examine Victorian attitudes to literary translation and compare Victorian translations of poetry with contemporary translations.

Following the vogue for recreating the medieval in all arts, typical Victorian translations of poetry archaize in an attempt to produce a deliberately distant and antique atmosphere. Two of the best-known Victorian translators are Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), whose translations from the German used elaborate Germanic constructions, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), who translated medieval Italian poets in archaizing forms. Hugh Kenner explains that the nineteenth century wanted

> to savor the romance of *time*. (Whatever) antiquarian passions ... admired was set at a great distance ... Such sentiments were not reserved for a few connoisseurs. People with 2/6 a month to spend could buy the *Morte d'Arthur* as the installments appeared, with Aubrey Beardsley designs modelled on Morris's to encumber it with a neurasthenic remoteness, thought "medieval". And Homer ? *Very* remote, to represent the feel of his text ..., his Victorian translators addressed Biblical obfuscations ... And meaning gives way to glamour (86).

Such remote artificial langue was coined "Wardour Street" English, after the London street which housed theatrical costumiers specialising in period costume. In possibly the only interesting work on literary translation to come from nineteenth century Britain, Matthew Arnold, in *On Translating Homer*, attacks this archaizing tradition, especially that of the translation of Homer's *Iliad* by F.H. Newman. Arnold says that Newman has tried

> to retain every peculiarity of the original, so far as he is able, with greater care the more foreign it may be (87).

He accuses Newman of trying to make his vocabulary as much "Saxo-Norman" as possible and "as little as possible" near "the elements thrown into our language by classical learning" (88).

Newman, in trying to be too close to the original, by reproducing everything, including Homer's epithets, has been unable to reproduce the general effect the *Iliad* had on its Greek audience. Newman's translation gives Homer an antiquarian rather than the impression of noble directness it should have on contemporary readers. Rather than taking the original as a basis for a word-for-word translation, the translator should take the original as a

> basis on which to rear a poem that shall affect our countrymen as the original may be coinceived to have affected its natural hearers (89).

This statement seems remarkably close to Pound"s intentions in his *Homage to Sextus Propertius* (see above, p.69). Yet Pound was aware that he was seeing ancient Rome with eyes belonging to 1914. Arnold, in his recipe for the ingredients the translator must put into the 1850's translation, seems unaware that he is seeing Homer through a peculiarly nineteenth century lens. He recommends that the prospective translator of Homer reproduce his "rapidity", his "plainness and directness", and his "nobility in expression and matter of thought" (90). From a vantage point nearly 150 years later, these qualities seem to be very much those on which nineteenth century Public School education, in which Homer and Greek played such an important part, and on which Arnold had such a large influence, were based.

This point is reinforced by the metre Arnold proposes. Newman uses a metre similar to that of the English ballad metre -- each line consists of a tetrameter and a trimeter separated by a caesura. Arnold considers this metre too folksy and forcibly makes out his case for the uncommon English metre, the hexameter. The short passage he translates substiantiates the opinion given above -- Homer becomes a pompous and stately Victorian grand seigneur.

> So shone forth, in front of Troy, by the bed of Xanthus,
> Between that and the ships, the Trojans' numerous fires.
> In the plain there were kindled a thousand fires: by each one
> There sat fifty men, in the ruddy light of the fire:
> By their chariots stood the steeds, and champed the white barley
> While their masters sat by the fire , and waited for Morning (91).

In *Digging for Treasure: Translation After Pound*, Ronnie Apter makes a close study of pre- and post- Poundian translators of poetry and attempts to show that Pound gave greater flexibility, energy and verbal resources to translation. She (sic) compares translations of Martial by the contemporary American translator, Dudley

Fitts, and the Victorian translator, James Cranstoun. Fitts looks for analogies to Martial's epigrams. He says:

> Nothing is more inert than a witticism that has to be explained. Topicality, the recondite allusion, special jargon -- these are matters that can not be handled ... in a ... footnote without inviting the embrace of death (92).

Fitts updates. He modernises methods of transport: *cars* replace *mules*.

> Pete, I admit I was late. It took me 10 hours to cover a mile.
> It was not my fault, but yours:
> Why did you lend me your car ?

Contemporary equivalents are found for the Roman references:

> Local Products Preferred
> Abigail, you don't hail from La Ville
> Lumiere, or Martinique, or even Quebec, P.
> Q., but from plain old Essex County;
> Cape Ann, believe me, for ten
> generations (93).

French-speaking cities are substituted for Greek-speaking cities, Abigail for the Roman Laelia, and all other references are pure American.

The Victorian translator Cranston dutifully reproduces each proper name in Martial. He begins one translation:

> To boast, Charmenian, is your practice
> That you're from Corinth -- now, the fact is
> Disputed not by one or other --
> But why, for heaven's sake, call me Brother --
> Me born in Celteberia's (sic) land,
> A citizen from Tagus' strand (94)

Apter states:

> Cranstoun smakes it clear that Corinth was not far from Celteberia, but not that Celteberia was in Spain; nor does he give any hint of the Roman stereotypes of the Greek and Spaniard underlying Martial's question. Greeks were supposed to be overcivilized and ineffective; Spaniards, aggressively masculine and energetic administrators (95).

Following Pound's example, Fitts looks for contemporary analogies, whereas faithfulness to the original is paramount for the Victorian translator.

Likewise, contemporary translators look for analogies for puns. Translating the Provençal poet Peire Vidal's *A per pauc de chantar no. m lais*, Paul Blackburn attempts to introduce an analogous effect in:

> Dels reis d'Espanha.m tenh a fais,
> Quàr tan volon guerra mest lor ...

(It troubles me about the king of Spain, because they so desire war among themselves.)

Vidal complains that the Spanish kings fight each other instead of the Moors. *Fais* means *burden, weight, trouble*; *a fais* means *together, as one; faire fais* means *to trouble, to make sick*; and *tener a fais* means *to take for, to understand as*. Several of these meanings are contained in Blackburn's

The kings of Spain
give me a general pain (96).

Apter also believes contemporary translators have considerably more sensitivity to Latin figures of speech than their Victorian counterparts. She compares two translations of Horace's *Ode 1.4* -- the modern translation of James Clancy with that of Thomas Charles Baring's translation from the last century.

Solvitur acris liems grata vice veris et Favoni trahuntque siccas machinae carinas ...

(At the pleasing return of spring and the west winds, harsh winter thaws and cranes draw forth the dried-out keels (97).)

Baring translated:

Sharp winter melts with spring's delicious birth; The ships glide down on rollers to the sea ...

Clancy translates:

Winter's fists unclench at the touch of spring and western breezes,
dried-out keels are drawn to the waves ...(98)

While Baring "follows usual Victorian practice by choosing the primary and most general meanings", "Clancy's translation exemplifies the new tendency to distill the more particular meaning of the metaphor". His "winter's fists unclench" gives an equivalent of the multivalent menaing of *solvere, to melt*, with ships "to set or unfurl sails", and here "relaxing from austerity and tension" (99).

So we can see that Pound has liberated translation in a number of ways. The modern translator has enormous freedom of form. Louis Kelly mentions that "organic form", a verse form developing from the peculiarities of the work to be translated and not one that will follow an accepted pattern, in verse translation, was very rare until the twentieth century (100). Before, translators used either analogical or mimetic forms. Thus the Augustans translated Homer into heroic couplets and Matthew Arnold proposed the mimetic form of the English hexameter. In "The Lively Conventions of Translation" (101), contemporary Classical translator William Arrowsmith comments on the different English form he uses within the same translation. Different parts of Aristophanes' comedies may be translated by different metres. And the variety of contemporary translation is underlined when Arrowsmith compares his more formal version with the more informal free version of Dudley Fitts.

The contemporary translator may also choose where to place himself on the "faithfulness to the original" scale, which ranges from Nabokov's total literalism to Lowell's *Imitations* (see below p.94). And, like Pound, the translator may concentrate on the musical qualities, or the irony, or look at the text to be translated through another text. Yet despite many successful translations into contemporary idiom, in few cases have we attempts at finding an idiom which is not contemporary. This is, unfortunately, one area in which Pound has not been emulated. Often we find a hybrid mixture. The following extract of Paul Blackburn's translation of the Provençal *Per fin' amor m'esjauzira*, attributed to Cercamon, contains an unhappy hotch-potch of modern and mock medieval idioms:

> true love
> warms my heart
> no matter if he run hot or cold.
> My thoughts attract on her always,
> but can't know yet
> if I can finish the job, stay
> firm with joy, that is
> if she wants to keep me hers
> Which my heart most desires ... (102)

To conclude, we can attempt to fit Pound's translations on to Dryden's *metaphrase, paraphrase, imitation* categories described in Chapter 2 and the German - French opposition described in Chapter 3. Many of Pound's translations fit into Dryden's category of *imitation* -- *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, *The Seafarer*, the Chinese translations. Indeed, it is for this kind of *Make It New* translation that Pound is best known. And to these *imitation* type translations Pound adds his own special element -- the importance of the translator. No longer is he following in the footsteps of the original or aspiring to be his friend; instead, the translator is dominating the translation, putting himself into the translation.

Yet not all of Pound's translations put a new angle on the original. His translations of Arnaut Daniel introduce new rhyme forms into English; *The Seafarer* reintroduces alliterative verse into the language; and he also brings the Japanese *haiku* into English. These translations have much in common with Schleiermacher's second type of translation -- that which follows the form of the original. But there is one important difference between Pound and Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher believes that German morphology, syntax and rhyme should adapt foreign forms through translation. Pound believes that only foreign rhyme schemes should be introduced into English. He condemns Browing for copying Greek syntax (see above pp. 59-60).

Also important to Pound's ideas on translation are the place of translation in a literature and the idea of translation as a creative process. Unlike the English Romantics, who saw translations peripheral to creation, a mere sharpening of the pencils, Pound sees translation as central to the creative process and central to the development of literatures. Creativity is not a God-given gift that descends from above but the result of rigorous training and practice. And the best way for the poet to practice and achieve mastery of his craft is for him to translate. Translation is also at the heart of changes and developments in literatures. It is impossible to cut one literature off from another. Translations will always ensure that new styles and ideas will be transferred from one literature to another.

So, Pound brought translation to the centre of the twentieth century literary stage. As Chapter 5 will show, his ideas have been followed and copied by a large number of contemporary translators. In Chapter 7 we shall find a number of Pound's ideas on the centrality of translation to the study of literature formulated in greater detail by present day scholars of translation. And in Chapter 8 we shall see that here in Brazil, the Campos brothers have adopted Pound as one of their principal mentors.

References

The quotation on the title page is from *Shame* , Salaman Rushdie. Picador, London, 1984. P.29.
The Chinese hieroglyphic is from *Canto LIII:*

Tching prayed on the mountain and
wrote MAKE IT NEW
on his bath tub
Day by day make it new

The Cantos of Ezra Pound , Canto LIII, p. 10-11. For complete references see Note 15.

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4. Ibid., p.35.

5. Ibid., p.36.

6. Ibid., p.36.

7. Ibid., p.25.

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10. Ibid., p.273.

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13. *Penguin Book of Modern Verse Translation* , Introduction by George Steiner. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1966. P.32.

14. This paragraph follows *Ezra Pound, the Poet as Sculptor*, Donald Davie. Oxford University Press, New York, 1964. P. 133, p.160.

15. *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*. Faber & Faber, London, 1964. P.512.

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19. *Canto XCVI*. In *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, p.691.

20. In *Penguin Critical Anthologies: Ezra Pound*, op.cit.."To break the pentameter, that was the first heave" comes from. *Canto 81. The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, op. cit. , p.518.

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54. Ibid., p.307.

55. Recently a Pound translation of Sopholces' *Elektra* has been discovered at Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. *A Chronicle of Higher Education*, USA, December 16, 1987, carries an article on the world's première of Pound's *Elektra* in New York and comments on the play by a number of "experts". Interesting is the parallel the article makes between Elektra, a captive in her house in Mycenae, considered mad as she believed Orestes still lived, and Pound, confined in St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital, Washington, where he wrote *Elektra* in collaboration with literary history scholar Rudd Fleming in the mid nineteen fifties. Of further interest are the experts' comments : Hugh Kenner: "There's a tendency for a certain kind of major poet, if he gets into severe personal trouble, to turn to Greek tragedy. Pound researcher Richard Reid suggests Elektra may have been just an experiment for *Women of Trachis*. Opinions similar to those of H.A. Mason on *Women of Trachis* (see above p.72) were made about the language of Elektra. Tony Harrison, English poet and translator of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*: "Pound had found a marvelous way of unlocking the directness of Greek drama". Hugh Kenner again: "Bits of Sophocles sit "right there as a sort of benchmark" and assume a ritualistic quality". Ms. Carey Perloff, director of the première, said that, in contrast to the Greek tragedy, "in Pound's version, the characters do not speak the same language; they speak several, and poetry is reserved for Elektra ... she expresses some kind of vision on Pound's part -- of Western civilisation disintegrating, with Elektra representing its highest level, unable to communicate top other levels".

A New Directions publication of Pound's *Elektra* is planned.

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83. Ibid., p.46, taken from T.J. Hogg, *The Life of Shelley*, quoted from *The Life of P. Bysshe Shelley as Comprised in the Life of Shelley by Thomas Jefferson Hogg, The Recollections of Shelley and Byron by Edward John Trelawny, Memoirs of Shelley by Thomas Love Peacock*, ed. Humbert Wolfe, 2 vols., 1933. Vol I , p.301.

84. *The Violet in the Crucible*, op. cit. , p.45. In *The Life of P. Bysshe Shelley as Comprised...* , op. cit. , Vol. I, p.134.

85. "Il miglior fabbro" originally comes from Dante's *Purgatorio* , xxvi, 117. Dante used it in order to praise the superiority of Arnaut Daniel to all his rivals. In 1938, answering a critic of Pound, T.S. Eliot expanded on this tribute: "the phrase, not only as used by Dante, but as quoted by myself, had a precise meaning. I did not mean to imply that Pound was only that; but I wished at that moment to know the technical mastery and critical ability manifest in his own work, which had also done so much to turn *The Waste Land* from a jumble of good and bad passages into a poem". The two poets were in correspondence in 1921-2, when Pound set out detailed advice and suggested extensive cuts to *The Waste Land*. Eliot recalled in 1946 that the "sprawling, chaotic poem" left Pound's hands "reduced to about half its size". *The Waste Land* was first published without the dedication to Pound. Eliot added these words in January 1923, when he inscribed a presentation copy for his fellow poet, and they were placed before the poem when *The Waste Land* was reprinted in 1925.

This information comes from *A Student's Guide to the Selected Poems of T. S. Eliot*, B.B. Southam. Faber & Faber, London, 1968. P.73.

86. *The Pound Era*, Hugh Kenner. Faber & Faber, London, 1972. P.24.

87. *On Translating Homer* (1861), Matthew Arnold. George Routledge, London, no date. P.2. This volume contains Arnold's original essay, Newman's reply, "Homeric Translation in Theory and Practice" , and Arnold's further reply, "Last Words on Translating Homer".

88. Ibid., p.6.

89. Ibid., p.2.

90. Ibid., p.10.

91. Ibid., p.99.

92. *Digging for Treasure: Translation After Pound*, op. cit., p.111-2.

93. Ibid., p.112.

94. Ibid., p.112.

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98. Ibid., p. 121.

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101. "The Lively Conventions of Translations", William Arrowsmith, in , *The Craft and Context of Translation,* ed. William Arrowsmith and Roger Shattuck. Univ. Texas, Ausitn, 1961.

102. *Digging for Treasure: Translation After Pound*, op. cit., , p.51.

CHAPTER 5

OTHER TWENTIETH CENTURY TRANSLATORS ON TRANSLATION

With poesie to open poesie.
George Chapman

Poetry is what gets lost in translation.
Robert Frost

Chapter 5 --- Other Twentieth Century Translators on Translation

This chapter will look at interviews, articles on comments on translation by other twentieth century practicing translators and will show that the overwhelming majority of ideas put forward are a repetition or reworking of the ideas of Dryden and the Augustans and Pound. Remarkably little new or original has been said by this group.

(i) The Translator's Voice

Pound's translations are distinctly Pound. the translator's voice echoes through his work. The old is made anew -- *Make It New* . Is this the ideal of translation of poetry , or should the translator try to remain as anonymous as possible ? The problem is put clearly by Renato Poggioli:

> Should he lean toward the splendid anonymity, toward the glorious common places of classical taste, or toward that picturesque emphasis, that sense of local color, that pre-dilection for the characteristic and the unique, which distinguish the Romantic outlook? (1)

Edwin Honig provides us with one answer:

> There seemed no be no use in doing a translation unless I were going to create a new work. There might be other translations, but there could not be another like my own (2).

For Honig, being faithful means the opposite of making a literal translation:

> And maybe now it's time the sterile polemics and argumentation induced by the question of being faithful to the original is countered by showing that one form of faithfulness is a matter of doing a new work (3).

As examples of this kind of translator, he mentions Rossetti, Longfellow and Fitzgerald. They "had a great deal more on the ball than most twentieth century English and American translators" (4).

Ben Belitt also insists that the translator's voice be heard:

> I myself don't know how to separate my own voice from the initiating voices because the initiating voices furnish a continuing motive for my own. There are two voices, two presences (5).

Dudley Fitts puts it quite simply:

> I have simply tried to restate in my own idiom what the Greek verses meant to me (6).

The opposite view is put equally forcefully and often antagonistically. Michael Hamburger writes of his translations of Hölderlin:

> Even in my latest-and-last renderings I have stuck to my unfashionable habit of trying to get under the poet's skin, rather than exhibiting the effects on my own skin of exposure to his work. I believe that this makes me roughly what Mr. Robert Lowell has called a taxidermist translator; that is to say, I do not appropriate my text to the extent of transposing it into my own idiom, my own favourite verse forms and my own favourite imagery, but treat it as a phenomenon different in kind from anything I could ever produce ... my overall purpose is to reproduce even those peculiarities of his diction , form and way of thinking and feeling which are alien both to myself and to English conventions obtaining either in his time or in ours (7).

Richard Wilbur is equally self-effacive:

> I think that I do try to avoid putting into anyone else's poem, as I bring it across into English, mannerisms of my own, and I certainly try to efface myself as much as possible ... I'm putting whatever abilities I have at the service of the poem I'm translating (8).

In "Cantiques Spirituels" Paul Valéry praises the proximity of the translations of Père Cyprien of the spiritual poems of San Juan de la Cruz:

> il n'a pas tenté ... comme d'autres l'ont fait ... d'imposer au français ce que le français n'impose ou ne propose pas de soi-même a l'oreille française. C'est là veritablement traduire, qui est de reconstituer au plus près l'effet d'une certaine cause, -- ici un texte de langue espagnole au moyen d'une autre cause -- un texte de langue française (9).

And Père Cyprien's self-effacement has its own kind of originality:

> Son originalité est de n'en admettre aucun , et toutefois, il fait une manière de chef d'oeuvre en produisant des poèmes dont la substance n'est pas de lui, et dont chaque mot est prescrit par un texte donné. Je me retiens à peine de pretendre que le mérite de venir si heureusement à bout d'une telle tâche est plus grand (et il est plus rare) que celui d'un auteur completement libre de tous ses moyens. Ce dernier chante ce qu'il peut, tandis que notre moine est réduit a créer de la gène (10).

A step further away from the original than translations in which the translator's voice is heard we find imitations. According to Dryden, the imitator takes "only some general hints from the original to run division on the ground work, as he pleases" (11). Robert Lowell, the most famous post-Poundian "imitator", follows Dryden's instructions:

> My licenses have been many. My two Sappho poems are really new poems based on hers. Villon stripped; Hebel taken out of dialect; Hugo's *Gautier* is cut in half. Mallarmé unclotted -- to give power; same with Ungaretti and Rimbaud; a third of the *Drunken Boat* left out; two stanzas added to Rilke's *Roman Sarcophagus* and one to *Pigeons*; Valéry's *Heden* and *Pigeons* more informal. Lines from Vollon's *Great Testament* come from *Little Testament*.
>
> And so forth. I have dropped lines, moved stanzas, changed images and altered metre and intent (12).

Imitation is the only valuable form of poetic translation:

> I believe that poetic translation -- I would call it an imitation -- must be expert and inspired, and needs as least as much technique, luck and rightness of hand as an original poem (13).

Right at the other end of the spectrum, Vladimir Nabakov follows Dryden's idea of *metaphrase*, "turning the author word for word and line for line, from one language to another (14).

> In my translation (of *Eugene Onegin*) I have sacrificed top total accuracy and completeness of meaning every element of form save the iambic rhythm, the retention of which assisted rather than impaired fidelty (15).

Yves Bonnefoy is equally stringent:

> le traducteur doit savoir qu'il ne connait pas le sens de ces oeuvres où la question est plus vaste que les résponses; et il devra tenir compte de leur plus infime détail (16).

Nabakov is frequently criticised for being "unpoetic". Max Hayward, also a translator from Russian, comments:

> Nabakov's *Eugene Onegin* -- not a translation, I think, that one can read with pleasure. But the important things about it are its notes and explanations and whatnot, but one can't regard it as a facilitating translation (17).

An excellent crib but not poetry. Ben Belitt and Octavio Paz believe that poetry cannot be translated literally. Belitt comments:

> literal rendering shows how inadequate poetry in its literal state can be -- poetry is not information ... (18)

And Paz:

> Only mathematics and logic can be translated in a literal sense (19).

There is equal dissatisfaction with imitation. Octavio Paz believes that there is a distinct difference between imitation and translation:

> The point of departure in imitation is the same as that of literary translation; the point of arrival is different: another poem (20).

Christopher Middleton notes that as the imitator always brings the translated author to his way of thinking, he fails to reap one of the main advantages of translation: that of contact with another mode of thought and style of writing:

> And one of the simplest and most creative ways of considering the act of translation is to regard it as a minimal, perhaps vestigal, but still happy encounter with the "other"; on the other hand, the translator who writes an imitation is ignoring the autonomous reality of "the other" because he's just rendering that text to this own pre-established terms (21).

Most translators agree with Dryden and follow the middle way, called by Dryden *paraphrase*, "translation with latitude ... where the original is kept in view by the translator ... but his words are not so strictly followed as the sense; and that too is amplified, but not altered" (22). Michael Hamburger, contradicting his remarks made above (p.93) to a certain extent, says he strictly follows Dryden's guidelines:

> All my successive versions then, have tended towards a kind of translation that is neither free imitation nor strict metaphrase --- to use Dryden's still valid term -- but something in between (23).

Other commentators hedge around the middle ground. Richard Wilbur is cautiously conservative:

> I think that there must come moments in the most faithfully intended translations when you have a choice between reproducing what is apparently, in the dictionary sense of the term, the exact meaning of the original, and falling below the aesthetic level of the rest, or providing to you what seems to you a close equivalent. I think I would always go for the close equivalent in such a case (24).

Michael Grant, Penguin translator of Cicero and Tacitus, reaches *paraphrase* via a process of elimination:

> ... we must ... reject Vladimir Nabakov's assertion that "the clumsiest literal translation is a thousand times more useful than the prettiest paraphrase" -- and reject also, the doctrine of Edwin and Willa Muir that even to change the word order, however unavoidable this may seem, is to "commit an irremediable injury" (25).

It is difficult to find any translator who rejects Dryden's definitions completely. Ben Belitt goes a certain way towards this:

> I don't know whether either of these words (paraphrase or imitation) really applies. It was something more subjective than imitation and more visceral than paraphrase. Meanwhile I considered it a providence when I could render in English what was literally present in the French. I had no conceptual stance that would lead me to say: "Here I'm going to paraphrase", "or "Here is where I imitate" (26).

(ii) *The Sympathetick Bond*

Christopher Middleton (above p.95) considers translation an activity in which the translator is influenced by the "other" -- the text he is translating and the author with whom he has contact. Like the Augustans studied in Chapter 2 -- Roscommon with his *sympathetick bond*, Franklin and his *secret sympathy*, and Tytler with his *genius akin* -- many contemporary translators also emphasise this strong personal empathy between the translator and the original writer. Kenneth Rexroth writes:

> ... what matters is sympathy -- the ability to project into Sappho's experience and to transmit it back into one's own idiom with maximum viability (27).

Cases of translators finding their "soul mates" in the author they are translating are not rare:

> When Rainer Maria Rilke ... first read (Valéry) he wrote to a friend that he had discovered an alter ego (28).
>
> Justin O'Brien
>
> ... the student showed me a book of Walser's, and I immediately felt, here was a kindred spirit, someone whose language was utterly unlike any other German I had ever read and whose mental agility I found congenial and admirable. It *suited* me. And I felt I could mimic his agility in English (29).
>
> Christopher Middleton
>
> After doing two and a half volumes (of *The Passion of Al-Hallaj* by Louis Massington) I began to be overwhelmed as I had been by *Gilgamesh*, and so I tried to find out what my voice was in this material -- not just the translator's role, but my voice. I wanted to write my *Hallaj* because I identified personally with him (30).
>
> Herbert Mason

Jorge Luis Borges is not totally tongue-in-cheek when he suggests an actual transmigrataion of souls:

> Umar (Khayyami) profesó (lo sabemos) la doctrina platónica y pitagórica del tránsito del alma por muchos cuerpos; al cabo de los siglos, la suya acaso reencarnó en Inglaterra para cumplir en un lejano idioma germánico veteado de latin el destino literario que en Nishpur reprimieron las matemáticas. Issac Luria el León enseñó que el alma de un muerto puede entrar en un alma desventurada para sostener o instruirlo; quizá el alma de Umar se hospedó, hacia 1857, en lo de Edward Fitzgerald (31).

Certain translators make their translations by imaginatively recreating the experience of their predecessor. Boris Pasternak writes of his translation of *Hamlet*:

> Pour la traduction des mots et des metaphores, j'ai fait appel à la traduction des pensées et des scènes. Il faut estimer que l'ouvrage est un oeuvre dramatique russe originale, parce que, en plus de la précision, de la différence des lignes par rapport à l'original, il renferme surtout cette liberté voulue, sans laquelle on ne peut se rapprocher des grandes choses (32).

Belitt seeks this intimacy not so much with the poet as with the poem. The essence of translation is to

> ... imagine or reimagine the process of a poem's embodiment, the poem not as an informative entity, but as a complex -- I believe Coleridge called it esemplastic -- of immediate excitements that stand for a live experience (33).

In "The Added Artificer" Renato Poggioli makes some interesting comments on the relationship between the translator and the original. The translator is an interpretive artist using the same aesthetic material as his model but elaborating a different linguistic and literary material. No other interpretive artist works in this way: a performing artist such as an actor, singer or instrumentalist, or a decorative artist such as a scene designer, a composer writing ballet music or a mime artist, will express the original in another medium, not in another language. In the case of the translator, the medium is the same but the language is different. The translator as artist is involved in a quest. He is

> an inhibited artist -- satisfied only when he is able to lay the burning ashes of his heart in the well-wrought urn outside of himself. Or one can say that he only overcomes his repressions in his tête-à-tête with the foreign poet; and that he ends by sublimating his inhibitions through the catharsis of an alien form. Translation is up to a point an exorcism or the conjuration through another spirit of one's self ... the translator is a "character in search of an author" -- in finding the author without, finds the author within himself (34).

The overwhelming attraction of the alien content is his *Gelegenheitsdichtung*: the translator will discover that the poem he is translating will offer him an ideal solution for his own creative problems.

(iii) **The Translator and the Poet**

Is translation a separate activity from poetry ? Or are the two integrated ? Opinions vary. Playwright Christopher Hampton believes that his translations of Ibsen and Molière had a considerable effect on his original work (35). Through translation a writer can find new inspiration. Ben Belitt writes:

> I would agree that translation is a kind of jungle gym for the exercise of all faculties and muscles required for the practice of poetry, even if it doesn't always begin that way -- that it serves the calisthenic function of bringing to bear upon what one is translating one's total resources and cunning as a poet. In this sense translation takes translators far from the genre of their own recognisable styles and idiosyncrasies as poets. One of these disintegrative benefits of translation is that it compels or seduces one into writing poetry other than one's own (36).

By contrast, Robert Fitzgerald, translator from the Latin and Greek, states:

> I guess the two activities (own poems and translations) are distant. If you are a poet or aspire to be one, the inference is that when you translate you embody that kind of effort simply in another form. I wonder. I don't think it's quite so simple, and I feel very hesitant to commit myself to what I think one does hear often as the version of what happens -- that is, that a poet is always doing the same thing, or a disguised form of it, in translating. I don't think that's true. I think that one poet is lending himself to the other poet, that the obligation is to the other poet, and that one is taking on for the time being the spirit and impulse and intent of the other poet, and so the wish is to make all that clear in one's own language more than express oneself (37).

Fitzgerald sees translation as a specific activity: the transference of a poem from one language to another. On the other hand, translation can be seen as an all-embracing activity which includes changing words into gesture, gestures into noises, speech into signs and one register of language into another. This returns us to the Romantic concept of originality examined in the previous chapter: originality is a God-given gift to the chosen few. Translation whittles down any value it has. This view of originality can be seen if the following comments of John Hollander:

> Pound and Eliot are both poets with grave problems of originality and grave problems about confronting their lack of originality. It seemed inevitable that they would propound. Like Longfellow they propound a corpus of poetry largely based on translation (38).

Hollander clearly believes that translation is different from creation. The opposite view, that translation is at the centre of all creative work, is put forward by Octavio Paz. Edwin Honig summarises his views in an interview with him:

> You ... seem to know almost by feel, by intuition, that translation is an activity that in its purposes lies at the root of all art (39).

All literary activity is translation:

> When you're reading a poem, you're translating. When you're reading Shakespeare, you're doing a translation -- translating him into the American sensibility of the twentieth century (40).

Paul Valéry agrees. In his *Preface* to his *Traduction en Vers des Bucoliques de Virgile* he says that any kind of writing that requires a certain amount of thought is translation and that there is no difference between this kind of translation and that of transmuting a text from one language to another (41).

In his essay "Traducción: literatura y literalidad", Octavio Paz examines a poem by the nineteenth Spanish poet, Miguel de Unamuno. A list of Spanish cities from Ávila to Zamarramala are:

> el tuétano intraducible
> de nuestra lengua española (42).

But on close examination this "tuétano intraducible" is found to consist of a list of Roman, Arabic, Basque, Celtic and Catalonian names. Even proper names we think of as inherently pure contain a strong element of translation.

Paz sees translation as central to history. Civilisation has progressed and changed by means of successive waves of translations: the Chinese translating Sanskrit; the Jews translating the Greek Testament in Alexandria; the Romans translating the Greeks. "The history of the different civilisations is the history of their translations" (43).

(iv) Translation of Traditional Metrical Form

As we saw in Chapter 4, one of Ezra Pound's greatest achievements was to liberate translation of poetry from the straitjackets of either mimetic or analogous forms. There is now no standard form to translate a certain language or a certain type of poetry. And the great majority of contemporary translators are aware of the enormous importance of the form of the poem to be translated. George L. Kline

agrees with the author he translates, Joseph Brodsky, on the importance of preserving the technical features in translation:

> Brodsky and I are in full agreement on the principle that translations of formal poetry, such as the Russian, must convey as much as possible of its form -- its meter, assonance, alliteration, etc., and, where this is possible without recourse to padding or other artificialities, its rhymes and slant rhymes as well (44).

Brodsky has even taken Western translators to task for translating Russian poetry into free verse. In general, Russian verse in rhymed. In 1974 he criticised American translations of Mandelshtam. For Brodsky free verse is a symptom of Western decadence which Russian poets have no part in. Replying to him, Yves Bonnefoy argues that regular metres are a "metaphor" of a society built on certainties; using such metres in Western society today would be an anachronism and by insisting on them Brodsky seems to be parochial and to lack a sense of European history (45).

Paul Valéry defends the most commonly held contemporary view when he says that to destroy the musical harmony is to destroy the poem altogether. Reduced to prose, poetic works become anatomical specimens, dead birds. And once their harmonic flow has been broken, the finest verses in the world become trivial and senseless. A poem, and a translation of a poem, should create the indissoluble compound of " le son et le sens" (46).

(v) Other Ideas

All the above statements are based to a greater or lesser extent on the views of Dryden and Pound. Other comments echo those of Schleiermacher and Ortega y Gasset: a perfect translation is impossible -- but he fact that it is impossible makes us attempt it with greater efort. Edwin Honig makes this point:

> Nor do matters help muffle the small crushing voice they hear whispering, "What you're doing is ridiculous because it's absolutely impossible". To which they will invariably agree, but with a touch of Kafkan paradoxicality, as Willard Trask suggests when asserting, "Impossible , of course -- that's why I do it" (47).

Michael Hamburger adds:

> All the things that are worth doing are impossible. Only impossible things are worth trying to do (48).

In the prefaces , articles and interviews I have examined hardly any translator looks at translation in a social or historical context or brings original ideas to bear on literary translation. In "Seven Agamemnons" Reuben Brower examines the way in which seven different translations of *Agamemnon* written in different periods reflect the literary values of these periods (49). But he does not go any further into

analysing the social and historical forces at work behind these translations. Belitt argues for an epistomology for translation, and Paz introduces the ideas of the Kabala and translation and the centrality of translation to life (50), ideas which will be looked at in the next chapter, but Dryden and Pound still provide the guidelines for the great majority of twentieth century translators.

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47. *The Poet's Other Voice*, op. cit., p.7.

48. Ibid., p.178.

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CHAPTER 6

KABAL, BABEL AND BIBLE

Rien n'est plus grave qu'une traduction.

Jacques Derrida

Chapter 6 -- Kabal, Babel and Bible

The last chapter showed that the thinking of many twentieth century translators on translation is still dominated by the ideas of the Augustans and those of Ezra Pound. Few new ideas have come from the translators mentioned. This chapter will look at more original twentieth century ideas on translation, which come mainly from literary critics. It will concentrate on the ideas of Jorge Luis Borges, Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man and Henri Meschonnic.

I shall not attempt to develop a consistent line of thought through the work of these authors, but rather to emphasise the recurrence of certain themes, which are to a great extent different from those of the Augustans and Pound. These ideas are: the presence of the biblical legend of the Tower of Babel and the Kabalistic myth of the *Ursprache* , the language spoken by all men before Babel; the way in which a translation can significantly change a work; the political element involved in translation; the importance of translating form rather than content, here continuing many of the ideas of the German tradition; and last but not least, the value of translation as a central element in human thought and experience, a belief shared by Pound and his followers.

(i) **Babel** *heureuse*

According to biblical legend, the angry God scattered men to speak in tongues which were incomprehensible to each other when they dared to build the Tower of Babel and attempt to reach him. What was the original *Ursprache*,the language of Adam, the language all men spoke to each other before they were punished by God ? And would it ever be possible to recreate this language everyone would speak and return to a state of pre-Babelian harmony and peaceful union with God ? For George Steiner it is possible:

> Translators are men groping towards each other in a common mist. Religious wars and the persecution of supposed heresies arise inevitably from the babel of tongues: men misconstrue and pervert each other's meanings. But there is a way out of darkness: what Böhme calls "sensualistic speech" -- the speech of instinctual, untutored immediacy, the language of Nature and of natural man as it was bestowed on the Apostles, themselves humble folk, at the Pentecost (1).

A number of Jorge Luis Borges' stories, particularly those in *El Aleph* (2) and *El Libro de Arena* (3), turn on Kabalistic themes. The *zahir* in "El Zahir" (4) is an

object, in the story a coin, which dominates one's thoughts so much that one can eventually think of nothing else and as a result becomes mad. The prisoner of "La escritura de Dios" (5) sees God's message, a formula of fourteen words, which, if he repeated it, would make him all-powerful. However, he refuses to repeat the formula: after the glory of the revelation he can no longer condescend to think of his own misfortunes and his merely human predicament. In "Undr" (6) the whole poetry of a race is contained in the single word *Undr*. The "Libro de arena" (7) in the story of the same name is so-called because it has an infinite number of pages as there are an infinite number of grains of sand. Here Borges reworks the medieval and renaissance legend, which saw the whole world as a book. And in "El Aleph" (8) Borges sees, on the nineteenth step going down to Carlos Argentino's cellar, the *Aleph*, which shows him the whole world -- "el inconcebible universo" (9).

Yet if Kabalistic themes are central to Borges' stories and he is fascinated by the Kabalistic idea of the whole world being contained in a word, book, text or object, he also takes pleasure in the enormous differences between languages and cultures. In his essays and stories where translation is mentioned, it is this, rather than a belief in the *Ursprache*, that we find. Much has been written on "Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote" (10), in which the imaginary French author succeeds in writing an exact replica of two chapters of the original work by Cervantes by imagining himself to *be* Cervantes. However, this exact copy of Cervantes' work, written by a twentieth century author, seems archaic and affected in both style and content. Borges thus points to the absurdity of an exact reproduction, a translation which will follow the original word for word. George Steiner seems to completely miss Borges' irony when he says

> But keen as is Borges' sense of the irreducible quality of each particular tongue, his linguistic experience is essentially simultaneous ... Quick with interchange and mutation, Borges's several languages move towards a unified, occult truth ... (11)

Indeed, when commenting on the translations of his stories into English, Borges demanded that the English version deliberately reflect the Anglo-Saxon roots of English. All polysyllables would have to be replaced by monosyllables and the rhythm of the language would have to be subjected to Anglo-Saxon intonation. Ben Belitt, one of the collaborators, reports the gist of Borges' instructions:

> Simplify me. Modify me. Make me stark. My language often embarasses me. It's too youthful, too Latinate. I love Anglo-Saxon. I want the wiry minimal sound. I want monosyllables. I want the power of *Cynewulf, Beowulf, Bede*. Make me macho and gaucho and skinny.

and:

> People concerned about the legitimacy of the literal might well be scandalised by his mania for dehispanisation (12).

In the same way that Borges can be Anglo-Saxonised, Aristotle can be Islamised. In "La busca de Averroes" (13) the Arabic scholar Averroes, translator of Aristotle, has to translate the words *tragedy* and *comedy*. Immersed in Islam, a culture where the theatre does not exist, he is puzzled. He is told by traveller Abulcasím about what goes on inside a theatre but fails to grasp the concept. For him the *Koran* is the whole world; no poetry is possible beyond its boundaries. He finally has inspiration to write his definitions of tragedy and comedy:

> Aristú (Aristóteles) denomina tragedia a los panegíricos y comedias a las sátiras y anatemas. Admirables tragedias y comedias abundan en las páginas del Corán y en las mohalacus del santuario (14).

In "Los traductores de las 1000 Noches" (15) Borges analyses a number of Western translations of the *Arabian Nights*. The German translation of Enno Littmann is the most accurate and faithful of the various translations available. But it is not to Borges' liking. It is "lúcido, legible" but "mediocre" (16). It is cold and clinical and dull. The explicitness of Sir Richard Burton's translation with its details of Muslim habits and copious notes, the colourful additions of Dr. Mardrus' French version, and even the sugary French version of Antoine Galland through which the West has come to know the *Arabian Nights*, are of greater interest. Why ? These versions

> solo se dejan concebir *después de una literatura* ... esas obras caraterísticas presuponen un rico proceso anterior. En algún modo, el casi inagotable proceso inglés está adumbrado en Burton -- la dura obscenidad de John Donne, el gigantesco vocabulario de Shakespeare y de Cyril Tourneur, la aficción arcaica de Swinburne, la crasa erudición de los tratadistas de mil seiscientos, la energía y la vaguedad, el amor de las tempestades y de la magia. En los risueños párrafos de Mardrus conviven *Salammbô* y La Fontaine, el *Manequí de Mimbre* y el *ballet* ruso (17).

Compared to these versions, that of Littmann contains nothing other than "la probidad de Alemania" (18), when it could take advantage of all the literature of the German tradition of fantastic literature. So, although we must always be careful of Borges' irony and his love of testing the credulity of the reader and we must consider his wish to return to his own Anglo-Saxon family roots, it does seem that he believes that a translation should reflect the characteristics of the language and culture into which it is made and that he delights in these very differences.

Joy in difference and plurality. Babel has led to happiness (maybe that of sin !) and not to regret. Let us now look at three more texts which express this pleasure in the multiplicity of languages, of literatures, of influences, of texts. First Octavio Paz, in an extract which is very reminiscent of Ezra Pound (see above, pp. 58-59):

> Los grandes períodos creadores de la poesía de Occidente, desde su origen en Provenza hasta nuestros días, han sido precedidos o acompañados por entrecruzamientos entre diferentes tradiciones poéticas ... Todos los estilos han sido translingüísticos: Donne está más cerca de Quevedo de que Wordsworth; entre Góngora y Marino hay una evidente afinidad en tanto que nada, salvo la lengua, une a Góngora con el Arcipreste de Hita que, a su vez, hace por momentos pensar en Chaucer. Los estilos son colectivos y pasan de una lengua a otra; las obras, todas arraigadas a su suelo verbal, son únicas ... Únicas pero no aisladas: cada una de ellas nace y vive en relación con otras obras de lenguas distintas. Así, ni la pluralidad de las lenguas ni la singularidad de las obras significa heterogeneidad irreductible o confusión sino lo contrario: un mundo de relaciones hecho de contradiciones y correspondencias, uniones y separaciones (19).

Haroldo de Campos is equally jubilant:

> The politopic poliphonic planetary civilization is, I believe, under the devouring sign of translation *latu sensu* (20).

Yet together with their pleasure in plurality, there is an awareness of, maybe even a need for, wholeness. Underlying this pleasure in diversity is an even greater delight in oneness. For Octavio Paz all the languages and styles lead back to "un todo unitário" (21) made up of different styles and tendencies; Haroldo de Campos likewise returns to this oneness:

> Rethinking it (Aristotelian mimesis) not as a passivizing theory of copy or reflex, but as a usurpating impulse in the sense of a dialectic production of difference out of sameness (22).

Only in our final text do we find an unself-conscious delight in the breaking of the one, the whole. The monotheistic pre-Babelian world has been broken, the *logos* has gone, the text dances in its plurality of readings existing "côté à côté". For Roland Barthes there is no regret, no referring back to the oneness; the cord has been severed:

> Fiction d'un individu (quelque M. Teste à l'envers) que abolirait en lui les barrières, les classes, les excursions, non par syncrétisme, mais par simple débarras de ce vieux spectre: la *contradiction logique* qui mélangerait tous les langages, fussent-ils réputés incompatibles; qui supporterait, muet, toutes les accusations d'illogisme, d'infidélité; qui

> resterait impassible devant l'ironie socratique (aménер l'autre au suprême opprobre: *se contredire*) et la terreur légale (combien de preuves pénales fondées sur une psychologie de l'unité !). Cet homme serait l'abjection de notre société: les tribunaux, l'école, l'asile, la conversation, en feraient un étranger: qui supporte sans honte la contradiction ? Or ce contre-héros existe: c'est le lecteur de texte dans le moment où il prend son plaisir. Alors le vieux mythe biblique se retourne, la confusion des langues n'est plus une punition, le sujet accède à la jouissance par la cohabitation des langages, *qui travaillent côté à côté*: le texte de plaisir, c'est Babel heureuse (23).

Whereas the confusion and chaos of Octavio Paz's world forms a certain order and unity and logic, Barthes' bliss is in the very lack of this order and logic.

(ii) **The Task of the Translator**

In the previous section, then, we find ambivalent feelings towards a wholeness of the text, of the world. Barthes delights in plurality. Borges' comments on translation, in contrast to the themes of a number of his stories, seem to be surprisingly anti-Kabalistic. For Octavio Paz and Harold de Campos (24), variety enables us to see the world in a more ordered way. Walter Benjamin, in "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" (25), places translation firmly within the Kabalistic tradition as he emphasises the oneness that results from translation. His essay, probably the most widely published and publicised essay on translation in the twentieth century, is also very much part of the German tradition, repeating many of the ideas introduced by Goethe and Schleiermacher.

The central idea of "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" ("The Task of the Translator") is that real translation translates the form of the source work. The importance of a poetic work is in its form more than in its content: it "derives from the connotations conveyed by the word chosen to express it" (26). A translation must, therefore, as did Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles, "lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification" (27). Moreover,

> A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully (28).

Like Schleiermacher (see Chapter 3, p.44) Benjamin also sees translation as a way of extending the potential of the German language. He quotes Pannwitz' observations in *Die Krisis der europäischen Kultur* (29):

> Our translations, even the best ones, proceed from a wrong premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English, into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, English ...

> The basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his own language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue ...
> He must expand and deepen his language by means of the foreign language (30).

Of equal interest is the Kabalistic element of translation we find in Benjamin's essay: through translation we can approach the *Ursprache*, the pure language. Translation expresses "the central reciprocal relationship between languages" (31). All languages are connected in what they want to express and this is made visible through translation. Superficially these languages are very different but they form a whole through "the totality of their intentions supplementing each other" (32), and this is the *Ursprache*, the "pure language" (33). Benjamin uses a number of such metaphors. Translation "catches fire on the eternal life of the works and the perpetual renewal of languages" (34); translation " keeps putting the hallowed growth of languages to the test: how far removed is their hidden meaning from revelation, how close can it be brought by the knowledge of this remoteness ?" (35); "it points the way to the region: the predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages" (36).

(iii) Derrida and de Man on Benjamin

In "Des Tours de Babel" (37), an essay based on his reading of Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers", Jacques Derrida extends Benjamin's ideas to the biblical legend of the Tower of Babel. Using the Chouraqui literal translation of the Bible (38), he reinterprets this story. When the Semites attempt to build a tower with its head in the heavens where they will "make themselves a name", Yhwh disperses them, proclaiming his name "Bavel", "Confusion", who "confounds the lip of all the earth" (39). Out of his resentment that men may attempt to reach him, he imposes confusion over all the earth. "Translation then becomes necessary and impossible" (40). In order to communicate with each other, nations will need to translate, but it will be impossible to reach the unity which existed before the tower was built. Derrida links this image with Benjamin's essay: man will strive after the one language, the *Ursprache*, the desire to achieve an impossible goal, a "kingdom promised and forbidden where the languages will be reconciled and fulfilled" (41); or, in Derrida's words, the translator "wants to touch the untouchable" (42); but this state of perfection will never be reached.

Derrida concentrates on a number of the metaphors Benjamin uses. One of these is the idea that translation provides an afterlife for the original work; it "gives birth" to a new language. Derrida gives his own interpretation of this. He considers "the task of the translator" to produce a translation contract:

> hymen or marriage contract with the promise to produce a child whose seed will give rise to history and growth (43).

Derrida also remarks on Benjamin's images of fruit and clothing. Benjamin says that in the original the content and the language form a certain unity, "like a fruit and its skin"; in the translation the language will envelop its content "like a royal robe with ample folds". It is a

> more exalted language ... overpowering and alien, one which cannot transfer, the nucleus, the core of the original (44).

It is this core which, according to Derrida, holds the fruit to the skin and is "untouchable, beyond reach and invisible" (45). The royal robe, the translation, "busies its tongue, makes pleats, molds forms, sews hems, quilts, and embroiders" (46), but is always at some distance from the original.

Derrida emphasises the inter-relatedness of languages. There is always an inter-connection. It is impossible to deal with just one language at a time. Derrida makes his analysis of Benjamin's essay through Maurice de Gandillac's translation. Benjamin's essay is at the same time a Preface to his translation of the *Tableaux Parisiens* of Baudelaire (47). My own reading comes primarily from the English translation of Derrida's text by Joseph Graham, and of Benjamin's by Harry Zohn. We are always surrounded by a infinite regression of translations. For a language to exist in isolation is for it to die: "each language is as if atrophied in its isolation" (48). And the term translation does not understand only translation of language. Derrida remarks on the transmutation of bricks and tar into stone and cement which the Semites used to construct the Tower of Babel. This transformation of building materials "already ressembles a translation" (49). And for Derrida translation is the centre of human experience. Any interpretation is translation and thus we are translating all the time. Translation is open to misinterpretation and confusion. God's name, *Yhwh* , originally, "the unpronounceable", has lost, through successive translations, any connection with that idea. The Hebrew term *Babal* does indeed mean "confusion", perhaps even a synonym for translation. What we think is a straightforward translation from one language to another may turn out to be totally unrepresentative.

The difficulty of translating is clearly seen when Derrida analyses Plato in the chapter of *La Dissémination* (50) entitled "La Pharmacie de Plato". The subtlety of Plato's text depends very much on the two meanings of *pharmakon* -- *poison* and *remedy* or *cure*. What is the translator to do when faced with such a problem ? The traditional facilitating approach would choose one of the meanings, thus destroying the whole idea of the *pharmakon*. Derrida says:

> All translations that are heirs and depositories of western metaphysics thus produce on the *pharmakon* an *effect of analysis* that violently destroys it, reduces it to one of its simplest elements by interpreting it,

> paradoxically in the light of the ulterior developments that it itself has made possible (51).

Our traditional translation merely gives us a false sense of security, and it is this false sense of security which Derrida attempts to undermine.

Can we find a Derridean solution to the problems of translation ? If we look at the translations of Derrida's own works, many of which Derrida himself has supervised, we find that where there is any possibility of misunderstanding the original French term is included after the translation.

> On what conditions is a grammatology possible ? Its fundamental condition is certainly the undoing (*sollicitation*) of logocentrism (52).

The lack of transparence between languages is the point that Paul de Man makes when he questions translations of Benjamin's essay. In "Conclusions: Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator" (53), he peeps into the chinks and crevices of Benjamin's metaphors and their translations. De Man points out the alternative interpretation of the title: "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" -- *Aufgabe* as well as meaning *task* can mean *give up*. Thus the task of the translator will be impossible -- he can give up before he has started.

The English and French versions of Benjamin's essay point towards the essential unity of languages, seen through translation, but de Man sees the central idea of the essay as the impossibility of translation. He finds serious mistranslations both in Maurice de Gandillac's French version and in Harry Zohn's English translation (54). It seems that rather than translations of Benjamin's essay uniting languages in a universal *Ursprache*, they spread disharmony and confusion. The translations of "The Task of the Translator" contradict the central point he was making. Zohn translates *Nachreife* as *maturing process*, and de Man points out the inaccuracy of the translation: "it is looking back on a process of maturity that is finished, and that is no longer taking place" (55). Zohn has also translated *Wehen* as *birth pangs*, when referring to the original giving new life to the translation. This translation gives the impression that the original is still alive after the appearance of the translation when in fact

> the process of translation, if we can call it a process, is one of change and motion that has the appearance of life but of life as an afterlife, because translation also reveals the death of the original (56).

De Man notes another error in Zohn's translation. When Benjamin talks about translations forming parts of a greater language, he uses the simile : "als Bruchstück eines Gefässes" (57). Zohn translates this as "just as fragments are part of a vessel" (58), when he should have translated it as "just as fragments are the broken parts of a vessel" (59). Zohn gives the impression that the fragments do constitute a whole, that they can be easily put together again, whereas Benjamin's

"fragments of the broken parts" gives an idea of there being much greater difficulty in reconstituting a whole.

These difficulties and mistranslations bring de Man to his conclusion.

> the text about translation is itself a translation, and the untranslatability which it mentions about itself inhabits its own texture and will inhabit anybody who in his turn will try to translate it, as I am now trying, and failing, to do. The text is untranslatable: it was untranslatable for the translators who tried to do it, it is untranslatable for the commentators who talk about it, it is an example of what it states, it is a *mise en abyme* in the technical sense. a story within the story of what is its own statement (60).

Difference in Translation contains a number of essays which look at the role of translation in fixing a received opinion. In "On the History of a Mistranslation and the Psychoanalytic Movement" (61) Alan Bass examines the history of Freud's use of a mistranslation from his reading of Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks. Freud continually refers to the bird, *nubio*, as a *vulture*, when he should in fact be referring to it as a *kite*. He seizes on the idea of the vulture in Egyptian folklore as a symbol of motherhood and develops this idea at length in his work.

Indeed, translation of Freud contains a large number of problems. Jean Laplanche is head of a team currently translating Freud's complete works into French, which will attempt to transpose Freud's original terms. e.g., *desaide* for *Hilflosigkeit*; *desirance* for *Sehnsucht*; *refusement* for *Versagung*. Other French translations of Freud and Strachey's *Standard Edition* are all facilitating translations. In these translations there are certain confusions. Laplanche mentions the idea of *Zwang*, found in *Zwangneuros* and classically translated as *obsessive neurosis*. Laplanche's team translated it as *neurose de constrainte* to get across the idea that this kind of neurosis does not necessarily include obsessions. Laplanche reaches the conclusion that a closer translation, one which transposes the original terms can even "permitir uma alteração de clínica" (62).

In "The Measure of Translation Effects" (63), Philip E. Lewis analyses the different nuances one must take account of when translating from French to English and vice versa. Derrida's idea of translation being much more than a relationship between languages is extended by Richard Rand in "o'er-brimmed" (64), where he looks at the idea of translation in the work of Keats:

> the works of autumn are translations, the changing of things into other things, as of raw fruit into ripe, of blossoms into flowers, of nectar into honey ... (65)

The Derridean emphasis of looking for a gap, a crevice, the *différence* in translation, and examining the translation through this opening even reminds Barbara Johnson, in "Taking Fidelity Philosophically" (66) of the style of the American New Critics:

> It is as though, through our excursions into the exotic, we had suddenly come to remember what it was that appealed to us and what we were being unfaithful to (67).

(iv) **Meschonnic v Nida**

Can translation of literature have a political element? Henri Meschonnic, French critic and writer on poetics, believes that it definitely does. He believes that the facilitating translation, that which tries to sound as if it had been written in the target language, is a way of introducing a foreign ideology and system of values into the target culture. Such translations give us the impression that languages are transparent, that they all belong to one transcendental system and that the same system of values exists in every culture. This kind of translation gives us an

> illusion du naturel ... comme si un texte en langue de départ était en langue d'arrivée (68).

In this way Western logocentric ideas have been translated and transmitted from dominant European and North American societies into "primitive" African, Asian and South American societies. Appearing in facilitating translations, the impression is given that these ideas are already part of the culture. Needless to say, there is almost a one-way traffic of translated works from "dominant" to "dominated" cultures.

An interesting corollary of this is that the dominating culture will not always have been a dominating culture; in the past it will have received, through translation, many elements from other cultures.

> Un impérialisme culturel tend à oublier son histoire, donc à méconnaître que le rôle de la traduction a des emprunts dans sa culture (69).

The great majority of translations follow this pattern; far fewer follow Schleiermacher's second type of translation, that which attempts to recreate the form of the original in the target language. This kind of translation is favoured by Meschonnic. It has "décentrement" (70); it does not intend to infiltrate the target culture but has a "rapport textuel" with the target language (71). He equates this kind of translation more with writing or rewriting than with actual translation. The best translators have been writers who have integrated their translations with their

other work; indeed, in their work the distinction between translation and original work is lost. This leads to a paradox:

> un traducteur qui n'est que traducteur n'est pas traducteur, il est introducteur; seul un écrivain est un traducteur, et soit que traduire est tout son écrire, soit que traduire est intégré à une oeuvre, il est ce "créateur" qu'une idéalisation de la création ne pouvait pas voir (72).

The translator of content will do no more than introduce the foreign ideas into the language; the translator whose translation takes into account the original form, who is a "writer", is the real creator. And, like Pound, Meschonnic dispels the aura of the idealisation of the creative process; the translator of a foreign form into a language is as much of a creator as any Romantic poet who has been "visited by the Muses".

Examples of real translators are few but important: Saint Jerome,

> en français, l'abbé Prévost, Diderot, Delille, Nadier, Nerval, Baudelaire ... Mallarmé, Valéry, et Larbaud, et Jouve; en Russe Lermontov, Pasternak; en anglais Ezra Pound ou Robert Graves; en allemand, par example, Brecht et Celan (73).

Their translations have achieved a status and recognition as literary works and have lasted the course of time.

A very different point of view is found in the work of Eugene A. Nida, American linguist and Bible translator. Nida is the linguistic expert of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the academic branch of the Wycliffe Foundation, an evangelical organisation devoted to translating the Bible into every existing language on Earth (74). Nida emphasises the possibility of translating God's message into every corner of the world. The content of the message is indeed of much greater significance than the form.

> Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (75).

Nida always stresses the importance of "getting the message across"; everything must be crystal clear in the target language:

> Translating must aim primarily at "reproducing the message". To do anything else is essentially false to one's task as a translator ... the best translation does not sound like a translation (76).

The audience is always the most essential factor for Nida:

> The priority of the audience over the forms of the language means essentially that one must attach greater importance to the forms understood and accepted by the audience for which a translation is

> designed than to the forms which may possess a longer linguistic tradition or have greater literary prestige (77).

What does Nida have to say about the translation of poetry, where the form is an integral part of the message ? He recognises that there is a "greater focus of attention upon formal elements than one normally finds in prose" and that "there are very special problems involved" , but when one has to choose between form and content, in general "meaning has priority over style" (78). Nida returns to his preoccupation with the fact that the content must be understood by the receivers of the translation.

> But all translating, whether of poetry or prose, must be concerned also with the response of the receptor ... (79)

What should we do when we translate the acrostic Psalms and the opening of Genesis ? Nida is quite unequivocal:

> In a similar way we cannot reproduce the rhythm of Hebrew poetry, the acrostic features of many poems, and the frequent intentional alliteration. At this point, languages just do not correspond, and so we must be prepared to sacrifice certain niceties for the sake of the content (80).

For Meschonnic, ail of Nida's theorisation is directed towards the evangelisation of under-developed peoples. When seeing, or more probably, hearing, the Bible, they will say:

> I never knew before that God spoke my language (81).

Through translation, American evangelism will have infiltrated into the remote cultures of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Meschonnic's criticism of Nida comes from their two completely different views of the Bible. For Nida, God's message is central to the Bible; this must always be translated and other cultures must know this message. Meschonnic sees the Bible as a poetical work of the Hebrew language and it is this element that should come out in translation. Meschonnic criticises Nida for totally ignoring the Hebrew original:

> l'escamotage de la langue de départ, l'hebreu, est total (82).

An excessively Christian message, "une sur-christianisation" (83), has been forced upon a work of literature. And Nida is

> aveugle á la spécificité littéraire d'un texte (84).

Nida's ideas on the translation of the Bible are typical of the lack of sensitivity to the original form with which the Bible has often been translated. In "Au Commencement" (85) Meschonnic compares ten different translations into French of the beginning of the book of Genesis. Almost all of them have completely

ignored the original Hebrew form. Meschonnic points to the importance of the symbolism of the number 7.

> Or ce texte du début de la Genèse est construit sur le symbolisme du chiffre 7, le nom de Dieu y revient 35 (7x5) fois ainsi que d'autres, aussi dans un rapport à 7; la structure du texte n'est séparable ici du liturgique (86).

And we are reminded of the vital importance of the form for Jewish scholars. Not a single word may be altered; not a single letter may be changed. However, in the attempt to make the Bible accessible and to be read out at church services, the original Judaico-Christian message has been lost. In this particular case, for the sake of clarity and brevity, Nida merely recommends reducing the number of repetitions. Roman Jakobson comments disparingly on linguists such as Nida who are deaf to the poetic function of language: such scholars are flagrant anachronisms (87).

To summarise this chapter, then, we can say that the feature that Borges, Paz, Haroldo de Campos, Benjamin, Derrida, de Man and Meschonnic have in common is that translation is central to the development of literature. All of them look at translation in an original way, escaping from the Dryden - Pound straitjacket. Borges, Benjamin and Derrida examine one of our society's most powerful myths -- by translation we may (re)discover a world language, a pre-Babelian tongue which will unite mankind in harmony. An idea which is common to de Man, Derrida and Meschonnic is that the translation of a work may influence us in a way that often seems very different from the original intention. A further idea, and here we can again emphasise the very strong connection between the German tradition and the writings on translation of Benjamin, Derrida and Meschonnic, is that a translation which fails to take account of the original form is to be mistrusted. Meschonnic demonstrates that it is through this kind of translation that a dominant ideology will infiltrate less powerful societies. Indeed, all the writers whose work is described in this chapter, with the exception of Borges and Barthes (who gives no opinion on the subject), strongly believe that a translation should attempt to follow the form of the original.

The connection with the German tradition has already been mentioned. Thus, like Schleiermacher's second type of translation, the type of translation favoured by the writers in this chapter would fit on to Dryden's paradigm under the label of *metaphrase*. And again, as in the case of the German translations, the difference is one of tone. Dryden's word-for-word translator, the clumsy fool who makes the vain attempt to dance "on ropes with fettered legs"(88), was metamorphosised by the Germans into the "Prophet" (89), and is now able to lead man to the "reconciliation and fulfillment of languages" (90).

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4. "El Zahir", in *El Aleph*, op. cit., pp. 105-116.

5. "La escritura del Dios", in ibid., pp. 117-123.

6. "Undr", in *El libro de arena*, op.cit., pp.109-129.

7. "El libro de arena" in ibid., pp. 169-176.

8. "El Aleph", in *El Aleph*, op. cit., pp. 154-174.

9. Ibid., p.171.

10. "Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote", in *Ficciones*. Alianza/Emecé, Madrid, 1974. See also *Oficina de tradução*, Rosemary Arrojo. Ática, São Paulo, 1986. Chapters 2 and 3.

11. *After Babel*, op. cit., p.59.

12. In *Adam's Dream*, Ben Belitt. Grove Press, New York, 1978. P.21.

13. "La Busca de Averroes", in *El Aleph*, op. cit., pp. 93-104.

14. Ibid., p. 103.

15. "Los traductores de las 1001 noches", in *Obras Completas de Jorge Luis Borges*. Emecé, Buenos Aires, 1974. 16. Ibid., p. 412.

17. Ibid., p. 412.

18. Ibid., p. 412.

19. "Traducción y literalidad", Octavio Paz, In *Traducción y literalidad*. Tusquets, Barcelona, 1981. Pp. 16-17.

20. "Tradition, Translation, Transculturation: The Ex-centric's Viewpoint", Haroldo de Campos. Translated Stella Tagnin. Unpublished. P.11.

21. "Traducción y literalidad", op. cit., p.17.

22. "Tradition, Translation, Transculturation: The Excentric's Viewpoint", op. cit., p.11.

23. *Le plaisir du texte*, Roland Barthes. Seuil, Paris, 1973. Pp. 9-10.

24. See "Transluciferação mefistofaústica", Haroldo de Campos, in *Deus e o Diabo no Fausto de Goethe*, Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1981, particularly, for Walter Benjamin's influence on Haroldo de Campos.

25. I follow the English version, "The Task of the Translator", translated by Harry Zohn, in *Illuminations*, Walter Benjamin, ed. Hannah Arendt. Schocken, New York, 1969. Pp. 69-83. The original German version is to be found in *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, ed. Hans Joachim Störig. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1969. Pp. 156-169.

26. *Illuminations*, op. cit. p.78. *Das Problem des Übersetzens* , op. cit., p.165: "... gewinnt diese gerade dadurch, wie das Gemeinte an die Art des Meinens in dem bestimmten Worte gebunden ist."

27. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.78. *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.165:"...die Übersetzung liebend vielmehr und bis ins einzelne hinein dessen Art des Meinens".

28. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.79. *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, p.166: "Die wahre Übersetzung ist durchscheinend, sie verdeckt nicht das Original, steht ihm nicht im Licht, sondern lässt die reine Sprache, wie verstärkt durch ihr eigenes Medium, nur um so voller aufs Original fallen."

29. *Die Krisis der europäischen Kultur* , Rudolf Pannwitz. Nuremberg, 1947.

30. *Illuminations* , op. cit., pp. 80-81. *Das Problem des Übersetzen* , op. cit., pp. 167-168: " ... unsere übertragungen, auch die besten, gehn von einem falschen grundsatz aus, sie wollen das indische, griechische, englische verdeutschen, anstatt das deutsche zu verindischen, vergriechischen, verenglischen ...: ; "...der grundsätzliche irrtum des übertragenden ist, dass er den zufällingen stand der eigenen Sprache festhält, anstatt sie durch die fremde gewaltig bewegen zu lassen."; "er muss seine Sprache durch die fremde erweitern und vertiefen..."

31. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.72. *Das Problem des Übersetzen*, op. cit., p.159: "So ist die Übersetzung zuletzt zweckmässig für den Ausdruck des innersten Verhältnisses dere Sprachen zueinander."

32. *Illuminations*. op. cit., p.74. *Das Problem des Übersetzen*, op. cit.,p.161: "Während nämlich alle einzelnen Elemente, die Wörtre, Sätze, Zusammenhänge von fremden Sprachen sich ausschliessen, ergänzen diese Sprachen sich in ihren Intentionen selbst."

33. *Illuminations*. op. cit., p.74. *Das Problem des Übersetzen*, op. cit., p.161: "die reine Sprache".

34. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.74. *Das Problem des Übersetzen*, op. cit., p.161: " ...so ist die Übersetzung, welche am ewigen Fortleben der Werke und am endlichen Aufleben der Sprachen sich entzündet..."

35. *Illuminations*, op. cit., pp. 74-75. *Das Problem des Übersetzen*. op. cit., pp. 161-162: "...immer von neuem die Probe auf jenes heilige Wachstum der Sprachen zu machen: wie weit ihr Verborgenes von der Offenbarnung entfernt sei, wie gegenwärtig es im Wissen um diese Entfernung werden mag".

36. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.75. *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit., p.162: "... in einer wunderbar eindringlichen Weise wenigstens hindeutet als auf den vorbestimmten, versagten Versöhnungs - und Erfüllungsbereich der Sprachen".

37. "Des Tours de Babel" in *Difference in Translation*, op. cit. . The French original pp. 209-248; the English translation by Joseph F. Graham, pp. 165-207.

38. *L'Univers de la Bible*, André Chouraqui. Lidis, Paris, 1984.

39. From the quotation from *L'Univers de la Bible*, op. cit., in *Difference in Translation*, op. cit.. French original, p.214: "YHWH confond la lèvre de toute la terre".

40. *Difference in Translation*, op. cit., p.170. French original, p.214: "La traduction devient alors nécessaire et impossible".

41. Ibid., p.191. French original, p. 235: " Cette promesse fait signe vers un royaume à la fois "promis et interdit où les langues se reconcilieront et s'accompliront". Derrida's quotation is from "The Task of the Translator", op. cit. .

42. Ibid., p.191. French original, p.235: "Il veut toucher à l'intouchable...".

43. Ibid., p.191. French original, p.234.: " ... hymen ou contrat de marriage avec promesse de produire un enfant dont la semence donnera lieu à histoire et croissance".

44. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.75. *Das Problem des Übersetzen*, op. cit., p. 162: "Es ist nicht übertragbar wie das Dichterwort des Originals, weil das Verhältnis des Gehalts zur Sprache völlig verschieden ist in Original und Übersetzung. Bilden nämlich diese im ersten eine gewisse Einheit wie Frucht und Schale, so umgibt die Sprache der Übersetzung ihren Gehalt wie ein Königsmantel in weiten Falten. Denn sie bedeutet eine höhere Sprache als sie ist und bleibt dadurch ihrem eigenen Gehalt gegenüber unangemessen, gewaltig und fremd".

45. *Difference in Translation*, op. cit.,p.193. French original, p. 237: "le noyau est "intouchable", hors d'atteinte et invisible".

46. Ibid., p.193. French original, p.238: "... affaire sa langue fait des plis, moule des formes, coud des ourlets, pique et brode".

47. In "Walter Benjamin as a Translation Theorist", Marilyn Gaddis Rose *Dispositio, Revista Hispánica de Semiótica Literária*, pp. 163-175. Marilyn Gaddis Rose compares Benjamin's translation of Baudelaire's *Recueillement* with that of Stefan George. Benjamin tends not to follow his own advice: "What Benjamin does not do is acclimate French prosody within German or give German poetry a new resonance" (p.170).

48. *Difference in Translation*, op. cit., p.202. French original, p.246: "...chaque langue est comme atrophiée dans sa solitude...".

49. Ibid., p.168. French original, p.212: "Cela déjà ressemble à une traduction".

50. *La Dissémination*, Jacques Derrida. Seuil, Paris, 1972.

51. Quoted by Christopher Norris in *Derrida*, Fontana Modern Masters, Fontana, London, 1987. In *La Dissémination*, op. cit., p.112: "Toutes les traductions dans les langues héritières et dépositaires de la métaphysique occidentale ont donc sur le *pharmakon* un *effet d'analyse* qui le détruit violemment, le réduit à l'un de ses éléments simples en l'interprétant paradoxalement, à partir de l'ultérieur qu'il a rendu possible".

52. *Of Grammatology*, Jacques Derrida, tr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. John Hopkins, Baltimore, 1976. P.74. See also Christie McDonald (ed.), *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation: Texts and Discussions with Jacques Derrida*. Univ. Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Na. and London, 1988.

53. "Conclusions: Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator" ", in *The Resistance to Theory*, Vol. 33. Univ. Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1986. Pp. 73-105.

54. For Harry Zohn's translation see note 25, above. Maurice de Gandillac's translation is in *Walter Benjamin: Oeuvres*, Vol. 1, *Mythe et Violence*. Les Lettres Nouvelles, Paris, 1971. P. 261-277.

55. "Conclusions: Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator" ", op. cit., p.85.

56. Ibid., p.85.

57. *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, op. cit.,p.165.

58. *Illuminations*, op. cit., p.78.

59. "Conclusions: Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator" ", op. cit., p.91.

60. Ibid., p.86.

61. *Difference in Translation*, op. cit., pp. 102-141.

62. "Os postulados da razão tradutora", interview with Jean Laplanche. In *Folhetim, Folha de São Paulo*, 30 July, 1988. See also "Os dilemas da tradução freudiana" in the same *Folhetim*. Both articles by Rubens Marcelo Volich.

63. "The Measure of Translation Effects",Philip E. Lewis, in *Difference in Translation*, op. cit., pp. 31-62.

64. "o'er-brimmed", Richard Rand, in ibid., pp. 81-101.

65. Ibid., p. 87.

66. "Taking Fidelity Philosophically", Barbara Johnson, in ibid., pp. 142-148.

67. Ibid., p. 143.

68. "Propositions pour une poétique de la traduction" in *Pour la poétique II*, Henri Meschonnic. Gallimard, Paris, 1973. P.308.

69. Ibid., p.310.

70. Ibid., p.308.

71. Ibid., p.308.

72. "D'une linguistique de la traduction à la poétique de la traduction". In *Pour la poétique II*, op. cit., p.354.

73. Ibid., p. 359.

74. For a very critical view of the work of the Summer Institute of Linguistics see *Is God an American? An Anthropological Perspective on the Missionary Work of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, ed. Soren Hvalkøf and Peter Aaby.* International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Survival International, Copenhagen and London, 1981.

75. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber. Brill, Leiden, 1974. P.12.

76. Ibid., p.12.

77. Ibid., p.31.

78. *Toward a Science of Translating*, Eugene A. Nida. Brill, Leiden, 1964. Pp. 161-164.

79. Ibid., p.162.

80. *The Theory and Practice of Translating*, op. cit. p.5.

81. Ibid., p.173.

82. "D'une linguistique de la traduction à la poétique de la traduction", p.335.

83. Ibid., p.338.

84. Ibid., p.339.

85. "Au commencement", in *Pour la poétique II*, op. cit..

86. "D'une linguistique de la traduction à la poétique de la traduction", op. cit., p.347.

87. "Lingüística Poética", Roman Jakobson. In *Lingüística e Comunicação*, tr. Izidoro Blikstein and José Paulo Paes. Cultrix, São Paulo, 1977, p.162. Originally published in *Style in Language*, org. Thomas A. Sebeck. MIT, New York, 1960.

88. See Chapter 2, p.22.

89. See Chapter 3, p.45.

90. See p.111 above.

CHAPTER 7

TRANSLATION AS A LITERARY FORCE

At the moment we do not have anything like a clear picture of the history of translation in any West European literature.
Theo Hermans

CHAPTER 7 -- TRANSLATION AS A LITERARY FORCE

(i) Introduction

This chapter will look at the work of two groups of scholars who have been developing studies on literary translation in the last two decades, the first group consisting of scholars who come mainly from the Low Countries and Israel, and the second group centring on the University of Göttingen, Germany (1).

The members of the first group, the more established group, share a number of common assumptions about literary translation. Firstly, they do not see literature as a fixed set of values in which literary works have permanent meanings. André Lefevere describes this approach as *essentialist*:

> Essentialist theories are ... theories which ask questions like, "What is ... literature, ethics, language, philosophy, religion, etc. ?" Translation has been traditionally been blessed with the sorry distinction that, in its case, and in its case only, this primordial essentialist question has been preceded by another one, namely, "Is translation possible ? " (2)

The original work is inviolable, and any translation can be no more than a mere shadow.

Lefevere and the other writers discussed in this chapter see literature not as a fixed system but as a complex and dynamic system in which the values of different works and genres are changing all the time. A literary translation is not looked at from the point of view of how close, accurate expressive or brilliant a reflection it may be of the original source text; instead, the place which the translation occupies in the system of the language into which it is translated (the target system) is analysed. A translation is not examined in isolation, merely having a relationship with its original, but it is seen as having relationships with all aspects of the target literature, and this role may either be central or peripheral.

The idea of literature as a system is a central idea of the Russian Formalists and can be seen particularly in the work of Tynianov (3). Any literature is a system in which there is a continual struggle for dominance between conservative and innovative forces, between canonized and non-canonized works, between models at the centre of the system and those at the periphery, and between different trends and genres. When the top position in a given literature is occupied by an innovative type, the more conservative forces are found lower on the scale; and when more conservative types occupy the top positions, the lower levels begin renewals. And if, in the second situation, the holders of the positions do not change places, the entire literature will become stagnant.

Itamar Even-Zohar analyses the role of translated literature in the literary system (4). It may occupy any position: high, low, innovative, conservative, simplified or stereotyped. If it maintains a primary position, it "participates actively in *modelling the centre* of the polysystem " (5). In this case, it would generally be innovative, probably associated with major events in literary history and introducing important new trends from abroad. Under these circumstances, there is a strong likelihood that there is no real clear-cut distinction made between original and translated writings. Sometimes translations will be disguised as original works, and very often the major literary figures and important new writers will produce the most important translations. Thus translation will be one of the main ways of introducing new models into the home literature. Works from abroad, specially chosen by the proponents of the new kind of literature, will be translated in order to introduce into the home literature "a new poetic language, new metrics, techniques, intonations" (6).

There are three types of situation where translation takes the centre of the literary stage. The first is when a young immature literature needs to adapt models "in order to make it function as a literary language and useful for the emerging public" (7). The prime example of this is German literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As we saw in Chapter 3, the translations of Shakespeare and the Greek poets played a major role in the formation of a national German literature.

The second instance given by Even-Zohar is "that of relatively established literatures whose resources are limited and whose position within a larger literary hierarchy is generally peripheral" (8). Such smaller literatures cannot produce all the different genres and leave some of them to be filled by translated literature. Thus, smaller literatures have more difficulty in producing innovations and may often depend on innovations coming in from translations. Within the group of European and related literatures, which form their own polysystem, some smaller national literatures take peripheral positions, imitating the innovations of major literatures. Clear examples would be most Latin American literatures, which, until this century, introduced a large number of forms through translations from the French. Even-Zohar comments:

> Whereas stronger literatures may have the option to adapt novelties from some peripheral type within their indigenous borders ... "weak" literatures in such situations often depend on import alone (9).

The third case where translated literature plays a major role in a national literature is when, at a certain historical moment, the established model is no longer acceptable for a new generation and no other adequate model is available for the home literature. In such a case, translated literature may easily play a central role.

In "Translated Literature in the Late Ottoman Literary Polysystem" (10) Saliha Parker shows that the dominant *Divan* poetry in Turkey in the late 1850's reached a state of exhaustion and thus facilitated the introduction of a large number of translations from Western European literatures into central positions within Turkish literature.

On the other hand, translation may play a minor role in a given literature. In such circumstances, it has no influence on innovative writing and is generally epigonic, keeping to outdated or conservative forms. Even-Zohar sees an interesting paradox here: "translation, by which new ideas, items, characteristics can be introduced into a literature, becomes a means to preserve a traditional taste "(11). This state of affairs may come about when translated literature, after introducing a number of changes, lost contact with avant-garde literature and took a conservative back seat. It may even be used as a reactionary rearguard, "often fanatically guarded by the agents of secondary activities against even minor changes" (12). Indeed, Even-Zohar speculates that this role for translation may even be its most common position. An interesting example of translation playing a conservative role is Brazilian poetry in the post-1922 period, where most translations preserved the outmoded Parnassian forms, and where the Modernist innovators attempted to find genuine Brazilian roots.

Of course, translation does not have to be either wholly innovative or conservative. Even-Zohar exemplifies Hebrew literature between the two world wars. Literature translated from the Russian introduced new forms whereas translations from English, German, Polish and other languages did not introduce new features. These translations even adapted the new features found in the translations from the Russian.

Another important aspect Even-Zohar addresses is the boundary between a translated work and an original work. When translated literature is in a primary position, the borderlines of translation are diffuse. The writer will not look for models in his own national literature but will transfer foreign models and conventions to his own work. Hence, we will find a large number of imitations of foreign works. We will also find pseudo-translations -- the author will pretend that his original work is a translation. Thereby, if the supposed "translation" comes from a more important literature, as it invariably will, his work will have greater prestige. *Don Quijote*, the most famous of all pseudo-translations, was written at a time when the Spanish chivalrous novel and conventions were weak and exhausted.

By contrast, when translated literature is in a secondary position, the translator will attempt to find ready-made models for the translated text: he will accomodate the foreign text to the home language. Here we can see Schleiermacher's first kind of translation, that of the translator bringing the

translation towards his own language. When the translated literature is in a primary position, we see Schleiermacher's second kind of translation -- the translator moving towards the text (13). Translated literature in Germany in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has already been mentioned as a literature in which translated literature was very strong and where home produced literature imitated foreign models. And again, as we saw in Chapter 3, translated literature in France in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was in a very weak position. All translated literature was required to conform to French norms -- everything translated into French was thoroughly Frenchified.

The questions which the follower of Even-Zohar's theories will ask will be different to those which the scholar of the translatability of a text will ask. He will not ask: "Did translator A capture the essence of text Y better than translator B ?" but "What literary forces produced translations A and B ? ; "What is the position of translations A and B within their literature ?"; and "How do translations A and B stand in relation to each other ?".

Thus this method is descriptive. The commentator will try to account for the various factors behind the nature of a translation: he will analyse a wide range of translations produced in a certain period, the historical development of translation in a given society, the influence of foreign literatures on a literature, an audience's expectations of translations in a given culture, and the influence of publishing patterns on translations.

Perhaps the most controversial point made by this group of scholars is that the source translation must be ignored completely. According to Gideon Toury, "translations are facts of one system only: the target system" (15). He believes that translations very rarely have any influence on the source system and can never influence its linguistic norms. On the other hand, they do often have considerable influence on the recipient culture, vocabulary and syntax. Therefore, the scholar should avoid any study of the source or comparison between the original and the translation.

(ii) **Case Studies**

Let us now look at a number of studies which see translation as an integral part of the literary polysystem. One of the most important studies in literary translation in recent years is the research project carried out at the University of Louvain, Belgium, by Lieven D'hulst, José Lambert and Katrin van Bragt. The project studied literature translated in France from 1800 to 1850 and took into consideration some 8,000 titles. The general conclusions of the project are published in the article "Translated Literature in France, 1800 - 1850" (16).

A central discovery was that the translation of plays and poetry played a central role in the Romantic drama versus Classical drama conflict, particularly in the decade 1820 - 1830. It was through translations that Romantic writers tried to abolish the traditional constraints of the stage. The unorthodox Alexandrines used by Deschamps in his translation of *Macbeth* and Vigny in his *More de Venise* introduced new verse forms to be followed by the Romantic dramatists, specifically by Victor Hugo. Indeed, the translation of foreign authors such as Schiller, Shakespeare, Calderón and Lope de Vega, whose plays did not of course conform to French dramatic conventions, were the most avant-garde plays available. Many theatre directors refused to stage these translations or insisted that they be "toned down". Despite this problem, translated plays, which introduced idiomatic speech, local colour, variations in the linguistic register and a breaking of classical unities, did undermine the traditional classical system. A school of translations of plays into prose, supported by Deschamps and Stendhal, gained a considerable following amongst Romantic writers. Although there was no possibility of staging these plays -- they were considered "non-drama" -- their long-term influence on the European theatre is considerable.

Moreover, around 1825, French prose became the popular accepted form for the translation of foreign verse, thereby starting the tradition of the *poème en prose*, still very evident today in French literature.

The rigid principles that governed the translation of drama or poetry were very different from the norms for the translation of prose. Prose, the non-elevated form, was more pliable and was not bound by the inflexible rules that governed the translation of classical or modern drama and classical verse. Translations of the novels of Walter Scott and E.T.Hoffman used colourful local expressions and introduced new themes and narrative techniques.

The project notes other differences between genres. Prose translations were reviewed by very few writers and critics. Prose works were also often introduced as pseudo-translations. On the other hand, translators of verse and drama would often introduce their works by means of an introduction or preface emphasising that their work was a translation, that it was new, and that it was in verse. Also, a number of sub-genres such as supernatural tales and women's novels were translated in greater numbers that others.

A further difference is that French dramatists often translated foreign plays as a way of importing new ideas whereas prose translators were usually specialist translators. Although the translations of Isabelle de Montolieu, Amédée Pichot, Elise Voïart, Amable Tastu, Adolphe Loèvre-Veimars, Auguste Defauconpret and Albert de Montément often provided the models for the work of Mme de Staël,

Charles Nodier, Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Eugène Sue, Alexandre Dumas or Georges Sand, the translators were never considered major writers.

Hendrik van Gorp, in "The European Picaresque Novel in the 17th and 18th Centuries" (17), shows the ways in which translations of the Spanish picaresque novel influenced the development of the European novel. Van Gorp's study centres on the three main picaresque novels: *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzmán de Alfarache* and *El Buscón*. In all three cases the early English, German and Dutch versions were often made from the French translations. The earliest translations (until 1620), which were made into French, were generally close to the original. In other words, they were source-oriented translations. But after 1620 the translations changed. Firstly, the style conformed more to French norms. Then the story was also adapted. A down-at-heel gentleman-bourgeois replaced the Spanish rogue. According to Van Gorp, " the plot is accomodated in such a way that amorous adventures overshadow social criticism and the protagonist's national needs" (18). In addition, happy endings replaced the normal open endings. Near the end of the seventeenth century, the translations became even freer. Van Gorp considers these versions more "adaptations" than "translations".

The genre the picaresque novel entered in France was very different from that which it entered in Germany. In France the novel was very much a lower genre whose principal function was entertainment. In Germany, whose literature in the first half of the seventeenth century was still at a formative stage, the novel had a didactic function. The German version of *Lazarillo Castigado* (1617) was used to propagate the Counter Reformation. It became a moralizing exemplary tale in which the point of view of the Church was favoured. Translations of picaresque novels found models for imitation in various countries. Nicolaas Heinsius' *De vermakelyken Avanturier*, Lesage's *Gil Blas de Santillane* and Smollett's *Roderick Random* are examples.

Maria Tymoczko's "Translation as a Force for Literary Revolution in the Twelfth-Century Shift from Epic to Romance" (19) shows "that translation played a central and in fact decisive role in the shift from oral to written literature, from epic to romance". Indeed, the failure to recognise the precise role of translation "has marred all critical and historical discussions of the emergence of the genre of romance" (20).

In the first half of the twelfth century we see the emergence of different genres , mostly coming from medieval Latin literature, such as the voyage or quest, the saint's life, histories, didactic genres, to challenge the dominant *chansons de geste* -- oral verse incorporating themes which included a thirst for fame, the importance of loyalty and honour, war and warrior ethics. All of these themes support the structures of feudal society and the view that the French are God's

chosen people. As a result of translation, the oral formulaic verse of the assonating, decasyllabic lines of the *chansons de geste* gives way to experimentation with other forms -- hexasyllabic rhymed couplets, octosyllabic rhymed couplets in four line stanzas -- and eventually to the standard *romance* metre -- continuous narration in octosyllabic rhymed couplets.

In addition to metrical innovations, translations introduced a number of other new elements: among them are interior monologues; character types such as the hero lover and female characters; the individual authorial voice; a taste for marvels; and , perhaps most important of all, the concept of *amour courtios*.

Characteristics which emerge when translation attempts to undermine the dominant poetics can be seen here. Many of the earlier *romances* were pseudo-translations, citing a supposed original and original author in order to gain prestige and facilitate its acceptance.

A further important change is the movement from an oral-based literature centring on epic singers to a more written-based literature in which lettered translators, adaptors and authors played the major role.

One neglected area of translation studies is that of the pressures behind the publication of translations. In her article "The Response to Translated Literature" (21), Ria Vanderauwera examines the translations of novels from a "small" literature, Dutch, to a "big" literature, English, during the period 1961 - 1980. There are a considerable number of barriers which prevent the acceptance of Dutch novels in the English-speaking world. Firstly, there is the conception of what a novel should be like. Contemporary Dutch novels are relatively short, provincial and mannered. They show a great interest in neat structures and precision. They are built around relatively few events and are often introverted. By contrast, best-selling Anglo-American fiction is more voluminous, characters and settings are broader, and there is a much greater emphasis on humour. Thus Dutch fiction comes up against an immediate problem. This was summarised by the newspaper reviewer, James Brockway: "Dutch writing differs too widely in its origins and traditions and even in its nature and aim, which does not always appear to be primarily to entertain or even to engage " (22). Never are Dutch works condsidered new or interesting innovations in Anglo-American literature.

A second considerable problem is fashion:

> There is hardly any room for foreign fiction in such an environment, unless of course, it is written by East European dissidents, or is from or about areas and political situations which are "fashionable" in the leading literary and cultural milieu -- none of which applies to the Low Countries and their literature (23).

Vanderauwera demonstrates that Anglophone book reviewers and literary critics have little sympathy for and knowledge of Dutch literature. Comments in reviews are often based on references to Anna Frank or comparisons with the one area of Dutch culture there is some knowledge of -- painting: "a self-portrait, as realistic as one of Rembrandt's or "a picture still easily recognisable, I should have thought, to Breughel" (24).

A further problem is access to the media. Little space is devoted to Dutch fiction either in the British or American literary press or journals of the book trade, and there is virtually no coverage in artistic programmes on radio and television.

Successes are few. The only bestseller, Jan Cremer's *I Jan Cremer* (1964), owed much of its success to sexual explicitness and similarity to the work of Henry Miller.

The lack of interest in Dutch fiction from conservatively-minded commercial publishers has resulted in the setting up of a Netherlands government supported Foundation for Translators, which has created openings for translations into English. The problem is now that of exposure and distribution. Dutch fiction in English may be available in translation, but the majority of copies are piled up, unread, in the warehouses of publishing houses or bought up by government agencies.

Gordon Brotherston's article, "Don Quixote's Tapestry: Translation and Critical Responses" (25), examines translations and adaptations of Cervantes' masterpiece. Like early translations of picaresques novels, the early translations of *Don Quijote* -- those until the 1680's -- are relatively source text oriented. In the 1680's there is a considerable change in translation style. This can be seen most clearly in the fact that Filleau de Saint-Martyin suppressed the hero's death of his French version (1681) so he could produce his own Part III !

Brotherston pays particular attention to the prints accompanying the different versions. The robust scenes of the prints in the 1662 Brussels edition contrast with the illustrations of Charles Antoine Koypel in which "Don Quixote and his squire are now obliged to ape Versailles" (26). These prints set the tone for versions of *Don Quixote* until the end of the eighteenth century when, under Romantic influence, "the *Quixote* began to be read itself as a specifically Spanish text", with illustrations showing local folk customs and "a would-be Castilian landscape" (27).

A further interpretation of *Quixote* is found in post-revolutionary Russia. George Balanchnes' ballet *Don Quixote* (1965) and the films by Pabst (1933) and

Kozintsev (1957) show Sancho as a proletarian hero and Don Quixote as a decadent noble.

Other recent interpretations include Salvador Dali's illustrations and Manuel de Falla's score for the puppet show which views Don Quixote as "a spirit of belligerent intransigence that ought never to be accepted in civilized society" (28).

Thus Brotherston shows how the Cervantes original has been given certain ideological interpretations not only in translation but also in illustration, film, music and ballet.

André Lefevere centres much of his recent writing around the idea of refracted texts -- "texts that have been processed for certain audiences, children, e.g., or adapted to a certain poetics or a certain ideology" (29). A translation is one of many ways of adapting a text to a certain ideology or for a certain audience. Most of our knowledge of the classics comes not from reading the original works but from refractions such as a TV serial, a comic strip, a film or stage version, a shortened or children's version, a critical article, etc. . Many young people's acquaintance with *Wuthering Heights* is through Kate Bush's classic pop song, *Heathcliff.* If the work is foreign, our contact will probably be with the translation. In certain cases the translations may become more important than the original. The work of Ibsen and Strindberg was introduced to the world not in the original Norwegian and Swedish but in the respective German and French translations. In his article "Why the Real Heine Can't Stand Up To/In Translation: Rewriting as a way to Literary Influence" (30), Lefevere describes the many different refractions of Heine both inside and outside Germany. The Victorians saw him as gross and vulgar and some Victorian translators censored parts of the poems they translated. Despite considering him "profoundly disrespectable", Matthew Arnold saw Heine as a fellow fighter against Philistinism. George Eliot admired him for his wit but condemned his "coarseness", "scurility" and "Mephistophelian contempt for the reverent feelings of other men". The Weimar Heine, like the Rhine, had "a European mission. The Nazis saw the Jew Heine as "scum". And in East Germany he has been an ally of fundamental social problems (31).

(iii) **The Göttingen Studies**

The Göttingen group share a number of the interests of the Israel - Low Countries group, or, as it has been called since the publication of *The Manipulation of Literature*, the Manipulation group. Like the Manipulation group, the Göttingen researchers are interested in the historical and social context of translated works, studying series of translations and avoiding judgements as to the ability of the translator, but they do not share two of the suppositions of the Manipulation group. They do not have the same enthusiasm for literature as a system as do certain of the

members of the Manipulation group. They also do not just study translations from the texts produced in the target language, ignoring the original source. Instead, they work with the idea of transfer from the source to the target text, often comparing parallel passages. One of their central ideas is that of *Kulturschaffende Differenz* (32), the notion that through translation different cultural values can be seen.

Let us now look at samples of the work of the Göttingen group. In "Oroonoko et l'abolition de l'esclavage: le rôle du traducteur" (33), Jürgen von Stackelberg examines the way in which a very different cultural emphasis is given to Mrs Aphra Behn's original, *Oroonoko or The Royal Slave* by the French translator, Pierre Antoine de la Place, whose translation was published in 1745. Even the title is considerably different: *Oronoko (sic) ou le Prince nègre*. The novel was originally written as anti-slavery propaganda by a supporter of the English Tory Party, who opposed the Whigs' support of the slave trade. Although he retains certain descriptions of the original, La Place deliberately changes many features. He states: "Pour plaire à Paris, j'ai cru qu'il lui fallait un habit français" (34). The novel is tidied up for the French market.

> D'un texte proliférant de tous côtés dans le désordre, fabriqué sans règles et sans goût, contenant certes des éléments romanesques mais également bourré d'exotismes ... La Place a fait, selon une méthode entièrement classique, un roman de type hellénistique (35).

The novel is given a happy end the slave-prince Oroonoko takes on the characteristics of a French aristocrat, and the anti-slavery message is toned down. When Oroonoko is given his freedom and is allowed to return home, he promises to send 300 slaves from his African kingdom to reward his liberators !

In "Problems of Cultural Transfer and Cultural Identity: Personal Names and titles in Drama Translation" (36), Brigitte Schultze studies the way in which names and titles in plays have been translated from Polish. The decision the translator takes as to whether he will adapt the name to the target language, find an equivalent or use the original form will be of utmost importance: names and titles in the target language will give the impression that the play takes place in the target culture; names and titles left in the original give the impression of foreignness. Brigitte Schultze finds that translators often use a combination of techniques to translate personal names. For example, in Daniel Gerould and C. S. Durer's translation of *Kurka Wodna (The Water Hen)* by Stanislaw Ihnacy Witkiewicz, the central character Elizbieta Flake (Guts) - Drawacka (Virgin) is given the name of Elizabeth Gutzie-Virgeling, reminiscent of Elizabeth the Virgin Queen and also the giving the idea of a certain stiffness and lack of sexual vitality. For the villain Maciej Wiktós, (connotations of a backwoodsman and "victor"), The American translators give Tom Hoozy, an uncouth Indiana joke figure. By contrast, the villain's alias,

Ryszard de Korbowa-Korbowski, is left in the original Polish, but he is often referred to by the hypocristic Dick (37).

Names and titles, then, are often subjected to such pluralistic treatment. However, the present day tendency is to leave them in or near the original form whereas the tendency until the first half of the nineteenth century was to adapt them to the target language. For example, Christa Vogel's contemporary German translation of *Buckel*, by Slawomir Mrozek, consistently adds "Baron" as a form of address. A remark "Dobrze, prosze pana" (Yes please, Sir) becomes "Bitte sehr, Herr Baron" (38).

The Göttingen and Manipulation groups, then, have similar aims. How can we compare them with Benjamin, Derrida and their followers ? Both sets of scholars recognise the importance of translation as a central human activity. However, the work of the Göttingen-Manipulation groups is more concerned with the socio-historico-cultural manifestations of translations whereas Benjamin and Derrida investigate the mythical and ontological aspects of translation. Another difference is that the studies of the Göttingen-Manipulation groups are generally macro-studies: results are obtained through the collation of data. As mentioned, the Louvain project on translation of literature in France from 1800 to 1850 has some 8,000 titles. Derrida, de Man and their followers whose essays appear in *Difference in Translation* (39) examine a single translation in detail to find faults, gaps and inconsistencies. To these scholars a translation is an individual reading of a text; to the Göttingen-Manipulation groups a translation is a way a certain society reads a text.

Most of the authors mentioned in Chapter 6 favour Schleiermacher's second type of translation, that which tries to adapt to the form of the original. The Göttingen-Manipulation groups do not favour any one kind of translation. Their position is more objective than that of Benjamin or Meschonnic, for example, where we do find a definite personal preference.

We can see the differences between the two sets of authors as differences between contemporary trends in literary criticism: one trend examining the social, cultural and historical values of a text or a set of texts; the other making a fresh reading of accepted values, "deconstructing" or questioning these accepted ideas. The study of translation, then shows both of these trends at work.

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6. Ibid., p.121.

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12. Ibid., p.123.

13. See Chapter 3, pp.47-48.

14. André Lefevere analyses Voltaire's translation of Shakespeare in "What is Written Must Be Rewritten: *Julius Caesar*: Shakespeare, Voltaire, Wieland, Buckingham", in *Second Hand*, op. cit., pp. 88-106.

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26. Ibid., p.54.

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CHAPTER 8

LITERARY TRANSLATION THEORY IN BRAZIL

a sempre desprezada, embora nem sempre desprezível, tradução dominical

Jorge Wanderley

Chapter 8 -- Literary Translation Theory in Brazil

This chapter will examine a selection of recent material published on literary translation in Brazil. It will first look at the work of Augusto and Haroldo de Campos, then analyse the studies of different groups of translators in Brazil made by Jorge Wanderley, and finally describe other work on literary translation that has been done in Brazil.

(i) The Campos Brothers

The ideas of Augusto and Haroldo de Campos on translation are quite transparent. I shall ennumerate them with the help of Jorge Wanderley's studies (1) and of Ana Cristina Cesar's essay "Nos Bastidores da Tradução" (2).

i) The whole of their work -- their translations and their articles on translation -- has a definite shape and coherence. They have translated only the authors they believe have affected, changed or revolutionised poetic form: firstly Pound, cummings, Joyce and Mallarmé; and then Maiakovski, Khlebnikov, Valéry, Poe, the Provençal troubadours, Goethe, Octavio Paz, Lewis Carroll, Keats, Edward Lear, John Donne and John Cage. They often quote the adage of Maiakovski pointing to the importance of new forms: "Sem forma revolucionária não há arte revolucionária" (3). In "Nos Bastidores da Tradução", Ana Cristina Cesar calls their attitude to translation "um sentido ativo de missão" (4). Haroldo de Campos uses equally strong terms:

> ...só me proponho traduzir aquilo que para mim releva em termos de um projeto (que não é apenas meu) de militância cultural (5).

The qualities the Campos brothers admire can be seen in Augusto de Campos' introduction to his translations of cummings:

> ... do lado de Pound e Joyce ... Cummings (sic) é dos poucos que mantêm uma sadia atitude de inconformismo, pesquisando os meios de levar à consequências profundas, num plano de funcionalidade, os assumos de rebeldia intentadas pelos grupos das décadas iniciais ... permanecem esses três, com uma obra *viva* e *aberta*, a apontar sendas de superação aos mais jovens e a fornecer "nutrimento de impulso a novas expansões (6).

Ana Cristina Cesar emphasises the political element in their work. They have: "uma atitude bastante política, uma vez que se expressa dentro de uma estrutura coerente de valores pró/contra e de conceitos de poesia nos termos "dominador/dominado" (7).

ii) The importance of poetry is not so much in the content as in the form. The translator must favour translating the form of the poem he is working with, even if this means sacrificing the content. They consciously attempt to introduce new syntactical, lexical and morphological forms into Portuguese. Haroldo de Campos states:

> O tradutor alarga as fronteiras de sua própria língua e subverte-lhe os dogmas ao influxo do texto estrangeiro (8).

In *Verso, Reverso, Controverso*, Augusto de Campos uses similar language:

> ...parece importante alargar o horizonte de nossa linguagem poética, reproduzindo em português alguns dos poemas de Laforgue e Corbière (9).

Their attempt to introduce new morphological forms can be clearly seen in their translation of excerpts from *Finnegan's Wake*:

> Ela era só uma tímida tênue fina meiga mini mima miga duma coisinha então, saltiritando, por silvalunágua e êle era um bruto andarulho larábil ferramundo dum Curraghman, cortando o seu feno para o sol cair a pino, tão rijo como os carvalhos (deus os preteje !) costumavam ruflar pelos canais do fortífero Kildare, o que primeiro florestfossenfiou champinhando através dela. Ela pensou que ia sussimir subterra de ninfante virginha quando êle lhe botou o ôlho de tigris !
>
> Translated by Augusto de Campos (10)

iii) The main influences behind their theory of translation are Walter Benjamin, Roman Jakobson and Ezra Pound. From Benjamin they take the idea of the source language influencing that of the target language, as we saw in the previous section (ii, above). From Jakobson they take the idea of translating the form of the source language into the target language. And from Pound they take the idea of the translator as recreator (11). The terms and neologisms they use for their translations are grandchildren of Pound:"*recriação, transcriação, reimaginação* (caso da poesia clássica chinesa), *transparadisação* ou *transluminação* (*Seis Cantos do Paradiso de Dante*) e *transluciferação mefistofáustica* (*Cenas Finais do Segundo Fausto* de Goethe)"(12).

Among the neglected Brazilian authors they have championed is the poet and translator from Maranhão, Odorico Mendes (1799-1864). Mendes translated the *Aeneid* and *Iliad* into a Portuguese which would try to find equivalents for many of the Latin and Greek lexical items. Where a word didn't exist in Portuguese, he would create a neologism. Some are less successful, e.g., "velocípede Aquiles" than others, e.g., "Irís alidourada", "crinazul Netuno". He also tried to situate the classical texts in Brazilian reality. His notes compare the *jangada* used by Ulysses with that of the *jangadeiros* of Ceará. Another technique he used was to interpolate lines from

other poets (Camoens, Francisco Manuel de Melo, Antônio Ferreira, Filinto Elisio) when he thought this was the most suitable way of rendering the line. As we shall see, the Campos brothers borrow this technique.

However, Odorico Mendes' translations aroused the wrath of many Brazilian critics. For Silvio Romero, his translations were "monstruosidades" written in "português macarrônico" (13). Antônio Cândido shares this opinion:

> alastrando a sua tradução da *Ilíada* de vocábulos e expressões que tocam as raias do bestialógico e que Silvio Romero já fez a devida justiça: *multimamente, olhicetílea, albinitente.* ... um preciosismo do pior gosto, enfático, vazio em que o termo raro, a imagem descabida, a construção arrevezada até a obscuridade são apoios duma inspiração pobre, em fase de decadência (14).

By contrast, Haroldo de Campos places Odorico Mendes very much in the tradition of craftsmen of the language, the tradition of Joyce, with his "palavras-montagem", or Guimarães Rosa, with his "inesgotáveis invenções vocabulares" (15).

iv) The translator must be fully integrated with contemporary currents in poetry.

> ... se o poeta-tradutor não estiver ao nível curricular da melhor e mais avançada poesia do seu tempo, não poderá reconfigurar, síncrono-diacronicamente, a melhor poesia do passado (16).

Ana Cristina Cesar lists further points : v) "Irreverência temática" (17). As well as favouring poets who introduced new forms, the Campos brothers choose to translate poets who write about unorthodox topics. Examples are Donne's *The Flea* and other metaphysical poems; Lewis Carroll's "nonsense" poems and the cummings' poems which emphasise visual format.

vi) "*Tecnologia* poética ou artesanato formal rigoroso" (18). Rather than working with poets who emphasise emotional states or existential problems, the Campos brothers work with poets who deliberately use language as an instrument and experiment with the various elements of language. A good example is the Provençal poet , Arnaut Daniel, who experiments with a number of different types of end rhyme (see above, Chap. 4, p. 67-68). Indeed, all Provençal poetry suits the purposes of Augusto de Campos:

> mas o que há de novo na poesia de Provença, a justificar a sua presença em plena era tecnológica? Há, em primeiro lugar, precisamente, a tecnologia poética, o trabalho de estruturação e de ajuste das peças do poema, em termos de artesanato (19).

The poems the Campos brothers translate often echo the ideogrammatic form of much concrete poetry. Examples are George Herbert's *The Altar* and *Easter*

Wings and Lewis Carroll's *Tail-Poem* , where the poems themselves form the shapes of an altar, a pair of wings and a tail. Needless to say, the translations of Augusto de Campos, the first two in *Verso, Reverso, Controverso* (20) and the third in *O Anticrítico* (21), form identical shapes.

vii) For Ana Cristina Cesar, the Campos brothers favour poems where there is some intentional difficulty or obscurity. They consider Mallarmé's adage, "ajouter un peu d'obscurité" (22), positive, as it ensures that the reader must approach the poem with a greater amount of objectivity, in contrast to the ease with which a more subjective emotional poem may be understood. They prefer cerebral, rational poets. Thus we can understand their enthusiasm for the Metaphysical poets and their disregard for the Romantics. In summarising the qualities Dryden and Johnson disliked in the Metaphysicals, Augusto de Campos puts forward the kind of poetry he himself favours:

> O que se condena. com esse ritual eufemístico, nos poetas "metafísicos" é, na verdade, a intervenção do pensamento, do raciocínio, ou mais ainda, da racionalidade, onde parecera lícito usar apenas da emoção e do sentimento: condena-se em resumo, uma poesia dirigida mais ao cérebro que ao coração (23).

Further points are made by Jorge Wanderley: viii) The Campos brothers make a definite imposition on the reader. The tone is that of "take us or leave us", or, in the words of Jorge Wanderley, "Après moi le déluge" (24) and more bluntly, "que tudo o mais vá pro inferno" (25). Their work contains an "autoritarismo da RUPTURA" (26). The translator/poet *must* break with the tradition. If he doesn't, he is hardly worth considering. There is even a certain snobbery towards other "ordinary" translations. This can be seen in Haroldo de Campos' comments on "inferior" translations of *The Raven* in *Deus e o Diabo no Fausto de Goethe*:

> Vejamos agora como se comportam diante do mesmo texto-amostra as traduções comuns, *naturais*, destituídas de um projeto estético radical (27).

ix) This excessive self-confidence can often be seen in their prefaces and commentaries:

> Mallarmé: tradução em triálogo, tridução (Décio dixit), palavras da tribo, tributo. E depois de Pound (Cantares), cummings (10 poemas, um solo, Augusto performing), Joyce (Panaroma, a duas vozes, i fratelli de Campos, turgimanos siamesmos), novamente o trio em tríptico, um Mallarmé que vem sendo trigerado desde os anos 50 completa agora o quadrante da circunviagem: paiduma, quadrívio (28).

Jorge Wanderley describes this as a "jubilosa auto-contemplação" (29), which shows that the coming together of the Campos brothers and Mallarmé is an "espécie de conjunção astral afortunada, cometa que não se dá a qualquer século" (30).

Yet their eloquence often covers up certain weaknesses in their arguments. Jorge Wanderley mentions Haroldo de Campos' essay, "O Texto-Espelho (Poe, Engenheiro de Avessos)", in which he dissects the effects Poe achieves through his repetition of certain sounds. Haroldo de Campos analyses his own translation of the second line of the final stanza of *The Raven*:

> On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door.
> No pálido busto de Palas, justo sobre meus umbrais (31).

He emphasises that the phonemes /u/ and /b/ "estão ainda em UMBRAIS" (32). However, as this vowel is nasalized, it is not the same as that of *busto* and *justo*.

In addition, the connection between RAVEN and NEVER which Haroldo de Campos makes at great length seems somewhat forced to Wanderley. In Poe's poem they appear near each other on only one occasion. The word NEVER appears only once; it is NEVERMORE that appears frequently and from which Haroldo de Campos extracts his NEVERs.

x) Perhaps the most interesting point that Jorge Wanderley makes is that despite their radical rhetoric, the work on translation of the Campos brothers is "capaz de não ser radical" (33). He fails to find a Poundian "Make It New" policy running throughout their work. What he finds instead is the use of different translation techniques within the same poem. In Augusto de Campos' translation of Marvell's *To His Coy Mistress* there are lines of seven, eight and ten syllables to translate Marvell's octosyllables. Sometimes Augusto de Campos follows Marvell's rhyming couplets , and sometimes he doesn't, and he adds three lines to Marvell's 46 lines. It seems that the translator is primarily trying to translate the movement of Marvell's language and is subordinating the metre and rhyme scheme to this. In other words, Augusto de Campos, rather than choosing to strictly obey either metre or rhyme scheme, or ignoring both, is "valendo-se de recursos normativos plurais" (34), an original, but hardly a radical Poundian technique. Indeed, many of the Campos' brothers' translations, e.g., those of Pound's *Cantos*, Mallarmé's *Coup de Dés* and the French poet's other poems, and those of Donne, do follow the original rather closely.

xi) To complete my analysis of the Campos brothers, I must emphasise the role they have had in bringing the work of the foreign poets they have translated to the attention of the Brazilian public. Their seriousness and coherent plan has made the translation of poetry, in the words of Jorge Wanderley,

> algo muito diferente da sempre desprezada, embora nem sempre desprezível tradução dominical, operada sem cerimônias e sem a

> visão fundamental: a de que na tradução tudo está ... Com esta mudança de eixo, o grupo instaura, ademais no panorama brasileiro uma visão... de que a tradução passe a ser considerada como chave para o literário e suas relações com o que nos cerca (35).

(ii) **Other Groups of Brazilian Translators**

In his M.A. dissertation, *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a experiência da geração de 45 e dos Concretos* (36), Jorge Wanderley compares the concrete translators with the so-called "Geração de 45" translators, Pêricles Eugênio de Silva Ramos, Geir Campos, Jamil Almansur Haddad and Lêdo Ivo, whose work began in the forties and fifties and who are still writing today. We find the poetics of the translations of this group very similar to the poetics of their poetry: they emphasise the value of formal perfection and rigour of composition; they show a concern for beauty and adornment which leads them to be called "neoparnassians"; indeed, their poetry is a reaction against many of the values of Brazilian modernist poetry.

It is much more difficult to schematize the beliefs about translation of the Geração de 45 as they never reason on why they take certain attitudes to the translations they make. Moreover, we even find members of the group attacking each other. A large part of Geir Campos' *Tradução e Ruído na Comunicação Teatral* (37) is devoted to attacking Pêricles Eugênio de Silva Ramos' translation of *Hamlet*.

One characteristic is that they have an unquestioning acceptance that the "great" works of European poets, particularly French poets, must be translated into Portuguese. The translator must keep as close as possible to the original; according to Jamil Almansur Haddad, he must be faithful to the "sonho nirvânico de aniquilarse diante da obra que traduz" (38).

The only point in which the Geração de 45 have something in common with the Concrete translators is in the way the act of translation is sometimes described. We find a similar epiphanistic celebration in Lêdo Ivo describing his moment of vision as we found in the Campos brothers' joyous self-contemplation:

> Quando acabei de traduzir Rimbaud, caia sobre a paisagem que eu fitava uma inaudita chuva de granizo. Tudo ficou sereno, de repente, e o arco-íris, que, criança, contemplei na paisagem total, atrevessou o céu de lado a lado e tinha as cores das vogais do soneto de Rimbaud (39).

Jorge Wanderley's doctoral thesis, *A tradução do poema entre poetas do modernismo: Manuel Bandeira, Guilherme de Almeida, Abgar Renault* (40) , analyses

the translations of these three modernist poets. However, he fails to find points in common. Bandeira's translations, very much an extension of his own poetry, are noticeable for their frequent distancing from the source text, ignoring a word for word translation to give a general impression of the original. Indeed, a number of his translations, such as the updating of the Castro Alves sonnet, *Adeus de Teresa*, and those of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sonnets, are generally recognised to be better than the originals. What Wanderley particularly notices about Bandeira's attitude to translation is its very casualness and modesty. He even admits, "sou bastante fundo no inglês" (41). He prefers to work "seguindo o próprio nariz do que acompanhando paidumas" and in his *Poemas Traduzidas* (42) translates the recognised "greats" such as Goethe, Hölderlin, Paul Éluard and Ruben Darío , together with virtually unknown Latin American poets he happened to know personally.

Guilherme de Almeida seems, to Jorge Wanderley, to belong to the Geração de 45 group:

> aparece como um poeta de 22 que tivesse vivido à espera do espírito de 45 para aí se declarar plenamente em casa (43).

His translations, rigid, rigorous and conservative, share all the characteristics of the Geração de 45. His notes, which anatomically dissect his translations, state his worry about producing versions of Baudelaire and the other French poets he specialises in translating which are as close as possible to the originals. According to Jorge Wanderley:

> É uma preocupação que mostra o tradutor a trabalhar como se estivesse diante de um olhar vigilante e punitivo, grande fantasma de culpa dos eruditos... O purismo ultra-acadêmico ... se volta para dar satisfações a um exigente monstro literário e gramático ... (que) só existe mesmo ... na cabeça de quem o concebe (44).

Abgar Renault, a relatively unknown poet and translator, translated the English war poets into Portuguese. His success is mixed. He captures a certain climate, "elegíaco, nobre, digno, contido mas sempre vigoroso" (45), but his work also contains "ingenuidades quase-amadorísticas como o recurso não só pragmático a rimas no infinito, inversões a arcaísmos" (46). Despite not having any theoretical design, Abgar Renault 's translations mainly attempt to adapt the English syntax of the poems he is translating to Portuguese.

Although Jorge Wanderley fails to find any general characteristics of modernist translators, (and I believe a wider study of modernist translators is necessary here), he does connect Manuel Bandeira and Guilherme de Almeida with the succeeding generations of translators:

> o autorismo óbvio da teoria da tradução existe em estado latente na dos concretistas, que recomenda enfaticamente o liberalismo, obriga a

> ser livre, sob pena de ser banal em desobedecendo. Por isto, ao fim de contas, o não-me-importantismo de Manuel Bandeira, o leve ar de molecagem que há por trás de suas transgressões, sua ausência de sisudez (compara-se o "sou bastante fundo no inglês" com Haroldo de Campos defendendo a validade ... dos seus conhecimentos de chinês -- tudo isto termina por fazer de Manuel Bandeira, na realidade, a mente menos rígida, por trás das três teorias (47).

(iii) **Other Work on Literary Translation in Brazil**

Other work on literary translation in Brazil is much less well defined, and it is not possible to distinguish any other schools of literary translation. There are certain patterns which articles on literary translation tend to follow. The first is that of "Dos and Don'ts". The writer will advise the prospective translator not to fall into certain traps and how to avoid certain certain false cognates. Examples of this are "Beware of les Faux Amis" (48) by Agenor Soares dos Santos, "Questões de Tradução" (49) by Zélia de Almeida Cardoso and Paulo Rónai's books, *Guia Prático de Tradução Francesa* (50) and *Escola de Tradutores* (51).

A second type is that of personal reminescences. A translator will explain his or her problems when translating a certain work. A large amount of material falls into this category. The titles often reveal the content: Paulo Rónai's *A Tradução Vivida* (52); *A Tradução da Grande Obra Literária (Depoimentos)* (53); "Uma Odisséia Traductora" (54) by José Paulo Paes.

A third standard kind of article compares different translations of the same poem. These are often highly prescriptive. In "Emily Dickinson Brasileira" (55) Walter Carlos Costa compares translations of Emily Dickinson by Manuel Bandeira, "tem valor poético ... só não contém poesia dicksoniana (sic)"(56); Mário Faustino, "permite ... para quem não domina o inglês, conferir no original as qualidades de Emily" (57); Aila de Oliveira Gomes, "Apesar da falta de ousadia das soluções, ... contém versos felizes (58); Idelma Ribeiro de Faria, "A mais apressada e antipoética" (59); and Augusto de Campos, " (Emily Dickinson) encontra, finalmente, no Brasil, uma dicção paralela à sua" (60). In a similar manner, Erwin Theodor sets himself up as a judge. In "A tradução de Obras Alemãs no Brasil" (61) he compares the versions of Hölderlin's *Hälfte des Lebens* of Manuel Bandeira and Paulo Quintela and then produces his own rendering.

As far as theory of literary translation is concerned, there is a somewhat confusing picture. A number of articles juxtapose quotations and references from various disparate critics. In the first two pages of "Literalidade e Criatividade na Tradução" (62) Geir Campos randomly quotes from translator of Classical

literature, William Arrowsmith, writers on linguistic theories of translation, Peter Newmark and Eugene A. Nida, the German Romantic, August Wilhelm Schlegel, the Canadian discourse analyst, Jean Delisle, Octavio Paz, Paulo Rónai, to mention only a few, in a heady cocktail of opinions from very different schools of translation theory. Never is there any attempt to place the different writers in their particular schools of thought and tradition.

So most writing on translation in Brazil has been much more concerned with the practical business of translating rather than more abstract theorising. Paulo Rónai admits his own lack of interest in translation theory:

> Por inclinação natural do meu espírito, a especulação abstrata pouco me atrai ... em vez de indagar a filosofia e a metafísicaa da tradução, preferi ater-me a seus problemas concretos (63).

The same author is quite disparaging about Pound.

> Não serei provavelmente capaz de saborear a versão de Pound tão integralmente como um leitor de língua inglesa; mas, ainda que por ela perpasse a vibração que lhe atribuem, custa-me considerá-la um padrão de tradução (64).

Although there have never been any open battles on the field of translation in Brazil between, for example, pro- and anti-Poundians, a few skirmishes can be noted. One such flexing of the muscles took place in the *Folha de São Paulo* in 1985. Rosemary Arrojo reports this confrontation in her article "Paulo Vizioli e Nelson Ascher Discutem John Donne: A que são fiéis Tradutores e Críticos de Tradução?" (65). Ascher accuses Vizioli of translating Donne into outmoded language and praises Augusto de Campos' translation as "o trabalho magistral de um poeta". In his reply Vizioli wonders why Ascher thought Augusto de Campos' use of a line from Lupercínio Rodrigues "um lance realmente inventivo". Rosemary Arrojo steps into the ring to break the grapplers with her view that it is impossible to adjudicate which of the two translations is the better. Each translator of Donne has his own opinion of the poet's qualities and it is this view that will come over in the translation. Arrojo develops this concept of translation in her book *Oficina de tradução* (66). Translation is a palimpsest: each new translation will erase previous versions and produce its own interpretation of the original. It is impossible to judge which is the best or whether there is a best translation.

Mário Laranjeira's Ph. D. thesis, *Do Sentido à Significância: em Busca de uma Poética da tradução* (67), defends the point that a translation must take account of the *significância* of a poem. It must follow the original "não pela reprodução servil de uma estrutura-fora, mas por um trabalho na cadeia dos significantes capaz de gerar um poema autônomo e vivo" (68).

This concept of *significância* is taken from Julia Kristeva:

> a semánalise desvencilha-se da obrigatoriedade de um ponto de vista central único, o de uma estrutura a *ser descrita* - e oferece a si mesma a possibilidade de captações combinatórias que lhe restitui a estruturação a *ser gerada* (69).

A good translation should reflect the relationship between the different elements of the poem. It is not just a matter of balancing form and content; it is rather "a resultante de um trabalho operado nos níveis semântico, lingüístico, estrutural e retórico-formal, integrados todos no nível semiótico-textual onde se dá a significância" (70).

Mário Laranjeira goes on to analyse translations which managed to translate the *significância* and those which failed. The reader of Guilherme de Almeida's translation of Villon's *Ballade des dames du temps jadis* into archaic Portuguese "recebe o mesmo impacto do leitor francês" (71). Lêdo Ivo's translation of Rimbaud's *Faim* , on the other hand, "deixou-se perder-se a nível dos elementos essenciais para a passagem da mímese para a significância" (72)."A tradução de Augusto de Campos (of cummings' *I was, I am*) respeita rigorosamente a manifestação textual do original no seu específico processo de significação" (73). A successful translation will be able to take its place as a "text", not just as a translation, in the target language.

Very little has been written in terms of a historical or descriptive approach to literary translation in Brazil. José Paulo Paes has compiled a compact history of translation in Brazil in the *Folhetim* (74). Christl Brink has catalogued works translated from German to Portuguese in the post - Second World War period (75). Carlos Daghlian has listed all the translations made of Emily Dickinson's poetry in Brazil (76). Nelly Novaes Coelho has examined the introduction of children's literature in Brazil in the nineteenth century (77). Most children's books in this period were either brought to Brazil in the French version (often translated from the English or German original) or from Portugal in a Portuguese translation of the French version. In addition, Nelly Novaes Coelho looks at the different genres of imported children's literature, right from the early translations and adaptations of Walter Scott and *Robinson Crusoe* to contemporary comic strips.

Sergio Bellei compares Fernando Pessoa's very accurate translation of Poe's *The Raven*, in which he succeeeds in recreating many of Poe's poetic techniques, with that of Machado de Assis, which ignores the rhyme schemes and the internal rhymes of the original and minimizes "the significance of the individual drama of the lover and ... replace(s) it by emphasising the raven as symbolic of loss, doubt and undying, painful remembrance of love forever lost" (78). Bellei gives his reasons for this change of direction:

> Unlike Pessoa, Machado is the writer in the colony who was suffering from a peculiar kind of anxiety of influence and who was particularly aware of the implications of this anxiety for the construction of nationality in literature (79).

Rather than "translating" Poe, Machado is "appropriating" him to echo the themes of the *Occidentais*, the volume which this translation opens. Bellei introduces the concept of "origins" versus "beginnings". Following the work of Mario Curvello, he states that Machado was always aware of the debt that Brazilian owed to its European origins and was therefore suspicious of attempts to make "new beginnings". A balance between the two elements could be made by the "appropriation" of foreign texts. Thus the Brazilian writer could produce a work which would contain both "origins" and "beginnings", as is done in Machado's translation of *The Raven*.

Onédia Barbosa's *Byron in Brasil: Traduções* (80) analyses all the translations made of Byron's work in Brazil between 1832 and 1914. Byron's influence in Brazil in the second half of the nineteenth century was enormous and he even became a cult figure, both in fashionable circles and amongst students, among them students from the Faculdade de Direito, São Paulo, who held supposedly macabre Byronesque ceremonies in the Cemitério da Consolação. Onédia Barbosa shows that until 1855 most translations of Byron were made directly from English, but after 1855 the majority were made from the French translations of Laroche, Barré and Pichot. Most of the translations were made by second-line poets into blank verse. And of the poems translated, *Parisina, Childe Harold* and *Hebrew Melodies* were the most popular. Indeed, such was the vogue for Byron in the nineteenth century that José de Alencar presents the hero of his novel *Senhora Seixas*, a fashionable Carioca dandy, as a translator of Byron:

> Às vezes repetia as traduções que havia feito das poesias soltas do bardo inglês; essas jóias literárias, vestidas com esmero, tomavam maior realce na doce língua fluminense, e nos lábios de Seixas que as recitava como trouvador (81).

Gentil de Faria continues Onédia Barbosa's work of examining translations from English in Brazil in studies of the influence of Oscar Wilde in Brazil. His M.A. dissertation contains a comprehensive list of all the translations of Wilde made in Brazil (82). As in the case of Byron, the literary image of Wilde in Brazil was very different from that in Britain. Wilde's social comedies remained relatively unknown; *The Importance of Being Earnest* was only translated for the first time in 1960. The Wilde Brazil imported was the French version, the aesthete par excellence. In *A Presença de Oscar Wilde na "Belle Époque" Literária Brasileira* (83), Gentil de Faria demonstrates that the great majority of translations of Wilde were made from the French and his most popular works in Brazil, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol, Salomé* and *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* were very influential amongst Brazilian

decadentismo writers in the first twenty years of the century. Indeed, the Modernists reacted against Wilde and his influence. Gentil de Faria quotes Menotti del Picchia, who says Wilde is one of a number of authors who should be "killed" as his work is "postiço, artificial, arrevezado, precioso" (84).

A survey of the theory of literary translation in Brazil, then, presents us with a rather patchy picture, one, which I think, would be similar to that in most countries. The profile of the Campos brothers is sharp and crystal clear and Mário Laranjeira puts forward his argument for translating the *significância* of a poem, but the rest of the field is vague and nebulous. Jorge Wanderley presents us with an outline of the views on translation of the Geração de 45 but fails to find a "modernist" theory or approach to translation.

And how does literary translation in Brazil fit in with the theories of literary translation we have explored so far? The Campos brothers recognise Pound as one of their mentors. Discussions on translation seldom get away from traditional arguments of form versus content. Although translators in Brazil seldom refer to the Augustans , Dryden is always there in spirit. His parameters of *metaphrase, paraphrase* and *imitation* still guide most references to translation here in Brazil.

And this is the point I hope this thesis has made: Dryden's parameters have been the basis for most forms of literary translation. The French *belles infidèles* show *imitation* as the standard form of translation in seventeenth century France. Goethe, Schleiermacher and the German writers on translation praise the literal translation, the *metaphrase* , but describe this translation which follows the form of the original in glowing tones which are completely different to those of Dryden. Ezra Pound put a different emphasis on an *imitation*: the translator's voice should be heard, and this has been the pattern of much modern translation. The trend favoured by most of the writers in Chapter 6 is to follow the form of the original. The message of literature, particularly poetry, is often in the form; a *metaphrase* will often be considered a much better rendering of a foreign poem than a *paraphrase* or *imitation.*

So, if the ideas of Dryden have been repeated ad nauseam, in which directions will literary translation studies develop ? I believe there is nothing new that can be added to the ideas of Dryden and Pound. By contrast, much has to be done in terms of describing the influence of translation in the histories of different literatures. I am sure many future studies will follow the lines of the studies I described in Chapter 7.

But I also believe that there are also other aspects of literary translation to be developed. Using Meschonnic's ideas, we can look at translation from an socio-anthropological perspective (85): what is the importance of translation in changing

the ideas of whole cultures ? And what is the political role of translation ? Derrida emphasises the mythical role of translation. I believe all cultures have ther myth of the Tower of Babel. How do these differ ? The German writers, Pound, Benjamin, Paz, Derrida, and others all emphasised the centrality of translation to thought and knowledge. Surely this ontological role of translation must be investigated in greater detail. And how do translations change our understandings of texts ? I am positive many more translations will be deconstructed.

And what about future studies of literary translation in Brazil ? I hope this chapter can lead us to some possible directions. A history of literary translation in Brazil is lacking. Surely José Paulo Paes is underestimating the importance of translation in the history of Brazilian literature when he says that translation has had limited influence in Brazilian literature because all the major writers have been able to read foreign works in the originals (86). And does the considerable amount of poetry translated nowadays in Brazil have any influence on poetry written in Portuguese in Brazil ? Is there really such a thing as an "establishment" or "anti-establishment" translation ? Is it possible to find a modernist approach to translation ? Following Sergio Bellei's article, can we talk of such a thing as a "nationalist" translation ? If so, what are its characteristics ? And how prevalent has this kind of translation been in Brazil ? And in addition to these and many other questions we have the vast virgin forests of translation of the novel and translation of drama just awaiting willing hands...

References

The quotation on the title page is from *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a expêriencia da geração de 45 de dos Concretos,* p. 158. For complete references see Note 1 below.

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A tradução do Poema entre poetas do modernismo: Manuel Bandeira, Guilherme de Almeida, Abgar Renault, Jorge Wanderley. Ph.D. thesis. PUC, Rio de Janeiro, 1988.

2. "Nos Bastidores da tradução", Ana Cristina Cesar. In *Escritos de Inglaterra.* Brasiliense, São Paulo, 1988.

3. For example, in "O texto como produção", Haroldo de Campos, in *A Operação do Texto*. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1976. P.45.

4. "Nos Bastidores da Tradução", op. cit., p.142.

5. In "Octavio Paz e a Poética da Tradução", Haroldo de Campos, in *Folhetim, Folha de São Paulo*, 9 de janeiro de 1987.

6. In "e.e.cummings: olho e fôlego", in *e.e.cummings 40 POEM(A)S*. Ministério de Educação e Cultura, Serviço de Documentação, Rio de Janeiro, 1960.

7. In "Nos Bastidores da Tradução", op. cit., p.143.

8. In footnote to "O texto-espelho (Poe, engenheiro de avessos)". In *A Operação do texto*, op. cit., p.35.

9. In *Verso, Reverso, Controverso*, Augusto de Campos. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1979. P.214.

10. *Panaroma de Finnegan's Wake*, Augusto e Haroldo de Campos. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1970. P.57.

11. For references to Benjamin see particularly "Transluciferação mefistofáustica" in *Deus e o Diabo no Fausto de Goethe*, Haroldo de Campos. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1981. Jakobson's influence on Haroldo de Campos' thinking can be seen particularly in "O texto-espelho (Poe, engenheiro de avessos". The Campos brothers constantly pay homage to Pound, see particularly *Ezra*

Pound, Poesia, translations by Augusto and Haroldo de Campos, Décio Pignatari, J.L. Grünewald and Mário Faustino. Huctitec, São Paulo, 1985. This beautifully produced book celebrated the hundredth anniversary of Pound's birth. However, it seems to me that the Campos' brothers actual strategies of translating are little influenced by Pound's concept of "Make It New". This was the point of a paper I presented, "Do the Campos Brothers Really Make It New or Do They Just Pretend To ?", at the XXII Seminário Nacional de Professores de Literatura Inglesa held in Poços de Caldas, MG, January, 1990. This paper developed some of the points Jorge Wanderley makes , which are presented in this chapter, see page 147.

12. In "Octavio Paz e a Poética da Tradução" , op. cit. .

13. In "Da Traduçao como Criação e como Crítica" in *Metalinguagem*, Haroldo de Campos. Cultrix, São Paulo, 1976. P.27.

14. Quoted in Antônio Medina Rodrigues' Ph. D. Thesis: *Odorico Mendes: Tradução da Épica de Virgílio e Homero*. USP, 1980.

15. "Da Tradução como Criação e como Crítica", op. cit., p.28.

16. From "Transluciferração mefistofáustica" , op. cit., p. 184-5.

17. "Nos Bastidores da Tradução", op. cit., p.144.

18. Ibid., p.144.

19. *Verso, Reverso, Controverso*, op. cit., p.10.

20. Ibid., p.150-153.

21. *O Anticrítico*, Augusto de Campos. Companhia das Letras, São Paulo, 1986. Pp. 130-131.

22. Quoted in *Verso, Reverso, Controverso*, p.201.

23. Ibid., p.214.

24. *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a expêriencia da geração de 45 e dos Concretos*, op. cit., p.126.

25. Ibid., p.126.

26. Ibid., p.8.

27. "Transluciferação mefistofáustica", op. cit., p.184.

28. *Mallarmé*, "Nota Introdutória", Haroldo de Campos. In *Mallarmé*, Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos e Décio Pignatari. Perspectiva, São Paulo, 1974.

29. *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a experiência da geração de 45 e dos Concretos*, op. cit., pp. 135-6.

30. Ibid., pp. 135-6.

31. "O texto espelho (Poe, engenheiro de avessos)", op. cit., pp. 28-30.

32. Ibid., p.39.

33. *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a experiência da geração de 45 e dos Concretos*, op. cit., p.157.

34. Ibid., p.147 and p.157.

35. Ibid., p.158.

36. For full references see Note 1 above.

37. *Tradução e Ruído na Comunicação Teatral*, Geir Campos. Álamo, São Paulo, 1982.

38. *As Flores do Mal -- Baudelaire*, Jamil Almansur Haddad. Max Limonad, São Paulo, 1981. P.11.

39. In *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a experiência da geração de 45 e dos Concretos*, op. cit., p.95.

40. *A tradução do Poema entre poetas do modernismo: Manuel Bandeira, Guilherme de Almeida, Abgar Renault*, op. cit..

41. Ibid., p.11. From *Itinerário de Pasárgada*.

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43. *A tradução do Poema entre poetas do modernismo ...*, op. cit., p.142.

44. Ibid., p.200.

45. Ibid., p.208.

46. Ibid., p.161.

47. Ibid., p.143.

48. "Beware of Les Faux Amis", in *Tradução e Comunicação,* no. 9, dez. 1986, pp. 59-64.

49. "Questões de Tradução", Zélia de Almeida Cardoso, in *Tradução e Comunicação*, no. 4, julho 1984, pp. 119-128.

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56. Ibid., p.79.

57. Ibid., p.81.

58. Ibid., p.84.

59. Ibid., p.86.

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61. "A Tradução de Obras Literárias Alemãs no Brasil", Erwin Theodor, in *Revista do Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros*, no. 16, 1975, pp.57-8.

62. "Literalidade e Criatividade na Tradução", Geir Campos, in *Tradução e Comunicação*, no. 7, dez. 1985, pp. 9-20.

63. *Escola de Tradutores*, op. cit., p.176.

64. Ibid., p.146.

65. "Paulo Vizioli e Nelson Ascher discutem John Donne: A que são fiéis Tradutores e Críticos de Tradução ?", Rosemary Arrojo, in *Tradução e Comunicação*, no. 9, dez. 1986, pp. 133-142. Nelson Ascher's review of Paulo

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68. Ibid., p.187.

69. "Sémanalyse, et production de sens", Julia Kristeva, quoted by Mário Laranjeira, in ibid., p.100.

70. Ibid., p.160.

71. Ibid., p.141.

72. Ibid., p.123.

73. Ibid., p.155.

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77. "Tradução: Núcleo geratriz da literatura infantil/juvenil", Nelly Novaes Coelho, in *Ilha do Desterro*, no. 17, op. cit., pp. 21-32.

78. "*The Raven* by Machado de Assis", Sergio Bellei, in *Ilha do Desterro*, no. 17, op. cit., pp. 47-62.

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80. *Byron no Brasil: Traduções*, Onédia Célia de Carvalho Barbosa. Ática, São Paulo, 1975.

81. In *Byron no Brasil: Traduções*, op. cit., p.259. See also *A Escola Byroniana no Brasil*, Pires de Almeida. Conselho Estadual de Cultura, São Paulo, 1962, for an idea of Byron's influence in Brazil.

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85. All the information I have at present on the anthropological element of translation is of an essay to be published later this year: "A Tour of Babel", David Richards, in *Sir James Frazer and the Literary Imagination*, ed. Robert Fraser. Macmillan, London, 1990.

86. "A tradução no Brasil", op. cit., "... a influência das traduções sobre a literatura brasileira é limitada. Isso porque muitos de nossos poetas, romancistas e teatrólogos, por conhecerem idiomas estrangeiros, puderam travar conhecimento com os autores de quem iriam eventualmente sofrer influência antes de eles haverem sido vertidos para o português."

Final Words

I beg forgiveness if this thesis has smacked too strongly of missionary zeal. However, if there is one area of literary studies where missionary zeal is well-placed, it is that of translation studies. For long it has been the Cinderella of the literary world; indeed, it has hardly belonged to the literary world; it has belonged to the twilight world of footnotes and apendices. To give two examples from Brazil, let us look at Alfredo Bosi's *História Concisa da Literatura Brasileira* and Antônio Cândido's *Formação da Literatura Brasileira*. Bosi merely lists "algumas versões de grandes poetas estrangeiros que começaram a falar em português à nossa sensibilidade" (1). Antônio Cândido emphasises the considerable number of translations from 1830 to 1854, above all second-rate novels translated from French, and asks the question: "Quem sabe quais e quantos desses subprodutos influfram na formação do nosso romance ?" His answer shows an awareness of the importance of translation in the development of Brazilian literature, but it is not followed by any further investigation: "Às vezes, mais do que os livros de peso em que se fixa de preferência a atenção" (2).

In many cases, writers on translation have not helped further the development of literary translation studies. Much writing on translation both inside and outside Brazil, has been amateurish and dilettante. Translation itself has, more often than not , been a hobby. To repeat the words of Jorge Wanderley: "a sempre desprezada, embora nem sempre desprezível tradução dominical" (3).

I hope the argument of this thesis has been clear: that current studies in literary translation are renewing ideas in this area and giving it an enormous amount of vitality. Methodical studies of literary translation, such as those by the Manipulation and Göttingen groups, are spreading, and the original approaches to translation described in Chapter 6 provide a basis for the study of translation as a central epistemological discipline.

Perhaps the biggest gap which I hope this thesis may fill is that of the lack of knowledge of translation theory in Brazil. Pound has been translated, and he has been popularised by the Campos brothers, but the Augustan and German traditions are virtually unknown in Brazil, to say nothing of the most recent work on literary translation. If this thesis does no more than spread some of these ideas a little, it will have made its point.

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2. *Formação da Literatura Brasileira*, Segundo Volume, Antônio Cândido. EDUSP and Editora Itatiaia, São Paulo, 1975. P.122.

3. *A tradução do poema. Notas sobre a experiência da geração de 45 e dos concretos*, Jorge Wanderley. M.A. dissertation, PUC, Rio de Janeiro, 1983. P.158.

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