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Ours has become an age of critics rather than an age of poets and writers. The critic surpasses the visibility of the writer, and the academic world cherishes the criticism of criticism of criticism. Whether the jargon-ridden articles derived from the Derridian tradition make sense and are accessible to the intelligent reader is not of great concern for the editors of many scholarly journals. The Alan Sokel episode bears witness to this dilemma.

The invisibility of the translator continues to be a subject of great concern to all translators, whether independent or academic. The latter are still fighting to have their work as practicing translators or as scholars of translation theory recognized as a viable contribution to the field of literature and letters. Many assistant and associate professors are denied promotions because translation activities don t fall into the realm of respectable scholarly work.

Yet, the meticulous research that a translator has to undertake in order to do justice to the intricate complexity of literary texts by far transcends the scholarly intensity that scholars and critics display in their interpretations of works of literature. For many years, one of my own idiosyncrasies has been to identify difficult passages in literary and philosophical works to see how scholars and critics have illuminated these passages for me. The results of my investigations in that direction are rather amazing. Many of the critical approaches do not comment on these particularly inaccessible moments in a text, and the authors of these articles seem to create the impression that the reader will have no difficulties in understanding what is going on in the text under consideration. I have come to realize that the critic or scholar probably had not taken the time to enter into the deeper layers of meanings of a poetic or fictional work to clarify them for the reader.

A translator cannot engage in such a luxury. Every word has to be seen under the umbrella of its etymological origin and its philological development, which applies especially to texts written in past centuries. The philological aspects include probing into the linguistic, cultural, historical, and aesthetic environments of words and how these words have been shaped within the context of a text. That in itself demands the highest level of academic scholarship and should therefore be recognized as such.

Let me add another idiosyncratic feature of my reading habits that will not meet the approval of professors in modern language departments. Whenever I know the original language of a literary text quite well, I prefer to reread this text in translation, especially if the work is available in multiple translations. What I watch for are the translations of the difficult passages. How has the translator dealt with the ambiguities, what kind of solutions has the translator found, and how does the translation reflect the overall interpretive perspective of the translator? An excitement has been added to the reading of the text that would not necessary surface to the same degree if I were to reread the work in its original language. I compare this attitude toward the reading of a text with the interpretation of musical pieces. From a performer s point of view, I look forward with great anticipation to hearing a pianist who plays a piece with which I am very familiar. I am curious and perhaps often somewhat nervous to find out how the pianist will interpret a particularly difficult passage, both from the technical and from the interpretive points of view. It is the translator who ultimately creates a similar excitement through the art of translation.

It is clear that in the future many academicians in literature and humanities programs will have to be educated to understand that the methodologies derived from the art and craft of translation will revitalize the reading and interpretation of literary texts. If these methods were then to be transferred to the field of criticism, they could become a major force in counteracting the jargon-ridden language of contemporary scholarly writing in literature and the humanities. The translator s contribution would be not only the transplantation of works from foreign languages into English but also the meaningful translation of the interpretive insights into an accessible critical language.

Much has been said about the invisibility of the translator. Now might be the time to reflect on how the invisibility of the translator could be turned into the visibility of the translator, both in the academic world and in the culture in which we live. Interviews with poets and writers are published in book, journal, and audio form. The same cannot be said for translators. As far as I know, only one collection of interviews with translators, entitled The Poet s Other Voice: Conversations on Literary Translation Review
Translation and edited by Edwin Honig, has been published in the United States. Unfortunately, this book has been out of print for several years. Moreover, special collections of poets, writers, and playwrights have found a permanent place in various special library collections throughout the country and throughout the centuries. Missing are similar collections for translators.

In most cases, the first translations of a new author from a foreign country appear in literary journals. However, in our technological age, we have not been able to build databases that would allow us to find out what works by international authors have actually been published in journals. Obviously, such a database could be of great value to publishers, teachers, and the general reader. On the more academic level, I want to refer to a research project that many years ago was initiated by the well-known German translator of Samuel Beckett, Elmar Tophoven,* a project that should be pursued in order to revive and expand the theoretical and practical aspects of the translation process. Tophoven, who dedicated his entire life to the art of translation, developed the practice of recording every difficulty he encountered in the text on an index card. He categorized the problems according to word, grammatical, syntactical, cultural, and historical difficulties. In each case, he clearly described the nature of the translation problem and then documented the reasoning for coming up with a final solution. In many instances, he also recorded the various alternatives he had considered to arrive at a final version. Tophoven developed these cards at a time when computers had not reached their present sophistication. Thousands of these cards are stored in boxes, which, we hope, will one day be transferred to a database and the actual cards deposited in some archival library.

In general, scholarly research procedures in the field of literature have not changed that much over the past few decades. With the electronic facilities we have at our disposal today, the implementation of Tophoven’s approaches would tremendously enlarge our reading and understanding of literary texts. Nowhere else would we be able to find this kind of intense examination of reconstructing the most refined nuances of a literary work. At a time when the idiosyncratic practices of deconstructionism have pretty much closed any intelligent reading of literary texts, new energetic ways have to be found to bring the reader, student, and teacher back to a meaningful interaction and dialogue with the realities of a poem, a novel, or a play. If we transfer Tophoven’s notion of the reconstruction of the difficulties of a text to be translated to the reading and interpretation of a work originally written in English, then the pleasures of reading might be recaptured. Translation practices should be considered to be the most powerful tools to counteract the incomprehensibility and pretension of contemporary scholarly writing.

Today, nations and languages interact at a more rapid pace than ever before in history. Wherever we look and listen, the word global assumes its pounding presence. Only the translator will be in a position to respond to the needs of a global civilization. Therefore, I would think that translators must be allocated a more prominent and permanent place in the halls of history.

I do not propose that we build statues for translators; however, I propose that we give serious consideration to recording not only interviews and biographies of translators but also the intense and meticulous activities of the translation métier, so that the importance of translation as the backbone of cultural renovation can be studied by future generations.

*In Translation Review No. 9, 1982, pp 24-29, we published an article by Elmar Tophoven entitled Furthering Collaboration and the Exchange of Ideas among Translators.
Koshi Odashima is one of the most prolific translators of modern English-language drama into Japanese active today. At any one time, three or four of his translations may be in production by professional theater troops in Tokyo. Among the plays he has translated and seen produced in the past five years are *Proof*, by David Auburn; *Defiled*, by Lee Kalcheim; Tennessee Williams’ *A Streetcar Named Desire; Amy’s View*, by David Hare; and *The Sneeze*, an omnibus of Chekhov’s stories and one-act plays via an English adaptation for the stage by Michael Frayn. He is also an Associate Professor of English Literature at Waseda University’s School of Literature. In this, he is following a family tradition: his father, Yushi Odashima, a professor at another university, is one of the foremost translators of Shakespeare in his country.

The following interview will focus on the approaches that Professor Odashima brings to rendering the plays he translates into a living Japanese that will engage the theater-going public, as well as on certain posttranslation phenomena that may affect how a particular work is interpreted on the stage and how it is received in Japan. Whenever Japanese terms are used, they will be transliterated into the Roman alphabet.

Daniel J. Webster: When and why did you decide to tackle drama, instead of some other genre of literature, or even subtitles for films?

Koshi Odashima: In my childhood I became accustomed to seeing live plays more than was the case with my peers, because my father had already become recognized not only as a translator but also as a drama critic. And even though I first went to the theater as a kind of family outing, I liked the stage from the very beginning. This was true even when the play was not terribly good. I just immediately liked the atmosphere of the live theater, in the same way as many children become addicted to going to the movies.

Your mention of the alternative of writing subtitles for movies was of special interest to me, because these two kinds of translation are so radically different from each other. The dialogue in plays will, of course, be spoken by Japanese actors and actresses. But with subtitles merely represented as Japanese writing on the screen, the characters will obviously remain patently non-Japanese. So, the subtitles should remain closer to natural English speech. For instance, in an American or British context, it would be very natural for a character to call his boss by his first name: Joe, or Bob, or whatever. And this is represented in the subtitles without it seeming at all strange. But in Japan, we would never call our superiors by their first names. So, when the spoken lines are in Japanese, this would come across as an almost childish mimicking or imitation of the original lines. The audience would just see a bunch of Japanese actors standing around and pretending to be Westerners. Unfortunately, this is what some translators end up doing with live dialogue for the stage. And this is one of the things I try my best to avoid.

DJW: So, would you say you try to “Japanize” what’s being said on stage?

KO: No. I think Japanize  is too radical a term. I’m looking for natural Japanese dialogue. But there’s a very delicate balance between the childish mimicking that I just mentioned and making the characters too Japanese, to the extent that I’ve subverted the atmosphere and group dynamic that the original playwright intends. Maybe the easiest example of what I mean is the use of the English greetings Hi! and Hello. In subtitles, and in some of these mimicking stage plays I mentioned, these are simply rendered in a literal way as hai and haroh, respectively. But in a Japanese context, this greeting could be translated in a number of ways, depending on the characters’ sexes and the relationship that exists among them. One could use yaa (among male adults who are peers), osu (a very macho greeting among male peers), yo (very familiar among men), or konnichi wa (polite and gender-free, with little nuance of subordinate or superior relationships). But, actually, the biggest difference is that daily greetings are very rarely used in comparison with English. So, often the absence of any greeting would be the most appropriate road to follow.

DJW: Why did you decide to concentrate on modern and contemporary plays, rather than works from the past as
your father does?

KO: The answer to that is very simple: market forces. Producers are in a hurry for translations of new hit plays so they can start production as soon as possible. But we already have a classical canon of translations from older works. In fact, my version of \textit{A Streetcar Named Desire} is the closest I’ve gotten recently to having the opportunity to translate an older play aside from the Chekhov omnibus, which was done using an English adaptation. In the more distant past, though, I have been asked to make fresh translations of works written several decades ago. Unfortunately, this doesn’t happen very often.

DJW: Is there a great deal of friction in Japan between “artistic” translators of drama and scholars?

KO: There was, but not any more. Now the relationship between those who translate for production and academics is much better, because these academics have finally actually started going to theaters!

DJW: How do you deal with problems of “cultural literacy”? That is, when you come across a reference in a play that is common currency among Anglophones or other Westerners but that would strike no chord with the Japanese layman, how do you decide whether or not the reference is essential to a true rendering of the play? And, if you think it is essential, how do you seek to “translate” that reference into something that will be meaningful to the audience?

KO: I’ve translated the play \textit{Peggy for You}, by Alan Plater. In this work, the title character says: This is not \textit{Brief Encounter}, making reference to the David Lean movie of that name. In this case, she wants to say to the other person that their relationship has no similarity to the one portrayed in the film, nor, just as importantly, has it been a brief one. The Japanese title for this movie is \textit{Aibiki} (Secret Rendezvous), and it is still shown quite often on Japanese TV. But just the word aibiki is not so immediately recognizable as the title of a movie as the English \textit{Brief Encounter} would be. Nor does it necessarily include the crucial nuance of brevity. Well, fortunately, the film director’s name had been mentioned in a different context earlier in the play. So, I translated this as, David Lean no Aibiki ja nain dakara (This isn’t David Lean’s \textit{Brief Encounter}). And, indeed, the mention of Lean’s name seems to successfully jar the audience’s memory, so they can understand the point she is trying to make. I know that, from the standpoint of cultural literacy, this is an example of a very trivial device. But it is a device that worked.

DJW: Well, actually I was asking about problems of cultural literacy on a somewhat more general and profound level, such as those dealing with religion, politics, and race. But I’m sure we’ll be addressing these issues somewhere later in this interview. So, I’ll go on to my next question: To what extent do you feel it is necessary to remain as faithful as possible to the original text, and what factors play a part in your decision to depart from the original?

KO: I’d like to say that I feel an obligation to remain 100% faithful to the intentions of the original author. I’ll give you an example of this as done not by myself, but by my father. And this is actually what first led me to an interest in translating plays not just for reading, but also for performance. In Act II, Scene II of \textit{Hamlet}, we have the following exchange between Hamlet and Polonius:

\begin{quote}
Polonius: What do you read, my lord?
Hamlet: Words, words, words.
Polonius: What is the matter, my lord?
Hamlet: Between who?
\end{quote}

Modern audiences in the English-speaking world cannot understand the significance of this last line unless they know that in Shakespeare’s time matter also meant love affair. And this was the sense in which Hamlet pretended to misunderstand the meaning of Polonius’s question, in order to avoid answering his real question or to mock him. In Japan, many had already translated this quite literally as:

\begin{quote}
Polonius: Nani o oyomi desu ka? (What are you [honorably] reading?)
Hamlet: Kotoba, kotoba, kotoba. (Words, words, words.)
Polonius: Watashi wa nakami no koto o kiitan desu. (I asked you about the content [of what you’re reading.])
Hamlet: Dare to dare no nakada? (Relating to whom and whom?)
\end{quote}

The words nakami (content) and naka (relationship) sound similar. So, Japanese who are reading these lines might understand this with their mind’s ear, so to speak. I
say might because they d be looking at Chinese characters, rather than an alphabet. But, on the stage, the audience cannot catch on to the fact that Hamlet is intentionally mistaking Polonius s meaning.

So, my father dared to translate these lines as,

*Nani o oyomi de?* (What are you [honorably] reading?)
*Kotoba, kotoba, kotoba.* (Words, words, words.)
*Iie, sono naiyoh de.* (I asked you about the content.)
*Naiyoh. Ore ni wa aruyoh ni omoeru ga.* (It seems to be nothing. But I think there is something.)

*Nakami* and *naka* don t have any music to the Japanese ear, and the audience would have to think too long and hard about the wordplay intended. But Shakespeare s double entendre doesn t mean anything in modern English, anyway. On the other hand, *naiyoh* (content / it seems to be nothing) and *aruyoh* (it seems to be something) are euphonious, and even rhyme. And they convey Hamlet s purpose of mocking Polonius. What my father did outraged scholars at the time, who criticized him for tampering with Shakespeare. But, as to intent, I think this is 100% faithful not to the words, but to the author s intent. And this is what I try to do when translating. I try to remain faithful to the intent of the original, rather than the superficial wording of the dialogue.

**DJW:** You have translated works by playwrights as different from one another as the very serious and political South African writer Athol Fugard and the very light and frothy Ray Cooney. Do you feel any greater obligation to giving a more faithful rendering of a “deep play” than you do to translating a work that does not pretend to be more than “entertainment”?

**KO:** I ve never been conscious of the difference between these two kinds of works. I m totally committed to doing the best job possible, whether the play is considered deep or not. In fact, translating an out-and-out comedy often requires more exertion on my part to make it funny in Japanese, as well.

**DJW:** In a course I taught at your university called “Comparative British and American Culture,” I showed my students film adaptations of British and American plays, which had Japanese subtitles. Although most of the plays had dark themes, such as Look Back in Anger and Who s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, I didn t want to
leave my students with the impression that all English-language plays that had won critical acclaim treated such depressing characters and situations. For this reason, at the end of the course I showed film versions of Willy Russell’s Shirley Valentine and Biloxi Blues, by Neil Simon. However, few of my students so much as even chuckled throughout either of these movies. And many of them wrote in their essays that they didn’t understand why either of these works was classified as a comedy.

Of course, the necessary brevity of movie subtitles may have much to do with their lack of reaction to the comic elements of these two works. But, aside from that, I have two ideas on why they found these works so unfunny. One is that, for most Japanese, the loan-word komedeii (a direct translation of the word “comedy”) conjures up the idea of a play or movie that is entirely farcical and only meant to amuse, without bringing up serious issues. And the other is the often-cited fact that humor is so hard — or, some would say, even impossible — to translate from one language to another and from one culture to another. What are your ideas on this question, and what are some of the ways in which you try to get around these problems when translating for the stage?

KO: Well, in my lexicon, a comedy is any work that is not defined as a tragedy. If you take any of Neil Simon’s comedies, there are elements that can make you weep as well as laugh. In Japanese, we have an expression, kao de waratte, kokoro de naite (to laugh with the face and cry with the heart). And, of course, this idea applies to Simon’s plays.

DJW: So, do you think the problem here was that in my class I used the English word “comedy,” and that the students automatically translated it in their minds as komedeii?

KO: Yes, I think this term komedeii led them to be prejudiced and to expect something like Eddie Murphy or the British slapstick character Mr. Bean, whose antics are very popular here.

DJW: Further to this, in the case of Biloxi Blues, there are several characters who make anti-Semitic jokes. And, of course, Simon didn’t mean these to be funny in any way. But I strangely found that my students, feeling some sort of pressure to find something funny, thought that these jokes were meant to make the audience laugh.

KO: These ethnic jokes are present in almost all of Simon’s plays. And how they are to be received by the audience is one of the hardest things to put over into Japanese.

DJW: That leads me to a question about the popularity of Woody Allen’s movies in Japan, because there is no way that most Japanese could understand his brand of humor — which, if anything, displays more comic discomfort with being a Jew than Simon’s writing.

KO: I think that in both Simon’s and Allen’s cases, what Japanese audiences get out of the films or plays is a kind of voyeuristic experience — the experience of peeking, if you will, into the window of another culture. So, they don’t come away from these works with the same sense of appreciation that Western audiences do.

DJW: So, would you say that this is often almost an experience in cultural anthropology of sorts?

KO: Exactly.

DJW: At times, you are called upon to translate plays with themes that are controversial in the West but that do not excite public interest or debate in Japan, such as the notion of technology taking over our lives in Defiled. What is your approach to conveying to Japanese audiences a sense of the kinds of passions some of these themes can excite in other societies?

KO: As you know, the concept of public debate is really foreign to Japanese society. Exchanging conflicting opinions on controversial issues is usually avoided. And if it does take place, it almost always turns into an argument in the fighting sense of the word, which leads to an enmity that is antithetical to the ideal of keeping social harmony. So, when translating these exchanges in Western plays, I always try my best to convey the atmosphere as it exists in other societies as naturally as possible.

For instance, in Athol Fugard’s The Road to Mecca, there are only three characters, and maybe 70 or 80 percent of the dialogue consists of such argument, because each of the three characters has a conflicting sense of the values of life. This play takes place in South Africa, and some of the themes treated are race, religion and differing attitudes toward art. So, the really big problem here was making the Japanese dialogue sound realistic while at the same time retaining the sense of tension. And if I
do say so myself, I think I was fairly successful at doing this.

After the end of the performance, I constantly heard comments from the audience that this play was very difficult, but interesting. And that’s a very Japanese kind of praise. In fact, playgoers in this country actually like coming away from a performance of a foreign work with the sense that they don’t fully comprehend the situation. They understand that what took place on the stage, or on the screen, happened in a society that they don’t pretend to comprehend fully. And, perhaps unlike other nationalities, it’s a positive experience to feel uncertainty about what a play or film wants to say to them. Aside from that, I was very fortunate with this play in that both the actors and the director were excellent.

But to expand on my answer, I think the translator’s job is not to show the exact meaning of each line but rather to keep the tension of the dialogue and to convey to the audience how passionately or seriously the characters feel about the subject at hand. Watching a play is not the same thing as reading an informative entry in an encyclopedia or an enlightening magazine article on a social topic. So, to reiterate what I said before, the main job is to convey that sense of tension among the characters.

**DJW:** Would it be fair to say, then, that you try to give the audience the sense of standing outside the window of a different society and looking in, so to speak?

**KO:** Yes. And, after seeing the play, my hope is that they will digest it over a period of time and will follow that up by finding out about this different society that you mentioned. I think this is what marks one of the differences between Japan and cultures in which a very serious performance piece is supposed to bring about some sudden epiphany on the audience’s part.

**DJW:** I know that, in a few cases, you have had some rather sharp disagreements with directors who are using your translations about the interpretations of plays. I’m sure that, at such times, if you had been the original author, your word would have carried more weight than a “mere translator’s.” What has been your rate of success in bringing directors around to seeing your vision of a work?

**KO:** Well, there was one occasion on which I had translated a play called Collected Stories, by David Margulies. This is a work about an aging famous writer named Ruth Steiner and a younger woman, Lisa Morrison, who is her admiring disciple and who now works for her. And in Act Two, there is a scene in which Ruth is reading a newspaper review, while Lisa is standing next to her. I’ll have to paraphrase here, because I can’t remember all of the next four lines verbatim. But the bit of dialogue goes something like this:

Lisa: What do they say?
Ruth: Something nice.
Lisa: Really? (In a thrilled voice.)
Ruth: Yeah. They’re really praising it.

And gradually, the audience comes to understand that Ruth is reading the first review of Lisa’s own debut as a writer. Anyway, the director, an American who lives here and who speaks Japanese very well, inserted a more specific question; something like, What does the review say? The reason he did this was to make the scene more easily accessible. Now, this may seem like a small thing. But I didn’t much like it, because I thought it dissipated the sense of anticipation intended by the author as to just what the two characters were talking about. And, beyond that, I think that this kind of alteration, as trifling as it may seem, deprives the actors of the opportunity to act and turns a play into a simplistic kind of story-telling.

**DJW:** So, who prevailed?

**KO:** I won that one. But such differences between myself and the director are actually quite rare. This is one of the few times I couldn’t keep my silence, though. But, now that you’ve brought it up, I can think of another bone I had to pick over the same play. One of the characters calls her ex-lover a man who talks about Kierkegaard and Joe DiMaggio at the same time. The director, once again in an apparent attempt to make this line more accessible, changed it to, a man who talks about philosophy and baseball at the same time. I found this a little condescending to the audience, with his assumption that a Japanese audience wouldn’t recognize the two more specific allusions. But, more importantly, I thought this generalization was sucking all of the flavor out of the character’s personality.

**DJW:** I suppose his reasoning was, “Who in Japan can now remember who Joe DiMaggio was?” Maybe some “intellectuals” know Kierkegaard, but who here can remember a baseball player from a half-century ago?
KO: Actually, the strange sort of compromise we reached here was changing Kierkegaard to Kant, and Joe DiMaggio to Babe Ruth! And I m not a combative sort of person, so I kept my mouth shut on that one!

DJW: Do you see any problem in bringing about a “suspension of disbelief” on the audience’s part when Japanese actors are playing characters who are obviously non-Asian?

KO: Well, you know that in Japanese we still use the term shingeki, literally new play, to designate both Western plays and Japanese plays that are Western-influenced; that is, those that do not fall under the category of traditional Japanese theater, such as kabuki, noh, or kyougen. And, for the benefit of those who will be reading this interview, I will add that this term, shingeki, originated in the Meiji Era in the late 19th century, when Japan first opened itself up to the West. And, ever since that time, there has been a kind of unwritten contract between the performers and the audience that the Japanese actors in Western plays really are Norwegians or Russians or Americans or whatever. So, we have always been able to accept the actors as the characters they are portraying, just as we readily accept that actors in a Japanese historical play are really samurai or 17th-century warlords, for instance.

DJW: Sometimes, there are scenes in American or British plays in which one character uses a derogatory ethnic term to refer to another character. So, what did you do, for instance, in Streetcar, when Blanche refers to Stanley as a “Polack”?

KO: Many translators of this play, my father included, simply accommodate the term to the possibilities of Japanese pronunciation: Pohraku (Polack) and depend on the nasty tone in Blanche s voice to convey the contempt that she intends when using this word. But I don t use this approach, because that ethnic slur has no meaning in Japanese. In fact, the only one that every Japanese knows for sure is Jap. So, what I do in this case is write Pohrand (Poland/Polish), then add a Japanese suffix or postposition that can turn any reference to another person into a term of abuse or insult. Two of the most common of these are yaroh (jerk or swine) and mono. Mono can mean either person or thing, depending on the Chinese character used, but sounds exactly the same when spoken, thus creating the possibility for a sort of double entendre. So, Pohrand-yaroh or Pohrand-mono leaves no doubt as to the contempt that Blanche intends with this word. I know this is a very nasty business to have to deal with, but it can t be avoided.

DJW: When the authors of the plays are still living, to what extent do you usually work together with them? And have such collaborations ever proved problematic for you?

KO: There are times when I get in touch with the author for consultation, but I don t always do so. In fact, I often translate plays without seeing the original production. In those cases, I just read the script and put my imagination to work on how best to render it into Japanese. Then, of course, it goes to the director, who will naturally have his or her own ideas about bringing it to life in another language. And it is not necessarily a handicap if neither of us has seen the original play performed. This is because the result, especially when both of us have seen the original, has the danger of turning into a mere cover version of the real play. On the other hand, when we re dealing with only a written script, we re sometimes more apt to come up with a vibrant and fresh work, because we won t subconsciously just mimic what we ve seen on Broadway or in the West End, for example. I m a strong believer in the creativity that takes place among the translator, director, cast, and crew here in this country. And I believe that this creativity does not in any way reflect a lack of respect for the original work.

But, getting back to your specific question, I sometimes contact the author; but I m always wary of depending too much on him or her, because if you ask too many questions of the writer, there is the danger that you will lose your own sense of creativity and just try to explain the play in Japanese. Translation is not explanation, or even just interpretation. Rather, it is interpretation and creation through the medium of language. But obviously, it is a delicate operation to strike the right balance between this creativity and the intentions of the original work.

DJW: A common complaint of translators is that they are often paid scant attention?or even ignored altogether?when critics and reviewers discuss a particular work, unless the translator has a widespread reputation as a writer in his or her own right. How much attention is given to translators of modern drama in Japan by both academics and reviewers for the mainstream press?
KO: I think I’ve received my fair share of attention from critics. So, I don’t have any complaints on that count.

DJW: Well, in the English-language press in Japan, I frequently see reviews by bilingual critics of foreign plays that have been translated into Japanese. And, whether they think the productions are good or bad, they almost always attribute the praise or the blame to the cast, the director, or the original author, usually without even mentioning the translation.

KO: I think such reviewers often lack the capacity to evaluate the quality of the translation, no matter how proficient they may be in both Japanese and the original language. The very fact that they don’t mention the translation is frequently, though not always, a sign that they’re not qualified to do so in the first place. Good critics will usually take the translation into consideration, and will make mention of it if they spontaneously see how it has helped or hurt a production. But, of course, the reviews I read are in the Japanese-language press; and this is naturally where you’d expect to find the most qualified reviewer of work translated into Japanese.

I don’t think it is necessary for critics to scrutinize the translation in every case. But I do believe they should be qualified to take it into consideration when making their overall review.

DJW: Many translators of drama from the more remote past, such as those who work on the Greek tragedies, Shakespeare, Molière, or even Ibsen, for instance, often see their work as plays meant to be read, rather than seen on the stage. However, in your case of course, you are writing with the direct intention of having your Japanese rendition performed before an audience. When you go back over the written texts of your renderings, do you see any great discrepancy between their quality on the page and their success as performance pieces?

KO: That’s difficult for me to answer, because I’m so busy with the next project that I seldom have the opportunity to go over the text after my version of the play has been put into production. I work almost exclusively in anticipation of the translation being used for performance in the near future. It’s almost as if the translation is consumed by the performance. Not many of my versions have been published for reading purposes. But, in those cases in which they have been published, I haven’t seen any great gap between their quality as performance pieces and as written texts. And, in fact, I hope I will have the time to publish them all some day.

But, on that point, I’d like to add something about my father’s work. He is an exception among the many translators of Shakespeare in Japan in that he translates Shakespeare for performance before general audiences, not for students or academics to read. And, although he does not pretend to translate him into modern colloquial Japanese, he does say that he translates your greatest playwright with much the same audience in mind as Shakespeare himself had; that is, people from all strata of society, from the aristocracy to the groundlings.

And my father’s approach has greatly influenced my own, because I always try my best to translate the modern plays that I work on into a language that can be appreciated by as wide a spectrum of Japanese society as possible. If my translations were too literal, people here would not be able to enjoy them. An example that comes to mind is, once again, from A Streetcar Named Desire. In the original script, Stella always calls Blanche by her first name, as would be perfectly normal among sisters in America. But I avoid this in my renderings, because Stella is the younger sister, and if Stella always referred to her older sister as Blanche in Japanese it would just seem like too much of an imitation of what Americans would do. And this would lead to the situation that I’ve mentioned before, in which the audience would see and hear only two Japanese actresses simply pretending to be Americans. So, I do something as seemingly slight as having Stella call her onee-san (a rather formal way of addressing one’s older sister), as these two women come from high society, or at least from a family with pretensions to being part of high society. If she were to call her older sister by her given name in Japanese, it would put them several rungs below the social class to which they both believe they belong. But here’s where my cleverness got the better of me: There’s one scene in which Blanche is trying to pass herself off as Stella’s younger sister when Mitch is present. But I got around this by simply having Stella address Blanche without any vocative at all, at least in front of Mitch. And that works nicely in Japanese, because we don’t address each other by name nearly as much as you do in English. The same thing goes for referring to someone simply as you. We very rarely do this in Japanese. As you know, we generally assume that the context of the situation will make it clear who is being referred to, without using either proper nouns or pronouns. Usually, you is translated as anata. But this word in Japanese is excessively polite, and can even contain a certain nuance of sarcasm. For example, if my wife calls me anata, that’s a sure sign...
that she is angry with me about something! Since Japanese traditionally avoid overt confrontation, the excessive politeness of this anata often comes off as having a somewhat snotty quality.

**DJW:** Considering how busy your translation work keeps you, do you ever have trouble maintaining your enthusiasm for a particular project?

**KO:** I’d like to say that I sometimes have trouble maintaining my enthusiasm for the classes I teach! (Laughs) But I’ve never experienced a loss of enthusiasm for my translation projects. However, there are times when I feel a little disappointed after a performance, even if it has met my expectations. That’s because I always hope for the performance to exceed my expectations. And the reason for this is that I see my translation as a mere starting point for the director and cast to work with; and if they’re unable to push beyond that starting point when they do the play, I do feel a little let down. So, I’ve never lost my enthusiasm for any project before it has actually been staged.

**DJW:** And is that true even when you are under extreme pressure to finish a translation?

**KO:** My wife sometimes says that I seem to feel no stress. But she often feels stress just looking at me, because she feels the pressure for me! (Laughs)

   Anyway, I feel this postperformance letdown even when I’m praised for my efforts, because, in my heart of hearts, I often feel that there was something I could have done better.

**DJW:** I know that you’ve translated Chekhov via English. Do you see any problem with the practice of what is, in essence, a translation of a translation?

**KO:** The Chekhov omnibus was a special case, because it was really more of an adaptation of Chekhov by Michael Frayn, rather than a pure translation. So, in a sense, it was actually written by Frayn. Therefore, I took on this project with no hesitation. And, in the published version of *The Sneeze*, Frayn provides a list of the pronunciation of proper nouns used in the play, so I was able to adapt them to the admittedly limited pronunciation possibilities of Japanese.

   Moreover, the four plays and four stories that make up *The Sneeze* had already been translated into Japanese directly from the Russian. So, I checked the differences between the translations from Russian and Frayn’s adaptations.

**DJW:** Finally, I’d like to ask you if you consider theatrical translation, at least translation of works that are considered “serious literature,” an art unto itself? Or do you see it more as a craft whose main responsibility is to convey a play from one language to another with as little damage as possible?

**KO:** This is an interesting question to me, because at least as far as translation for the stage is concerned I make no distinction between art and craft. I put myself in the same boat as the stage designers, lighting technicians, and sound technicians who work on these plays. In the most ordinary sense of the word, all of these people are craftsmen, because they are making or doing something for pay. But the end result can transcend craftsmanship and turn into art. By the same token, I write translations on commission, but my ultimate hope is that what I write will emerge on the stage as art.
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Let me with Sappho and Orinda be
Oh! ever sacred Nymph, adorn'd by thee
And give my verses immortality

Aphra Behn

Before the publication of Aphra Behn's translation of Oenone to Paris, an epistle found in Ovid's Heroides, all recognized published translations of this epistle were re-imaginations by male writers. Seventeenth—century poets regarded translation of the classics as a male activity and the mark of the true artist. Few women had the opportunity to translate or reinterpret classical texts. Aphra Behn was determined to prove that restrictions could not be placed on the aesthetic endeavors of female poets. Thus, we can deduce that when Behn paraphrases the Oenone to Paris epistle, she does so for three primary reasons: 1. revising or paraphrasing classical texts permitted Behn to authenticate and empower herself as a female writer; 2. working within the classical tradition allowed Behn to participate in the male-dominated practice of appropriating classical narratives; and 3. the pliability of classical mythology granted Behn the freedom to experiment with and re-tell classical tales from a distinctly feminine perspective.

Behn's Oenone to Paris epistle first appeared in Jacob Tonson's Ovid's Epistles Translated by Several Hands, published in London in 1680. In the preface to this text, the then poet laureate, John Dryden, critiques Behn's translation of the Oenone to Paris epistle. Dryden writes:

The Reader will here find most of the Translations with some little Latitude or variation from the Author's Sense: That of Oenone to Paris is in Mr. Cowley's way of Imitation only. I was desir'd to say that the Author, who is of the Fair Sex, understood not Latine. But if she does not, I am afraid she has given us occasion to be ashamed of this. (A6r)

Dryden's apology on behalf of the female author (Aphra Behn) who understood not Latine should not be ignored. At first, the disclaimer suggests that Behn's translation lacked the artistry and accuracy of those translations written by the male contributors. However, as Dryden points out, even if Behn did not know Latin, her version of the poem was commendable, for she fared better than the male contributors, who were well versed in the language. As the only female writer included in this publication of Ovid's Epistles, Behn's revision was remarkable because during the 17th century, few women were educated in Greek and Latin or had been exposed to classical literature in translation. Knowledge of classical languages was a passport to being included among the elite. In fact, Elaine Hobby remarks: Those inside the secret society knew its codes and culture and could profit from membership. Those outside—most men and almost all women—were excluded from a wide range of social activities and employments (193). Naturally, poets and scholars alike regarded the practice of both reading and translating the classics as the male insignia of learning (Munns 46). Thus, translating separated the mediocre writer from the prestigious artist.

Those able to translate texts were generally familiar with several foreign languages. Behn scholars have affirmed Behn's knowledge of French but generally agree that she did not know Greek or Latin. As Janet Todd surmises,

Behn so routinely lamented her lack of classical learning that she probably could not translate directly from Latin texts. More likely, one of her university-educated theatrical or legal friends, Nahum Tate or [Thomas] Otway might have given her a prose translation or, since she was remarkably fluent with poetry, might have translated orally while she turned the words into couplets. (256)

In his preface to Ovid's Epistles, Dryden also confirms that Behn understood not Latine. Either Behn herself told Dryden that she could not read Latin or Dryden arrived at his own conclusion. We may never know if Behn could actually read Greek or Latin. However, we cannot ignore the fact that she was familiar with classical texts and like her male contemporaries...
desired to engage in the practice of translating. Behn recognized that translation would be a difficult task; however, she knew that to authenticate herself as a writer she too would have to translate.

To understand the nature of Behn’s translation and identify with her contribution to the tradition of classical appropriation, we must first discuss the 17th-century definition of translation. Samuel Johnson’s *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) describes translation as the act of turning into another language; [or] interpretation. Seventeenth-century writers translated texts either by paraphrase To interpret with laxity of expression, to translate loosely or by imitation A method of translating looser than paraphrase. Although Behn’s poem is titled *A Paraphrase of Oenone to Paris*, in his preface to *Ovid’s Epistles Translated by Several Hands*, Dryden refers to her version of the poem as an imitation and not a paraphrase. In this instance, because he considers imitation to be the lowest form of translation, Dryden undermines Behn. Considering that Behn’s epistle is labeled a paraphrase, it is surprising that Dryden would refer to her text as an imitation. Daniel Matthew contends that Dryden saw Paraphrase as a compromise between imitation and slavish word-for-word translation, metaphor (1). Dryden acknowledged the similarities between paraphrase and imitation but considered paraphrase to be the higher art form. Dryden believed that poets who imitate fail to create their own authentic works. He writes, To state it fairly, imitation of an author is the most advantageous way for a translator to show himself, but the greatest wrong which can be done to the memory and reputation of the dead (186). Perhaps Dryden could not accept Behn’s Oenone as a paraphrase because he would not admit that artistically, he and Behn were poetic equals. Therefore, in his opening statement, although Dryden compliments Behn’s translation as one that could put others to shame, by labeling her text an imitation, he implies that her narrative is inferior.

The question of whether Behn paraphrased or imitated is ultimately irrelevant. What is most important is that Behn’s translation (or paraphrase) of the Oenone epistle was included in an all-male anthology of translated poems. This paraphrase gave Behn license to join her male peers and participate in a unique process that would define her position as a legitimate poet. Before focusing our discussion on the dynamics of Behn’s interpretation of Ovid’s epistle, it is critical that we first discuss Behn’s life as an author and examine the social climate in which she worked. A study of Behn’s early writing career illu-minates the challenges the 17th-century female writer faced and helps support my assertion that Behn turns to revising classical mythology as a means of emancipating herself as a female author.

Before trying her hand at translation, Behn began her career as a playwright. In 1671, she produced *The Forc’d Marriage, or The Jealous Bridegroom*, followed by *The Amorous Prince; or, The Curious Husband* (1671); *The Dutch Lover: A Comedy* (1673); her most popular play, *The Rover; or, The Banished Cavaliers* (1677); *Sir Patient Fancy: A Comedy* (1678); and many more. At first, Behn enjoyed relatively encouraging criticism from her peers. Her literary coterie included writers such as Anne Wharton and Elizabeth Taylor. She also made enduring alliances with male writers, including Thomas Creech, John Dryden, Edward Ravenscroft, Thomas Otway, and Nahum Tate. However, as Judith Kegan Gardiner recognizes, Behn’s membership in the playwriting society meant compromising her reputation as a woman: The theatrical set to which Behn belonged was a privileged slice of London where the classes could mix but only while following certain rules that traded female sexual respectability for access to men of rank and wit (282). Unfortunately for Behn, it was socially unacceptable for the moral or virtuous woman to associate freely with several male acquaintances. Thus, while her peers accepted Behn, because she was a woman, they did not necessarily respect her.

As a Restoration writer, Behn wrote in a libertine mode about controversial subjects such as politics, marriage, sex, and female oppression. Behn often uses her poems, plays, and novels to promote her views, but she was often ostracized for tackling these issues. It was thought that only men could be libertines, and therefore, because she was female, Behn was maligned. Before long, Behn’s popularity began to founder. It has been suggested that the attack on Behn’s literary career began after the publication of *Love Letters to a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684). Critics condemned Behn for the narrative’s highly sexual content and libertine ideals (161). For example, when commenting on the sexual themes resonant in Behn’s plays, Alexander Pope wrote: The Stage how loosely does Astrea [Behn’s poetical nickname] tread / Who fairly puts all characters to Bed (117). Hobby says that ironically, Behn’s plays were far less bawdy than the plays written by men (17). Behn was attacked not just for the sexual overtones of her works, but more so for her crime of being female and daring to publish works that lacked the modesty expected by females. Behn soon realized that she had to defend
herself and confront her critics. Like other Restoration writers, Behn offers a rebuttal to her critics through the prefaces of her plays. In many of the prefaces to Behn's plays, the relationship between gender and authorial power is addressed.6

In the preface to The Luckey Chance or an Alderman's Bargain: A Comedy (1687), Behn reiterates her awareness that female writers are treated unjustly:

All I ask, is the Priviledge for my Masculine Part the Poet in me, (if any such you will allow me), to tread in those successful Paths my Predecessors have so long thriv'd in, to take those Measures that both the Ancient and Modern Writers have set me, and by which they have pleas'd the World so well. If I must not, because of my Sex, have this Freedom, but that you will usurp all to your selves; I lay down my Quill, and you shall hear no more of me, no not so much as to make Comparisons, because I will be kinder to my Brothers of the Pen, than they have been to a defenseless Woman, for I am not content to write for a Third Day only I value Fame as much as if I had been born a Hero; and if you rob me of that, I can retire from the ungrateful World, and scorn its fickle Favors. (A8r)

When Behn refers to the masculine part, the poet in me she acknowledges that authorship is associated with masculinity. Moreover, she expresses her desire to be respected as a true poet who takes her writing career seriously. As she notes, her purpose is not to be a quick and quiet success; rather, she wishes to establish herself as a famed writer.

Unmistakably, Behn was keenly aware that male and female writers were held to different standards, and this invariably had an impact on what she produced.7 Feminist critic Margaret Homans has examined how the consciousness of being a woman affects the workings of poetic imagination (3). Homans believes, Where the major literary tradition normatively identifies the figure of the poet as masculine, and voice as a masculine property, women writers cannot see their minds as androgynous, or as sexless, but must take part in self-definition by contraries (3). Drawing upon Homans hypothesis, then, it is possible that Behn could not help but recognize the masculine part in her. But, as a female writer, writing against a male tradition, Behn was aware of her female-ness and argued for the right to garner the respect and
acclaim given to her male counterparts. More succinctly, as Jessica Munns notes, if writing is male, then as a woman and a writer Behn claims a male part, too. Behn does not want to be a genteel lady poetess, nor does she just want money (196).8

The difficulty in gaining public acceptance made Behn extremely aware of her self-presentation. Richard Helgerson contends that most Renaissance poets were preoccupied about their ranking among the great poets, past and present. Helgerson asserts that Renaissance poets pondered several questions, among them: What relation has his greatness to that of other significant cultural protagonists, literary and nonliterary? [And] what are the literary genres appropriate to his role? (6). To begin with, it would be difficult for Behn to align herself with the acclaimed, mostly male, poets of the day, because even if her texts were as great as those written by men, because of her sex, she would not receive the deserved accolades. Second, in regard to selecting a literary genre appropriate to her role, Behn was aware that there were no literary genres appropriate for her role as a woman writer – the appropriate role of the female was to be silent. Behn experimented with several genres, but she knew that the translation of classical works had a cachet as the superior genre. Writers such as Dryden had achieved the poet laureate status by translating the classics. Therefore, to achieve fame, she would have to engage in translation.

It was after the demise of her career as a playwright that Behn experimented with translation. Critics hold opposing views about Behn’s decision to translate. Some suggest that she reworked classical narratives solely for money. But Elizabeth Spearing says that Behn translates because it was in vogue:

Aphra Behn lived in a period when translation was a prestigious activity: A great variety of instances and discussion of translation offered aesthetic and intellectual excitement to her and her contemporaries. To an intelligent woman, almost certain to have had little Latin and less Greek, translation would have been associated with access to the ideas and literature of classical paganism and with the possibility of escape from the strongly and perhaps stifling Christian framework of the vernacular writing most readily available to her. (154)

Spearing proves that for Behn, translation would be a way of placing herself on the same level as male poets. But, as Behn tells us in the preface to Thomas Creech’s translation of Lucretius, the opportunity to read and interpret classical literature was closed to women:

Till now I curst My birth and education, And more the scanted customs of the nation, Permitting not the female Sex to tread The mighty paths of learned heroes dead. The God-like Virgil and Great Homer’s verse, Like Divine mysteries are conceal’d from us We are forbid all grateful Themes, No ravishing Thoughts approach our Ear; The fulsome gingle of the times Is all we are allow’d to understand or Hear. (31)

As Goreau points out, Behn’s anger is twofold. She is angry because male prejudice has denied her an educational inclusive of classical learning. Furthermore, she laments the fact that few women have been given the opportunity to contribute to the English literary tradition (32). When Dryden invites Behn to include her translation in his collection, she eagerly accepts the offer to join the male domain of translating myth first, so that she can participate in the male activity of classical translation, and second, so that her work can be included alongside respected writers of the day. According to Goreau:

Literary translation of the classics was very much in vogue in her day, and her colleagues were busy turning out new versions of poems, satires, and essays from both Latin and Greek literature. Abraham Cowley translated odes from Pindar and Horace; Edmund Waller, part of Virgil’s Aeneid; Thomas Creech, Lucretius’s De Rerum Natura; Henry Higden, Juvenal’s Satires; and John Dryden Ovid and Homer. Aphra Behn, determined not to be left out, had to translate Ovid’s Epistle of Oenone to Paris and other works by paraphrasing a literal rendering of the original. (Goreau 30-31)

Goreau confirms that many of the established writers of the day practiced translation. It is possible that Behn hoped the inclusion of her revision of a classical myth would provide her with the same credibility her male peers enjoyed.

Paraphrasing was such a popular 17th-century occupation that Behn would have been able to familiarize herself with Ovid’s Heroïdes without knowing Latin.
Several versions of the *Heroides* existed. Rachel Trickett asserts that 17th-century writers were drawn to the *Heroides* because the text’s depiction of distraught yet articulate women had a continuing fascination. Trickett notes that Ovid transforms the heroines of myth and exemplary history into recognizable women of Augustan Rome whose arguments and complainings introduce an element of wit that preserves them from total dereliction. A deserted woman writing to her betrayer, if she is to carry any conviction in her appeal, must evidently have some skill and some hope. Late seventeenth—and eighteenth—century readers recognized this paradox, but with a deprecating smile at female volubility and arts of persuasion, which seems not to change through the ages. (198)

As a writer who often highlighted the theme of unrequited love and feminine desire, it is not surprising that the *Heroides* would appeal to Behn. Ovid’s *Heroides* are a collection of poems comprising 14 epistles from heroines of Greek and Roman mythology. In his discussion of the heroines of the *Heroides*, classical scholar Peter Knox maintains:

[E]ach of the heroines epistle [is a referent] self-consciously to a specific source in earlier literature; they represent episodes set in the interstices of the literary tradition. Ovid does not re-create his heroines from the broad range of traditional material available to him; he begins with his characters as they have already been constituted in the works of his predecessors. (18-19)

Readers familiar with the classics recognize heroines from texts like the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and *Aeneid*. Ovid’s decision to form his narrative on the basis of already written stories indicates the possibility of reshaping classical myth. By imagining what heroic women said and thought, Ovid fills in the gaps of the narratives that were written by his predecessors. Knox contends that the *Heroides* were ideally written for women readers: In his *Arts Amatoria* Ovid asserts the novelty of these epistles when he recommends his own poetry as reading material for women. *Uel tibi composita cantetur Epistula uoce: / ignotum hoc aliis ille nouauit opus* (14). Ovid not only conceptualizes women’s inner emotions and experiences but also focuses on subjects he thinks women want to read about.

Oenone to Paris is from the fifth letter of Ovid’s book of epistles *Heroides*. According to Knox, the Oenone story is not found in the stories of Homer or other tragedians who wrote about the Trojan War (140). Rather, he contends that the story is first presented in the Hellenistic period. Knox states that Ovid’s version of the Oenone myth differs radically from other extant versions:

Ovid’s treatment of the story adopts a very different focus from the other accounts known to us: theirs is on the death of Paris and Oenone’s rejection of him, the central episode in all other extant narratives. Ovid’s epistle plays upon the reader’s familiarity with Paris tragic end, an ironic twist emphasized by Ovid’s rejection of the traditional attribution to Oenone of the power of prophecy. (141)

In contrast, Ovid’s *Oenone* epistle describes Paris betrayal when he goes off to war with the promise to reunite with Oenone but returns with a new love, Helen of Troy. Distraught, Oenone writes to Paris and begs him to leave Helen and return to her.

Hundreds of years after the publication of Ovid’s *Heroides*, other male writers would step into the hearts and minds of mythical heroic women and present their versions of the *Heroides*. Until the emergence of Behn’s *Oenone*, men wrote all recognized renditions of this ill-fated love story. Like Ovid, Behn presents her own new alternative reading of the Paris and Oenone love affair. Behn’s version of the Oenone epistle alters the male tradition of telling this woman’s story from a male perspective. With her appropriation, we are given a woman’s story from a woman’s point of view.

Behn’s *Oenone* was first published by Jacob Tonson in *Ovid’s Epistles Translated by Several Hands* (1680). In the second edition of *Ovid’s Epistles* (1681), Tonson also included John Cooper’s translation of the Oenone epistle. It has been suggested that Behn used Cooper’s text as the model for her own imitation. For example, Behn biographer Maureen Duffy concludes that because Behn could not read Latin or Greek, she had to rely on someone else’s translation on which to base her own. In this case it was John Cooper whose translation of the same verse letter precedes her own in [Tonson’s] book (192). In contrast, others, like Todd, maintain that either translator may have seen the other’s work, and it is not possible to tell the direction of any influence. Todd asserts that Wye Saltonstall’s popular 1639 transla-
tion might also have been an influence; however, she finds that there is no significant verbal similarity to his work in Behn’s version and no specific evidence that she used his translation as a source (376). The variation between Behn’s version and that of 17th-century male writers is crucial to this study. An analysis of Behn’s epistle and the male versions written by John Cooper and Wye Saltonstall illustrates how Behn uniquely weaves her tale in a fashion that differs from that of male writers.9

A comparison between Behn’s text and those of Cooper and Saltonstall indicates the contrasting features between Behn’s account of the Oenone epistle and Cooper’s and Saltonstall’s recreation of the text. First, to evoke sympathy for the female protagonist from her readers, Behn alters the harsh tone of the narrator. Second, she gives voice to her characters, and third, in some cases she heightens the dramatic nature of the story and includes events that the other writers do not. In other instances, she omits details that both Cooper and Saltonstall present in their texts. In Saltonstall’s and Cooper’s letters, each depicts Oenone as an arrogant nymph who scorns and condemns both her husband and the new lover he brings home. Alternatively, Behn emphasizes the sentimental anguish of a woman who has been wronged by her first true love but is willing to forgive her lover’s infidelity if he will reunite with her. Behn does not feature Oenone as the lofty, arrogant jilted wife that Cooper and Saltonstall portray. Rather, Behn characterizes Oenone as a young and naive girl who suffers the fate of loving too much.

In both Saltonstall’s and Cooper’s texts, the opening lines of the epistle convey a tone of arrogance. Saltonstall’s letter begins:

Unto my Paris, for though thou art not mine,  
Thou art my Paris, because I am thine,  
A Nymph doth send from the Idaean Hill,  
These following words, which do this paper fill.  
Reade it, if thy new Wife will permit,  
My letter is not in a strange hand writ. (31)

Similarly, Cooper writes:

Read this, (if your new Bride will suffer), read;  
And no upbraidings from Mycena dread.  
Only Oenone here does of her swain,  
(If he will let her call him hers) complain.  
What God has robb d me of your love and you?  
(97-98)

Both Saltonstall and Cooper immediately highlight Oenone’s sarcasm. Oenone sardonically suggests that Paris’s new wife is so controlling that he must have permission to read Oenone’s letter. This remark attacks Paris’s lack of virility. Cooper and Saltonstall imply that Oenone taunts Paris and accuses him of being afraid to assert his manly prowess and stand up to his new wife.

In Behn’s rendition, Oenone refrains from mentioning Paris’s new bride. Instead, Behn’s Oenone appeals to Paris’s conscience, first by reminding him that he is the Lord of her desires, the ruler of her heart, and second, she appeals to Paris to explain why his affections have strayed:

To thee, dear Paris, Lord of my Desires,  
Once tender Partner of my softest Fires;  
To thee I write, mine, whilst a Shepherds Swain,  
But now a Prince, that Title you distain.  
Oh fatal Pomp, that cou d so soon divide  
What Love, and all our Vows so firmy ty d!  
What God our Loves industrious to prevent,  
Curst thee with power, and ruin d my Content?  
(97-98)

From the outset, Behn avoids the bitter disposition of the Oenone featured in the two male stories. Behn’s Oenone tells Paris that even though he has been unfaithful, she still loves him. Behn replaces the sarcastic tone with one of love and hurt. For Behn, Oenone is an estranged wife who fails to understand why her husband has turned to the arms of another woman.

The next difference between the three versions is that both male writers move into the conflict of the narrative with little description of Paris and Oenone’s courtship. Behn devotes several elaborate passages describing their past relationship. Here Behn’s intention is to illustrate that Paris and Oenone once shared a passionate relationship that was far from a passing fancy. Oenone reminds Paris that when he met her, she was the object of affection for many men, but she chose him above all others:

Me all the Village Herdsmen strove to gain, / For me the Shepherds fight and fu d in vain, / Thou hadst my heart, and they my cold disdain (99). Continuing to reminisce about their past, Oenone reflects back on the reasons for falling in love with Paris. We can be certain that Oenone’s perception of the relationship is not a figment of her imagination, for Paris reciprocates his love and admiration for Oenone:

Upon the charming Musick of thy Tongue,
And never thought the blessed hours too long,
No swain, no God like thee cou d ever move,
Or had so soft an art in whispering Love,
No wonder that thou wert Ally d to Jove,
And when you pip d, or sang, or danc d, or spoke,
The God appear d in every Grace, and Look
Pride of the Swains, and Glory of the Shades,
The Grief, and Joy of all the Love-sick Maids. (102)

Oenone proves that the feelings of love are mutual.
Oenone adores everything about Paris, including the way
he sings, dances, and talks, and he is enamored with her
also. In addition, Oenone insinuates that Paris, the more
experienced of the two in the game of love, seduced
Oenone and made her fall in love with him.

In another lengthy passage, Behn s Oenone credits
Paris for awakening the innocent feelings of sexual
desire that she was ashamed to express:

Speechless, and panting at my feet you lay
And short breath d sighs told what you cou d not
A thousand times my hand with Kisses prest,
And look d such Darts, as none cou d e re resist.
Silent we gaz d, and as my Eyes met thine, (mine!)
New Joy fill d theirs, new Love and shame fill d
You saw the Fears my kind disorder shows,
And broke your Silence with a thousand V ows.
Heavens, how you Swore! By ev ry Pow r Divine
You wou d be ever true! be ever mine. (100-101)

Behn portrays Oenone as an innocent virgin. In contrast,
Saltonstall and Cooper disclose that Oenone is no stranger
to sexual encounters. For example, when Saltonstall and
Cooper describe the intimate encounters between the two,
their Oenone is less than bashful. Cooper s Oenone writes:
Slave as you was, I took you to my Bed, / Often, amidst
your Flocks, beneath some shade / On Leaves and
Flow rs we Amorously were laid / As oft, upon the Straw
our joys we prov d (98). Clearly, this is an Oenone who
is far from demure. Instead, she is characterized as aggress-
ive and wanton. Admittedly, Saltonstall s description is
less erotic than Cooper s: Under some Tree together in
the shade; / Whose boughs like a greene Canopie spred, / While
the soft grasse did yeelede us a greene bed: / And
when the dew did fall, we often lay / In a poor Cottage,
upon straw or hay (31). The primary difference between
Behn s Oenone and Saltonstall s Oenone is that
Saltonstall s Oenone is not ashamed of the passionate
encounter upon the straw.

When Behn describes this scene, there is no mention
of the two lovers lying together. Paris is either featured at
Oenone s feet or sitting beside her: Oft to the cooling
Groves, Our Flocks we led, / And Seated on some shad-
ed, flowry Bed, / Watch d the united Wantons as they
fed (101). Behn illustrates that their pastime is innocent.
Perhaps Behn recognizes that male writers have focused
on this lust that binds Oenone to Paris. For this reason,
she concentrates on their love.

Another example illuminates further how Saltonstall
and Cooper make Oenone s speeches more sexual. In a
scene in which Oenone tells Paris not to be ashamed of
her, Cooper writes, Despise me not because with you I
lay, / And pass d on new fall n leaves the well spent day;
/ For thy Oenone s worthy of a Bed, / Not with Green
leaves but gawdy Purple spread (103). Cooper moves
the imagery from one of pastoral innocence to one of
worldly bawdiness. Saltonstall s Oenone makes a similar
admission: Despise me not, because that I with thee /
Have laine under some shady Beechen tree. / For I am
fitter for thy royal bed, / When it with purple Quilts is
covered (34). Oenone s statement suggests that before
Paris was King he was willing to lie with Oenone in the
straw. But, now Paris has become King, Oenone is too
lowly to sleep in Paris royal bed. In Behn s epistle,
Oenone refrains from mentioning anything about sex,
their past sexual encounters, or the differences between
her and Paris different social classes. Instead, she tells
Paris that even if Paris is King, she can offer her love to
him: Tis no Ambitious Flame that makes me sue / To
be again belov d, and blest with you; / No vain desire of
being Ally d t a King, / Love is the only Dowry I can
bring, / And tender Love is all I ask again (115).

One of the most significant distinctions between
Behn s account and that of the male writers is that Behn
gives voice to her characters. When Paris leaves to go to
war, all three writers describe how Paris and Oenone
have difficulty saying goodbye. For example, Cooper
writes:

From your swoln Eyes the Tears at Parting crept,
Deny it not, nor be asham d you wept:
(Your Love was then no injury to your Fame;
You daily burn in a more shamefull flame.)
You wept, and on my Eyes you gazing stood,
Whose falling Tears increas d the briny Floud.
About my Neck your wreathing arms you flung,
Closer than Vines to their lov d Elms you clung.

(100)

Saltonstall also mentions the tearful departure and hints
that perhaps Paris will deny that he cried:

Thou didst weepe at thy departure;
Do not deny it, it was no offence:
For by my love thy credit is not stained,
But of loving Helen thou mayst be ashamed
Thou weptst, and also that very time
Thou sawst me weep, my teares dropping with thine
And as the Vine about the Ealme doth winde,
So thy armes were about my neck entwine. (32-33)

Again, the sardonic tone returns when Saltonstall's Oenone says Paris should not be embarrassed to admit that he wept, but he should be ashamed to acknowledge that he is with Helen.

Behn's Oenone prefers not to imply that Paris would be embarrassed to express his sorrow. Once again, in an attempt to appeal to Paris' emotions (and for dramatic effect), Behn allows both Oenone and Paris to express their anguish orally:

You kist the Tears which down my Cheeks did glide,
And mingled yours with the soft falling Tide,
And twixt your sighs a thousand times you said
Cease my Oenone! Cease my charming Maid!
If Paris lives his native Troy to see,
My lovely Nymph, thou shalt a Princess be!
But my Prophetick Fear no Faith allows,
My breaking Heart resisted all thy Vows.
Aa must we part, I cry! those killing words
No further Language to my Grief affords.
Trembling, I fell upon they panting breast
Which was with equal Love, and Grief opprest

(106)

This added dialogue is important to our reading of the text. Behn's Oenone relays that Paris vowed to return and make her his queen. Moreover, in order to remind Paris of the promises he made her, Oenone puts his words in writing.

Finally, rather than just narrate Oenone's pain, as Saltonstall and Cooper do, Behn allows her Oenone to verbalize her despair. We should note, Behn does not limit this dialogue to Oenone. In another section of the poem, Behn's authorial voice slips into the narrative to address readers about the politics of love:

How much more happy are we Rural Maids,
Who know no other Palaces than Shades?

Who want no Titles to enslave the Croud,
Least they should babble all our Crimes aloud.
No Arts our good to show, our Ills to hide,
Nor know to cover faults of Love with Pride. (113)

Behn's direct address to her readers is clear: simple or rural maids, like herself, engage in relationships not for titles or social distinction, but simply for love. Behn identifies with women like Oenone because they are victims who suffer the consequence of loving unconditionally. More importantly, differentiating her story from the male writers, Behn introduces an authorial feminine voice into the text.

The ending of the text reflects Oenone's desperation to be united with Paris. While Cooper and Saltonstall describe a scene involving Oenone as the victim of rape, Behn opts to omit this detail. Saltonstall writes:

I hid me in the woods While the wanton rout
Of nimble Satyrs fought to finde me out:
And horned Fawnes, with wreathes of sharp Pine
crown'd,
Over the Mountaine Ida fought me round
For great Apollo that protecteth of Troy,
The spoiles of my virginity did enjoy.
By force against my will, for which disgrace
I toare my guiltless haire and scratcht my face. (36)

Cooper offers a similar anecdote:

Long time I liv d a Tenant of the Groves,
The Common object of the Satyr s loves,
Me Faunus too, who o r the Mountains fled,
Pursu d with Leafy Chaplets on his head;
And Phoebus, who but with much force, obtain d
That bliss for which the rest in vain complain d.
I tore my hair, while my soft limbs he prest,
And that curst face for which I was disgrac d.

(106-107)

Cooper implies that because of this rape Oenone needs Paris' emotional support:

My Paris can, and he must pity show,
To her who merits he can bestowed,
For I am yours, with you of old did pass,
In childish innocence my Infant days;
And I beseech you Gods to fix my doom,
And give that blessing to the time to come.
So in his arms to whom my Youth I lent,
Shall the remains of my blest life be spent. (107-108)
To some readers it might be thought that this rape could make Oenone appear more sympathetic. I contend that Behn leaves out these details because she wants to characterize Oenone as naive and innocent as possible. Also, earlier in the narrative, it is suggested that Helen has been raped, or pretends that she is raped. So, to align Oenone with Helen would make her as spoiled as Helen. Highlighting the difference between herself and Helen, Behn's Oenone reminds Paris: A Spotless Maid into thy Arms I brought, / Untouch't in Fame, even Innocent in thought. / Whilst she with Love has treated many a Guest, / And bring thee but the leavings of a Feast (112).

It is possible that the male writers focus on the rape scene because, in some ways, it satisfies their own desire to perceive female characters as victims. In her essay Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, Laura Mulvey argues that when men go to the movies, they play out their sexual fantasies with the women who are portrayed on the screen. Mulvey says while watching female characters in movies, men often experience scopophilia (the pleasure in looking). She writes:

The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. (425)

Mulvey also explains that at times the male gaze exhibits signs of sadism. This voyeuristic sadism allows men to experience pleasure when seeing women victimized or raped. Applying Mulvey's theory of sadistic voyeurism to the translations of Cooper and Saltonstall provides us with a possible understanding of why they presented a rape scene. For Cooper and Saltonstall, picturing Oenone as a victim of rape is pleasurable. Obviously, approaching this narrative from a female gaze, Behn does not relish the idea of describing a rape scene.

In Behn's text, instead of including the rape scene, Behn returns to the description of Oenone and Paris spending time together, once again lamenting upon how things used to be. In Behn's epistle, Oenone completes the letter simply by asking Paris come back to her arms, where he belongs:

Rouze your soft Slumbers with their rough Alarms,
And rudely snatch you from her faithless Arms:
Turn then fair Fugitive, ere tis too late,
Ere thy mistaken Love procures thy Fate;
Ere a wrong d Husband dos thy Death design,
And pierce that dear, that faithless Heart of thine. (116)

In essence, Oenone's letter demonstrates that she is not bitter about their separation. Indeed, she is waiting for Paris to return to her. Just as she begins the letter with a humble tone, she closes with a forgiving one.

The comparison between the two male versions of the epistle against Behn's female version clearly highlights the difference between the male and female translators. Whereas Cooper's and Saltonstall's Oenone focuses on blaming both Paris and Helen for the demise of their relationship, Behn's Oenone opts to absolve Paris of his wrongdoing and arrange a reunion. It is obvious that male writers have portrayed Oenone as the less sympathetic character. Both writers do not highlight the idea that Oenone is the innocent young nymph who would be grateful if Paris came home to her. Rather, Saltonstall's and Cooper's Oenone is confrontational and assertive. As readers, we are more inclined to empathize with Behn's Oenone. Behn's Oenone is less aggressive. Instead of the worldly, complaining character that is presented in the male versions, Behn's Oenone is passive. She does not quite understand why Paris has left her. Therefore, in what could be read as a loving and forgiving letter, Behn asks Paris to rekindle the romance they once had. It is possible that Behn sides with Oenone because as a woman she understands or has experienced unrequited love. Therefore, as she draws upon her own womanly experiences, she succeeds in re-telling a woman's story from a woman's perception.

After the publication of Oenone, Behn was harshly criticized. Although Dryden is gracious in his statement about Behn's inadequacies, others would not excuse Behn. Goreau quotes from A Satyr on the Modern Translators (1684) that one writer (Goreau suggests that this writer is Matthew Prior) dogmatically criticized what he viewed as Behn's less than poetic genius:

The female wit, who next convicted stands,
Not for abusing Ovid's verse but Sandy's;
She might have learn'd from the ill-borrowed grace,
(Which little helps the ruin of her face)
That wit, like beauty, triumphs o'er the heart
When more of nature's seen and less of art:
Nor strive in Ovid's letters to have shown
As much of skill as lewdness in her own.
Then let her from the next inconstant lover,
Take a new copy for a second Rover
Describe the cunning of a jilting whore.
From the ill arts herself had us d before,
Thus let her write, but paraphrase no more. (254)

As the author of this passage attempts to undermine
Behn for her lack of learning, he displays his own
ignorance when he suggests that rather than paraphrase
Ovid, Behn is paraphrasing George Sandys, because
Sandys translated the *Metamorphoses* and not the
*Heroides*.

Contemporary critics such as S. J. Wiseman have
recognized that Behn is just not translating but experi-
menting with feminine tropes and feminine language.
Wiseman writes,

Behn's poetry—pastoral, quasi-Petrarchan, and
libertine investigates feminine desire and the
power of language. In the translation from
Ovid's *Oenone to Paris* (first published in 1680), Behn takes up the problems of feminine
desire since the passing of the golden age and
the arrival of highly gendered models of love
and poetry whose strictures work against femi-
nine satisfaction. (17-18)

Here Wiseman demonstrates a recognition that Behn's
translation expresses feminine qualities.

The publication of the *Oenone* epistle may have
been liberating for Behn. As Wiseman noted, by rewrit-
ing this classical myth, Behn was free to write about the
issue of feminine desire. During the 17th-century,
women were not permitted to write about their sexuality.
In contrast, during the Golden Age, it was permissible
for women to write about issues of erotic desire.
However, with the exception of Sappho, it was mostly
male writers who were recognized for retelling women's
stories of love and lust. By alluding to the classics, Behn
looks back to a time when women could express their
sexuality freely. Writing in the spirit of the Golden Age,
Behn challenges the 17th-century social, religious, and
moral codes, which advocated that women should pos-
sess pure hearts and minds.

Essentially, the publication of Behn's *Oenone* epis-
tle is highly relevant because during the 17th century it
was the first female classical revision published and
included in an all-male anthology. As the female narrator
of this epistle, Behn succeeds in providing female read-
ers with a narrative that is presented from a woman's
consciousness. Even if Behn's rendering of the narrative
was not seen as a great contribution during her day, she
sets a trend and helps shape the tradition of female clas-
sical translation for other women to follow.

Notes

1 Behn's translations of French texts include Abbe Paul
Talleman's *Le Voyage De L'isle d'amour* (1688),
Balthasar de Bonnecorse's *La Montre or The Lover's
Watch* (1686) and Fontenelle's *Histoire des Oracles and
Entretien sur la pluralité des ondes, Agnes de Castro
(1688), which includes her preface detailing her own the-
ory of translation. For a more in-depth study of Behn's
French Translation see Sherry Simon's *Gender in
Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of

2 We don't know if Behn could read Latin. While evi-
dence says she did not, critics have not been able to
prove that she couldn't.

3 In the Renaissance imitation and paraphrase held differ-
ent levels of significance. For example, Dryden privi-
leged paraphrase over imitation. In his preface to *Ovid's
Epistles*, Dryden offers his own theory of translation.
Dryden explains that metaphorase, paraphrase, and imitation
are all classified as translation:

[A]ll translation may be reduced to these three
heads: First that of metaphrase, or turning an
author word by word, and line by line, from one
language into another. Thus, or near this manner,
was Horace his *Art of Poetry* translated by Ben
Jonson. The second way is that of paraphrase, or
translation with Latitude, where the author is
kept in view by the Translator, so as never to be
lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as
his sense; and that too is admitted to be ampli-
fied, but not alter'd. Such is Mr. Wallers
Translation of Virgil's Fourth *Aeneid*. The third
way is that of imitation, where the translator (if
now he has not lost that Name) assumes the lib-
erty, not only to vary from the words and sense,
but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and
Dryden's definition of translation indicates that Behn is indeed **paraphrasing** classical texts. In the Oenone to Paris epistle, Behn uses Ovid's text as a framework for her own poem. Behn recasts the story so that the essence of Ovid's narrative is kept in view, but she embellishes the narrative in a way that reflects her female position.

4 Either Behn herself, an editor, or Dryden could have labeled Behn's text a paraphrase.


6 Others who comment on Behn's prefaces include Elaine Hobby, Janet Todd, and Angeline Goreau.

7 In the preface to *Sir Patient Fancy*, for example, Behn tells readers that she is aware that because she is a woman playwright, her plays are considered more lewd than comparable ones written by male writers. She says:

> I printed this play with all the impatient haste one ought to do, who would be vindicated from the most unjust and silly aspersion, Woman could invent to cast on Woman; and which only my being a woman has procured me. *That it was Bawdy*, the least most Excusable fault in the Men writers; to whose Plays they all crowd, as if they came to no other end than to hear what they condemn in this: *but from a Woman it was unnaturally*; but how so Cruell an unkindness came in to their imaginations I can by no means guess; (.5)

Behn makes is clear that she does not respect the double standards that are given to men but not women.


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AN ABC OF TRANSLATION

By Justin Bland, Sylvia Mello, and Tia Rabine

Prepared for a translation workshop directed by Steven F. White at St. Lawrence University

A — Translation is an art. It is a human process that creates an object of aesthetic value. However, in this age of artificial intelligence, a conflict has arisen between automatic and artisanal translation. And while the machines may be able to produce a literal, if not always accurate, translation, they will never replace the artistry of human translation.

B — Brot › pan › bread. Even literal translations of words do not always produce the same meaning. Brot, in German, is dry, dense, dark, and thinly sliced. Pan, in Spanish, is long and light, with a hard crust and a soft center. And yet, they are both literal translations for the soft, square, heavily-processed food item we in English call bread.

C — Crikey! This may be English, but how would you translate it into your own dialect? A cockney may greet you with a happy Cheerio! but how would you respond? Translation does not have to occur between two different languages, but rather, in intralingual translation, it occurs within one language itself. This could happen through clarification, definition, comment, parody, or simple translation between dialects. Mind the [translation] gap!

D — The dictionary is perhaps the translator’s most common tool (except for the pencil); however, difficulties often arise. It gives many different options for each word, but these are not always sufficient. The dictionary often does not take into consideration context, idiomatic expressions, or slang, and therefore, one must often consult other sources.

E — A translation must attempt to create the same effect upon the reader as the original. As Eco mentions, it is most important to translate the deep story of the text, or, in other words, the general emotional and intellectual effect on the reader. To do this, one cannot always translate the text literally. Instead, the translator must impose his own creative ego to produce a text that is equally as valid as the original.

F — A commonly disputed issue of translation is that of foreignizing versus domesticating a text. Jos Ortega y Gasset, for example, favors una forma de traduccion que sea fea, como lo es siempre la ciencia, with plenty of footnotes. He thinks of a translated text as a vehicle that brings the reader to the original language like a journey to an absolutely foreign land. Those in favor of domestication, on the other hand, believe that the translation should flow in its newly adopted language — they would say that, for a good translation, it should sound as if Carlos Fuentes wrote his works originally in English.

G — According to Walter Benjamin, the translator is a gardener in that he tends to the seedlings of the original texts so that they grow and flower as living, healthy translations.

H — Tejaswini Niranjana cites the importance of the historicity of translation. The act of translation does not occur in a void — it happens within specific circumstances of time, space, and history. Niranjana, however, is concerned with the absence, lack, or repression of an awareness of asymmetry and historicity in several kinds of writing in translation. The context in which a translation occurs, she says, is often used as a sort of cultural domination. Translation, she states, is a desire to construct the primitive world, to represent it, and to speak on its behalf. In this way, the dominant culture does not let the colonized culture speak for itself, but feels the need to use these people’s words to their own ends.

I — Specific languages do not always have to be involved in translation. Eco discusses intersystemic interpretation, or the rewriting of a text in another system of expression. Standard translation between two texts is included in this idea, but so are a variety of other processes. Adaptation, for example, refers to works like a ballet that is based on a fairy tale, a film that is based on a novel, or an animation that is based on a piece of classical music. Rather than moving between two languages, these works must move between two forms of artistic expression.
J J’aime bien Ike! As you can see, even the best translation of this phrase cannot capture the appeal of the original catchphrase, I like Ike! Such slogans and jingles are often difficult to translate because what makes them memorable is not their message, but their witty turn of phrase. On the other hand, sometimes a slogan might mean too much in its new language. The fact that Nova means It doesn’t go in Spanish rightfully justified the change of the name of the Chevy Nova when it was introduced into the markets of Spanish-speakers.

K In certain cases, a good background knowledge of the author and historical context of a work is necessary to create a good translation. When translating, one must often keep in mind more than simply the words on the page. This may include the voice of the author, the audience of the text, etc. For example, in Spanish or French, the sex of a character may be obvious because of simple grammatical formations. However, when translating to English, one must make an effort to maintain these distinctions.

L Rainer Schulte discusses the interdependence of translation and literary criticism. Both of these activities, he says, can exist only if there is an original text that needs to be translated or interpreted. Translator and critic do not create the original work, but rather re-create a work through the act of translation or interpretation. There are many other similarities between the two undertakings. Both translation and literary criticism require an intense interaction between the reader and the text, and both must be redone every few decades. In addition, many writers have done translations, and many translators have written literary criticism.

M Translation is a Mission: Impossible. If there can be no exact translation for any single word, then how can translation itself exist? This is the misery of translation, as Ortega y Gasset puts it. He says that translation, like so many other human activities, is a utopian effort, that it is in itself impossible, and that it remains a mere pretension, a vain project, and an invalid gesture. On the other hand, by translating these phrases from the Spanish, we the authors have just attempted the impossible.

N Translation in its most refined practices fosters non-linear, associative thinking, and it depends to a great extent on the intense interaction of the reader with the text (Rainer Schulte).

O A translation is in itself an original text. However, translators are some of the most overlooked workers in the literary world. Although a translation is always based on another text, the translator must make his own decisions and express his own opinions. The translated work, as an original in itself, must be able to stand alone and apart from the original opus.

P The process of translation is as important as the final product, according to John Felstiner. The translator makes a plurality of choices along the course his work, but is ultimately forced to reject all possibilities except one. The reader only sees this final product, and therefore misses out on the long, involved decision-making process that leads from the original to the translation.

Q Just as there are good and bad original works, the quality of a translation is also greatly variable. George Steiner questions how one can qualify a translation as bad. Translation fails where it does not compensate. The translator has grasped and/or appropriated less than is there. He traduces through diminution. Or he has chosen to embody and restate fully only one or another aspect of the original, fragmenting, distorting its vital coherence according to his own needs or myopia. Or he has betrayed upward, transfiguring the source into something greater than itself. Above all, the translator must make sure that there is

R restoration of radical equity. Ortega y Gasset says that, to write well, one must make small erosions to grammar and to the established use of the language. Translation is an act of permanent rebellion against the social environment, a subversion. In order to re-create this effect, the translator must break the rules of his own language just as the original text did in its language.

S According to Douglas Robinson, the translator must submit himself to the spirit of the original text. The translator’s task is to step aside and let the source author speak through him or her. Neruda, too, participated in such a form of linguistic spirit-channeling, as he exclaims to his Indian brothers in the last line of his 12-part poem The Heights of Macchu Picchu: Speak through my words and my blood.

T The image of a translator colonizing the foreign terrain of an original text has somber implications, especially in the case of a first world translator working on a third world writer (Clayton Eshleman). Often, a
translator from an imperialist culture will make changes to and attempt to improve upon a third-world text, thinking that he knows best. However, he usually does not, and therefore produces an inaccurate translation.

U Language is universal. As Octavio Paz says, in different languages, men always say the same things. No matter what language you speak, the thoughts and ideas are pretty much the same. And translation is what reveals and suppresses those small differences that remain. Language unites humans, but translation does so even more.

V Walter Benjamin uses the metaphor of a broken vessel to visualize the process of translation. Just as one must consider the smallest details of each fragment to determine where they fit, one must also take into account the slightest grammatical and semantic variations of each phrase to construct a well-formed sentence. And this translation and its original, in turn, can be thought of as fragments of a greater, universal language, the reine Sprache.

W Words can be used as a weapon to wage war against first-world imperialism. Very often, literary works contain important underlying political messages. In some cases, the words of certain translated writers can be used to support a rebellion against suppressive and totalitarian regimes. Thus, a key player in the fight against harsh imperialism is writing.

X Translation X-tracts a foreign author's ideas, allowing him to X-press them to the X-ternal world. The process is often X-acting and X-hausting, yet the final product can be X-hilarating.

Y Translation represents a yearning for a deeper understanding of language. By translating, one learns not only about the secondary language, but also about one's own mother tongue.

Z Universal language is the zenith toward which all translation tends. Benjamin believes that, by translating, one approaches another language. It is neither the source, nor the target, yet is something greater and altogether different, which pervades all human expression: the universal language.

Notes

1 A form of translation that is ugly, as science always is. (Translation ours.)
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Translating theater is never an easy undertaking. In a January 1998 conference, the Ariane Literary Network, a project of the European Union, issued a final declaration on the minimal requirements for translators who engage in transferring a dramatic text from one language to another. These include linguistic competency, theatrical experience, and writing talent. But individual texts, in the translation process and in performance, may pose challenges that go far beyond those minimal requirements and encompass as well a knowledge of translation theory. Such was surely the case with my translation of Jean-Paul Daumas’s *Le Cimetière des éléphants*. The original French play was first performed at the Avignon Festival in 1990 and has since been staged successfully in Paris, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, and several Eastern European countries. I translated the play into English in 1993 at the request of the author’s agent, Geneviève Ulmann, and quickly succeeded in having the translation published in *Modern International Drama*. The first American performance, however, did not take place until December 1998, when *The Elephant Graveyard* was included in the professional script-in-hand new play series of New Jersey Repertory Company (NJ Rep).

The action of *The Elephant Graveyard* takes place in a boarding house in a city by the sea. The characters are five elderly ladies of varying backgrounds. The allusive title is, of course, correctly rendered with the Germanic graveyard, not the Latinate cognate, cemetery. As the title suggests, the play deals with growing old and facing the inevitable end of life. One of the five women has been a great actress, a national treasure. Her appearances, in which she often recites lines from the tragic role that made her famous, and the propensity of all but one of the other characters toward role-playing within the role make this poetic tragicomedy a highly metatheatrical piece. The fact that one of the women is really a cross-dresser who feels less lonely playing the role of a woman than being a man, enhances both the comic and the tragic potential of the text. The cross-dressing role also led to the major problem in performance at NJ Rep. In general, the work is far removed from American realism/naturalism and must retain a poetic and overtly theatrical tone.

Four aspects of Daumas’s play that raise particular questions for translation and performance are the geographical location of the action, the characters names, cultural gaps (most notably those stemming from intertexts), and the handling of cross-gender dressing.

Jean-Paul Daumas lives in Nice and undoubtedly had that city in mind when he wrote his play. The elderly ladies have congregated at a suncoast city where it rains a lot, where the beach is really pebbles, and where going out may be dangerous because of the muggers in the streets. The optional opening scene is a poetic choral piece, performed by four of the characters; it addresses such matters as the allusive sun, the nearby sea, and the fearsome voyous (hoodlums). (In the performance at NJ Rep, the rendition of this scene was impeccable.) There is no direct reference to Nice in the text, and the playwright, who has made trips to Florida, assured me in our correspondence that the setting could just as easily be Miami. Moreover, the setting is intended to be metaphorical rather than specific. I thus deliberately downplayed references to France or French culture: I eliminated the use of Madame in the polite interchanges among the women. On the other hand, the climate and pebbles are still those of Nice, not of Miami. I made no attempt to shift the action specifically to somewhere else; the story of lonely and frightened elderly people seeking a sunny seaside resort could take place in any number of cities and countries. In the discussion after the NJ Rep staging, I asked if it could be neighboring Asbury Park, a former resort now in decay, and the audience laughingly agreed it could.

The characters names remained French, but I tried to take into consideration the difficulties that might surface with their pronunciation. The great actress’s stage name in the text is Ludivine Desforets; her real name was Jeanne Dubois. I decided that the real name posed no problems but that the stage name could turn out to be more ludicrous than poetic. When correctly pronounced in French, Ludivine Desforets is a bit high flown but nevertheless quite beautiful in sound. I changed it, with the author’s approval, to Madeline Delaforet. My sense was that the new name would pose no trouble even for people who have never studied French and would prove
less distracting than a mispronounced version of the original name.

A somewhat different problem was posed by the name of the cross-dresser. Originally Fernand, he began calling himself Fernande after his wife died and he began wearing her clothes. My assumption was that American actors who do not know French would also not know that the final consonants in Fernand are silent; the masculine and feminine names might turn out identical, thus losing their effect. My solution was the pairing Paul/Paula.

Far more difficult to resolve were the intertexts that form an integral part of the dialogue. One of the characters reads a rather dreadful and therefore funny novel aloud to another, whose eyesight is failing, but that novel is the creation of Daumas and is easily translated on a par with the rest of the text. More problematic are the passages used by the actress-character. Madeline’s entrances are always dramatic; she commands attention by the theatricalized tone of her voice, her gestures, and by the use of quotations from real texts. At her first entrance, she cites two lines from Paul Valéry’s poem Le Cimetière marin. The connection between one graveyard and another (cimetière and cimetière) is intentional enough that I opted to keep the original poem even while knowing that most American spectators like that of Oenone (an old servant in Phèdre). That allusion, too, would be lost on American audiences.

After a rapid review of the complete works of Shakespeare and consultation with Daumas, I opted to substitute Anthony and Cleopatra for Racine’s Phèdre. Shakespeare is well known in France, and Cleopatra could conceivably have been the vehicle to fame for a French actress. American spectators will recognize the sound of Shakespeare even when the specific quotation escapes them, but in the case of Anthony and Cleopatra, there is at least a lingering memory of Elizabeth Taylor in the movie version. Like Phèdre, Cleopatra suffers from an unhappy love affair and commits suicide as a result. The parallel lines from Shakespeare contained similar connotations and were easily woven into Daumas’s dialogue. In keeping, too, with the Shakespearean substitution, Madeline states that she left the stage because she did not wish to be relegated to playing Juliet’s nurse, a more familiar character.

The first and most extensive passage from the classic tragedy in Daumas’s play occurs in scene 3.

Whether or not his statement is true, something essential in Daumas’s play would be lost in the English-speaking world were Racine to be preserved at the cost of the audience’s ability to relate the intertext to the frame story. Keeping in mind Eugène Nida’s well-known concept of dynamic equivalence, I felt obliged to hunt for a different but yet related text. Racine may be considered the great classic French writer of tragedies; his counterpart in the English-speaking world is Shakespeare.

Daumas incorporates lines from Phèdre at three points in his play. The intertext emphasizes the protagonist’s anguish resulting from unrequited love and her wish to die. Suicide is preferable to continued suffering. The aspect of dying, of course, also alludes to the general situation of the elderly characters in the frame story of The Elephant Graveyard. Paula, when s/he is publicly embarrassed by the revelation that s/he is a man in female clothing, chooses suicide. In addition to the three quoted passages from Phèdre within the actress-character’s dialogue, Ludivine states that she voluntarily left the stage rather than be forced to play secondary roles like that of Oenone (an old servant in Phèdre). That allusion, too, would be lost on American audiences.

MADELINE (entering): This quiet roof, where dove-sails saunter by, / Between the pines, (Slight pause.) the tombs, throb visibly. Well, my doves? Have you been throbbing so visibly since early morning that your flashes have pierced the partitions and reached the cubicles where we’re supposed to be resting?

Far more difficult to resolve was the matter of Racine’s Phèdre. French audiences would, of course, recognize Racine’s style and probably know the specific play well. American audiences could not be expected to have any similar knowledge of the play-within-play. James Magruder, who has achieved widespread acclaim for his translation of Marivaux’s The Triumph of Love as well as for his translations of comedies by Lesage and Labiche, has stated that Racine is untranslatable.

LUDOVINE: N allons pas plus avant, demeurons chère Oenone. Je ne me soutiens plus, ma force m’abandonne Mes yeux son blouis du jour que je revois Et mes genoux tremblants se drobent sous moi. Morph e n a pas daign vous emporter encore en ses bras apaisants? (28)
MADELINE: 'Tis sweating labor
To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me,
Since my becomings kill me when they do not
Eye well to you. Your honor calls you hence,
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly.
And all the gods go with you!
Morpheus has not yet deigned to carry you off in
his soothing arms? (20)

A second use occurs in scene 6, during an impromptu birthday party. In this case, the actress suddenly forgets the lines that have haunted her so many years.

LUDOVINE: Ah! que l'on porte ailleurs les honneurs
qu'on m'envoie
Importune peux-tu souhaiter qu'on me voie ?
De quoi vas-tu...
De quoi viens-tu... Non? C est merveilleux... mer veilleux. J ai oubli la suite, je ne sais plus. J ai oubli Ph dre. J ai enfin oubli Ph dre. (49)

MADELINE: Give me my robe, put on my crown,
I have immortal longings in me.
Now, no more. The juice. . . The grape. . .
No? It s wonderful. . . wonderful. I ve forgotten the rest. I don t know it anymore. I ve forgotten Cleopatra. I ve finally forgotten Cleopatra. (31)

In the sad, final scene of the play, Daumas has Ludovine repeat Ph dre s lines from the first recitation:
N allons pas plus avant ch re Oenone... N allons pas plus avant! (80). I opted instead, once again with the author s approval, for using the second speech from Cleopatra, I felt expressed even more clearly than Racine s lines the proximity of death: Give me my robe, put on my crown, I have immortal longings in me. . . (48).

The script-in-hand performance at New Jersey Repertory Company was well received and led afterward to an animated dialogue between the theatrical company and the audience. The cast expressed gratitude to the French playwright for giving them a vehicle of genuine interest to mature actresses and for presenting them with a poetic play, rather than the usual Anglo-American realism/naturalism that dominates the U.S. stage. Spectators were surprised that I would or could take the liberties I had with the original text, most notably substituting Shakespeare for Racine. But the biggest surprise was their discovery that Paula was a male cross-dresser, not a lesbian.

Theatrical translation may take many forms.

Daumas created a role in which he intended for a male actor to play the role of a man in woman s clothing. NJ Rep s artistic director, SuzAnne Barabas, decided, however, that it would be too difficult to get the cross-dressing across to the audience in anything other than a full production and that using a female actor was the easy answer. Lindy Regan made an admirable attempt as a female actor playing the role of a man playing the role of a woman, but something was definitely lost in the translation. Despite her short hair and her severe black clothing, no one in the audience who was unfamiliar with the play could guess what was really happening until almost the end of the performance. Her name on the program was itself a ready indicator that Paula was female. A woman played the role in the original production at Avignon, but Daumas has declared that casting to be a mistake. In the second production in Paris, and in subsequent productions, the role has been played by a man.

When the cross-dressing role is played by a man, when will the audience realize this fact? Perhaps immediately, if the program gives it away through revealing the actor s name. Perhaps only gradually, depending on the skills of the particular actor and the ability of the individual spectator to catch the subtext. Among the other four characters, only Madeline knows at once. She assumes that the new arrival at the boarding house is a retired drag performer. At the end of the first scene in which the cross-dresser appears and just after he exits, the following dialogue takes place:

ADA: Elle est tr s comme il faut.
LUDOVINE: Hin, hin.
CHLOE: Tr s bien lev e.
LUDOVINE: Hin, hin.
LOUISE: Et puis tr s courageuse.
LUDOVINE: Hin, hin.
ADA: C est tout ce que vous trouvez dire?
LUDOVINE: Tr s comme il faut, tr s bien lev , tr s courageux. Il est tr s bien. Il est tr s tr s bien. (22)

Is Ludovine s switch to masculine forms adequate to inform the audience and the other characters? Perhaps the former, but not the latter. In later scenes in the play, there is considerable comic irony from the fact that Ludovine and, one assumes, most of the audience is in on the joke while the other characters still do not know. The other women are surprised that Fernande doesn t know how to sew, that she tends to keep her hat with veils on always, even inside, that she is not afraid to venture out on the streets as they are. The use of comme il faut in the French partially blurs the switch from femi-
nine to masculine. Elderly women, with hearing loss appropriate to their age, might not be expected to catch an aside that changes courageuse to courageux. The masculine and feminine forms lev / lev e are pronounced identically. Indeed, il est tr s bien might be taken as a general expression of the situation rather than a specific reference to the new boarder herself.

The problem in the English version is that adjective forms are invariant but that some way had to be found to introduce a slight hint on gender while not making the point absolutely clear and thus destroying the scenes of comic irony that follow.

ADA: She s very proper.
MADELINE: Hmm, hmm.
CHLOE: Very well mannered.
MADELINE: Hmm, hmm.
LOUISE: And she s very brave.
MADELINE: Hmm, hmm.
ADA: Is that all you have to say?
MADELINE: Very proper, very well mannered, very brave. Very, very nice. She/he s very, very nice. (17)

I had in mind a drawn out pronunciation of the subject pronoun that would slur the feminine into the masculine form. The director, Cindy Carver, and the actress playing Madeline, Marilyn Roberts, did not believe that my intention could be implemented. In a phone conversation with Cindy Carver, I agreed that they could ignore my text, using just the feminine pronoun, but I was unaware that Paula would be played by a woman until I got to the theater.

Had I realized that Paul/Paula was going to be cross-gender cast (that is, a woman playing the man s role), I would doubtless have voiced precisely the concern that the audience would misinterpret Paula as being a lesbian. Eduardo Manet s Les Nonnes (The Nuns) was written with the idea that men would be cross-gender cast in the roles of the nuns. When the nuns are played by men, the grotesque tragicomedy has many humorous moments. On the occasion in Antwerp when the director opted to cast the male-nuns with female actors, the audience saw the nuns as lesbians, the Catholic church protested vociferously, the production was closed down, and the director lost his job. Whether transferring a dramatic text from one language to another or into a performance text, one needs to pay careful attention to gender.

It was not my intent in translating Le Cimetière des éléphants to domesticate Daumas s play, but I did feel that an imaginative translation was more likely to be successful than a literal one. All changes to the source text were made collaboratively with the author. Judging from the experiment at New Jersey Repertory, I believe that my changes were less intrusive than the failure to follow through with the cross-dressing called for by the text. Nevertheless, the audience reacted well to the performance. The Elephant Graveyard still awaits a full-scale production in English, but the enthusiastic response to that staged reading holds out promise for the future.

Notes

1 In her discussion of how to treat dialect forms or regional linguistic devices, Susan Bassnett-McGuire quotes a flippant remark from Robert Adams about how Paris must be Paris and our hero must be Pierre, not Peter, but that it would be silly to have him say, I am enchanted, Madame (119). I was guided by this concept in my conversion of the characters speech to normal English patterns.

2 I have dealt in detail with the problems of staging Manet s The Nuns in my TDR article. In the 1990 New York City staging of the play, director William Hunt used male actors for the male nuns but deliberately altered Robert Baldick s translation; he changed the characters use of feminine pronouns to masculine so that the characters and the actors portraying them would not come across as transvestites. The play lost its humor and the production quickly closed.

3 I am grateful to SuzAnne Barabas, artistic director; Gabor Barabas, executive producer; Cindy Carver, director; and the five-actor cast for their interest in my translation and the excellent performance that resulted at New Jersey Repertory Company. I am grateful as well to Jean-Paul Daumas for his active collaboration in the preparation of the translation.

Works Cited


The bibliography listed below reflects what I consider to be the third phase of the representation in English that modern Arabic poetry has attained in recent decades. The other two phases discussed in an earlier article on modern Arabic poetry in English translation demonstrate the increased visibility of Arabic poetry as a result, first, of the countless poems that have appeared and continue to appear in numerous English-language literary journals, and second, of the fairly large number of anthologies or collections that have become accessible. The latter, published in both Arabic- and English-speaking countries, vary in their literary quality, their representation or scope, and the criteria and methods by which they were collected or translated. As classified earlier, they include (1) Pan-Arab anthologies, (2) country- or region-related anthologies or collections (Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, UAE, and Yemen), and (3) works of individual poets from different Arab countries anthologies. Admittedly, not all published collections or anthologies (which number thus far more than 80) can be regarded as being representative of the finest trends in modern Arabic poetry or the remarkable achievements of many Arab poets. Indeed, one may raise serious doubts or questions about the literary quality or value of certain works whether they are judged on the basis of their original Arabic or translated versions. Nonetheless, viewed in toto, they provide us with many poems, which illustrate the vitality, modernity, and thematic richness of contemporary Arabic poetry. This is especially evident in poems that have been rendered into English by noted American, British, Irish and other English-speaking poets, such as Alan Brownjohn, Samuel Hazo, John Heath-Stubbs, W.S. Merwin, Desmond O Grady, and Richard Wilbur. In short, contemporary Arabic poetry is currently represented by a good number of poems that are likely to appeal not only to students of Arabic literature but to readers of world poetry in general.

The question of how Arabic poetry is represented in world anthologies has rarely been discussed despite its relevance to the West’s reception of modern Arabic literature. A more thorough and detailed examination of this question is needed, for several reasons. Such anthologies have, to paraphrase Rainer Schulte’s remarks on a related subject, an important function in the transfer of poets from other countries into the English-speaking world (Schulte 136). Widely used by readers in both academic and non-academic contexts, anthologies or specialized collections of international poetry serve to promote, in one volume, a general awareness of other literary traditions and an appreciation of the experiences or concerns revealed in the works of different international poets. In certain cases, they may also engender a sustained interest in studying or translating a particular national literature or a poet. Indeed, some anthologists consider sending readers to the original as a primary purpose of editing an anthology of world poetry. In addition, such anthologies may shed light on the place of different national poets (such as Arab poets) in relation to major trends, issues, and practices in world poetry or the literary taste prevalent among readers and editors/anthologists in the target languages.

In addressing this question, I referred briefly earlier (1985) to an al-hisar al-adabi (literary siege or embargo) that modern Arabic poetry continued to experience in the West, or more specifically in the United States and other English-speaking countries. A survey of English anthologies or selections of world poetry published before 1985 revealed at that time (i.e., 1985) a prevalent trend to exclude Arabic poetry with the notable exception of works covering women’s poetry. (Note, for example, unmarked items in the bibliography below.) A similar pattern or trend was also evident in other general reference works, which completely overlook or marginalize Arabic poetry. Consider, for example, Magill’s Critical Survey of Poetry: Foreign Languages Series (1984) whose stated mission was to survey briefly the creative works of significant poets whose means of verbal expression is non-English. What the five volumes of the survey cover in reality is mostly poets from Western languages: Catalan, Czechoslovakian, East German, French, German, Ancient Greek, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latin, Polish, Russian, Scandinavian, Spanish, and Yugoslavian. Other non-Western traditions or languages surveyed include Chinese, Indian-English poetry, Japanese, third-world poetry, and Tibetan in addition to Omar Khayyam and Sa di as representative of...
Persia. If there is any reference to Arabic poetry, it was made in connection with Omar Khayyam, who, we are told, also wrote poems in Arabic.

However, the pattern began to change since the late 1980s, as more anthologies and relevant reference works sought to incorporate selections from Arabic and other third-world literature. Several factors have been instrumental in such a significant shift from the earlier exclusionary approach to a wider representation of Arabic and other marginalized literature. First among them is the global recognition or attention that Arabic literature began to receive since 1988, the year Najib Mahfuz was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The second and more directly related reason is the proliferation of highly successful translations or anthologies of Arabic poetry, as noted above. Other factors include the contribution that post-colonial, multicultural, and women’s studies have made toward representing other cultures and Edward Said’s persistent and influential efforts against biased attitudes toward modern Arabic or other third-world literature.

The bibliography listed below includes different types of anthologies or collections with equally different objectives in mind: academic and nonacademic, theme- or subject- or period-oriented, and more universal or general. The first obvious observation that should be made is with regard to the greater representation of modern Arabic poetry in English anthologies of international/world poetry, as asterisked (*) items indicate. Nevertheless, the mere representation itself raises various questions relevant to the choice or omission of particular poets or poems. Forbes’s monumental and laudable anthology of the 20th century in poetry includes, for example, only Mahmud Darwish in a section entitled Lost Tribes: the Middle East 1948—. The section itself presents more poems by three other poets: Yehuda Amichai, James Fenton, and Jon Silken. Forbes’s choice was obviously dictated by the calamitous nature of the Palestinian/Arab-Israeli conflict, but by limiting himself to this conflict, Forbes overlooked other catastrophic events or wars in the Arab world that many Arab poets, such as Adonis or Sa di Yusuf, have addressed in their poetry. This is not to mention the section’s exclusion of other Palestinian poets, such as Fadwa Tuqan. McClatchy, a highly regarded poet/critic, seems to have aimed at allocating an equal space to both Arab and Israeli poets in his anthology The Vintage Book of Contemporary World Poetry (1996). His selections include 12 poems by two Arab poets (Adonis and Darwish) vs. 18 poems by three Israeli poets. In so doing, McClatchy fails to achieve a broader or more balanced representation of other leading poets from different parts of the Arab world, including in particular Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Morocco.

What I regard to be a case of most regrettable and inexplicable omission or exclusion is World Poetry: An Anthology of Verse From Antiquity to Our Time (1998) edited by Katharine Washburn et al. The anthology itself stands out as the most comprehensive, informative, and remarkable attempt we have seen in recent years. It gathers in one volume (1338 pp.) the universe of verse, a 4000-year period, 1600 poems, and dozens of languages, including Classical Arabic. The anthology has been rightly acclaimed by many critics and characterized in positive terms: enduring, indispensable, and the first of its kind with fresh translations, etc. It is noted for its representation of numerous modern poets writing in non-European languages, such as Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Marathi, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Hebrew is also represented, not in association with the other non-European languages but within a European context, in the section entitled Poetry in the Languages of Continental Europe. This unusual or unconventional classification of Hebrew is perhaps because the three Hebrew/Israeli poets who were chosen for the anthology were born in the West: Yehuda Amichai (Würzburg, Germany), T. Carmi (New York), and Dan Pagis (Bukovina, Romania). As for Arabic or the Arab world, the anthology completely leaves out modern Arabic poetry, for inexplicable reasons. Even the note on the section The Twentieth Century 1915—glosses over the Arab world in its reference to anti-imperial and anti-colonial movements in different regions of the non-Western world: China, Indonesia, Turkey, and Africa. To overlook Arabic or to circumvent the Arab world is most perplexing in view of the obvious twofold fact: Arabic being a major world language and heir to one of the longest continuous literary traditions, and the fact that the Arab world has been in a state of constant contact or confrontation with Europe for many centuries. It is of course possible to attribute such an omission or exclusion to one or more of the familiar reasons: bias or prejudice, lack of knowledge about recent translations from Arabic, questions about the literary value of the translations themselves, the notion that modern Arabic poetry is well represented in other anthologies, or the rationalization that not all national literatures can be represented and that the omission of one or another is unavoidable. However, none of these or other reasons justifies or explains the
complete exclusion of modern Arabic poetry in an anthology of this extraordinary range. I should add that the anthology does include a few French poems by Egyptian and Algerian poets: André Chedid, Joyce Mansour, and Malika O Lahsen.6

As the annotated bibliography below indicates, similar or other questions can be raised with regard to the exclusion of Arabic poetry or its limited or partial representation in other anthologies. Nevertheless, the bibliography provides ample evidence of the greater visibility and representation Arabic poetry has gained in recent years.

Notes


5 See Washburn’s anthology, p. 891. The coeditor John S. Major wrote the note.

6 Elizabeth Washburn (d. 2000), a noted poet, translator, essayist, and editor, was responsible for the selection of poetry from a large area, including the Near East. She states in her introduction: My own territory encom- passed the poetry of our own language from both the British Isles and America, the work of the West from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the classical world through contemporary Europe in both Western and Eastern European languages, and, because the links are arguably so strong between Europe and the Near East, the poetry of two Semitic languages Hebrew and Arabic and Persian. (Washburn xviii-xix).

It is with Washburn’s statement in mind that I wrote a letter to her (October 8, 1999) seeking her clarification regarding the exclusion of modern Arabic poetry. I said in my letter that some progress has been made in recent years toward ensuring more successful translation of modern Arabic poems thanks to the participation of English-speaking poets (American and others). Note, for example, Samuel Hazo’s translations of Adonis and Jayyusi’s Modern Arabic Poetry (Columbia UP, 1987). I am wondering whether you have had a chance to review such translations or you were unable to select for your anthology any of the Arabic poems to which you had access. I would greatly appreciate your comment or views regarding this matter. Washburn was kind enough to respond by an e-mail message dated December 23, 1999, in which she stated the following: I just returned (yesterday) from three months in Ireland and Rome, where the email reception was not all I d hoped for-and discovered, much to my dismay, your letter among many other strayed messages. Do bear with me a bit longer, and I’ll respond to your interesting and thoughtful letter in more detail. In the meantime, best wishes and a happy new year. That was unfortunately the only and last response I received from Washburn, a few months before her untimely death on March 22, 2000.

Modern Arabic Poetry and International Anthologies: A Bibliography

The items that include selections from the works of modern Arab poets are marked by (*).

*Aharoni, Ada et al., eds. A Song to Life and World Peace: Selected Essays and Poems Presented at the XIII World Congress of Poets of the World Academy of Arts and Culture. Jerusalem: Posner & Sons Ltd., 1993. [Includes a single poem Usual View by Fawaz Hussein translated from Arabic into Hebrew by the poet, and into English by Ada Aharoni. Only
the Hebrew and English versions are given (125).]

*Arkin, Marian, and Barbara Shollar, eds. Longman Anthology of World Literature by Women, 1875-1975. New York: Longman, 1989. [Includes Malak Abd al-Aziz We Asked and The Fall; Fawziyya Abu Khalid Tattoo Writing and Mother’s Inheritance; Zabyah Khamis from Fading of Memory and The Ten Commandments; Nazik al-Mala ika I Am, Washing Off Disgrace, and Jamila (in addition to an excerpt from her book Issues of Contemporary Poetry); and Fadwa Tuqan After the Release, The Last Knocks, Nothing Is Here, and To Etan.]


*Bankier, Joanna, and Deirdre Lashgari, eds. Women Poets of the World. New York: Macmillan, 1983. [Includes Fawziyya Abu Khalid Mother’s Inheritance; Nazik al-Mala ika Jamila, Mona Sa’udi When the Loneliness of the Tomb, How Do I Enter the Silence of Stones, Why Don’t I Write in the Language of the Air?; and Fadwa Tuqan From Behind the Bars. This is in addition to Arabic poems by pre-modern poets and poems written originally in French or English by three modern poets: Evelyn Accad, Etel Adnan, and Andree Chedid.]

*Bankier, Joanna, et al., eds. The Other Voice: Twentieth Century Women’s Poetry in English Translation. New York: Norton, 1976. [Includes Nazik al-Mala ika Elegy for a Woman of No Importance; Saniya Salih Exile; Fadwa Tuqan from Behind Bars I; in addition to Etel Adnan, Venus Khoury, and Nadia Tueni.]


Benedikt, Michael, ed. The Prose Poem: An International Anthology. New York: Dell, 1976. [Apart from a few Japanese prose poems, the anthology represents the genre in Western languages.]

*Bernstein, Charles, ed. 99 Poets/1999: An International Poetics Symposium. A special issue of Boundary 2 26 (Summer 1999). [An anthology of international responses to questions on poetry. It includes statements by six Arab poets: Adonis (Syria/Libanon), Mahmud Darwish (Palestine), Abdellatif Laabi (Morocco), Abdelwahab Meddeb (Tunisia), Amina Said (Tunisia), and Habib Tengour (Algeria).]

*Biddle, Arthur W., et al., eds. Global Voices: Contemporary Literature from the Non-Western World. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995. [Includes only two Arab poets; one from Kuwait, Su’ad al-Mubarak al-Sabah Third World, A Thousand Times More Beautiful, A Covenant, Sojourn Forever, Free Harbor, and You Alone; and the other from Iraq, Badr Shakir al-Sayyab Rain Song and Song in August.]


Buck, Philo Melvin, ed. An Anthology of World Literature. 3d ed. New York: Macmillan, 1951. [Includes four short lyrics from earlier periods, and extracts from the Qur'an.]

*Clerk, Jayana, and Ruth Siegel, eds. Modern Literature of the Non-Western World: Where the Waters Are Born. New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995. [Includes Fawziyya Abu Khalid A Pearl; Abdullah al-Baradduni Answers to One Question; Mahmud Darwish Guests of the Sea; Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih Sanaa Is Hungry; Fadwa Tuqan Song of Becoming; in addition to texts written originally in English by Khalil Gibran On Children; and Etel Adnan In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country.]

*Chipasula, Stella, and Frank Chipsula, eds. The Heinemann Book of African Women's Poetry. London: Heinemann, 1995. [Includes Malak Abd al-Aziz We Asked and The Fall, in addition to other Francophone poets from Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia. This is in contrast to Moore's anthology of modern African poetry; see below.]


Ferlinghetti, Lawrence, ed. City Lights Pocket Poets Anthology. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1995. [Based on forty years of City Lights Pocket Poets fifty two volumes the anthology includes American, European, and Latin American poets who reflect, according to the editor, an international, dissident, insurgent ferment.]


*Forche, Carolyn, ed. Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness. New York: Norton, 1993. [Includes Adonis The New Noah, Elegy for the Time at Hand; and A Mirror for the Twentieth Century; Mahmud Darwish Earth Poem; We Travel Like Other People, Prison, and Psalm 2; and Fadwa Tuqan Face Lost in the Wilderness, After Twenty Years, I Won't Sell His Love, Behind Bars, Sel, and Song of Becoming.]

Friebert, Stuart, and David Young, eds. Models of the Universe: An Anthology of Prose Poem. Oberlin: Oberlin College P, 1995. [An anthology representing about two centuries of the prose poem in Western languages, in spite of the reference made to the process of identifying and choosing prose poems from all over the world as stated in the introduction (20).]


*Hamalian, Leo, and John D. Yohannan, eds. New Writing From the Middle East. A Mentor Book. New York: New American Library, 1978. [Includes Salah Abd al-Sabur The Tartars Have Struck and People in My Country; Adonis The Frontiers of Despair, You Have No Choice, The City, and A Mirror for Autumn; Abd al-Wahhab al-Bayati Why Are We in Exile the Refugees Ask and The Wall; Mahmud Darwish Pride and Fury; Buland al-Haidari (Haydari) The Dead Witness, and The Parcel; Rashid Husain (Husayn) Lessons in Parsing; Jabra Ibrahim Jabra In the Deserts of Exile; Nizar Qabbani Comments on the Notebook of Decadence, Bread, Hashish, and Moon, I Am the Train of Sadness, and A Personal Letter to the Month of June; Tawfiq Sayigh The Sermon on the Mount; and Badr Shakir al-Sayyab For I Am a Stranger and Burning.]


Muyassar Lost ; Huda Na’mani Love Poem ;
Amjad Nasir Loneliness ; Fu ad Rifqa The
Fortune Teller ; Ahmad Shawqi An Andalusian
Exile ; Fadwa Tuqan I Found It ; and Ahmad al-
Udwani from Signs.

Hirshfield, Jane, ed. *Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43
Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women*. New York:
HarperCollins, 1994. [Includes only Rabi’a al-
Adawiyya from the classical period.]

Jay, Peter, ed. *The Spaces of Hope: Poetry for Our Times
and Places*. London: Anvil P Poetry, 1998. [With two exceptions, the poems are selected from Anvil Press
Poetry publications 1969-98. They include transla-
tions primarily from Western and Chinese lan-
guages.]

*Jones, Richard, ed. *The Last Believer in Words: An
Anthology of Poems in Translation from the Pages of
Poetry East*. A special issue of Poetry East (45-46
[1998]). [Includes Mahmud Darwish I Am From
There.]

Junkins, Donald, ed. *The Contemporary World Poets.*
New York: Harcourt, 1976. [Includes only poems by
Mohammed Dib, a noted Algerian Francophone
writer.]

*Kharrat, Edward, and Nihad Salem, eds. *Afro-Asian
[Includes: Jili Abd al-Rahman The Street Is Shaking
O Lorca and The Two Mates on the Banks of
Remembrance ; Salah Abd al-Sabur The Hanging
of Zahran and The Tartars Have Struck ;
Muhammad Abu Sinna Eternal Egypt ; Adonis
Chapter of An Old Image and The One Who Left
Before Time ; Abd al-Wahhab al-Bayati al-Hallaj’s
Agony and The Descent of Orpheus ; Mu’in
Basisu The Island of Ancient Mottoes and The
Lamp and the Mill ; Muhammad Darwish The
Martyr of A Song, A Lover From Palestine, and
The Man With the Green Shadow ; Amal Dunqul
The Last Supper ; Muhammad al-Fituri He Died
Tomorrow ; Taj al-Sirr al-Hasan Going on the
Pilgrimage ; Ahmad Abd al-Mu’ti Hijazi Blood of
Lumumba ; Mahmud Hasan Isma’il Self and Sin ;
Salih Jawdat The Dark Star ; Nazih Khayr
Illusion ; Muhammad Mahjub Little Adam ;
Nazik al-Mala ika The Top of the Stairs ;
Muhammad Afifi Matar Of the Moon Of Summer
and Of Man ; Abd al-Karim al-Na’im Our Cause
and the Discovery of the Moon ; Samih al-Qasim
To All the Smartly-Dressed Men in the UN ; Radi
Sadduq A Song of A Revolutionary Without
Identity ; Badr Shakir al-Sayyab In Front of the
Gate of Allah ; Shadhil Taqah And the Man
Returned ; and Tawfiq Zayyad Bury Your Dead and
Rise.]

*Kritzeck, James, ed. *Modern Islamic Literature From
1800 to the Present*. New York: Holt Rinehart and
Winston, 1970. [Includes Ahmad Zaki Abu Shadi
The Maiden of Bekhten ; Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqad
Untitled, Love’s Companion, Competition and
Cheat Me! ; Ab al-Majid Ibn Jallun Who Are
Thou? ; Ma’ruf al-Rusafi Sleepers, Wake! ; Abu-al-
Qasim al-Shabbi Untitled [Extract from The Will
to Live]; Ahmad Shawqi To a Late Composer ;
and Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli Lament.]

Linthwaite, Illona, ed. *Ain’t I A Woman: A Book of
Women’s Poetry from Around the World*. New York:
from around the world intended to redress the omis-
sion of women’s works in traditional anthologies. It
includes Mririda n Ait Attik, a Berber poet-singer
from Morocco.]

*Lomax, Alan, and Raoul Abdul, eds. *Three Thousand
Years of Black Poetry*. New York: Dodd, Mead,
1970; 2nd Ed. 1984. [Includes Muhammad al-Fituri
The Knell, I Am a Negro ; and Salah Jahine
Quatrains, in addition to other pre-modern poets.]

*Lowenfels, Walter, ed. *For Neruda, for Chile: An
[Includes Yusuf al-Khal For Neruda Upon his
Death ; and Etel Adnan A Candle for Pablo
Neruda.]

*McClatchy, J. D., ed. *The Vintage Book of
Contemporary World Poetry*. New York: Vintage
Books, 1996. [Includes four poems by Adonis: The
Passage, Tree of Fire, Song of a Man in the
Dark, and Elegy for the Time at Hand ; and eight
poems by Mahmud Darwish: Identity Card, On
Wishes, Victim Number 48, Steps in the Night,
We Walk Towards a Land, Sirhan Drinks His
Coffee in the Cafeteria, Words, and Guests on
the Sea. See 285-307 for 12 Arabic poems and 308-
336 for 18 Hebrew poems by three poets.]

McGreal, Ian, ed. *Great Literature of the Eastern World.*
New York: HarperCollins, 1996. [Includes descrip-
tive essays on over 100 of the most noteworthy liter-
ary works of China, India, Japan, Korea , and the
Middle East (ix). The section on Arabic literature
covers largely works from the classical period,
including the Seven pre-Islamic Odes, the Qur an,
and the Arabian Nights, in addition to three modern
writers: Taha Husayn, Tawfiq al-Hakim, and Ghassan Kanafani.]


*New World Writing: Fifth Mentor Selection. New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1954. [Includes four modern Arabic poems selected and translated by Desmond Stewart: Buland al-Haydari Sterility and Arrogance; Muhammad Qasim To a Basketball Player; and Ibrahim Tuqan The Doves.]

*Nye, Naomi Shihab, ed. This Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World. New York: Four Winds P, 1992. [An anthology of 129 poets from sixty-two countries selected for young readers. It includes: Fawziyya Abu Khalid Distances of Longing and A Pearl; Salim Barakat The Squirrel; Ali Darwish Or; Mahmud Darwish The Prison Cell; Muhammad al-Fayiz A Sailor s Memoirs; Muhammad al-Ghuzzi The Pen; Muhammad al-Maghut The Orphan; Ali al-Mak The Gatherer; Fuad Rifqa from A Diary of A woodcutter; Yusuf al-Sayigh Ants; Nadia Tueni In the Lebanese Mountains; and Fadwa Tuqan Between Ebb and Flow.]


Pinter, Harold, Anthony Astbury, and Geoffrey Godbert, eds. 99 Poems in Translation. London; Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994. [Includes poems from other Near Eastern languages: Hebrew (five poems) Persian, and Turkish (one poem each).]

Ragland, Cindy, ed. International Portland Review 1980. Portland, OR: Publications Board, Portland State U, 1980. [An experimental multilingual anthology of poems presented in both original languages and in English translation. Scores of countries and languages from all continents are represented including Israel (Hebrew), Lebanon (a French poem by Salah Sttti) and Turkey (Turkish). No selections from Arabic poetry.]


the Maps of the Material and from Preface; Mahmud Darwish from Memory for Forgetfulness; Unsi al-Haj The Charlatan; Yusuf al-Khal Cain the Immortal and The Wayfarers; Muhammad al-Maghut Executioner of Flowers; and Badr Shakir al-Sayyab The River and Death.

*Schulte, Rainer, ed. Contemporary Writing from the Continents. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1981. [Includes poems by Adonis, Mahmud Darwish, Unsi al-Haj, Jabra I. Jabra, Samih al-Oasim, and Tawfiq Sayegh. This is in addition to other works written originally in English or French by Etel Adnan, Tahar Ben Jalloun, Andree Chedid, and Nadia Tueni]


Steiner, George, ed. The Penguin Book of Modern Verse Translation. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1966. [Steiner left out translations from Persian and Arabic, stating, perhaps wrongly, I feel that those I have seen move in a saccharine limbo between the original and the natural shapes of English (30).]


Van Doren, Mark, ed. An Anthology of World Poetry. New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1928. [Includes about forty selections from classical Arabic poetry.]

Van Doren, Mark, and Garibaldi M. Lapolla, eds. The World’s Best Poems. New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1929,1932. [Includes some of the selections given in Van Doren s Anthology of World Poetry.]

Washburn, Elizabeth, and John S. Major, eds. World Poetry: An Anthology of Verse from Antiquity to Our Time. New York: Norton, 1998. [Includes poets from the pre-Islamic and Andalusian periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. The chapter on Arabic from Pre-Islamic periods only. 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The list indicates that poets who are more frequently anthologized are Adonis (7), Mahmud Darwish (12), al-Mala ika (6), al-Sayyab (7) and Fadwa Tuqan (10).
One of the most problematic challenges in theater translation is undoubtedly the treatment of dialect and slang, which in the source text shape dramatic characterization and position the character within a certain community or group and within a specific cultural and linguistic tradition. The identities of the dramatic characters in the source playtexts are sculpted above all by their use of language varieties, and this article identifies the possible strategies and methods used in the stage translation of vernaculars and nonstandard language, with specific examples from a German translation of the cockney dialogues in Edward Bond’s *Saved* and an Italian translation of Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*. I analyze the decision-making process, positioning the translations within different acting traditions and theatrical conventions, while looking at possible reception effects of each of these strategies on monolingual and monocultural audiences abroad. Italian and German in particular have a rich and long tradition of vernacular, popular theater (for example, *commedia dell’arte* or the *Volksstück*), and regionalisms and dialects in these countries can vary so much because of history and geography that Sicilian idioms can be unintelligible to a Milanese, or at the extreme, a Fresian would fail to understand a German-speaking Swiss.  

**Forging regional and social identities**

Sociolinguistics has long tried to define the relationship between dialect and language, a relationship that is historically troubled and politically challenging. From a linguistic point of view, dialect has been catalogued as a subdivision of a particular language, a language variety that can be either regional or social. We recognize the regional and local (rural or urban) connotations of dialect, so the notion of dialect is strongly tied to the geography of a given place. Especially from the 1970s on, there has been concern with the social use of language, and the social variations of language have been addressed as sociolects, or language usage according to class, age, profession, and sex. Dialects can be both geographical and social (for example, the working-class dialect of Edinburgh, portrayed in Welsh’s novel *Trainspotting*). Furthermore, the dialect speaker has a sense of belonging to a group membership, to a regional or social community. Although linguistically speaking there is no difference between language and dialect, and in fact the divisions between dialects in the same country are of a geopolitical nature, the latter has come to be known as a substandard, low status form of language. Some dialects, such as Scots, Sardinian, and Qu b cois, are perceived and adopted by their speakers as standard languages rather than merely minority linguistic varieties or deviations; others have eventually prevailed as official languages (for example, the 14th-century Florentine dialect eventually prevailed as the modern Italian). When dialect is used as a communicative linguistic form, both in normal conversation and in written or oral literature, cultural, historical, and socio-geographical implications are inevitably unearthed.

Slang, which is an informal linguistic variety used by a specific social group, seems to fall into the category of sociolect.

Against this intricate, politically sensitive background, translators of drama, and of literature in general, probably face one of the most difficult challenges of their profession, transporting such strong cultural, historical, social, and local features of a given language across into another, alternative linguistic and cultural frame. Brisset notes the fascinating, political reappropriation into Qu b cois by translators in Quebec of works first translated into the official French: the desire for a language of one’s own reflects the nationalistic quest for political autonomy in Quebec, and for a Qu b cois identity, rather than the acceptance of the federal bilingualism. Qu b cois is, according to Brisset, an alternative to the foreign cultural French and to the socioeconomic colonization of the English. The Qu b cois experiment is also an example of a postcolonial approach to culture and language in translation, where sociolects and regionalects are linked to territory, to the notion of native land, to issues of cultural colonialism, and to politics.
Translating for the stage: some considerations about vernacular dialogue

The issues surrounding the translation of playtexts (written to be staged and performed) sit cross-culturally between the discourses of Theater Studies and Translation Studies, and theater translation itself is then positioned between linguistic science and dramatic art. Starting from the assumption that plays accomplish their social function only when performed, we find that one of the main influences in the activity of translating, and also a difference between the translation of playtexts and that of poetry or prose, is the goal or objective of the translation product, which will inevitably affect the translation process. In this case, the primary intent of the translator of plays is usually not to have the text published but rather produced for an audience, during a live, immediate public event. Besides the transposition of the text from language to language and from culture to culture, as common in all literary translation, the translation of plays involves a transformation from one medium into another, or at least this possibility has to be taken into account. A playtext therefore presents its translator or rewriter with the potential of performance, and many theater translators use the term performability to indicate theactable, oral quality of the written play that they need to somehow reproduce in another language.

During the translation process, the translator of plays is more than a writer: he or she becomes a theater practitioner grappling with the problem of making the words playable, functioning on a stage when spoken by actors. Philip Boehm, for example, advises translators to consider the playscript as a score for performance rather than as a final, unalterable text. The relationship between the (translated) playtext and its (potential) mise en scène has also been extensively investigated by Susan Bassnett, who observes that:

With the translation of a playtext all kinds of factors beyond the strictly linguistic are also involved, for the written text exists in a dialectical relationship with the performance of that text and those two elements—the written and the hypothetical performance—are coexistent and inseparable.

But how does the target language culture perceive/receive the translated drama onto their stages? Further, in the case of stage dialogue in dialect or slang, how is this reception shaped and influenced?

There are several strategies for translating dialect and slang for the stage, and these strategies, together with choices in production, will manipulate the target reception of the play. Some translators prefer to substitute dialect with standard language, although the nuances and musicality, as well as some aspects of characterization will inevitably be lost. Victor Price lamented the difficulty of translating the compressed, Hessian dialect of Bchner’s Woyzeck, after he felt that standard English had somehow failed:

I have tried hard to match Bchner’s concision; but what can one do with the dialect? Perhaps the ideal translation would be in dialect too a latterday Robert Burns might be able to render the toughness and poetic qualities of Bchner’s idiom.

The majority of theater translators agree that dialect should be translated with dialect, but which one? Usually translators have a stronger affiliation to one dialect than another, because they belong to that geographical and social reality; thus, it is easier to translate into what one knows best; however, this particular choice may not suit the literary and theatrical needs of a text. Second, one can find some parallels between source nonstandard languages and idioms and target ones. Furthermore, as already discussed, one has to consider the immediate impact of spoken stage dialogue. Phyllis Zatlin notes how audience response to the spoken dialogue will be affected by, among other factors, the actors’ voices and style of delivery. The actors’ accents and pronunciation thus have to be taken into account by the theater translator, particularly when dealing with regional dialect, because this can be made stronger or weaker by the actor.

Many translators feel that finding a target language dialect that parallels that of the source language on a geographical, social, and political scale comes with its problems: the target text can be perceived by a target-language audience as born within their own culture or community; the language itself would swiftly uncover domestic connotations during performance. One may also convey the nonstandard language of the play by distorting the standard grammar and using some linguistic features shared by most dialects in the target language: you have to make them speak something that is palpably a vernacular, but not a vernacular at home in any particular period, suggests Erich Fried, and Martin...
Esslin agrees that translating dialect is in fact inventing a language that sounds like ours but isn’t! 10

The most challenging strategy is undeniably the translation of dialect into dialect, because of the political and aesthetic implications that this act represents. In fact, in some cases the strategy of substituting one dialect for another, usually one that might be perceived as equivalent in terms of geography and social reality, is a political/ideological choice. This strategy is present in Martin Bowman’s and Bill Findlay’s translations of dramatic works by Canadian playwright Michel Tremblay into Scots (for example, The Guid Sisters, 1989; The Real World?, and Hosanna, both staged in 1991), particularly that spoken in Lowland Scotland, although names and references are left as in the original and Quebec is still the setting of the plays. In this way, Scots itself becomes a theatrical and literary language in its own right, an alternative to standard English or a challenge to the cultural colonialism of the majority language, an act of linguistic freedom fighting by Scots for British stages:

The long-standing predominance of Standard English translations in Scottish (and British) theatres more often than not delivered in the class-associated accent of Received Pronunciation had misrepresented both the non-standard linguistic nature of much Western drama (contemporary and classic) and its rootedness in the texture of a particular national or regional culture. 11

Findlay sees Scots as an adaptable theatrical language that can offer the immediate political and cultural effects of the original, particularly so when translating Tremblay’s plays, written in joual, a working-class Montreal vernacular.12 Because of the politico-linguistic connotations of the source-language plays, Findlay finds Scots more fitting than any other English variation. Bowman also collaborated with Montreal playwright Wajdi Mouawad on a translation of Harry Gibson’s dramatic adaptation of Welsh’s Trainspotting. Bowman finds linguistic and political parallels with the Edinburgh working-class vernacular of the novel and the urban joual. He is very aware of the dangers of creating confusion in the reception phase of the play, when such a substitution is made. However, he argues that the French-speaking audience for Trainspotting should find the language to be transparent, not joual, certainly not Scots in joual, but just language, 13 and if members of a Scottish audience perceive Tremblay’s plays translated into Scots as Scottish plays, it is not because of the work itself but because of the attitudes they hold towards the language of translation. 14

However, even if Bowman has pointed out that a faulty, confused reception lies in middle-class audience’s preconceptions, this practice might still make things complicated for the receivers. Another example of strongly localized dialect translation is Ibsen’s Peer Gynt in an Irish version by playwright Frank McGuinness. In the preface to the published edition, McGuinness stresses that liberties have been taken. I’ll argue for a sense of ironic parallels between Ibsen and Ireland’s cultural dilemmas. 15 A further example of this translation practice was a production at the National Theater of Napoli Millionaria by Eduardo De Filippo (Napoli Millionaire, 1991), a post-war play about the hardships of a Neapolitan family, written in Neapolitan dialect. The English-language play for this particular production was rewritten by Peter Tinniswood from a previous published translation and, even if left within a Neapolitan setting, it drew strong linguistic and cultural parallels with Liverpool and Scouse. This was a way of interpreting and then conveying/transforming Neapolitaness into a familiar British context, of making it easier for the target audience to understand.

The translation of cockney: some examples

What happens when, for example, the colorful cockney of London, with all its connotations, is translated and transported onto the different and diverse theatrical cultures of European stages?

A Cockney originally meant someone born and spending all his or her life in London, traditionally within the sound of Bow Bells. In G. B. Shaw’s Pygmalion (1914) and in Edward Bond’s Saved (1965), cockney is perceived as both sociolect and regionalect, spoken by lower classes in a specific urban area of London (in the case of Saved it is a South London cockney variety). We begin with a brief contextual and textual analysis of the treatment of cockney dialect and slang in these two plays, with references to German and Italian translations.17

Pygmalion, Bernard Shaw’s immensely popular play, written in 1914 and later adapted as a successful musical, My Fair Lady, displays the complicated relations between classes and the social contradictions arising from these multifaceted interactions. In Pygmalion, the phonetician Professor Higgins attempts the almost impossible task of transforming flower-girl Eliza...
Doolittle into a society lady, able to forget her cockney roots and to eventually speak with impeccable pronunciation, that of standard English. Shaw, who was himself a member of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, understood the down-to-earth, ethnic and tribal essence of dialects, but he also believed that, at the turn of the century, dialect and strong accents were an obstacle to high employment and to those social reforms that England needed at the time. One of the Italian translations of this didactic play is by translator Francesco Saba Sardi, undertaken in 1980. Saba Sardi defines cockney as the strange mixture of idioms from the London area and recalls the difficulty of translating such a dialect, because of its nuances and because dialect generally escapes institutionalization, whereas the standard language of the play is instead more universal, less idiosyncratic and therefore easier to translate. The Italian translator attempted to re-create Shaw's cockney by fashioning what he calls a horrible linguistic mixture. He uses a fusion of dialects from across Northern Italy, the agricultural Po Valley area, and from the urban areas of Milan, because of their Latino-Celtic matrix, which makes them closer to the sonority of cockney. Conveniently, Saba Sardi himself is a Northerner, originally from Trieste but living in Milan, so that he has worked within and been inspired by the intimate knowledge of his own dialects. Places, proper names, and cultural references are kept as in the original while a distinctive Northern Italian idiom is created by use of various terms and recurring expressions such as gnanca (for neanche; not even), sior and siora (signore and signora; gentleman and lady), alura (allora; then), sunt (sono; I am), and other Northern Italian dialectical expressions. Shaw demonstrates the very difficult task of transforming Eliza's speech by having her speaking a very strong cockney from the beginning of the play, where Eliza is complaining about the manners of a young man after he accidentally knocks her flower basket out of her hands:

**THE FLOWER GIRL:** Theres menners f yer! Tee-o banches o voylets trod into the mad Ow, eez ye-ooa san, is e? Wal, fewn dan y deooty bawmz a mather should, eed now bettern to spawl a pore gel d flahrzn than ran awy athat pyrn. Will ye-o py me f them? (I)

Shaw attempts here to represent the sound of (spoken) dialect in a written form without a conventional phonetic alphabet. Saba Sardi also reproduces the nonstandard features of this passage with his invented dialect, although he does not attempt to reproduce the sound (which would in any case present problems), apart from some brief lines, and uses primarily lexical and grammatical changes:

**LA FIORAIA:** Che modi! Du massetti di viulette sbattuti in te la fanga Oh, el saria el so fioeu? Be , che mi venga un colpo se mai avria pens che la podaria vess la so mama, I avria fa mei a cat su i fiur d una pora tusa invece che cur via sensa pagai. Me li paga le? (13)

(What manners! Two bunches of violets thrown into the mud Oh, he is your son? Well, may a curse come to me if I thought you could be his mother, he should know better than fall on a poor girl's flower and run away without paying. Are you paying for them?)

Higgins difficulty lies in the process of transformation of Eliza, when she begins learning English pronunciation and good manners. In this case the translation shows this process by attempting, like Shaw, to represent the spoken deviation from the norm through written language, for example:

**HIGGINS:** Alt. Di : una tazza di t (62)
(Stop. Say: a cup of tea)
**LIZA:** Una tassa di teee

In one of her first society engagements at Mrs. Higgins house, Eliza performs the part of the lady impeccably, until she spoils Higgins experiment:

**PICKERING:** Goodbye, Miss Doolittle (They shake hands)
**LIZA:** (Nodding to the others) Goodbye, all
**FREDDY:** (Opening the door for her) Are you walking across the Park, Miss Doolittle? If so-
**LIZA:** Walk! Not bloody likely (III)

The expression not bloody likely stuns the upper-class guests in the room. Usually on British stages this line is performed using a posh accent so that the comical effect is even stronger. Saba Sardi's solution is no, col cavolo (literally meaning: no, with the cabbage; no, I don't...
bloody think so), and it does reproduce the humorous effect of the original line in theater, a cue for the audience to laugh. Saba Sardi’s *Pigmalione* has tackled the issue of translating dialect and slang resourcefully. However, this is a dialect that, even if made up, draws strongly from Northern Italian linguistic varieties, and therefore its stage production could be at times unintelligible to Central and Southern Italian audiences. Perhaps a latter-day Venetian in the vein of Goldoni or a literary Neapolitan would be clearer to a wider audience, because those dialects are already established as theatrical non-standard languages on Italian stages, both with connotations of comedy, and also placed within urban environments, in contrast to the mainly agricultural territory of the Po Valley. When approaching the translation of dialect on the basis of parallels and similarities, translators should consult the dramatic tradition and literary canon of dialectical works within the receiving culture.

A different approach is that presented in Klaus Reichert’s *Gerettet* (1966), the first German translation of Edward Bond’s *Saved*, first staged in 1965. *Saved*, a play about life in South London, had received hostile reactions from the public and press in England, particularly for the violent scene of the stoning to death of a baby in a park by some youths. Bond wrote this play in times of strong political upheaval, depicting the squalor and violence of urban societies. His main concerns were the bleak reality of Britain’s working and lower classes, the issues of unemployment and poverty, and the social injustice caused by capitalism and materialism. Bond often defended the act of violence in the play as a necessary truth, and stressed in various prefaces that capitalist selfish societies were responsible for the acts of violence and terrorism that they provoked: I didn’t think the kids who murdered the baby were guilty. I thought they were themselves victims and I was clear about the moral relationship.

The language in *Saved* bonds and excludes at the same time: the slang the young characters use is a sign of belonging to a close-knit group, of membership to an identity, but it also signifies their isolation from society and their social invisibility. Furthermore, the speech is very ordinary, but it is also a highly selected and very carefully worked and reworked form of dialogue. Through the dialogue, Bond shows how ideology works and how it infiltrates the lives of the youths. In his Preface, Reichert commented on the challenge of translating the language of *Saved*, particularly in choosing a German Großstadtjargon (urban jargon): this would have been possible, but the social differences between them would have added another difficulty to the translation. Reichert’s solution is thus explained:

Die vorliegende Bersetzung, die für ganz Deutschland brauchbar sein soll, ist eine Art Modell. Sie versucht, das spezifische S dłondoner Idiom durch eine allgemeine deutsche Umgangssprache die auf der untersten Stufe der soziologischen Leiter angesiedelt ist, wiederzugeben.

(The present translation, which should be usable all over Germany, is a sort of model. It attempts to reproduce the specific South London idiom through a general German colloquial language that is located in the lowest level of the social ladder).

Reichert attempts to create a neutral, lower-class German vernacular, suggesting to potential directors and actors to einfärben (color) the dialogue with their own regional accents, expressions, and jargon; his translation was used, for example, in a Dortmund production in which actors used the regional accents of the Ruhr mining area. However, he warns against turning the play into a specific regional German production. Von Ledebur notices how fewer slang expressions are used in Reichert’s *Gerettet* than in the original and how this choice makes the play less brutal, losing the virility of working-class speech so evident in the original. In fact, the German translation, because of its neutral stand on dialect, is less direct and linguistically less shocking or violent than the original: for example, must a bin bloody rotten when yer were a kid (ii) is rendered as muß schüchtern gewesen sein, wie du klein warst (it must have been dreadful when you were little, 27); the expressions was up darlin? (ii) and E don’t know no better (iii) are respectively translated as was ist denn, S ä? (What is then, sweetheart?, 29) and der weis es nicht besser (he does not know better, 32). In scene six, with the violent act in the park, the gang continually and ritually refer to the baby as it, just before the killing, almost to defamiliarize themselves from the baby, to deprive him of any human characteristics. Language indicates in this case that the youths perceive the baby as an object.

**Fred:** That ought a be in bed.

**Pam:** Fresh air won t kill it. (iv)

Reichert also uses das, thus reproducing the process of dehumanization in language: for example, das geh
ins Bett (that belongs in bed, 55) and das sieht schon krank genug aus (that seems ill, 66). The pronoun used for the baby however, changes in German from time to time, but the overall effect remains:

**COLIN:** Little bleeder s alf dead a fright.
**COLIN:** Der kleiner Schei§er ist halb tot vor Angst. (64)

(the little crapper/bleeder is half dead from fright)

Reichert’s strategy chooses colloquialism and a general nonstandard speech over a specific regional dialect, because he does not want in the play the introduction of any target culture connotation. His advice to the actors and directors attracts attention to his own indistinct idiom translation practice, while making Gerettet the standard German translation of Saved, and the practice of coloring the dialogue with the actors (local) accents has in fact been the general and preferred treatment of Saved on German stages. A totally different ideological approach was that of Martin Sperr’s translation of Saved into Bavarian, and its transportation of the setting from South London to the urban, deprived inner-city areas of Munich. The text was translated appositely for Peter Stein’s memorable, anti-naturalistic 1967 production. The strong, localized dialect of the text demanded a different kind of acting from the prescribed German rhetorical acting tradition that was quite unsuitable for this kind of play, and Sperr’s version was seen as an attempt to use dialect for serious drama, in the vein of Hauptmann and B chner, and hailed as an important text for German theater.26

**Five strategies for theatrical transposition of dialect and slang**

From our analysis of strategies and possibilities used by translators of drama, we can identify the following strategies for translating dialect or slang in theater.

1. **Dialect Compilation**

To translate a dialect or a slang into a mixture of target dialects or idioms. Because these are still very localized or rooted in specific social groups in the target language, a wide audience reception can be hampered if strong regionalisms exists in the target culture. Setting and milieu remain the same as those of the original play (for example, Saba Sardi’s translation of Shaw’s Pygmalion).

2. **Pseudo-dialect translation**

To make up a fictitious, indistinct dialect, usually using nonstandard language and idiomatic features of various target language dialects. Proper names and topical and cultural references are kept as in the original. Use of actors (unspecified) regional accent (for example, Reichert’s Gerettet) in performance. This kind of text is accessible to a wide audience and seeks to occupy a standard position in theater, usually being recycled for different productions.

3. **Parallel Dialect Translation**

To translate a dialect or slang into that of another specific target language, usually one that has similar connotations and occupies an analogous position in the target linguistic system. Proper names are kept as in the original, as are topical jokes, places, and other source-language cultural references. Use of actors (specified) regional accents; (for example, Bill Findlay’s and Martin Bowman’s translations). This strategy will achieve the desired reception effect only if the translator works closely with director and actors. There is always the danger of mis-reception (i.e., a play perceived to be born within the audience cultural system).

4. **Dialect Localization**

To localize a dialect or slang into another specific to the target-language frame. Often, characters proper names are changed. Setting, topical, and cultural references are changed to target ones. This is very much a domesticating, acculturating strategy, which borders on adaptation and version (for example, Irish versions of foreign plays by Frank Mcguinness or Martin Sperr’s Bavarian adaptation of Bond’s Saved). Chosen for political and aesthetic ideals, a dialect-localization strategy is often desired by a playwright or a director for expressing a different perspective on a well-known play or for a particular production. Translator and director will usually work together, and the production will
aim to unearth and make visible domestic connotations. The dialect-localization strategy might hamper reception on a national basis, especially in those countries in which regionalisms are stronger.

5. STANDARDIZATION

To substitute dialect, slang, and jargon with standard language. The language is sometimes dotted with occasional colloquialisms (for example, Victor Price's *Woyzeck*). This strategy is more suitable for scholarly editions of drama, but also for productions that universalize some of the issues or ideals in the foreign play: domestic connotations are avoided, and the setting and topical references are those of the original. However, if this type of text is used for a stage production, the characterization will lose its strength and the dialogues some of the musicality and colorfulness of the source dialogue.

We have discussed how a nonstandard source-language play should (and could) be translated into nonstandard target language. But what happens when standard is translated into dialect? This strategy can be seen either as a political or aesthetic act as much as a dialect localization strategy, and from a literary point of view, it is an act of appropriative adaptation. Findlay chose this practice with Raymond Cousse's *Enfantillages*, written in standard French and translated into Scots (*Bairns Brothers*) as a means of extending the repertoire of Scots play translations and of testing and stretching the creative resources of Scots. Here the target-language dialect is used for its creativeness, rhythms, and musicality rather than for any sociocultural or linguistic equivalence or political acculturation. Classical or established literary works seem to be more vulnerable to target-language localized dialect translation. Edwin Morgan's translation of Racine's *Phèdre* (*Phaedra*) is rendered into a Glaswegian-based Scots dialect: the translator feels that although the rhythm of Scots is in some ways close to that of the original drama, the non-classical shock of it will bring the characters back alive. A version of Sophocles' *Antigone* was written by Ian Brown in Scots (English) and subsequently retranslated into Welsh (Celtic) by Ceri Sherlock. The translators were interested here in exploring and understanding the dramatic flexibility of Scots and Welsh and how these were capable of dealing with ancient myths. I would go even further by stating that the translators using this strategy are in a way testing whether classical ideals per se can be embodied (and expressed) in Scots and Welsh, languages that traditionally have not been vehicles for the theatrical representation of classicism. This practice is used when the translator/adaptor has either a sociopolitical purpose or a cultural, aesthetic plan: the translated text will be characterized by freer departures from the source-language text, affecting register and involving dialectal shifts.

Conclusions

The use of regionalisms, slang, and dialects is an extremely important literary choice in playwriting: characters are defined primarily by their language, which identifies them as members of specific geographical, social, economic, and political communities. We have identified at least five textual strategies for the translation of dialect and slang that, used together with specific performance practices, manipulate the reception in the receiving culture to a greater or lesser degree. Furthermore, political choice, unsuitable target-language dialects, or the need to address specific target-culture aspects lead the translator into the process of adaptation. These strategies are by no means exhaustive in the area and possibilities of dealing with regionalects and sociolects, but they go toward systematizing and understanding the position(s) acquired by the source theatrical/cultural product abroad, while trying to predict the diverse reception effects that each translation strategy might instigate.

Notes


5 Annie Brisset, *In Search of a Target Language: the Politics of Theatre Translation in Quebec*, *Target*, no. 1,


14 ibid.


17 With regard to the following textual analysis, examples from the Italian published edition of *Pygmalione* is George Bernard Shaw’s *Pigmalione*, translated by Francesco Saba Sardi (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1993). The examples from the German translation of *Saved* are taken from the following edition: Edward Bond *Gerettet* translated by Klaus Reichert (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1999), a newly published edition of Reichert’s 1966 translation.


20 ibid.

21 The Lord Chamberlain censored whole scenes from *Saved* and refused to give the licence for public performance. It was later produced as a private club viewing at the Royal Court Theatre in London on 3 November 1965, under the direction of William Gaskill. The first German-language translation of *Saved* (*Gerettet*) was staged in Vienna in 1966, while in Germany, the experimental Kammerspiele in Munich staged Peter Zadek’s production of *Gerettet* (in Martin Sperr’s translation) for the first time in 1967. The play itself was soon part of the repertoire of several theatres and had a successful run. For a detailed account of Germany’s reception of *Saved*, see Ruth von Ledebur, ‘The Adaptation and Reception in Germany of Edward Bond’s Saved” in *The Play Out of Context: Transferring Plays from Culture to Culture*, edited by Hanna Scolnicov and Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).


26 Michael Patterson, 1981, pp. 3-5.


METAPHOR, IMAGE, AND MUSIC IN A LINE
BY NIZĂR QABBĂNI

By Zalfa Rihani

Nizār Qabbāni’s poetry is known for its clear and familiar diction but minute details and graceful images that are capable of evoking the most remote memories and presenting them with new strength, depth, and presence. Nizār Qabbāni transforms us from the physical moment, which is entrenched in the simple and the ordinary, to a grand moment in history summarized in concise and well-crafted metaphors.

As a native speaker of Arabic and a novice translator, I underestimated the difficulty of translating Nizār Qabbāni’s poetry. Once I indulged in the process, I realized that Qabbāni’s poetry only seems easy to translate. The difficulty lies in the contrast between the familiarity of the diction, especially for a native speaker of Arabic, and the elaborated images. The challenge is in how to transfer the mood of his images and maintain the familiarity of his diction in English. In Translation as Metaphor: Three versions of Borges, Alfred J. Macadam argues that a translation exists when it is perceived; it is only and always the version created by the reader’s act of translation (749). So my job as a translator of the metaphor is not only to deconstruct and reconstruct it in the target cultural and linguistic structure but also to help the reader finish the act of translation. However, this is not possible when the poet writes his metaphor for an audience with very different, even contradictory, attitudes than those common among the audience for which the translator writes. The proud mood and unfettered enthusiasm that a certain metaphor evokes in a Muslim reader, for instance, can evoke a historically inimical mood in a Christian reader. So, what should I do as a translator when the metaphor, the image, and the music are intended in the source language for a specific reader?

In Granada, Qabbāni starts with narrating a coincidence. He is happy to meet a beautiful Spanish woman, carried away with her beauty, admires her dark eyes, wonders about her nationality, and finds out that she is from Granada. And through one word we are transported to a different realm. He conjures up seven centuries of glory and victory. We have no sooner caught our breath at the glory represented by the word Granada than we are swept next into another more glorious realm by the word Umayyah. That one word evokes for us, as Muslims, pride in the Umayyad Dynasty (established in 40 anno hegirae [AH] / 661 AD) and its founder Mu‘awiyyah Ibn Abī Sufyān. We remember the Islamic conquest of Spain, which started in 92 AH and was completed within three years. Within three years, Spain, Portugal, and Southern France fell into the hands of Muslims. We admire Mūsā Ibn Al-Nusayr, the mastermind behind this conquest: a 78-year-old man with exceptional ambition and drive to conquer these lands not for worldly gains but rather to spread the grandeur, the tolerance, the teachings, and the morals of Islam. We remember the 18,000 warriors crossing Gibraltar with him in Ramadān of 93 AH and building the Banners Mosque in Algeciras as soon as they settled. We remember Tāreef Ibn Malek, the first Muslim to tread on Spanish soil in Ramadan of 91 AH with 400 warriors to settle in Algeciras near Tāreef. We remember Tāreef Ibn Al-Nusayr and Tāreq Ibn Ziyād converging with their forces to meet in Toledo in Dhu al-Hijja of 94 AH. We marvel at the political survival of Abdul Rahmān Al-Dakhel, the last remnant of the Umayyads, who escaped the tyranny of the Abbasids in Damascus and managed to keep the sovereignty of Andalusia under the Umayyads and Islam even though the Abbasids ruled the rest of the Islamic world at the time. And the list goes on and on while we cherish in a flashback that exceptional leadership, that devoted courageous army, and that sweeping victory that took place only 76 years after the death of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). One word, Umayyah, carries us to a glorious presence and wonderful memories and then leaves us with a grand image portrayed in simple words:
And Umayyah: its banners hoisted high
Its warriors at one with their stallions.

Arabic transliteration:
Wa umayya: rayātuhā marfū atun
wa jiyādhu mawsulatun bijiyād2

The word Jiyād means literally horses, but do I translate that phrase literally: its horses attached to horses? Despite the literal meaning of the words, the phrase refers to the Umayyad conquerors and leaders, not to the horses. The question is whether to translate the meaning of the line in reference to its historical Islamic implications or detach myself from these implications in favor of vocabulary? Images crowded in my mind and I was thinking of a grand, great, glorious, sweeping army and of victory. But how can I transfer that mood in its full intensity?

Trot of “Granada”

In the entrance of (Alhambra) was our meeting
How tasty is meeting without an appointment
Black eyes. In their sockets
Dimensions are produced from dimensions.
Are you Spanish? I asked her.
She said: and in Granada is my birth
Granada! And seven centuries awakened
In those two eyes after slumber.
And Umayyah: her flags are raised
And her horses are attached to horses.

My Translation

At the entrance of Alhambra we met
How delightful to meet without a rendezvous
Two dark eyes: in their depths
Distances give birth to distances.
Are you Spanish? I asked
Born in Granada, she answered.
Ah Granada: seven centuries revived
In those eyes
After slumber
And Umayyah: its banners hoisted high
Its warriors at one with their stallions.

Is the Attachment in warriors at one with their stallions literal or symbolical? My reading is of a vast number of warriors on Arabian horses approaching Granada with sweeping victory, glory, and sovereignty. They look almost physically attached to their horses. That attachment symbolizes their dexterity at riding and maneuvering these horses in the battlefield. These horsemen are exceptional; they are foursan (Arabic for knights), hence my choice of warriors. I ignored the actual reference to the horses in one instance and decided on warriors to refer to the glorious cavalcade and to stress the historical glory.

My commitment to transfer that mood of grandeur made me think of the musicality of the Arabic sound of the letter Alif in Rayātuhā, jiyādhu, and jiyād. So I chose Banners and stallions because the \( \text{\textalpha} \) echoes the \( \text{\textalpha} \) sound in Alif, and I chose warriors, hoisted, and high because the \( \text{o} \), \( \text{oi} \) and \( \text{I} \) diphthongs complement that flowing musicality of the same line in its English version. The line at hand sounds in Arabic like:
Rayātuhā Marfū atun wa Jiyāduhā Mawsulatun
Bijiyād.
And in English it will sound like:

Its banners hoisted high
Its warriors at one with their stallions.

In addition, the stanza itself carries a musical pattern expressed through meaning and sound. Her dark eyes, Granada, and Umayyah carry a crescendo of meaning that climaxes in the assonance of Alif in the last line and in the nasal sound of al-tanwīn (vocalization \( \text{\textalpha} \) = un) in Marfū atun and Mawsulatun. And the final effect is commensurate with the grandeur of the historical reference.

So in the decision-making stage of translation I was not separate from my ethnic identity. In fact, I was driven by an urge to express that mood and its musicality in the English translation. The translation now exists in me as a Muslim reader and translator, but will it exist in the non-Muslim reader? How far does the translator as a critic and reader imply his ethnic understanding in the creative act of transferring the metaphor? When encountering such ethnic images and writing them in English, is it justifiable to dispense with the English reader to maintain the originality of the image in its source language? What role does ethnicity play in the choice of the text, the translation of the text, and the publication of the text? Is translation a political act? Discussing ethnicity in translation sheds light on the politics of translation that is dormant, I think, in every stage of the translated and
published work. But what do all these questions have to do with metaphor, its imagery, and musicality? Discussing ethnicity in translation could provide an approach for deciphering the metaphor in its native soil rather than colonizing the metaphor for the sake of the English reader. And maybe, as translators, we can make our peace with metaphors when we realize that a metaphor cannot be divorced from the intended image and the source of that image.

Granada

At the entrance of Alhambra we met
How delightful to meet without a rendezvous
Two dark eyes: in their depths
Distances give birth to distances.
Are you Spanish? I asked
Born in Granada, she answered
Ah Granada: seven centuries revived
In those eyes
After slumber
And Umayyah: its banners hoisted high
Its warriors at one with their stallions.

How amazing history is!
How it had brought me back
To the dark-skinned beauty, one of my granddaughters
In that Damascus face I could see
Balqees's eyelids, Suad's graceful neck
Our old house, and that room
Where my mother provided my pillow,
That jasmine vine adorned with its stars,
And that fountain with the golden hymns.

And Damascus! Where could it be? There, I said
In your cascading hair that sable river
Gracing your Arabian face,
In those lips
Where all the suns of my country
Have always been stored,
In the scent of the trees of al-Areef and its waters,
In the Arabian jasmine, in basil, and in quince.

She strolled with me: her hair gasping after her
Like wheatstalks left unharvested,
Her long earrings glittering on her graceful neck
Like Christmas candles.
I followed my guide like a child
History behind me: a dust pile.
I could hear the pulse of art
In the ornamented walls and ceilings.
She said: Here is Alhambra, our forefathers pride
So go ahead, read on its walls my glories.
Her glories? I wiped a bleeding wound
And another one inside my heart
If only my beautiful heiress had realized
It was my forefathers she was talking about.

* 

When I said goodbye, I embraced in her
A man by the name of Tareq Ibn Ziyad.
Notes

1 In Islam, peace be upon him is mentioned out of reverence to Muhammad as a prophet.

2 I am using LC Romanization Tables and Cataloging Policies for romanizing Arabic letters.

3 I am using Webster's Guide to Pronunciation for English phonetic transcription.

Bibliography


In the Flicker of an Eyelid
A Novel
Jacques Stephen Alexis

Translated and with an afterword by Carrol F. Coates and Edwidge Danticat, with the 1983 preface by Florence Alexis

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TRANSLATION COURSE IN FILM SUBTITLING

By Tatsuya Fukushima and David L. Major

Introduction

While researchers have proposed numerous theories on film translation, few of them discuss practical methods to train professional translators in university programs. The ultimate goal of a film translator is to produce the kind of translation that preserves the cultural identity of the source language while it is optimally accessible to the prospective audience at the same time. In order to accomplish these seemingly contradictory goals within one film, the translators will have to use different cultural adaptation strategies on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, different media of film translation involve different forms of stylistic requirements, such as lip synchronization in overdubbing and text shortening in subtitling. Furthermore, film translation involves numerous methods of technical editing that would facilitate the audience’s comprehension of the dialogue. This issue would be particularly crucial in releasing a foreign film in the U.S., a predominantly English-monolingual nation known for the moviegoer’s limited tolerance for non-English film presentation. Finally, regardless of whether the translation itself would be conducted by an individual or group, the process of the actual subtitling or overdubbing will involve a collaborative effort with the production team. This fact seems to suggest that, while translation skills may be developed by individual efforts, conducting the actual translation in the form of a group project would facilitate the students’ skills for the collaborative process.

In consideration for the theoretical background, this article documents the cases of two projects where groups of advanced Japanese language students translated full-length contemporary Japanese films into English as a major course requirement. Due in large part to material constraints that would render the overdubbing practically impossible, both projects employed subtitling rather than overdubbing. Objectives of these projects included (1) optimizing the students’ exposure to authentic Japanese language in a foreign language setting through a contemporary film; (2) facilitating the students’ understanding of sociocultural practice in Japan; and (3) providing the students with simulative experience in the individual and collaborative processes involved in the actual film subtitling. First, this article provides the theoretical background of film translation from the perspectives of technical writing, stylistic requirements, and cultural adaptation techniques. Second, this article discusses the process of the actual course projects to illustrate the degree to which the students’ products would conform to the theories. Third, based on our observations of the students’ activities, this article discusses strengths and weaknesses of their simulative activities. Fourth, and finally, this article proposes suggestions on alternative approaches to film subtitling in a university classroom in different academic disciplines.

Overview of Film Subtitling

Subtitling and Overdubbing

The choice of subtitles or overdubs has been a subject of decades-long disputes. Studies in translation have found four critical limitations in overdubbing that grants subtitling the advantage in terms of its economic viability, technical efficiency, and artistic integrity. First, especially from the perspective of economic viability of the film, film corporations often elect to subtitle a foreign film because this method is far more cost-efficient than overdubbing. Since overdubbing presupposes a fruitful supply of voice actors and other specialists, it is generally 10 times more expensive than subtitling (Kilborn, 1989, p. 423). Second, overdubbing requires a more intricate and demanding process than subtitling on the part of the operation staff since the former calls for a high degree of skill and collaborative activity (Kilborn, 1989, p. 424). In addition to technical expertise on the part of the staff, overdubbing requires the voice actor/actresses to overcome different stress patterns and rhythms between the source and target languages. This adaptation would be particularly problematic in overdubbing a Japanese film in English due to different stress/rhythm patterns between the two languages. In syllable-timed languages such as Japanese, each syllable tends to occur at regular intervals (Misono, 1995, p. 292). On the other hand, in stress-timed languages such as English, stressed syllables instead of syllables themselves tend to occur at regular intervals (Ladefoged,
This stress-timed inclination in English translates into the isochrony, or the tendency to produce unstressed syllables with different lengths roughly at the same speed, while the syllable-timed languages do not conform to this stress pattern. Third, overdubbing tends to focus primarily on lip synchronization in word selection, and semantically incongruous words and phrases would result (Kilborn, 1989, p. 424). On the other hand, subtitling, free from the constraint for lip synchronization, focuses on the presentation of dialogues in the most linguistically relevant manner, which would result in the successful delivery of the interlocutors intended meanings (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). Fourth, subtitling advocates contend that superimposing maintains the artistic and cultural integrity of a foreign film. It is a common complaint of overdubbed foreign films that the timbre and tonal qualities of voice actors do not correspond to those of the original actor/actresses and often alter the characters personality (Tornquist, 1999), while subtitling preserves the faithfulness to the original version by maintaining the voices of the original actor/actresses (Kilborn, 1989, p. 426; Gottlieb, 1994, p. 102).

Despite these advantages, there are critical drawbacks in subtitling that have steadfastly kept the general U.S. movie audience off foreign films, including the Oscar-winning Italian film Life is Beautiful (1998). Translation theorists argue that subtitles force (the) audience to add a third cognitive effort (reading) to the two basic efforts: watching and listening (Gottlieb, 1994, p. 102). In other words, overdubs, a covert form of translation (House, 1981; Batterbee, 1986), give the audience a superficial impression as though the overdubbed film were the original, subject to good performance on the part of the voice actor/actresses. On the other hand, subtitling, an overt form of translation, inevitably projects an impression of containing extrinsic components by physically adding the text in a non-original language to the original film. The process of subtitle reading poses a heavier burden on the audience than book reading because subtitle reading is essentially a receptive process where the viewers are not in charge of their pace of reading (Gottlieb, 1994, p. 113), while book reading presupposes the readers control of the pace of processing. The dominance of overdubbing in English-monolingual nations such as the U.S. and England has a lot to do with corporate executives fear that subtitling, which disrupts the pattern of easy, or even mindless, viewing, will result in much reduced ratings (Kilborn, 1989, p. 429), while overdubbing would increase the sales potential enough to offset the high production cost. Kilborn (1989) cites as examples the British release with both subtitles and overdubs of the French opera Chateaurolland and the subsequent release of the then-West German hospital series The Black Forest Clinic in English overdubs only. Based on the results of the surveys conducted by the British TV station, Kilborn (1989) speculates that the overdub-only release of The Black Forest Clinic would be attributable to British viewers overwhelming preference of the overdubbed version of Chateaurolland (p. 423). Another example would be found in the U.S., where Miramax released the English overdubbed version of Life is Beautiful a half year after its Oscar awards in an attempt to boost its sales (Tornquist, 1999).

**Cultural Adaptation**

Successful cultural adaptation in the course of film subtitling depends on the adequate selection of an appropriate cultural adaptation strategy on a case-by-case basis rather than persistence in one predetermined strategy throughout the film. The problem with persistence in one fixed strategy is that it prevents the resulting subtitled film from achieving the seemingly paradoxical goals: to render the translation faithful but accessible. The faithful translation which would correspond to the source-language culture orientation is crucial to preserve the film’s cultural identity, while the accessible translation which would correspond to the target-language culture orientation is essential to facilitate the audience’s comprehension. The adaptation of one fixed strategy throughout a film entails a risk of failing to achieve one or both of these goals. The faithful translation in its extreme form would seriously minimize the audience’s comprehension while the accessible translation in its extreme form would risk a loss of authenticity. At the same time, an entirely general (neutralized) translation would abridge a film of its cultural identity and hamper the audience’s comprehension. Virtually all foreign films would include a mixture of instances of the total source-language culture orientation (e.g., Tokyo, Osaka, etc.), the total target-language culture orientation (e.g., amazake [lit. sweet rice wine] —> hot cider), and the general translation (e.g., Nagata-cho —> legislative district). Only a case-by-case use of these strategies can make subtitles adequately faithful and accessible at the same time. Instances of source-language culture orientation would help the film maintain its cultural identity to an adequate degree, while neutralization and target-language culture orientation would facilitate linguistic deliv-
Translation Review

While adequate representation of audience views in the subtitles is essential for accessible translation, our project members were inclined as individuals toward the source-language orientation. It would be an intuitively appealing view that many of our group members, sharing the same linguistic background as speakers of English, would naturally lean toward the target-language culture orientation. On the contrary, cultural immersion as a result of years of learning Japanese led the project members to lean toward the source-language culture orientation in interpreting culturally specific expressions. To put it another way, cultural immersion desirable as it may be for the benefit of learning a second/foreign language successfully (Ellis, 1985, p. 122) would make it more difficult for our project participants to represent our target audience, who is generally inclined toward the target-language culture orientation.

In the selection of an adequate adaptation strategy for each instance of culturally specific expression, group negotiation played a crucial role for successful strategy adaptation. Both projects involved a mixture of members from different cultural groups who seemed to represent different views of the source/target-language orientation. In general terms, American participants, as native speakers of the target language, would lean toward the target-language orientation while other participants would temper the predominant target-language orientation, if not leaning toward the source-language orientation. Especially, the inherent individual differences would lead the participants to represent different levels of source/target-language orientation. Extensive negotiations by these participants representing different degrees of source/target-language orientation contributed to the selection of an appropriate strategy for each culturally specific dialogue.

In addition to different levels of source/target-language orientation discussed above in general terms, the 2000 project (see below for details) observed a rather unique case of group dynamics. The 2000 project was especially noteworthy from this perspective because it involved one American student who represented the target-language oriented view in an intriguing manner. This student was a senior majoring in theater and already had substantial experience in authentic theater production ranging from acting to directing as part of his undergraduate program. Especially important in this student’s contribution was his consistent reminder to other participants to be aware of the audience’s interpretation. This student was well immersed in the source-language culture as a result of studying Japanese extensively. In this film project, however, because of his experience in theater production, he consciously represented the perspective of the target audience, the average Americans who generally have little exposure to printed text being superimposed on the visual images (D’Ydewalle et al., 1991, p. 652). On the other hand, the Korean exchange student, who was well immersed in the source language culture as a result of an extensive stay in Japan, leaned heavily toward the source-language culture orientation. At the same time, the remaining participants, two Americans, represented the target-language culture inclined view as native speakers of the target language, who were both immersed in the source language culture.

These examples illustrate a major advantage in group tasks, where effectiveness would reach beyond the scope of theoretical stipulations. As described in detail above, diversity in language culture orientation would facilitate input from different perspectives. The 2000 project illustrates a clear case of successful cultural adaptation to the subtitles as a result of the students diverse degrees of language culture orientation. On the other hand, the 1999 project (see below for details) illustrated a case of homogeneous views of language culture orientation with no participant representing an extreme end. Nonetheless, individual differences between the project participants led to sufficient diversity in language culture orientation that would translate into student input based on different perspectives.

Technical Editing

Students can use technical writing skills at many stages of translating, editing, and subtitle a film, whether they are primarily language students consulting writing sources, students knowledgeable in both areas (perhaps working toward a career in technical translation), or writing students assisting in the process. Along with aspects obviously related to technical writing, such as copyediting and computer-generating the subtitles, approaches to managing projects and analyzing audience can also contribute to the translation. We began to develop a parallel course in technical writing/editing with the 2000 project, conducting an independent study for an English-major, Japanese-minor student who was able to focus on preparing the text translated by the other students. Because the group of translators in the 2000 project was smaller than the 1999 group, this assistance was beneficial, allowing the language students to focus on translation with less attention paid to the process of doc-
umenting their work.

By the time students are ready for a translation course, they have spent a great deal of time and effort familiarizing themselves with the culture of the language they study—gaining source-language culture orientation. They may then have difficulty in seeing a translation through the eyes of someone who does not have that familiarity—the audience of the target language culture. One fundamental concern in technical writing is how to transfer information from an expert on a subject to a novice. Furthermore, strategies for communicating technical information across cultural lines may as well inform a film translator’s efforts. *International Technical Communication: How to Export Information about High Technology* (1995), by Nancy L. Hoft, provides a thorough discussion on how an international audience adds considerations to all stages of a documentation process. Hoft addresses the book to experienced professional communicators and covers project management and collaboration with translators, audience analysis, cultural bias, and document design. However, students particularly need to be aware of her definition of the term localization: the process of creating or adapting an information product for use in a specific target country or specific target market. Addressing the demand for professional translators, Bacak (2000) equates localization with translation, emphasizing the importance of accessibility. While Hoft’s assumption is that her readers will export information from U.S. English to other countries, students in this project needed to adapt not just a foreign language but even a good translation to a specific target audience—a group of moviegoers. In this task, they were required to bridge their translation from their own familiarity with the source-language culture to the needs of the specific audience from the target-language culture. They had to deliberately compensate for their own knowledge to make use of their own background in this target culture.

Further material on analyzing audiences is readily available in technical writing sources. Doheny-Farina and Odell (1985) discuss ethnographic methods for studying audiences. Their directions for observing and considering the social context of the audience’s interaction with the text apply as well to the cultural difference between a film’s original society (creators and viewers) and the translated version’s viewers as to the experience of gathering to watch and read a film. As the translators immerse themselves in the film’s cultural aspects, the student or students documenting the text may present draft translations to representative moviegoers. From observing moviegoers’ responses, the student-editors may prepare a thick description of what an audience should need, and the translators can allow for these needs as they continue to translate. Doheny-Farina and Odell also give an important warning that observations are not going to provide a perfect picture of an unchanged audience, so projections of what an audience may need can also be considered. For a procedure for observing moviegoers’ responses, a student-editor may look to Janice Redish and David Schell’s *Writing and Testing Instructions for Usability* (1989) particularly the approach of protocol-aided revision, in which the observer listens in as test subjects discuss the text while using it. This approach is similar to the students’ in-class reviews of translated scenes each week during the two projects.

As with many technical documents, the audience of a translated film will not be a homogeneous group. An English version of the film may have to be accessible to speakers of the original language, beginning students of the language, viewers whose native language is neither English nor the original language of the film, foreign-film buffs, foreign-film novices, people more accustomed to dubbed films, and friends and family of the translators whose interest in the film itself may be incidental. Student-editors can work with the translators and their text to open it up to these diverse audiences within the audience. Holland, Charrow, and Wright (1988) discuss means of addressing a multiple audience that apply mainly to print documents, which can refer to supplements or can be skimmed through, as subtitles cannot; however, their tactics for defining the nature of the audience and some of their suggested responses are useful. They offer three questions for defining the multiple audience and the needs they impose on the text:

In what ways and to what extent do the anticipated audiences for your text differ?
What are your constraints in producing the text?
[schedule, budget, design of the document]
Is one audience more important than another?

The translators and editors can discuss these questions and plan a stylistic approach for the translation as the students did from the beginning of each project. One of Holland, Charrow, and Wright’s responses to a multiple audience—compartamentalizing—involves sectioning off parts of text that different audiences will need. Compartamentalizing subtitles will not be practical, although the subtitles may be set up with explanatory
modifiers and repetition that more experienced members of the audience can skim. The translators and editors can recognize that various members of the audience will work with the subtitles in various ways. More practically, the text can be targeted to a level of greatest common accessibility, which the translators and editors can determine in discussion.

For more sources with guidance on audience, an editor may refer to Gerald J. Alred’s annotated *St. Martin’s Bibliography of Business and Technical Communication* (1997), particularly the chapters Theory and rhetoric with sections on Theories and Models and Rhetorical Studies and Audience and Interdisciplinary connections with sections on Communication and Culture and Composition and Rhetoric. Allen (1989) also presents a valuable survey of audience analysis.

As we have discussed, the relationship among translators and between the translators and the editors is an essential aspect of the course, helping students develop necessary skills. This exact relationship is not likely to be repeated in a career because a lone translator prepares most professional translations—print or film. However, the classroom collaboration serves as an introduction to the interaction a translator will have with subject-matter experts, editors, native speakers of the target or source language, and, in the case of film, production executives. Responding to the common image of a writer working alone, Debs (1989) reports on the discussing, organizing, drafting, composing, reviewing, and editing that make up collaboration and group authorship. Debs also suggests in-class approaches to collaborative writing, including division of labor and project management. Students in the two translation projects followed these tasks quite naturally, and they efficiently divided the work of translating and editing alternately. Project management fell primarily to the instructor, although the student editor in the 2000 project was able to assume some responsibility.

McGee (2000) surveys the ways writers have of exchanging and verifying information and characterizes the advantages of the different ways. Team (as in the classroom) or individual meetings help at the beginning of the project to establish the purpose and to develop teamwork; then meetings on a regular basis let members exchange perspectives and stay informed. Toward the end of the documentation process, meetings can help build consensus on the results, but document reviews provide a more thorough, stable form of current product information (p. 42). While meetings are clearly the instructor’s responsibility, a student-editor could manage the e-mail and print review processes. Eldridge (1988) describes this role of managing communications including the interpersonal skills necessary for getting cooperation from team members and argues for the inclusion of the writer (or editor) from the beginning of a project.

A style guide—a formal and standard set of guidelines for writing a particular kind of document—is a common tool in technical writing. In both projects, the instructor issued a number of basic style guidelines at the beginnings of the semesters. Though student-translators will negotiate their approaches to such matters as slang, personal and place names, and culturally specific terms, a student-editor can take the responsibility of recording and distributing these approaches and can review the group-written subtitles to help maintain consistency. Hart (2000) proposes a dynamic style guide incorporating templates, online reference tools, and macros. An editor may save considerable effort by creating templates for the translators with the fonts and spacing set for subtitles. The editor can also help translators adjust the spelling and grammar checkers on their word processors, not only checking foreign words in a customized dictionary but also avoiding time wasted as standard settings on the checkers highlight unfamiliar words and ungrammatical speech patterns. While many of the advantages of macros apply to projects lasting for years or to revised editions of documents, some keystroke shortcuts may assist with frequent terms used in the film. Adapting spelling and grammar checkers and creating macros for previously translated material, along with databases of translations, fall under the practice of Translation Memory, which Altanero (2000) compares to Machine Translation (software that translates, such as Altavista’s Babel Fish) greatly to Translation Memory’s favor. TM does not translate, but it is a tool for more efficient, consistent translation. Bacak (2000) emphasizes the need for human supervision of any computer-influenced translation. Students will readily discover the need to review computer shortcuts as well as their own phrasing.

While most students have grown up with computers, not all can deliberately employ the various functions of the software or even easily change their own writing habits to coordinate with a group’s agreed-upon format and style. Beyond managing communications among translators and maintaining a style guide, an editor can focus on the technical side of documenting the translation so that the translators can focus on translating. Though the student-translators should have a say in the appearance of the subtitles, a technical editor can suggest ways to increase readability. Students in both the 1999...
and 2000 projects worked carefully on line length, spacing, line division, and the font's style, size, and color. All these considerations are important for text that must be read quickly from a movie screen, and many can be effectively set up in templates. Many technical writing texts deal with document design; however, Schriver (1997) and Rostelnick and Roberts (1998) are leading authors. Linguistic considerations particularly inform decisions affecting choices.

Selection of Project Films

The selection of an appropriate project film requires not only considering the type of the film but the objective of the academic course. For the purpose of our project, the instructor selected a Japanese live action film that was not available in the U.S. with English subtitles. Japanimation films, increasingly popular as they might be in the U.S., often deal with subject matters that would be beyond the scope of human sociocultural interactions. While many Japanese live action films available to date in the U.S. deal with samurai or other historical themes, this project selected a film with contemporary settings in an attempt to optimize educational experience through scenes with sociocultural implications. In an attempt to provide our non-Japanese students with a different perspective of Japanese films, the project selected the Japanese films that are not excessively inclined toward artistic orientation. As has been represented by masterpieces by Akira Kurosawa, most of those released in the U.S. are rather atypical of Japanese films in the sense that entertaining (as opposed to artistically/intellectually oriented) Japanese films have been underrepresented in the U.S. market. This type of film, which is common in Japan (i.e., uncommon in the U.S.), would provide students in this project with a different perspective on Japanese cinema. Since the project would be conducted as part of a U.S. university curriculum, the selected film should meet the general American public's decency standards. Our project based such judgment on (1) absence of Japan's industry-standard warnings on potentially objectionable content for individuals under 18 years of age; and (2) students' consensus through the initial viewing that the project films would be presentable to the general American public.

Procedures of the Film Subtitling

In full awareness of U.S. moviegoers' resistance to subtitled films (Tornquist, 1999; Allen, 1999; Brown, 2000), the students selected subtitling as a mode of translation for their project films. The 1999 project selected Love Letter and the 2000 project selected II.' While it was not the initial intention, Love Letter happened to be considerably inclined toward artistic/intellectual orientation in terms of the complexity of its story, which is based on A la recherche du temps perdu (1913-27) by Marcel Proust. On the other hand, II., a romantic comedy, is more inclined toward entertainment than Love Letter.

Opening Week of the Projects

Prior to the actual translation project, the instructor spent the Week 1 class meetings providing the students with overviews of film subtitling. The instructor first presented several example scenes from English-subtitled Japanese films to discuss important guidelines in film translation. The instructor suggested that the length of each subtitle be proportional to the amount of utterance time and approximate reading speed of the prospective audience. Especially important was to prevent the subtitled texts from causing distraction on the screen. Therefore, in light of the well-established patterns of subtitling in foreign films available in the U.S., the instructor mentioned in the style sheet that the maximum length of each subtitle should be (1) up to eight words in one line; or (2) up to fifteen words in two lines. Long utterances in one turn (e.g., speeches, etc.) would be divided into subtitles in accordance with this guideline with sequence/linking dots between the subtitles.

Furthermore, the instructor suggested that varieties of the source language be realized in different forms in the target language. Loud utterances, which typically indicate the character's strong emotion, should be subtitled in all upper-case letters (e.g., WHAT!!), or modified spelling (e.g., WWHHAAATT!!). Letter reading, quotes, and song lyrics should be transcribed in italics (e.g., Hella, How are you?). Personality differences between characters should be portrayed accordingly in the form of different language styles. For example, the 1999 project film involved two female characters with identical appearance, with one being a spoiled young adult female (a brat; as one student put it) and the other a polite and proper young woman. In an attempt to portray their personality differences effectively, the students unanimously agreed that the brat's utterances include the frequent use of (1) ellipsis (e.g., Strange, very strange, isn't it?; see Onions, 1971; Quirk et al., 1972); and (2) youth vocabulary (e.g., weird, cool, sucks, etc.).

As a general rule, dialects in the source language
should be neutralized in the English subtitles. One main character in the 1999 project film consistently uses the Kansai dialect, a variety of the Japanese language spoken mainly in the Kinki Region (including Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, etc.). One major problem in dealing with the Kansai dialect is that it is not entirely a regional dialect. While the Kansai dialect is primarily an indication of the speakers' geographical origin, it has become a well-established occupational register among standup comedians since Yoshimoto Kogyo Inc., an Osaka-based entertainment production company, emerged as the nation's largest entertainment promoter at the peak of the standup comedy boom in the early 1980s. Additionally, as would be the case with other non-English dialects, the Kansai dialect as a whole expresses the sociocultural implications that would not translate adequately into any regional dialect of the English language. Therefore, the students decided that different dialects in the film be generally neutralized into the English subtitles.

Prior to the actual translation/subtitling tasks, the instructor explained the process of the project throughout the semester. The Japanese transcript would be translated into English the way that would be optimally faithful to the source language in terms of its content. This translation involved both literal and free translation (Crystal, 1992, p. 395) for optimal productivity in the subsequent revisions. The English translation would be edited into the revision that would facilitate subtitle reading for the prospective audience (i.e., speakers of American English in the case of this particular project). At this stage, the students employed various editing techniques such as neutralization and structural alteration (Karamitroglou, 1998). The students read the texts over the VCR playback for revision into the final draft, which would best accommodate the audience's reading speed. In addition to the shortening of each subtitle, this revision involved further negotiations between the students on the content of the subtitles for optimal comprehensibility.

1999 Project: Love Letter

The first subtitling project was conducted in the 1999 Spring Semester in the third-year advanced reading class of Japanese at Oklahoma State University. Participants in this project consisted of seven students including two Koreans (one of whom was a U.S. permanent resident born and educated in the U.S.), one mainland Chinese, and four Americans. Throughout the semester, there were three 50-minute class meetings each week. Assignments for the reading course included the film with complete English subtitles and two response articles. After the Week 1 discussions, the students spent Weeks 2-9 translating into English the complete Japanese transcript that the instructor prepared (Draft 1) and then editing Draft 1 into the text that would be most suitable for subtitling (Draft 2). Each week, the translators were given a Japanese transcript of approximately 10-15 minutes in length (8-9 pages typed in single space). Once Draft 2 was completed, the students spent Week 10 revising it into Draft 3, or the final draft that involved revisions based on the handout that the instructor provided in Week 1. In Weeks 11-12, the students inserted the Draft 3 subtitles on the screen with technical assistance by the OSU Educational Television Services. Upon completion of the subtitling, the film was presented to OSU faculty and students. The students spent the remaining weeks of the semester discussing their tasks and the contents of the film and writing the response articles.

Students in the 1999 project were divided into three groups (2 pairs and 1 triad) that alternated their duties on a weekly basis to produce Drafts 1-2. In Weeks 2-9, two of the three groups served as translators to produce Draft 1, and the remaining group as text editors to revise the previous week's Draft 1 into Draft 2. Both drafts were submitted on Friday, and the students received the new assigned transcripts for the following week. On Monday, when only the text editors met in class, the students read through Draft 1 along with the playback of the corresponding scenes to review the content of the texts. After the run-through, the students spent the remaining class time discussing ways to rephrase culturally specific words/expressions into those that would be optimally suitable within the given context. On Wednesday, when only the translators met in class, the students had produced a preliminary edition of Draft 1, and they would discuss in class the words/expressions that they had difficulty comprehending. Due to the inherent colloquial nature of foreign language films, which often involve culturally specific, dialectal, and novel expressions that would not appear in conventional language dictionaries, the instructor provided necessary and appropriate information to assist the translators in response to the students' questions. On Friday, when all students met in class, Drafts 1-2 were submitted to each individual student and instructor. During the first half of the Friday meeting, the students read through Draft 2 over the VCR playback of the corresponding scenes and took notes of the words/expressions that would require further adjustment for Draft 3.
The second subtitling project was conducted in the 2000 Spring Semester by four OSU students. There were two major differences between the two projects. First, unlike the 1999 project, the 2000 project was conducted in the form of a parallel course. While the 1999 project was conducted and completed entirely by students in the advanced reading class, the 2000 project involved one student in a technical writing independent study course in addition to three advanced reading students. The technical writing student, who participated in the 1999 project as an advanced reading student, took part in the 2000 project as text editor and subtitling engineer while the reading students served as translators and content negotiators with the editor. The reading students were one Korean reciprocal exchange student and two American students, and the technical writing student was American. Second, while the 1999 project involved technical assistance by OSU staff in the actual subtitling, the 2000 project involved the editor, who used his personal computer for actual subtitling.

During the weeks of translation, class meetings were divided into units of three sessions. Generally, each Friday, students in the reading class were given a Japanese transcript of approximately 10-15 minutes (8-9 pages typed in single space), which they would translate into English by Friday on the following week (Draft 1). On the other hand, each Friday the editor received the Draft 1 copy for editing into Draft 2 for Friday of the following week. On Monday, when the translators had read through the assigned transcript, the class read the transcript over the VCR playback of the corresponding scenes for adequate interpretation of the content. During the Monday class meeting, the students discussed the words/expressions that would require the instructor’s assistance for their cultural specificity and absence of their literal equivalent in English. Whenever necessary and appropriate, the instructor provided the relevant cultural information that would lead to adequate interpretation. On Wednesday, the editor and translators jointly met to discuss Draft 2. In this meeting, the editor brought in his ideas for free translation (Crystal, 1992, p. 395), focusing primarily on the intended meaning rather than the closest literal counterparts. The editor’s main task in this class meeting was to negotiate with the group of translators on the interpretation of the words/expressions based on the development of the story. On Friday, the instructor held a joint class meeting to discuss the new scenes for translation. Also, Drafts 1-2 of the assigned transcripts were submitted to the instructor. Since these drafts would be used for future discussions, each student prepared photocopies for all students and the instructor. During the first 15 — 20 minutes of the Friday class meeting, the students discussed Drafts 1-2 for confirmation of the content and raised questions on the words/expressions that they had difficulty comprehending or interpreting adequately. Upon completion of this discussion, the students received copies of the new Japanese transcripts for translation. Once the translators received the documents, the instructor played the corresponding scenes of the new assigned transcripts on the VCR and the students read through the Japanese transcript to review the general development of the story.

Discussion: Linguistic Adjustments and Presentation of the Subtitles

Based on the linguistic abilities and cross-cultural understanding that students gained through the previous and current Japanese language courses, it was predictable that the students’ translation met the conditions necessary for use as film subtitles from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. As will be discussed in this section, the students employed various techniques for linguistic adjustments that would make the translation optimally faithful and accessible at the same time. Despite the successful adjustments, however, readability problems arose in some of the subtitles. This section analyzes some of the students’ actual subtitles to demonstrate that the readability problems are attributable to the way the subtitles are presented rather than to the inadequate linguistic adjustments.

Various Methods of Cultural Adjustment

Throughout the process of translating and editing, the students employed various revising techniques. For instance, the editors partially omitted the uncommon and/or excessively specific names of places and institutions in order to facilitate the speed of subtitle reading, while internationally well-known place names and those that would repeatedly appear throughout the film were generally maintained. In the projects, the students retained well-known place names such as Tokyo (119) and Kobe (Love Letter) in the subtitles, while they partially omitted institutional names in cases like the following:

Translation Review
In (1)(a), Kamoshita is the family name of an old widow who owns a tofu store, and the literal translation Kamoshita Tofu Store would not be excessively long. Nevertheless, the students omitted this personal name for two reasons. First, the students reached a consensus that the owner's family name Kamoshita is distinctly un-English and may, therefore, be distracting to the audience, especially to those with little exposure to foreign films. Second, this is the only scene where the tofu store owner's name is mentioned at all throughout the film. Instead of her name, all characters in this film call her obachan Auntie even though only one of them has familial ties with her. For these reasons, the students agreed that (1)(a) be translated into Tofu shop for instant visual recognition by the average native speaker of English in the U.S.

In (1)(b), on the other hand, the place name Otaru is mentioned at various scenes. Nevertheless, the students chose to omit it to minimize the burden of reading an un-English place name. Second, the word Welfare Hospital is an instance of what Karamitroglou (1998) calls a culture-specific linguistic element. According to Karamitroglou (1998), there are five different methods of linguistic adjustments as illustrated below for the sentence This legislation was pushed forward by Nagata-cho:

(2) (a) Cultural Transfer: This legislation was pushed forward by ________. (The gap will be filled with the respective name of the ruling party's headquarters such as Washington, D.C.)

(b) Transposition: This legislation was pushed forward by Nagata-cho.

(c) Transposition with explanation: This legislation was pushed forward by Nagata-cho, the ruling party's headquarters.

(d) Neutralization: This legislation was pushed forward by the lawmakers.

(e) Omission: This legislation was pushed forward.

In Karamitroglou's (1998) terms, (1)(b) demonstrates an instance of omission of the word welfare for cultural adjustment. In the U.S., where welfare is a media-hyped political issue, it would be possible that the expression welfare hospital be wrongly interpreted as a hospital that serves primarily poor and senior citizens. This notion would contradict the event in the scene, where a young adult female is brought to the hospital by her family members for diagnosis. Moreover, there would not be an adequate alternative expression for welfare within the context of this scene. Therefore, the students chose the single-word subtitle Hospital instead of using the semantically closest alternative.

Moreover, we observed instances where names of culturally specific products were omitted from the subtitles. The following example comes from 119, where firefighters Tomita (T) and Ishii (I) are about to order tofu at the tofu store where Momoko (M), the tofu store owner's niece who is visiting the town, is attending the store on her aunt's behalf:

(3) T: 5 of your best. Kinugoshi 5-ch. silken pieces
5 silken tofu.


W: 5? 5-ch ? pcs
5 pieces?

T:Well, I have a big family. Iya, uchi kazoku ga i kara sa.
well I family NOM many

I: Well, 10 FOR ME. Ja, ore, momen 10-ch !
then I cotton pcs
Then, I [take] 10 cotton tofu.

T: What? E?
Interj.
What?

W: Are you going to eat all that? Sonna ni katte, such-many buy d surun desu ka? how do COP Q [You] buy so many, and what are you going to do [with them]?

I: All of what?! Ikenai no ka! problem GEN Q A: That he died. Aitsu ga shinda koto o he NOM died fact ACC kaka hen katta ya ro. write NEG PAST TAG

W: Umm, nothing. Betsu ni ii kedo . particularly good but Well, okay, but

H: Tell her what? Uso tte? lie that (conj.) A lie?

In this scene, Tomita and Ishii try to impress Momoko by buying an excessively large amount of tofu. Although tofu is becoming increasingly common in the U.S. and many other English-speaking nations, differences between cotton (i.e., firm) and silken (i.e., soft) tofu would be generally unfamiliar to non-Asians. Furthermore, the main focus of this dialogue is on the two young men's attempt to attract a woman by ordering an excessive number of tofu pieces. Therefore, the students omitted the words cotton and silken to highlight the numbers of tofu that the two men order.

While the previous examples demonstrated cases where culturally specific expressions were omitted through group negotiations, there are instances where some expressions were neutralized into a more suitable expression in the target language. The following dialogue comes from Love Letter, where Akiba (A) and his fiancé Hiroko (H) leave the house of her pen pal Itsuki Fujii (who happens to bear the same name as Hiroko's deceased fiancé) after Hiroko leaves a note to Itsuki, who is not at home at the time of their visit:

(4)


H: Yes? Umm?

A: Why didn't you tell her about Fuji?

Sakki kaitotta tegami, then wrote letter nande uso kai ta? why lie write PAST The letter you wrote moments ago, why did you lie [in it]?

H: I don't know. I just ... D shite kana? why I-wonder Nanto-naku... somehow I wonder. Somehow

Well, it's an unpleasant story, don't you agree? Buss na hanashi de sho. unpleasant story COP TAG Unpleasant story, right?


In this dialogue, the word uso a lie requires linguistic adjustment in translating into English because the Japanese uso has a different connotation from the English lie. While the English lie is perceived as a negative act that would lead to serious consequences, the Japanese uso does not seem to convey the same level of negative meanings that the English lie does. In fact, there have been suggestions that the Japanese uso, inclined though it is toward negative meanings, would often con-
vey a semantic feature of a justifiable act for good cause for others. For example, Inoue (1984) points out that nearly half of *lie*-related Japanese proverbs describe *uso* as a justifiable act for good cause. Inoue (1984) found that Nakano (1933), a reputable dictionary of proverbs in Japanese, includes 25 Japanese proverbs with the word *uso*, of which 14 portray *uso* as an undesirable act and 11 as a justifiable act. The following are some of the Japanese proverbs on *uso*:

(5) *Uso* as a justifiable act  
   (a) *Uso* mo h ben.  
       lie even expedient  
       Lit. Even a lie (can become) an expedient.  
   (b) *Uso* kara deta *makoto*  
       lie from come-out truth  
       Lit. Out of a lie comes the truth.

(6) *Uso* as an undesirable act  
   (a) *Uso* wa dorob no hajimari.  
       lie TOP thief GEN beginning  
       Lit. Lying is the beginning of stealing.  
   (b) *Uso* o ie ba *emma* ni shita o nuka reru.  
       lie ACC tell if *Emma* by tongue ACC pull-off PASS  
       Lit. If one lies, he/she will get his/her tongue pulled off by *Emma*.

(LoCastro, 1987, p. 108)

Speakers of Japanese frequently use these back-channel cues to indicate their surprise at what they have just heard. (7)(a) and (b) are very similar in the sense that both of them are used to indicate utter surprise at what the speaker just heard. The difference in length of the word-final vowel a/o would be a result of different levels of surprise, with (7)(a) indicating a higher degree of surprise than (b) by virtue of a longer vowel. (7)(c), on the other hand, is slightly different from the first one in the sense that it would indicate initial disbelief of the truth value of given information, while (a) and (b) both entail the interlocutor s instant belief of its truth value. None of the utterances are based on the interlocutor s suspicion of the other party s deceptive attempt; rather, they are based on his/her recognition of information as beyond expectation.

From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, Coleman and Kay s (1981) empirical study identified the three semantic features of the English *lie*, including (in order of semantic salience) (1) deliberate utterance of false information, (2) intention to deceive, and (3) falsehood of information (p. 35). While Coleman and Kay s (1981) study deals exclusively with the English *lie*, it provides a basis for comparison between the Japanese *uso* and English *lie*. Based on the empirical finding of the English *lie* (Coleman and Kay, 1981) and findings of the Japanese *uso* (Inoue, 1984; LoCastro, 1987), it is possible to assume that the Japanese *uso* would semantically have a lot to do with falsehood of information and that the speaker s deceptive attempt would not be as salient a semantic attribute as it is in English. In the dialogue (4), Akiba, Hiroko s fiancé, uses the word *uso* to point out that Hiroko is not informing her pen pal Itsuki Fujii of her former fiancé e s death, not to suggest that Hiroko is trying to deceive her pen pal. Therefore, the students chose to transform the literal *The letter you wrote, why did you lie?* into *Why didn't you tell her about Fujii?* in order to exclude the semantic attribute of deceptive attempt, which is clearly not Akiba s intended meaning.

In addition to cultural omissions, the students used...
structural alteration as another technique for subtitle editing. The following example comes from 119, where fire-fighters Nakai (N) and Tsuda (T) discuss personal matters in a fire department office at night while Ishii, absent in the scene, is cleaning a fire engine in a garage:

(8)

N: (a) Would you like some coffee?

Kh demo iremasu ka.

coffee such-as make Q Shall I make some coffee?

T: Please.

yes

Yes.

N: Ishii might want some, too.

Ishii san mo Mr. also

nomu kana.
drink I-wonder

I wonder if Mr. Ishii also wants it.

T: Ishii?

Ishii?

N: (b) He can’t sleep either.

Netsukare nai sleep-can NEG
toka itte that say

He says he can’t sleep

Nakai’s intention in (8)(a) is to offer coffee to Tsuda rather than to brew it for himself alone. Therefore, in an attempt to explicate Nakai’s offer to Tsuda, the students edited the translation into the subtitles as shown. (8)(b) is an instance of represented speech, where he says is omitted to explicate what Ishii says. While these adjustments do not have much impact on the line length in these particular cases, the resulting subtitles facilitate the reading speed due to their explication of intended meanings.

Furthermore, there were other forms of cultural explication. The following conversation takes place in 119 between Momoko (M) and her aunt (A) in reference to Taguchi, Momoko’s colleague who is a research assistant at a university and his wife:

(9)

A: Mr. Taguchi and his wife are very different people.

Taguchi san wa iu Mr. TOP that say

hito na noni, person COP but

okusan wa zuibun wife TOP very

are de sh . that COP TAG

Mr. Taguchi is that kind of person, but [his] wife is that, right?

A: She is a weird woman.

Hen ne, ano okusan. strange TAG that wife

Strange, that wife.

They make a strange couple.

Okashii wa yo, strange COP interj.

ano f fu.

that couple

Strange, that couple [is].

M: They re both weird, so I suppose they match

F fu tte sonna mon ja couple COP such kind COP

nai no?

NEG Q

Couples are just like that, aren’t they?

This pattern of interaction is common between Japanese speakers, especially when they try to avoid bluntly describing the personality of a third person. As the example shows, Momoko and her aunt use no explicit terms to describe the personality of Taguchi and his wife in the original Japanese dialogue. Nevertheless, they have no trouble comprehending the way they portray the Taguchi couple’s character to each other.

This pattern of communication would be attributable
to two features in the Japanese style of communication, namely taciturnity or reluctance to talk a lot or the use of indirect . . . rather than direct expression (Tsujimura, 1987, p. 116) and the reader-responsible characteristic of the language (Hinds, 1987). Tsujimura (1987) attributes the Japanese taciturnity partly to ishin-denshin (i.e., heart-to-heart communication without language) as one form of the nobility’s culture (p. 119) and partly to common people’s experience for generations. Tsujimura (1987) points out that the nobility’s culture values communication without language as the ultimate form of success in attaining higher perception of the truth (p. 117) as a result of extensive training in martial arts. According to Tsujimura (1987), Japanese beliefs among the nobility hold that it is not advice through language but devotion to practice that will ultimately enlighten one. Once he/she is trained to enlightenment, he/she attains ishin-denshin, where he/she understands all without being told anything.

Although the long-established discipline of ishin-denshin would be one explanation for the taciturnity, it is questionable, as Tsujimura (1987) admits, whether nobility’s traditional practice would have a large impact on the communication behavior of the commoners. Instead, (the) essential origin of Japanese taciturnity in daily life is the historical fact that they subjected themselves to restraint during a long feudal era and to the regulation of speech under totalitarian regimes (Tsujimura, 1987, p. 120). As evidence of this self-restraint, Tsujimura (1987) cites Japanese proverbs such as Least said, soonest mended and Out of the mouth comes evil to support his claim that loquacity was attended (in the past) with danger both politically and socially (p. 120).

Hinds (1987) attributes this pattern of communication to the characteristic of Japanese as a reader responsible language as opposed to English as a writer-responsible language. According to Hinds (1987), European languages are inclined to explicate utterances because responsibility for successful communication rests primarily on the writer/speaker in these languages. Languages like Japanese, on the other hand, are inclined to include the least necessary amount of information in their utterances because responsibility for successful communication rests primarily on the reader/hearer. Especially in cases of describing others’ personalities, expressions such as are that (kind) and iu hito that sort of person are very common in Japanese, while speakers of English would be rather explicit, such as She’s very nice, That guy’s okay, and He’s a redneck. It is indeed arguable that the literal English translation as shown above would be appropriate as a way to highlight an international nature of this film. However, in an attempt to accommodate the typical American audience, our students elected to explicate these utterances rather than to keep them optimally faithful to the original version, which would impede the audience’s recognition of the intended meaning. Whether it would trace back to ishin-denshin, historical self-restraint, or reader responsibility feature, the Japanese inclination to avoid straightforward utterances seems to be documented extensively by scholars, in conjunction with English speakers’ inclination to straightforward utterances (Suzuki, 1975, p. 31; Tsujimura, 1987, pp. 119-120; Hinds, 1987, pp. 143-144; etc.).

Readability of Subtitles

While the students’ linguistic adjustments were mostly appropriate as ways to produce audience-friendly subtitles, they failed in some subtitles to allocate texts within a subtitle in the way its physical appearance would facilitate the reading speed. Karamitroglou (1998) suggests that a two-line subtitle is preferred over a long single-line subtitle because the bulky physical appearance of the former would accelerate the reading process. Especially, Karamitroglou (1998) suggests that a long subtitle should be segmented into separate lines each of which presents the highest syntactic (node) possible for optimal reading speed.

What Karamitroglou (1998) means by the proposal above is that the higher the node for segmentation is, the easier it will be to process the sentence, and consequently the faster the reading speed will be. The following are the results of segmentations at different nodes:

(10) (a) His defection from the ruling party was predictable.
(b) His defection from the ruling party was predictable.
(c) His defection from the ruling party was predictable.

According to Karamitroglou’s (1998) rule, (10)(a) is the most desirable form of segmentation for a subtitle of the three because each line presents a syntactically complete piece of information. On the other hand, (10)(b) would not be as readable because the first line presents an incomplete piece of information by virtue of the division
of the subject His defection // from the ruling party. Similarly, (10)(c) would not constitute a desirable form of subtitle due to a division of from the // ruling party.

In our students subtitles, we observed instances of readability problems due to incomplete pieces of information presented in subtitle lines. To illustrate this point, we cite the following scene from 119, where firefighter Tsuda (T) is talking in a fire department office to Momoko, to whom the speaker may be somewhat attracted:

(11)

T: For us

orera wa ne,
we TOP intj
We,

For firefighters,

sh b shi tte
firefighter that

iu no wa ne,
say GEN TOP intj

Firefighters,

Waiting is our job.

matsu no ga
wait GEN NOM

shigoto nan desu yo.
job COP intj

Waiting is our job.

(a) We don t know when we ll have a fire

itsu kaji ga aru ka
when fire NOM exist Q

wakara nai.
know NEG

We don t know when there is fire.

(b) We don t know when we ll get a call.

itsu ky ky de
when emergency for

yobidasa reru ka
call PASS Q

wakara nai.
now NEG

We don t know when we are called for emergency.

All we can do is wait.
tada matte iru shika
only wait STATE only

nai n desu yo.
NEG COP intj

Nothing to do but wait.

In both (11)(a) and (b), the students were successful in the linguistic adjustment. In (11)(b), our students changed the passive sentence in the original into its active equivalent, when we ll get a call, because Japanese passives implicitly convey a concept that is specific to the language. From the perspective of their syntactic structures alone, the students translations (11)(a) and (b) would be considered appropriate. However, it is the physical appearance that impedes the readability of these subtitles.

The critical problem in (11)(a) and (b) lies in the break within the sentence a // fire (11)(a) and a // call (11)(b). Both subtitles provide structurally incomplete pieces of information in both lines, with parts of the object noun clauses in the first line and the sentence-final nouns in the second, which is separated from the determiner a. In accordance with Karamitroglou s (1998) guidelines, the following revisions would make these subtitles more readable:

(12) (a) We don t know when we ll have a fire.

We don t know when we ll have a fire.

(b) We don t know when we ll get a call.

where the first lines consist of the combination of the subject and main verb, and the second lines of the object noun clauses. In both (12)(a) and (b), each line is made short for instant eye recognition, and presents a syntactically complete piece of information.

In addition to (11)(a) and (b), we observe other instances of improper segmentation in the previous dialogues we have cited. We recall them for analysis as follows:

(13) (a) They re both weird, so I suppose they match.

They re both weird, so I suppose they match.

(in 9))

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To solve these readability problems, (13)(a) and (b) would be revised as follows:

(14) (a) They're both weird, so I suppose they match.

(b) Well, it's an unpleasant story, don't you agree?

where each line includes a complete syntactic constituent. In (14)(a), the first line, They're both weird, and the second line, so I suppose they match, each present a complete S. Similarly, the first line, Well, it's an unpleasant story, and the second line, don't you agree? in (14)(b) each present a complete S.

There were two major factors to these readability problems. First, the time required for the aforementioned linguistic adjustments during the projects was such that it eventually left the editor/engineer little time for the task of segmentation proposed above. Second, and perhaps more critical, while the style manual focused extensively on audience-friendly linguistic adjustments, it did not address the issue of visually effective subtitle presentation. The degree to which the improper segmentation would hamper the audience's subtitle comprehension would be a potential subject of future research. Nevertheless, this is one area where the projects would need improvement.

Assessment of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Projects

In light of the fact that there are few well-established courses or programs in the U.S. in film subtitling, a parallel course from different academic disciplines would provide an alternate approach to teaching film subtitling. It seems that the key to optimal pedagogical results through this project would lie in the way the students would be grouped according to their educational goals. While both of our projects ended in success thanks to the students' varied talents, the nature of this course as a humanities program would make it admittedly unreasonable to expect our students to be generally technologically oriented enough to conduct the actual computerized subtitling. Additionally, if the projects involve only the students in translation per se, alternating roles for different segments would be essential for optimal pedagogical results. As mentioned earlier, assigning the roles that are irrelevant to a given student's academic goals repeatedly would seriously minimize the pedagogical benefit and motivation.

Our projects observed several important strengths from the perspective of language pedagogy. First, scenes of the contemporary films exposed the students to the real-life source-language settings. Second, successful completion of the projects gave each student a sense of accomplishment. Especially noteworthy in successful completion of the project was the fact that the project provided each student with his/her accomplishment in a practical shape with near-professional quality.

Additionally, we observed several strengths from the perspective of training professional film translators. First, group negotiations facilitated each student's understanding of the target-language culture in the process of identity preservation and audience accommodation in translating each culturally specific expression. While the actual professional translation may require high-level skills that may be beyond the reach of trainees, the group process provided a reasonable first step by allowing individuals with different skill levels/types to contribute to the product. Second, since the actual subtitling or overdubbing would eventually involve a collaborative effort between the translator and film production team, our students' group projects would serve as an effective simulation of the actual professional setting. Third, regular contact out of class with a target language environment facilitated the translators' sensitivity to the perspectives of average moviegoers in it.

On the other hand, we observed several weaknesses in these projects that would be subject to consideration for future projects. First, this group project proved more time-consuming than translation by an individual. Especially in cases of high-profile foreign films with substantial sales potential, there will be demands for the earliest possible release without much time duration since the original release. However, it is questionable, if not doubtful, whether this lengthy process would meet the demands of the film industry. Second, while cost-efficiency is one major justification for subtitling a foreign film rather than overdubbing, this lengthy process would inevitably raise the production cost and minimize (or even nullify) this strength. Third, in cases in which the project participants consist exclusively of learners of Japanese as a second/foreign language, excessive compartmentalization of individual roles may result in the project's failure to train individual students as consum-
mater translators.

On the basis of these observations, we make the following recommendations for projects of this type. First, we recommend that the instructor observe patterns of enrollment well in advance to ensure that the project would be workable within the given time constraints. Whether the project would be conducted independently or jointly, it is necessary to evaluate whether or not there would be sufficient human resources to conduct the project. In order to achieve this goal, it is desirable that the instructor be adequately familiar with each prospective participant's academic interests prior to the decision. Second, it is advisable that the instructor plan in advance, given the foreseeable extensive negotiation processes during the actual project. Especially, selection of a list of project films would require ample time, because it entails careful content evaluation. In some cases, particularly when the project is conducted at a university with a quarterly schedule, time constraints for the project would be such that the instructor him/herself would have to prepare the film scripts. Third, the instructor should be sensitive to each student's academic goals in participating in the project, and assign each student his/her role in accordance with his/her goals. For example, a project with a mixture of JSL/JFL students and broadcast journalism students would not require much consideration for an obvious reason. On the other hand, a project involving only the JSL/JFL students would require careful consideration since the number of technologically inclined students would be limited. Unless at least one technologically inclined student were to volunteer for the role of subtitle engineer, it is advisable that the instructor seek cooperation of another course that is relevant to subtitle insertion. Of course, sensitivity to this consideration would be advantageous to the project on a practical level since assigning the students roles according to their academic interests would not only facilitate the process but optimize their pedagogical benefits.

Additionally, we offer two suggestions on the procedures of class meetings. First, in light of the readability problems observed in the project, it is advisable for the instructor to address the issue of segmentation and conduct a series of exercises for the editor/subtitling engineer prior to the actual subtitling. If the project were to be conducted as part of an undergraduate program, it might be unrealistic to expect the students to achieve an expert understanding of Chomsky's Transformational-Generative Grammar (Chomsky, 1957; Chomsky, 1965; etc.) within a short period of time available. However, presenting practical examples would help them comprehend the basic tenets of Karamitroglou's (1998) theory of presenting a syntactically complete constituent on each subtitle line. Or, in the case of cooperation with a technical writing course, readability can be discussed as a linguistic and design concern. Second, it would be advisable that students in the parallel courses meet together in the same class meetings rather than hold separate class meetings. One critical rationale for this joint setting is that it would simulate the content negotiations that would take place in the course of the actual subtitling, and it is only by meeting jointly that the students would simulate the authentic professional situation. On a practical level, joint class meetings would facilitate communication and understanding between the groups. A lack of regular contact between the groups would impede mutual understanding, and the groups might fail to resolve differences of opinions.

Our subtitling project as part of a source-language course is clearly beneficial to the students in the sense that it provides them with exposure to authentic target language and culture. Especially in a foreign language setting, which generally does not assume the students previous experience in a target-language environment, projects of this kind give the participants invaluable exposure to the target language used in accordance with applicable social contexts. As a translation course, this exposure is a useful tool to learn to convey the content fluently to the audience whose knowledge of the source-language culture varies. Additionally, negotiations in the course of the project serve as a simulation of interactions that would take place in the actual professional film subtitling. By virtue of the extensive period of time that the students spent, this project would not prepare the participants for the level of expedient interactions typical in the multimedia industry. However, for a young college student aspiring to entry into this industry in the future as a qualified professional, this course serves as introductory firsthand exposure to issues and processes involved in foreign film subtitling.

Notes

1 Kilborn (1989) estimated that one hour of lip-synchronized overdubbing would cost ECU 20,000 while one hour of subtitling would cost only ECU 2,000 in Europe (p. 423).

2 Life is Beautiful attracted only 13% of U.S. moviegoers until the English overdubbed version was officially released (Tornquist, 1999).
3 In the case of *Life is Beautiful*, director/actor Roberto Benigni supervised the overdubbing for satisfactory performance (Tornquist, 1999).

4 Subtitling is a dominant form of foreign film presentation in some European nations (d’Ydewalle et al., 1991; Gottlieb, 1994; etc.). Especially in cases of multicultural-multilingual nations, subtitling is everyday practice on TV as well as films. For example, Malaysia presents Hong Kong films with English/Chinese subtitles, TV shows from the U.S. with Malay subtitles, and Taiwanese soap opera with Chinese subtitles (to accommodate speakers of non-Mandarin dialects of Chinese).

5 *Japanimation* films, in Bloch’s (1998) terms, deal with dozens of genres that range from wacky hijinks reminiscent of the American romantic comedy to nightmarish tales of technology run amuck.

6 The traditional English translation of the title *A la recherche du temps perdu* is *Remembrance of Things Past*, but a recent re-translation uses the more literal *In Search of Lost Time*. The 1999 project film *Love Letter* includes a scene where a Japanese junior high school girl returns this book to a library bookshelf. For the scene where the Japanese title *Ushinawareta toki o motomete* is visible in the film, the students subtitled the book title as *In Search of Lost Time* because this would be faithful to the Japanese version.

7 Karamitroglou (1998) uses the number of characters instead of words as a measure for acceptable length in subtitling. For optimal legibility and minimum interference with the image action, Karamitroglou (1998) recommends that each subtitle line allow up to 35 characters.

8 Sequence dots refer to the three dots [ ] after the last character of a subtitle to signal the noncompletion of the subtitled sentence (Karamitroglou, 1998). Linking dots, on the other hand, refer to the dots before the first character of a subtitle to signal the continuation from the previous subtitle.

9 In Japanese, ellipsis is common in informal spoken settings, as shown in the following example:

```i
I TOP stomach NOM vacated
Lit. As for me, stomach is vacated.
```

10 Standup comedians’ speech is considered by some to be quasi-Kansai dialect due to its inconsistent mixture of several regional dialects (Gengo, 1999).

11 For example, Long (1997) points out that Japanese does not observe what he calls linguification (i.e., recognition of a variety of a language as a language itself by the speech community) because the increasingly positive public view of the term —*ben* (i.e., a Japanese suffix for regional dialect) minimizes the need for linguification.

At the level of interpersonal communication, Hallmon (1998) observed several patterns of the code-switching among Japanese speakers between Standard Japanese (i.e., the variation spoken within the Tokyo Metropolitan Region; see Long, 1996) and Osaka dialect. According to Hallmon (1998), the female Japanese switch their code into the Osaka dialect when they show mutual concerns, make corrections, and add spontaneous thoughts.

12 The Japanese *obachan*, which literally means an aunt, is a common term to refer to a middle-aged woman. Within the context of this film, the community-wide use of the term *obachan* in reference to this tofu store owner indicates that the community is tightly knit enough to know practically everyone in the city. See Suzuki (1978) for detailed account of Japanese address terms.

13 According to Miyagawa (1983, p.23), (5)(a)(b) and (6)(a) would best correspond to the following English idiomatic expressions and proverbs, respectively:

```
(5) (a) The end justifies the means.
       (b) Crooked logs make straight fires.

(6) (a) He that will lie will steal.
```

14 LoCastro (1987) spells this word *usoo* (p. 108). However, this study uses the spelling as shown for consistency throughout this article.
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## A WORLD OF VOICES

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BOOK REVIEWS


Ritva Leppihalme, Reviewer


Väinö Linna is probably the best-known and the most read Finnish writer among his own nationals. He raised some hackles with his reinterpretation of events in recent Finnish history in his novels, but later his views have been very influential in his home country, especially among general readers. *Under the North Star*, the first volume, now available for the first time in English in its entirety, comes in Richard Impola’s translation.

Translations into many other languages have been published much earlier; Bill Copeland, writing in the mid-1970s, listed Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, French, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Czech, Hungarian, and Estonian but noted that not all versions were complete. Perhaps the notorious changes made to Linna’s war novel *The Unknown Soldier* during the American translation and editing process some years earlier (for an easily accessible though brief discussion of this, see Marja Suominen, 2001) made Linna insist that his new work should not be subject to similar treatment but should be published in its entirety if at all (Copeland 1974:12).

For source-text readers, the Finnish trilogy was a reappraisal of nearly 100 years of Finnish history through the story of a rural community, focusing especially on the conditions and social motives leading to the upheaval of the civil war of 1918 and the subsequent unrest in the 1930s as well as the war years 1939-44. The violent events are described in parts two and three of the trilogy, both to be published in Impola’s translation in 2002-03.

Ask any Finn to give an example of a literary line familiar to the whole nation, and what they will cite, for its allusive power, may well be the first line of the trilogy. In its original Finnish, the line reads: “Alussa oli suo, kuokka — ja Jussi.” [In the beginning, there was the swamp, the mattock and Jussi]. The six words of the source text constitute a beginning in more ways than one. In the beginning, for Finns, was not the word but the work. There was the swamp or marsh: wet, unfertile land; there was the tool: the hoe or mattock; and the man to wield the tool: Jussi. It is possible to argue that Linna’s story of creation is better known in Finland at an emotional level than the biblical one, for in the mythical Finnish past, creation, in a way, begins with human efforts. A man, Everyman, but also a clearly delineated individual enters the forest or wetland that has been there since time immemorial, fells or burns down the trees, and digs a ditch so that the water will run or seep away, and the land can be claimed for cultivation, to become a field growing rye or barley to feed him and his family. The forest retreats a little, civilization advances. Granted, at the beginning of the novel we are no further back in history than 1884, but even that is four generations back from today’s high-tech Nokia land.

*Under the North Star* starts with the clearing of the swamp. But it also describes the community of which Jussi and his wife are part. Village life is a struggle, not an idyll. There are clashes between people representing different social classes. Jussi has to cede some of the land he claimed to his landlord; in a dramatic scene, a tenant and his family are evicted; a self-taught tailor strives to civilize his fellow villagers; the aging baron’s attempts to uphold the old feudal ways meet with increasing resentment. All this and much more is narrated with a gentle irony and fellow-feeling, and the central love story of Jussi’s son Akseli, the protagonist of the next volume, and his Elina is handled with a touching sensitivity that rings absolutely true, despite the lack of poetic effusion.

To help target readers grasp the background to the novel, there is both a translator’s foreword, aiming to assist American readers in recognizing the nature of Linna’s approach, and an introduction written by Brje Vähäki, which outlines the historical background of the novel.
In its home country, the novel has also won readers through the realism with which characters and events in the village are described and through the marvellous authenticity of its dialogue. The different groups in the village all have their own concerns, which are reflected in their language. The baron, whose mother tongue is Swedish, speaks ungrammatical, basic Finnish with his workers but fluent Swedish with the vicar, who in turn is disgusted at the need to switch languages. The vicar and his wife support the Finnish cause in opposition to both the old Swedish-speaking ruling class and the oppressive Pan-Slavist regime of the Czar; their Finnish (especially hers) has high-sounding words and idealistic goals, but their actions show that they are not free of selfish motives either. The land-owning farmers with their narrow worldviews centering on propitity speak little but hold on to what they have once said. The tenant farmers struggling to improve their lot and those whose existence is on a still shakier foundation use language both as an escape, playing with catchphrases and new buzzwords of the period (such as the woman’s cause), and slyly to score points off the upper class. It is the new buzzwords of the period (such as the woman’s cause), and slyly to score points off the upper class. The language both as an escape, playing with catchphrases and the new buzzwords of the period (such as the woman’s cause), and slyly to score points off the upper class. It is quite a feat that Impola largely manages to make believable what goes on in the village linguistically.

The authenticity of the dialogue is of course impossible to convey fully in translation, for how would a Finnish farm laborer in his thirties, say, living in the Hame region in the late 19th century, address a workmate in English? It is easy for Finnish readers to contrast source and target and to point out differences, but we need to recognize that the whole function (skopos) of the translation is necessarily different from that of the source text, because the book is aimed at American readers. In an earlier article (Leppihalme 2000), I considered Impola’s translation of another Finnish novel in which regional elements in the dialogue play an important role (Our Daily Bread by Kalle Patalo) and came to the conclusion that the translator’s choice to use standard English flavored with general colloquial elements was understandable: If we assume that readers were looking for a sense of the past, awed by the tough conditions and impressed by the fortitude of Finns, then we can understand that they were perhaps less interested in the details of dialect, connotations, and humor that were part of the linguistic identity of the author (Leppihalme 2000: 266). Judging by the translator’s foreword and the introduction to Under the North Star, this translation, too, is aimed primarily at readers who are keen to read a novel about Finland, even though the book’s transnational appeal lies in its being also about survival under extraordinarily hard times, people who are willing to work hard and unselfishly, and who ask only for justice, respect and human dignity (Vihuri 2001: xii). This description is echoed in Linna’s own words (in an interview, translated by Copeland, 1974:11): My concrete expression is about the Finn and Finnish life, but at its deepest it is abstract and transcendental. Through this we discover points of union with others.

Considering the status of the source text in the source culture, it goes without saying that no translation of it can be equivalent to the source text in all ways. How, then, to assess Impola’s translation? If we were to apply the criteria suggested by Burton Raffel in The Art of Translating Prose (1994), the Indo-European bias of those criteria would soon become evident. Flaubert’s first sentence has clauses of five and then four words, set off by commas, and followed by seven-and ten-word phrases linked by and, he writes (1994:48), finding that the translators whose work he analyzes have mostly failed to construct their sentences in an identical way. This, for him, is a weakness in their translations. Should Linna’s first sentence, then, be rendered in six words in English? The first two words suggest the Gospel according to St. John (alussa, in the beginning; oli, was); the next two set the scene and name the ground-breaking tool (suo, swamp or bog or marsh, kuokka, hoe or mattock: there exists no precise equivalent in agricultural English, according to Copeland, 1974:13); then the dash; and the last two words introduce the arrival of the new element, the man who will transform the swamp into a field with his (literally) backbreaking toil (ja, and, Jussi). Impossible to achieve this in six words in a language that needs articles and prepositions! Impola’s predecessors in short extracts published more than a quarter-century ago in a low-circulation magazine in Finland needed 10 or 11 words: In the beginning was the bog, the pick, and Jussi (Copeland 1974:14) and In the beginning was the swamp, the hoe — and Jussi (Bingham 1974:14). Impola’s choice is closer to the latter: In the beginning were the swamp, the hoe — and Jussi. Still, I suspect that none of the three versions can give English readers more than an approximation of the connotations and the effect of the source-text sentence. Different criteria therefore are required for assessment. Impola as the translator is at his best in descriptive sections in which culture-bound elements do not play much of a role or simply provide a backdrop:

For the good-sized rocks, Jussi’s strength was indeed sufficient. He was not really a big man,
but his body was sturdy and compact. And more important, there lived and moved in it a spirit that could wring the last ounce from it. When the effort reached the breaking point, when the body’s every fiber trembled, yielding its last bit of strength, and still another ounce was needed, that little iota lay hidden in some strange and secret store. A dark, settled look appeared in the man’s eyes, his lips drew back into a kind of tight grin with a glint of ferocity in it, and the stone rolled up the bank. (p. 8)

The story itself gets told fluently (which despite Lawrence Venuti’s critical attitude is probably welcome to most American readers, used to this global strategy), and the central characters are clearly individualized. The translator has recognized that Linna has at his command a variety of voices perfectly suited to the character he is portraying (Impola 2001:v), and the target text successfully distinguishes, for example, between the carefully understated tone of the master of Tyry, a man accustomed to being listened to, who owns his land like generations of Tyry men before him, and the impotent rage of his tenant, Antto Laurila. But Linna’s technique of representing the rhythms, evasions, and recapitulations of the local dialect is hard to render convincingly in another language culture.

Let us examine, for example, a few lines in the three English versions of the opening pages of the novel, because this will allow us to consider not just the translation under review but also some alternatives. Early in the first chapter, we meet Jussi presenting to the minister of his Lutheran parish his request that he be allowed to dig up the swamp and build a farm there, thus becoming the tenant of the parsonage. (I have deleted the parson’s intervening questions.)

Binham’s version (British) (Linna 1974a: 16, col. 1):

Reverend sir. It’s like this. When it’s Sunday. I’ve been thinking. A farm-hand like me, now when I’m married, n all. If his Reverence ud give me that swamp. I ud take it up. I was thinking like, like a proper tenant farm. If his Reverence ud let me.

Binham uses clearly nonstandard spelling and syntax and retains Linna’s widely spaced suspension points to indicate interruptions in Jussi’s speech, where Jussi gropes for appropriate words. In contrast, Copeland, a Finnish-American, opts for standardization, reorganizing clauses and deleting some of the suspension points, and in consequence making Jussi sound more determined and forceful:

Copeland’s version (American) (Linna 1974b: 16, col. 2):

Parson, Sir. I came about this even on a Sunday. I’ve been thinking that now that I’m married there’s these things. If the Parson would give me the bog. I would clear it. I thought about putting up a real cabin, if the Parson would permit it.

Impola, an American with Finnish roots, modernizes even more, suggesting greater speed with his closely spaced suspension points. His Jussi addresses the parson more directly. He leaves out, however, the apologetic tone of the reference to disturbing the parson on a Sunday:

Impola’s version, p. 5:

Mr. Pastor. I would like to ... now since it’s Sunday ... I’ve been thinking ... Being a hired man when you’re married is not much of a life. If you, Mr Pastor, would let me have the swamp. I would clear it. I was thinking sort of ... that a real farm ...

The British translator chose to emphasize Jussi’s low status in the society of his day with its clearly marked distinctions of class by making his speech obviously nonstandard. The two Finnish-Americans may have thought that an American geographical dialect, however lightly done, would confuse readers.

Another area in which standardization occurs is the names. There are no footnotes or glossaries, but for some farm names, translations are given in brackets. What is more surprising and in my view illogical are the changes made to some personal names. If Jussi and Akseli are retained unchanged, why anglicize Vihtori to Victor and Adolf to Adolph when those spellings are quite un-Finnish?

Perhaps by way of compensating for these domesticating choices, the translator foreignizes the dialogue to some extent by rendering proverbial rural expressions literally. Because of this function, their effect, of course,
also differs from that in the source text: far from being preformed and well-known, they will be seen as original and creative by readers who do not know Finnish. An angry man may vent his generalized fury and frustration by yelling: I m attacked by lice and the world hates my guts but I keep pushing right on (p. 33) or bluster: [I m] the kind of man to show what hole the chicken pisses through (p. 365). These and the frequent Yaah s (remember the dialogue in the film Fargo) usefully counter the standardization, which Toury (1995) claims occurs in any translation process. They also serve as reminders of the geographical and temporal distance, as do the polite third-person addresses and titles used to interlocutors. For American readers even a quarter-century ago, Linna s style seemed to be somewhat antique. This is particularly true of Linna s dialogues, with their rural colloquialisms, nearly-forgotten localisms, and socially loaded words (Copeland 1974:14). The translator has suggested as much of this as is compatible with his global strategy of fluency.

On the whole, I find the translation of Under the North Star very readable. This is not the place to discuss the small errors and misunderstandings I detected on some of its pages, especially because they are hardly noticeable to readers who do not know the source text in depth. Not surprisingly, there is some loss of connotations and color. Especially the rather clumsy literal translations of some songs or poems quoted do not convey the emotional effects of those texts, which Linna uses subtly to question mainstream conceptions of history. Still, my overall impression is positive. I hope that the book and its sequels will find many English-language readers who are interested both in how historical developments affected one small corner of northern Europe and how one of Finland s best-known authors described them.

References


George Messo, Reviewer

The year 2002 marks UNESCO s year of Nazım Hikmet, in recognition of the centennial of the Turkish poet s birth. Yet Hikmet s was a life few would choose. He was a political prisoner in Turkey for 18 years on charges of alleged communist activities. Shortly after his release during a general political amnesty, he fled into exile, where he was to spend the last 13 years of his life. In 1959, he was stripped of his Turkish citizenship and died four years later in Moscow.

In modern day Turkey, Hikmet is everywhere. His face adorns café walls, T-shirts, posters, and postcards; musicians from jazz to opera have set his poems to song. He is distinguished as the only national poet ever to receive widespread international recognition. It is an unfortunate truth, however, and one that says much about the reception of modern Turkish poetry in general, that
outside of his native land, the majority of Hikmet's vast literary corpus remains unknown.

A few poems made their way into English during Hikmet's life, but it was not until four years after his death, with Taner Baybars' 1967 Cape Edition (London), that the first selected poems appeared. As Baybars noted in his foreword, no Turkish poet before Hikmet had used the language with such skill and assurance (9). But there was little evidence of this in Baybars' translations. In Barefooted (13), a poem typical of Hikmet's evocations of the Turkish steppe, amid acrid soil (13) and old peasants (13) with sun round their heads like a burning turban (13), we're suddenly faced with the incongruity of village bobbies (13). The effect is surreal, when it shouldn't be, even comical: a kind of Anatolia of the English home counties. Baybars himself reports Hikmet as having once said that he did not believe the translation of poetry was possible:

But I wouldn't really mind if a translator turned my verse into prose provided he didn't attempt to alter what I originally put down. (9)

The irony was seemingly lost on Baybars, although some of Hikmet's vaunted prophetic vision rubbed off, for Baybars it was who acknowledged his hand with the unorthodox done into English instead of the customary translated by for what was, after all, a thorough doing in. Despite the appearance of another translation in 1972, Baybars' versions found no place for Hikmet, the books went out of print and the poet out of sight in Britain, and it was not until the publication earlier this year of Beyond the Walls, a new selected poems translated by Ruth Christie, Richard McKane, and Talat Sait Halman, that Hikmet resurfaced into British poetry from the oblivion of his protracted exile.

In the United States, however, Hikmet fared well. Randy Blasing and Mutlu Konuk's celebrated translations began to appear from the early 1970s. Their range and power in both Poems of Nazim Hikmet and Human Landscapes prompted W.S. Merwin to describe their achievement as a real addition to contemporary poetry in what the Los Angeles Times called lucid, colloquial, vivid English. Moreover, the Blasing/Konuk versions have remained in print for more than 20 years, expanding with each new edition, a fact that might justify their own claim to have found Hikmet a place as an indispensable modern poet of lasting international significance (viii).

Although the Blasing/Konuk versions have established themselves as the standard by which all translations of Hikmet (into English) are now compared, they have not been readily available in the United Kingdom. The importance, then, of Beyond the Walls cannot be overstated. It marks at once the reentry of Hikmet into British publishing and, with more than 93 translations, represents the largest single body of Hikmet's poetry in English to date. Admittedly, much of the core selection follows closely on that of Blasing and Konuk's all of the classics are there: The Prison Poems, The Epic of Sheikh Bedreddin, etc. but among them are many valuable new poems never before seen in English. And it is here, in the detail, that Beyond the Walls creates its own space and moves us into a fresh engagement with Hikmet.

The selection covers the full range of Hikmet's career and although not strictly chronological, invites us to read the poems as life and a life in poetry. It is as Hikmet would have wanted: for him the two were inseparable. And despite his formal eclecticism, the sometimes daring experimentation, the awkward haranguing political jargon, what Beyond the Walls demonstrates repeatedly, whether lyric or narrative, rhymed or free verse, is the unity of Hikmet's voice. That voice was as authentically present in his first poems as in his last, as here in First Look at Anatolia, a poem he wrote at the age of 19:

As we opened our eyes, the Anatolia of our dreams
Now lay before us with her misty valleys;
We saw far down below the road to the stream,
On its right a meadow, pine trees on the left.
The mountain slopes were so near
But spring dropping into the valley could climb no higher.
What a wonderful country! Winter in the mountains,
On the roads autumn, spring in the valley,
And in the golden sunlight, summer's heat. (245)

Hikmet, in fact, spent precious little time in Anatolia outside prison. But it served him well as the focus of his lyric impulse, his romancing the Turkish peasantry, the stage of his revolutionary politics, his future utopia, his wonderful country. Anatolia, both real and imagined, and its associated patterns of imagery were to obsess him throughout his life and to return so hauntingly in his poems of exile:

Friends, if it's not my lot to see the day
of independence, dying before it,
take me away,
bury me in a village graveyard in Anatolia (179).

This is the opening stanza of Vasiyet, translated in Beyond the Walls as Testament. The original includes an endnote, which tells us that the poem was written in Barviha Hospital, Moscow, in 1953. A small detail, but one that helps situate the poem’s sentimentality, if not its reason d’être — Hikmet had suffered a heart attack and believed himself to be near death. Its omission from Beyond the Walls evidences a willingness to allow obscurities a life in English not easily justified by the original. The opening address is problematic too. Turkish has several words to distinguish degrees of closeness among friends. The word yolda?, however, implies friendship on the basis of political allegiance and is commonly transcribed as comrade. Given what we know of Hikmet’s politics, his unwavering support of a Marxist-Leninist doctrine, friends merely serves to anaesthetize the original, and for reasons that we can only guess. The Blasing/Konuk version, on the other hand (translated as Last Will and Testament) boldly opens the text, both rhythmically and rhetorically:

Comrades, if I don’t live to see the day
I mean, if I die before freedom comes
take me away
and bury me in a village cemetery in Anatolia (151).

What’s striking, above all, about the Blasing/Konuk stanza is its music and their uncanny ability to approximate the rhythmic nuances of Hikmet’s voice. For example, the choice of freedom over independence not only rids the sentence of any awkward staccato multisyllabics but also captures the semantic generality of Hikmet’s original, and by so exploiting the general currency of its use in English, we pass over the sentence without pause or confusion. In both versions, the rhyme of the first and third lines skillfully loads the caesura that follows the third line. But it is what happens after, again in the detail, that highlights substantial differences between the texts. For Blasing/Konuk the conjunction curtails the caesura, prompting us to dwell over echoing sound values that run consistently through the stanza see, mean, freedom me, cemetery as the syllabic cadence of the last line rises to its peak in Anatolia. By contrast, the Testament of Beyond the Walls has the Turkish mezarlık to mean graveyard, not cemetery, with its Gothic overtones of confinement and separation, oppositional to all that Anatolia has come to mean as Hikmet’s boundless dream, a vast, legendary place of beauty. And it does not end there. Within the same poem, the smell of burnt petrol (yanık benzin kokusu) becomes the scorched smell of petrol (179). Oversight or deliberate obfuscation, the result is the same: Hikmet through frosted glass. It has to be said, too, that the random music and clumsy obscurities of Testament are not isolated to that poem alone.

Despite its occasional flaws, however, by the sheer scale of its ambition, Beyond the Walls renders itself almost impervious to serious critique from overly attentive scholars of Turkish, clearly not its intended audience. Although Beyond the Walls is unlikely to substantially redefine our understanding of Hikmet in English if there is such an understanding it does, nevertheless, extend the Hikmet corpus and, one can only hope, provide stimulus for further excursions into unknown terrain. At the very least, it proposes a restatement of Hikmet’s work and a repositioning of him as an important, if not central, 20th-century poet.

Works Cited


Katherine A. Burgess, Reviewer

Marie Bronsard’s short novel L’ermitage appeared in France in 1986 as her debut work. In language that is sparse and concise, the unnamed heroine addresses a letter to a past lover in which she recounts the details of their lost relationship. The letter writer lives in a small house at the edge of a village with a dog and several
cats. She dwells in her hermitage in silence, protected from meaningful human contact by self-imposed exile, an exile that began with her lover’s departure 10 years earlier and that only deepened as the long years passed. As she recounts the details of her lost love in the pages of her letter, we are invited to explore the nature of human isolation and the difficulty of establishing and maintaining intimacy between two human beings. The letter (novel) is written in short, declarative sentences, stripped of ornamentation. Sparseness of language is surprising in a novel dealing with the complexity of human relationships. Words present themselves in the novel as sterile symbols that cannot attach one human being to another; they serve only to momentarily cover over one human s fear of loneliness and isolation. The two lovers are joined by shared words while their physical intimacy is limited: I remember the words we exchanged in the night that united us much better than the love we made so badly (6). The lovers words, however, did not fuse them into a unit so much as decorate the terrain where two individuals came together: All that remained was in your room, on the walls of your room, those ugly green and white walls that we had covered together with words and phrases (16).

Because of the sparseness of the language, one might think translating the novel would be an easy task, and, indeed, the translation appears to be a faithful word-for-word rendering of the original text. At least two major hurdles, however, present themselves to the translator in attempting to render the full emotional range of this work. According to the title page, the author herself worked with translator Sonia Alland in producing the English text, and the book’s cover indicates that this is not the only work by Marie Bronsard that has been translated by Alland. On a word-for-word basis, the translation cannot be faulted. The problems with the translation arise around issues that reveal the core difficulties of rendering any translation, issues that point out that it is rarely an easy task, even with seemingly simple text, to convey all the depth and subtleties of one language into another.

First, the sparseness of the language itself presents a unique challenge for the translator in the context of the original language, French, and its essential differences from English. As the traditional language of diplomacy, French expresses itself in ways that are frequently round-about and imprecise. Meaning often buries itself in phraseology. By trimming away the usual frills of the French language in her debut novel, Bronsard evokes a heroine stripped to her emotional core, her feelings exposed and raw. The use of such sparse and austere French makes a statement that is difficult to duplicate in English translation. Whereas the mood of the original novel is evocative, the English version comes across as narrative. The English version mirrors the short sentences and frequent paragraphs of the original; however, short sentences and frequent paragraphs in English follow a tradition of utilitarian Anglo-Saxon phraseology, which stresses action over emotion. The reader is encouraged by the style of the English prose to concentrate on the events of the affair rather than the emotional state of the heroine; thus, a small portion of the emotional impact and the evocative mood of the original is lost.

A second challenge for the translator, and perhaps the greatest one, occurs because of the use of formal pronoun vous in the original version. Throughout the long letter addressed to her past lover, the novel’s heroine never addresses her lover by his name or with the familiar tu. It would be hard for someone who spoke only English to understand the vast subtleties between the usage of formal and informal modes of address in French (and other languages). For the French, a woman addressing her lover only in the formal vous sounds a discordant note and causes questions about the relationship in the mind of the reader. Does the use of vous imply a distance that was always there, or does it merely reflect the distance of time that has finally allowed the author to gain perspective on the past? At the least, use of the vous form between the lovers is inconsistent with true intimacy, and at the worst, it shows a commercial or authoritarian relationship. To the native French reader, the emotional distance and ambiguous nature of the relationship between the lovers does not need to be explained or articulated; it is linguistically built into this formal form of address. How can the translator bring across this idea into English? A footnote or translator’s note would perhaps have been useful, but even then the English reader might be mystified by such subtleties of address that no longer exist in English.

This translation of The Hermitage, then, serves as an illustration of the myriad difficulties that face the translator of even the seemingly simplest text. Rendering an accurate and serviceable translation requires that the translator plumb the depths of both the source language and the target language to convey the full range of meaning, both utilitarian and emotional, hidden within the text. A direct word-for-word translation may not capture all the emotional content packed into the original. The subtle undercurrents of meaning in languages run much deeper than the surface ripples of words, and for the
translator; these subtle undercurrents are always the most difficult to convey. Although Alland and Bronsard provide us with a very readable and enjoyable novel, much of evocative depth of the original is missing.


Ikuko Tomita, Reviewer

This translation of the poetry of Tamura Ryuichi (1923—1998), Japan’s greatest postwar poet, includes 149 poems. It covers the entire scope of the poet’s career from 1946 to 1998, including the posthumous volume, The Traveler Returned (1998). It contains a lengthy introduction that provides deep insights into Tamura’s poetry and a thorough analysis of Tamura’s sense of time.

It also includes an extensive chronology of the poet’s life from his birth in Otsuka, on the outskirts of Tokyo, where there used to be a karyuu-kai (old red-light district), until his death in Kamakura in 1998. There are also 20 photographs and 15 pages of the poet’s handwritten manuscripts.

This book is targeted for a wide range of readers from poetry lovers to literary scholars. It is also suitable for graduate seminars on Japanese literature, as well as for undergraduate survey courses. Grolmes and Tsumura’s work is indeed a historical tribute to this leading Japanese postwar poet and is highly recommended for everyone.

Samuel Grolmes and Tsumura Yumiko are both established translators and poets who have published their works in numerous literary journals in the United States and in New Directions Annuals. They also published Poetry of Ryuichi Tamura (CCC Books) in 1998. Samuel Grolmes is a professor of Japanese at the College of San Mateo, California. Tsumura Yumiko is a professor of Japanese at Foothill College, California.

The translators met Tamura in 1967 at the University of Iowa. At that time, Grolmes was the Assistant Director of the International Writing Program, and Tsumura was working on her Master of Fine Arts in Poetry and Translations. I must say that this work was created in the ideal situation: Japanese poet Tsumura and American poet Grolmes, both fluent in Japanese and English, collaborating in translation, reviewed by the poet Tamura Ryuichi himself. This is reflected in the accuracy and poetic quality of their translations.

The book also contains an essay, On Translation, in which the translators comment on the process they followed and give some examples of the basic differences between English and Japanese that force translators to make decisions and interpretations regarding how a text is to be rendered into English. They explicitly state that their approach was deliberately on the side of literal rather than liberal translation. Admitting that there are tonal variations in Japanese that cannot be rendered into English, the translators state that they concentrated on presenting Tamura’s thoughts and perceptions as accurately as English allows. Furthermore, the form and structure of the original poems have been consistently reproduced in these translations, providing a very authentic sense of what the poems actually look like in terms of spacing, stanza and line breaks.

It is rewarding to compare some of the areas in which the translator must vary from, or invent, or simply pass over aspects of the Japanese in order to produce a readable text in English.

As an example, in the poem A Sense of Chill, Tamura repeats the pronoun 1 in various forms, beginning with the gruff ore, then the familiar boku, and a repetition of the conventional watashi in both phonetic script (hiragana) and Chinese characters (kanji). This achieves the sense that no matter how one states it, only I can be used to express this sense of chill. Recognizing that there are no such variations for the first person singular pronoun in English, the translators have chosen to use simply I. In this instance, there are no other English choices:

おれは
という一人称でしか寒気を表現できないのは
いったい
どういうことか
ぼくは
わたしは
私は

「われわれ」では不可能である
集団的な寒気というものは考えられない
Ore wa
to iu ichininshoo de shika samuke o hyoogen dek-
inai no wa
ittai
doo iu koto ka
boku wa
watashi wa
watakushi wa
Wæreware de wa fukanoo dearu
shuudantekina samuke to iu mono wa kangaer-
arenai

What in the world
does it mean
that we cannot express a sense of chill
except with the first person pronoun
I

It is impossible to say we
I can t think of a group sense of chill

In the long poem The World Without Words, a
very interesting example of inventive translation occurs. The Japanese original (Section 11) produces a simile,
cold as Pluto. The Japanese word, meioosei is
specifically the planet Pluto, and the image is a descrip-
tion of the coldness associated with the planet most dis-
tant from the sun. Recognizing the various denotations of
Pluto available in English, the planet, as well as the
mythological god of the underworld, and even the car-
toon character from Disney, the translators have chosen
to change the image to cold as the back of the moon,
which retains the astronomical reference and avoids the
possible undesirable overtones of a direct translation of
Pluto:

メイオーセイ no yoo na hiekitta rokugatsu
メイオーセイ no yoo na hiekitta michi
June cold as the back of the moon
Road cold as the back of the moon

Similarly, in the poem Leiberman Goes Home, a
poem in which a drunken farewell party is described
with jocular cynicism, the final lines in Japanese make a
pun on the foreigner s mispronunciation of the Japanese
word for Thank you, arigatoo as arigeetaa. The
pun, of course, does not carry over into English, and the
translators have very skillfully caught the tone of the

ニホン no koto nanka, wasurete shimae!
アバよ, カバよ, アリゲーターー!

As far as Japan is concerned, forget it!
So long, goooo bye, see ya later alligator!

A quite different instance appears in the poem
Reunion. Japanese is extremely rich in onomatopoetic
constructions, most commonly consisting of repetitive
syllables such as noronoro to indicate slowness or
pikapika indicating brightness. In Reunion, the final
line in Japanese reads, Anata chikyuu wa zarazara
shiteiru with the onomatopoeia transcribed in phonetic
katakana script, conventionally used for words from for-

「あなた  地球はザラザラしている！」
Anata chikyuu wa zarazara shiteiru!

You the earth is rough

There are, of course, numerous examples of refer-
cences in the poems to things within Japanese culture and
society that do not correspond to known references in
English, or at least in America. A notable example is
found in the title poem from the book The Ashen Colored
Notebook. Here, a reference is made to the eight-volume
novel by Roger Martin de Gare, a Nobel prize winner for
1937, whose work The Thibault Family is still known
and read in Japan but is virtually unknown in the United
States. The opening volume of the series is Cahier Gris,
literally Gray Notebook, which in Japanese is translated
as Haiiro no nooto. The word haiiro consists of the
Chinese characters for ash and color, a normal
vocabulary equivalent for the English word gray. Yet
because the poem focuses on the destruction that war
causes and the memories Tamura has of burned-out
cities, a landscape of ashes, the translators have avoided a basic rendering such as Gray Notebook and have retained the images of devastation that Tamura’s poem develops; hence the perhaps unusual phrase, ashen colored notebook. Here the attention has been given to what the poem does, rather than what individual words might denote:

The Ashen Colored Notebook

Summer 1914
a young man of the Thibault family began his notebook that summer
ten years before I was born
In Europe the first world war broke out
That notebook
instantly becomes ashes
The ashes become the seed of bread and I
become a young man

In his introduction, Grolmes cites a comment by Oda Kyuro, the Chairman of Shichosha Publishing Company. As Oda says, the importance of Tamura’s poetry would not be recognized in the West without a comprehensive, well-made translation like this:

The English translation, Tamura Ryuichi Poems 1946-1998, which represents Japanese postwar poetry, makes the poet’s work available in America. As a person who has been engaged in the publication of modern Japanese poetry for a long time, I see this as a dream-like accomplishment being realized. There has never been a book of this scale of Tamura Ryuichi’s work in translation in any country, and it is indeed a historical publication. . . . For the western readers who have been exposed primarily to the short traditional forms of Japanese poetry such as tanka and haiku, I can only imagine what a fresh shock this book of translations, Tamura Ryuichi Poems 1946-1998, will create. I look forward to the effect this book will have.

At noon on a hot summer day of August 15, 1945, Tamura heard the Emperor Hirohito’s gyokuin (imperial voice) announcing the end of the war. Tamura said of that moment, time stopped. It began anew as he decided to start a poetry magazine. When he returned to Tokyo, his hometown had been burned to the ground by the U.S. bombings. Standing on this barren landscape, Tamura determined to revive the poetry journal called Arechi (The Wasteland), inspired by the poem of T. S. Eliot. The Arechi poets Tamura, Ayukawa Nobuo, Kitamura Taro, and others, became the representative voice of the defeated nation, which was struggling to recover from the devastation of the war. With his first book of poems, Four Thousand Days and Nights (1956), Tamura introduced a narrative form of poetry filled with striking, sensual images and metaphors. He expressed his despair and nihilism in the face of the misery of postwar Japan and criticized modern civilization with ironical tones, without any sentimentalism.

From Four Thousand Days and Nights, A Vertical Coffin (pp. 22-25) contains vivid imagery and irony. The contrasting phrases and images emphasize the lost values and the destruction caused by the war:

There is no country on the earth for us
There is no country on the earth worth our deaths

I know the value of this earth
I know the lost value of the earth

The poet’s agony in not finding a way out is vividly expressed in the lines:

We do not have a poison
We do not have a poison to heal us

With nowhere on earth to find solace, the poet must put his corpse in a vertical coffin, so that we will remember the human errors, the tragedy of the war and the death of millions of people:

Do not let my corpse sleep on the ground

Your death
cannot rest on the ground
As for my corpse
put it in a vertical coffin
and let it stand up.

Tamura's poetry is not a reflection of a poet's sentimental inner world. For him, a poem must be born from the suffering of human existence. In the title poem from his first book, Tamura repeats the pronoun "wareware" (we). This collective we emphasizes the devastation that mankind brought upon itself and reminds us persistently of our own duty to resurrect the dead, or the past. The past must be remembered, so that we can avoid the same mistakes and can recover our lost humanity from the ashes:

For one poem to be born
we must kill
We must kill many things
We shoot, assassinate, poison the many things we love

To give birth to one poem
we must kill the things we love
This is the only road to take to resurrect the dead
This is the road we have to take
( Four Thousand Days and Nights, p. 14)

In Tamura's poetry, most unexpected objects are combined in a most unusual way. For example, The House of a Human Being (pp. 76-77) offers intense metaphors for the house and the words. The poem starts with an ordinary scene with a man leaving a house:

I guess I'll be back late
I said and left the house.

However, what follows these opening lines is startling:

My house is made of words

A woman lives in water
A hyacinth blooms from the woman's eyeball
The woman too is metaphor itself
A woman changes like a word changes
A woman is such an indefinite shape, like a cat
I have no way of knowing even her name

The house and woman become metaphors of the poetic language itself. However, he does not want hollow adjectives, vulgar meager adverbs, or boring nouns. What he wants is only verbs, but not in the future tense or in the past tense. What he wants is the present tense. He is fed up with a society filled with a sentimental lament over the tragic past and the empty promise of the future. What he desires is present action.

Following the sequence of surrealistic images in the lines above, the poet expresses his frustration at the lack of reality, of reliability, that he finds in the conditions he met when he returned from the war.

Even if you open the door that does not mean
there is a room
Simply because there is a window you can't say
there is an interior
You cannot say there is a space where a human being lives and dies.

Yet he still thinks about going home, not to seek a refuge but to see the disintegration of the house/language, so that he can rebuild a new house/poetry made of his own words:

I just want to see with my own eyes
the collapse of the house of a human being
the dismantling of my language

Of course my house is not made of your words
My house is made of my words.

As Samuel Grolmes comments in his Introduction, the recurring image of rain associated with the odor of gauze, pain, and death is probably the most striking metaphor in his poetry. In October Poem (p. 15), the rain falls in the terrain dominated by the silence of people who are going to die:
October is my Empire
My dead armies occupy all cities where rain falls
My dead patrol planes circle in the sky above the
lost souls
My dead mobs sign their names for the people
who are going to die.

In A Vertical Coffin (pp. 22-25), the vivid image
of a decaying corpse standing in a vertical coffin in the
rain defines Tamura's attitude:

As for my corpse
Mix it in the crowd
Let the rain fall on it.

Perhaps this is the image engraved or etched in his
mind of the decaying bodies, the casualties of the war,
washed out in the merciless rain.

In The Rainy Day Surgeon's Blues (p. 33-34), we
can smell an odor of gauze in the rain. This startling
sensual image already appeared earlier in the poem
Autumn (pp. 8-9):

Bandaged, rain was curved

Grolmes points out in his introduction that Oda
Kyuro has said that no modern Japanese poet has yet sur-
passed this line. The poem continues with this sensual
image of rain tainted with a smell of gauze:

Outside the door the rain again turned the
corner of the street
creating a smell of fresh gauze

Another distinctive feature of Tamura's poetry is his
perspectivism. He introduced multiple voices in his
poetry by creating a narrator, or narrating self. Instead
of using a sentimental, confessional persona, Tamura
insisted on the multiplicity and plurality of his con-
sciousness or personae in his poems. This perspec-
tivism is apparent in his poem entitled Etching (p. 7). The first verse starts as if it is an ordinary scene with a
man standing in front of a dark landscape in a German
etching:

A landscape I saw in a German etching is now
in front of him it
looked like the bird's eye view of an ancient city
going into night from

twilight Or it appeared as if it were a realistic
picture depicting a modern cliff
being led from midnight to dawn

The landscape that Tamura depicts in this verse is
ambiguous and intriguing. The sharp contrast between
the ancient city and the modern cliff is mitigated by the
transitional time, the eternal limbo, which goes into
night from twilight or leads from midnight to dawn.

However, in the second stanza, the line separating
I and he also becomes ambiguous. Who is I? Who
is he who killed his father, and whose mother went
beautifully mad?:

This man in other words the he that I started
to talk about at
his young age killed his father That autumn
his mother went beautifully mad

Like a Doppelgänger, the narrating I observes the
he, who stands in front of the dark landscape. Does
this landscape really exist? Or is it just the dark, abstract,
and ominous image etched in his psyche? This ambi-
guity and distance between the observing self and the
observed self gives the immense dimension and plural-
ism to his narrative poem. It is significant that this poem,
the poem in which he says he first found his own poetic
voice, was written when he was only 23 years old. It is a
testament to his genius.

In his early poetry, Tamura describes himself as a
vertical man. Following his visit to the United States in
1967 as Guest Writer at the University of Iowa's
International Writing Program, his verse takes on a light-
ness, indulging more in humor, yet he never deserts his
eye themes and images. Certain motifs such as rain and
the smell of gauze, the ants and the exploding pear tree,
continue throughout. His concern with time, as the sig-
nificant date of August in 1945 as well as the relentless
passage is acknowledged. He sees himself later in life as
a horizontal man. In the title poem of the book The
Ashen Colored Notebook, he acknowledges the span of
time that has changed him, and yet he sees himself even
late in life as unchanging. He writes:

The autumn I turned 22
I began to write a new Ashen Colored Notebook
and yet, he says:

Even now
though I have become seventy I am barefoot

It is symbolic that this book of translations ends with the poem entitled Bird Language, which was published in his posthumous volume The Traveler Returned (1998). Its final lines read:

My epitaph is decided
carved on the stone in the forest in bird language
My life was beautiful
Salih J. Altoma, Professor Emeritus of Arabic and Comparative Literature at Indiana University, has published a number of works on modern Arabic literature, and its translation into English. He recently edited the special issue of The Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature, volume 48 (2000), which was dedicated to Arabic-Western Literary Relations.

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Ritva Leppihalme received her Ph.D. from the University of Helsinki (Finland) in 1994. She is currently professor in translation studies at the Department of English of the University of Helsinki. Her research interests include culture-specific translation problems, the translation of wordplay and literary dialogue, and the teaching of translation. She is the author of Culture Bumps: An Empirical Approach to the Translation of Allusions (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997). She lives in Helsinki.

David L. Major is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and English at William Penn University in Oskallosa, Iowa. His specialization includes creative writing, technical writing, and Japanese literature and film. Most recently, Dr. Major released a book review of Alex Kerr’s Lost Japan in the November 1998 edition of The Journal of Asian Studies. Dr. Major is currently researching localization and computer-influences writing.

George Messo’s books include From the Pine Observatory (Halfacrown Books, 2000), and The Complete Poems of Jean Genet (translated with Jeremy Reed). He has been a translator-in-residence at The British Centre for Literary Translation and was Hawthornden Fellow in Poetry for June/July 2002 at Hawthornden Castle, Scotland. His poetry has been anthologized in Framing Reference (ed. Valerie Kennedy, 2001) and Reactions (ed. Esther Morgan, 2002). He is a member of ALTA, the British Comparative Literature Association, and is the founding editor of the international journal Near East Review. He teaches in the faculty of Humanities & Letters at Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

Manuela Perteghella is a graduate with an MA in Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. She is currently undertaking doctoral research at the same university in the field of theatre translation, studying this phenomenon from an anthropological and socio-cultural perspective. She has worked as an Administrator and Literary Assistant for the Gate Theatre, London, which specializes in international drama in translation, and for various community-based theatre companies. Currently involved in the translation into Italian of a contemporary English opera.

Zalfa Rihani is a Fulbright scholar from Aleppo, Syria. She has a PhD from the University of Toledo and is completing an MFA in Literary Translation at the University of Arkansas, where she won the 2002 Lily Peter Translation Award. She recently submitted her translation of Damascus ... Nizar Qabbani, by Nizar Qabbani to a university press and has begun translating Mourner’s Ruin, a novel by Ahmad Ali El-Zein.

Ikuko Tomita holds a Ph.D. in Hispanic Languages and Literatures from University of California, Santa Barbara, and is currently the Chair of the Japanese Department at
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**Tracy Walters** currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Literature in African Studies and English for Stony Brook University. Her major areas of interest include Black British literature and women and their appropriation of classical narratives. She has published numerous articles on this subject, including Gwendolyn Brooks The Anniad and the Interdeterminacy of Genre, *CLA* 2001, and she has also completed an article on Rita Dove’s revision of the Persephone and Demeter myth that is to be included in an anthology on new concepts of the Black Aesthetic. She is currently completing a manuscript that examines how and why women of color experiment with classical literatures.

**Daniel J. Webster** is the author of *Dreams and Responsibilities*, a collection of his own poetry and translations from Russian and German. In December 2000, his rendering of Hölderlin’s *Da ich ein Knabe war* won the *Adirondack Review*’s First German Poetry Contest. In *Translation Review* #60, he analyzes various versions of an early Mandelstam poem. His latest published work is *Love*, a translation from the Russian of a poem by Dmitry Kedrin in Issue Seven of *Beacons: A Magazine of Literary Translation*.

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