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Retranslation, thirty-odd years after Berman

Kris Peeters

University of Antwerp

Piet Van Poucke

Ghent University

Guest Editors

Abstract

The introductory chapter to this special issue on retranslation goes back to the beginning, that is, Berman's (1990) seminal paper in the fourth issue of *Palimpsestes*, as well as to Bensimon's introduction to that issue. We look in detail at Berman's argument, and reconstruct the way in which he was misunderstood before being instrumentalised by Chesterman (2000), in his often-quoted "retranslation hypothesis". After a discussion of that still dominant yet problematic paradigm, and the methodological issues involved, of 'closeness' to the source text, historicity and ageing, and the dichotomic homogenisation of languages and contexts, we present an overview of the existing literature, both in terms of inward (i.e., text-comparative) and outward (socio-cultural) perspectives on retranslation. Attempting to go beyond the beaten path, we identify a number of blind spots and call for a transversal, cross-cultural perspective, while suggesting a number of possible avenues for future research, regarding the WHY?, HOW?, WHAT?, WHERE?, WHEN?, and WHO? questions related to retranslation. Another possible and promising inquiry into the phenomenon of retranslation, besides transversal comparisons across contexts, is to study its absence, that is, non-retranslation, by looking into some of the same questions. WHEN and WHY are some works, or parts thereof, *unretranslated*, or even *unretranslatable*? WHAT texts and genres are concerned by this phenomenon? WHERE, i.e., in which translation cultures does it occur? WHO is responsible for that? HOW can it be explained that some texts are *not* retranslated? Finally, we present the papers in this special issue, and the ways in which they address new horizons for retranslation studies. Our objective is not only to bring an overview and show the vitality of retranslation studies, but also, as retranslations do, to uncover earlier shortcomings and to bring new interpretations.

Keywords

retranslation, literature review, history of translation, retranslation hypothesis, non-retranslation

1. The emergence of retranslation as an object of study: How Berman was misunderstood

Retranslation as a phenomenon has existed for centuries (Burton, 2011; Van Poucke & Sanz Gallego, 2019, p. 10), yet became an object of study only some thirty years ago, with the publication of a special issue of *Palimpsestes* (1990) devoted to “*Retraduire*”. Since then, it is common, although not entirely unproblematic, to define retranslations as new translations, in the same language, of a text already translated, in full or in part (Gambier, 1994, p. 413; see, also, Tahir Gürçağlar, 2009, p. 233 and Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010).

On the one hand, to define retranslations as “new” translations remains ambiguous: does “new” refer to a translation *product* that is new, i.e., different as compared to a previous one, presenting an amount of textual changes large enough for that product to be described as new, as opposed to a revision or an adaptation (Gambier, 1994)? Or does “new” refer to a new publication, i.e., a new event in a text’s foreign reception *process*, formed by the appearance, in the target context, of a translation that was produced later than a previous one, without having to be, necessarily, all that different? On the other hand, there is the question of the “same” target language: languages evolve, and so do attitudes with regard to language, including its use in literary texts and the translations of those texts. To what extent can it be said that new translations use “the same language” as previous ones? And even when we are dealing with clearly distinct target languages, we can ask ourselves whether a translation into, for instance, Portuguese might be influenced by a previous translation of the same literary work into Spanish and whether this more recent translation might then be defined as a “retranslation” as well (Alevato do Amaral, 2019).

These two aspects of the most widely used definition of retranslation – that is, difference and time, or difference over time – have been the main objects of debate since the beginning of what we now refer to as “retranslation theory” (Brownlie, 2006) or “retranslation studies” (Berk Albachten & Tahir Gürçağlar, 2019a). The starting point of that debate on retranslations’ difference, along the thin line between retranslation, revision, adaptation, re-use, or even plagiarism, and on the alleged ageing of translations (and target languages) as opposed to originals, or at least canonised originals that reputedly do not age, is Antoine Berman’s seminal paper, “*La retraduction comme espace de la traduction*”, published in the 1990 issue of *Palimpsestes*. Over the past thirty-odd years, Berman (1990) has been, and he remains, one of the most quoted references in retranslation studies, although, astonishingly, no English translation is available. As a result, Berman’s text is often referred to by second hand, and presented as the origin of the ‘retranslation hypothesis’, which in fact it is not. Therefore, one could say that at the beginning of retranslation studies, there was... a translation issue, all the more so because Berman’s thoughts on retranslation were made out to be something they are not. We will go further into that below, but let us first look at what Berman *did* actually write.

In his 1990 seminal paper, Berman presented retranslation as “*espace de la traduction*” (“*espace*”, not “*un espace*”), whereby he further defined “*espace*” [room, space] as “*espace d’accomplissement*” [room of/for fulfilment] (1990, p. 1). In Berman’s view, which is largely inspired by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Walter Benjamin, this “*espace d’accomplissement*” is pervaded by time, more precisely by the relationship between historical time and translation’s “own temporality” (“*une temporalité propre*”, p. 1). Historical time is presented, following Goethe and Benjamin, in terms of triadic, dialectic evolution: thesis, antithesis, synthesis (the latter subsequently becoming the thesis of yet another triadic cycle to follow). Applied to translation, the passing of historical time thus brings a repeated triadic cycle of “epochs of translation”, as described by Goethe in his *West-Eastern Divan* (see also Deane-Cox 2014, p. 3), from word-for-word translation, over free adaptive translation, to what Berman calls “literal” translation. In Berman’s views (1984, 1985), “literal translation” (“*traduction*

littérale”) therefore is not word-for-word translation, but a translation that remains “attached to the letter (of works)” (2000, p. 207), i.e., their language, their style, their “*étrangeté*”. It is the opposite of what Berman (1985) calls “*la systématique de la déformation*” [systematics of deformation], which occurs when translators privilege the sole transmission of “meaning” at the expense of “the letter” (of content, at the expense of form, one could say). Rather than resorting to deforming tendencies, such as “clarification” (explicitation), “rationalisation”, “*ennoblissement*” [ennoblement] or destruction of vernacular language (standardisation or normalisation), “literal translation” brings the target language to evolve in response to “the trials of the foreign” (Berman, 1984; Venuti *transl.*, 2000).

Translation’s own temporality, on the other hand, is marked by “*caducité*” [obsolescence or decay], and “*inachèvement*” [incompleteness or unfinishedness]. As no translation can claim to be ‘the’ translation, Berman argues, the need for retranslations – which he defines, with more latitude than Gambier (1994), as “any translation made after the first translation of a work” [“*Toute traduction faite après la première traduction d’une oeuvre*”] (1990, p. 1) – is embedded in the very nature of the act of translating. Translating, put otherwise, is conceptualised by Berman as a repeated triadic series of translation acts taking place in historical time while bringing into play translation’s own temporality marked by obsolescence and incompleteness: “Translation is thus embedded in a relationship with time, with the ephemeral and with history” (Vatain-Corfdir, 2021, p. 1, our translation).

In a dialectic view of history, beginnings are clumsy, hesitant (“*maladroit*”, p. 4; “*aveugle et hésitant*”, p. 5) and “*toute action humaine, pour s’accomplir, a besoin de la répétition*” [all human action, to be fulfilled, needs repetition] (1990, p. 4), as repetition brings improvement. This is why “[l]a retraduction surgit de la nécessité [...] de réduire la défaillance originelle” [retranslation arises out of the need [...] to reduce the initial failing] (1990, p. 5). This *défaillance* (failing, or “shortcomings”, in Deane-Cox’s (2014, p. 3) translation) is not so much the textual description of a first translation (let alone of any first translation) – Berman explicitly states that a first translation can (exceptionally) be a “*grande traduction*”, provided it shows the characteristics of a retranslation. Rather, it is the result of the nature of translation itself as an act of incompleteness being inscribed in a dialectic view of historical time, which, in Goethe’s idealistic envisionment is less about the chronological progression of time than it is an evolution of thought, in a threefold but most of all cyclic movement (Vatain-Corfdir, 2021, p. 5; Berman himself speaks of “phase[s] de la conscience occidentale” [phase[s] of occidental consciousness], 1984, p. 281).

Translations, and retranslations as well, are subject to obsolescence, and coincide with either one of the first two stages of historical fulfilment (“*accomplissement*”). But what Berman then calls “*grandes traductions*” – commonly translated as “great translations”, although “major translations” would be more accurate, as the term points to a translation’s status in the target context, without necessarily implying a quality statement – coincide, in his view, with the third stage of fulfilment, “literal” translation (“*traduction littérale*”), which is the synthesis between (all too) source-oriented (word-for-word) translation and (all too) target-oriented (free, adaptive) translation. Normally, “literal translation” completes a triadic translation cycle, and “pour un temps, suspend la succession des traductions” [temporarily suspends the succession of translations] (p. 5, our emphasis). As “major translations” occur in the third stage of historical fulfilment, they are necessarily retranslations. Retranslations, however, as they can also occur in the second stage of historical development, are not necessarily “major translations”. For his final argument, on the conditions needed for a major translation to happen, Berman goes back to historical time. A major translation only occurs “*au moment favorable*” (p. 6), i.e., at the appropriate moment, the ungraspable *Kairos* of Greek mythology. As this concept “refers to History itself” (“*renvoie à l’Histoire elle-même*”, p. 6) rather than to the process

of translation's *own* temporality, Berman actually refuses to explain the emergence of major translations – “*traductions qui perdurent à l'égal des originaux*”, p. 2 [translations that endure just like the originals] – by an inherently translational logic alone, outside of historical time (i.e., by a translation universal or law). Indeed, “major translations” remain unaffected – “*pour un temps*”, Berman says, i.e., for a given period of historical time, which length depends on the ungraspable contingency of history – by translation's temporality of obsolescence, until “the taboo represented by the retranslation of canonical translations” (Ladmiral 2011, p. 45, our translation) is transgressed, and a new translation becomes necessary (Jianzhong, 2003). In brief, in Jean-René Ladmiral's view (2011, p. 31), which echoes Berman's, “[i]n fact, it is not so much the translation itself that is ageing as our relationship with it, i.e. our reading of it, for many reasons” (our translation) – we will get back to that.

Although translation logic plays its part as major translations (“*grandes traductions*”) are preceded by insufficient ones and could not have come to fruition without these early stages of translation – so that, in Berman's view, first or early translations contribute to retranslations (see also, Gambier, 1994, pp. 414-415) – the emergence of a major translation is determined, not by translation-inherent logic or time, but by contextual, historical contingency – which explains what Deane-Cox (2014, p. 1) called retranslations' “mercurial inconstancy”. This is illustrated by the example Berman gives on the final page of his paper, Pierre Klossowski's 1964 French translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* (1990, p. 7) that he had superbly analysed earlier (Berman, 1985, pp. 127-150). In order to truly understand Berman's argument on retranslation as “literal translation” that dynamises language by the “trials of the foreign” (Berman, 1984) and by a return to the history of translation itself, one should read those pages.

From this “*réflexion*” (Berman's term, 1985, pp. 37-44) on time and the succession of acts of translating, to the retranslation hypothesis as we know it, there is quite a stretch, although that hypothesis is all too often ascribed to Berman. Berman never presented his ideas as a ‘hypothesis’, never claimed that retranslations are by definition ‘closer’ to the source text (he describes Klossowski's “literal” translation as “*un mélange de littérature et de liberté*”, 1985, p. 138, i.e., as a synthesis of the first two stages of historical evolution, that renders what he calls “the letter” of the text); he never wrote that retranslation could be explained by a sole translation-inherent logic, outside of historical time and contextual contingency (Kairos), let alone by a testable hypothesis or translation universal. The ‘retranslation hypothesis’ has taken Berman's argument away from its philosophical level of reflection, to a methodological-procedural one, with which it has but very little affinity.

The ‘retranslation hypothesis’ was formulated ten years after Berman's seminal paper, by Andrew Chesterman (2000). Chesterman referred to Berman, yet his ideas rest mainly on Paul Bensimon's “*Présentation*” in the 1990 *Palimpsestes* issue. In that introduction – which is not available in English either – Bensimon formulates all elements that Chesterman would turn into a hypothesis, without however explicitly relating any of these to Berman's paper, nor presenting these elements as a hypothesis. First translations are “introductions”, Bensimon writes, that “naturalise” the foreign work, reducing alterity to better integrate the work in the target culture by observing “socio-cultural imperatives that privilege the addressee of the translated work” (p. ix, our translation). Arguably, in Berman's “reflection” on retranslation, this actually describes what happens in the *second* stage of historical evolution, which *already concerns retranslations...* As opposed to first translations, Bensimon continues, retranslations are different: retranslators no longer have to introduce the foreign work in the target culture, do not strive to reduce the distance between the two cultures, do not refuse “cultural displacement / disorientation” (“*dépaysement culturel*”) but present a work's “irreducible strangeness” (“*irréductible étrangeté*”). Retranslations are generally more attentive, Bensimon

concludes, to “the letter of the source text, its linguistic and stylistic landscape, its singularity.” (pp. ix-x, our translation).

It is in Bensimon’s introduction, not in Berman’s paper, that we find the constitutive ingredients of what would become Chesterman’s hypothesis, including its binarism of target-oriented first translations *versus* source-oriented retranslations, rightfully described by Ladmiral (2011, p. 45) as “un *trivium* problématique” [a problematic *trivium*]. The key elements found in Bensimon (1990) are also present in Gambier (1994): “Following Berman (1984 and 1990), it can be argued that a first translation always tends to be rather assimilative, to reduce otherness in the name of cultural, editorial imperatives [...]. Retranslation under these conditions would consist of a *return* to the source text.” (1994, p. 414; our translation, Gambier’s italics). This “*retour*” to the source text, Gambier insists, also is a “*détour*”: “If there is a return, it is by the *détour* of the first translation [...] Retranslation unties enslaved forms, restores *signifiance*, opening up to original specificities, while at the same time making the translating language work.” (1994, p. 415; our translation). In presentations of Berman’s thought, such as Gambier’s, however prudent his formulation may be, the triadic nature of translational time has disappeared in favour of binary logic – which is Bensimon’s, not Berman’s. Consequently, the idea of major translations (“*grandes traductions*”) as *third*-stage retranslations, as “literal” translations that make the synthesis of both source-orientedness (attention to the letter of the text, to its *literaturnost*) and target-orientedness (re-actualising the meaning of a classic for its target audience), has also disappeared. Finally, whereas Berman recognises the possibility of exceptions by stating that a first translation can exceptionally be a major translation, Gambier’s formulation is prudent (“it can be argued”), yet also absolute: “that a first translation *always* tends to be rather assimilative” (our italics).

Chesterman (2000) took stock of the 1990 *Palimpsestes* issue to discuss basic models for translation studies research, for which he takes retranslation as a case in point. In other terms, Chesterman laid out a “comprehensive empirical research programme for translation studies” (2000, p. 25), by way of hypotheses to be tested. This is, indeed, quite a stretch for who has carefully read Berman, who stems from another tradition of scholarly work altogether and who would most certainly have been adverse to his work being presented as the prolegomena to an *empirical* research programme (see, for instance, Berman, 1985, p. 37, on his adversity to “methodologising” experimental theory). Chesterman has turned Berman’s “*réflexion*” into the “methodology” he explicitly refused (1985, pp. 37-39, 84), that is, into a “research model” of the causal kind (rather than comparative or process-oriented), based on the assumption that “[a]ny rigorous academic discipline progresses by way of hypotheses.” (p. 21).

In Chesterman’s view, there are four types of hypotheses: interpretive ones (that use comparison as a means of understanding), descriptive ones (that make empirically verifiable claims about the generality of a condition, i.e., whether it is a translation universal or law), explanatory ones (that state why a given phenomenon occurs), or predictive ones (that declare that under given conditions a phenomenon will occur). For each type of hypothesis, Chesterman mentions the example of retranslation, grossly derived from Berman’s and Bensimon’s papers discussed above, while being inscribed in a binary either/or and earlier/later logic. This is what Chesterman writes, as a first example of an interpretative hypothesis: “Goethe’s three phases can be reduced to a dual opposition between ‘freer earlier’ and ‘closer later’” (p. 22). Such a reduction can only be interpreted as a denial of Berman’s key argument on the relationship between historical time and translation’s own temporality, and the idea that “major translations” (“*grandes traductions*”) come in the third stage of “literal” translation, as the combination of source- (stage 1) and target-orientedness (stage 2). This “interpretive hypothesis” informs the three other formulations that follow: “Later translations (same ST,

same TL) tend to be closer to the original than earlier ones” (p. 23) (descriptive hypothesis); “Later translators take a critical stance to the earlier translation, seek to improve on it” (p. 24) (explanatory hypothesis); and “Later translations of a given text will be found to be closer than earlier ones” (p. 25) (predictive hypothesis).

To Chesterman’s defence: he does add that “[m]uch testing obviously remains to be done” (p. 25) and, with respect to the descriptive hypothesis, that “[t]he jury is still out on this one: there seems to be evidence both for and against. Much depends on how ‘closeness’ is to be measured, of course.” (p. 23). Chesterman’s program quickly became a heuristic paradigm in retranslation studies. It would be hard to find even a single article that does not mention the “retranslation hypothesis”, generally in its first pages, too often wrongly ascribing it to Berman and therefore unintentionally reducing the French critic’s stimulating “*réflexion*” on retranslation to Chesterman’s procedural caricature of it.

2. The problematic paradigm: the “retranslation hypothesis” no more

Chesterman’s “laconic” hypothesis (Deane-Cox, 2014, p. 4), which has dominated the field of retranslation studies since over two decades, continues to be used as a heuristic tool, despite serious conceptual and methodological problems, that come on top of its caricature of Berman’s thought on retranslation. In addition, about half of the dozens of extant case studies that take the hypothesis as a starting point, claim to validate it, and the other half to invalidate it, which immediately contradicts the potentially “universal” character of the phenomenon. Put otherwise, the retranslation hypothesis creates a tangent perspective on retranslation that really does not say much about it, except that the complexity of a cultural praxis cannot be grasped by a simple “hypothesis” that claims to ‘measure’ this practice in terms of ‘closeness’ to the source text, or a “universal” or general tendency allegedly present in every single translation effort.

The point here is not to know whether the hypothesis holds or not for particular cases; the point is that the hypothesis in itself is insufficient to really say anything about retranslation, and therefore creates a heuristic perspective on retranslation that in itself is invalid. Already in 2003, Kaisa Koskinen and Outi Paloposki formulated the core of this critique: “contrary to what the so-called Retranslation Hypothesis claims, the textual profiles of translations are not determined simply by their chronological order of appearance, but respond to a number of different reasons and settings” (2003, p. 20; see, also, Koskinen & Paloposki, 2004). Put otherwise, “a linear evolution from domesticating towards foreignising translations does not reflect the real complexity of the retranslation process” (Cadera, 2017a, p. 6). In the following paragraphs, we will go into the question why this hypothesis is invalid and insufficient, and look at the methodological issues of this problematic paradigm in more detail, by considering its different components. For this we will refer to its “descriptive” formulation (Chesterman, 2000, p. 23): “Later translations (same ST, same TL) tend to be closer to the original than earlier ones.”

2.1. “Closeness” and the textual relationship between original, translation and retranslation

A first issue, and it is a major one, has to do with the textual relationship between original, translation and retranslation, and is more or less admitted to by Chesterman himself: What does it mean to say that a given translation is “closer” to the source text than another translation? Much depends, Chesterman acknowledged, on how ‘closeness’ is to be measured. Yet, “closeness” *cannot* be measured: To decide, in an objective manner, what ‘closeness’ means would be to square the circle. The reason for this, is that “closeness” is a spatial conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), and therefore, as any conceptual metaphor, it is a cultural

given. As a result, the meaning of ‘closeness’ in translation can differ from culture to culture (and even from individual to individual), and can therefore never be an objective basis of comparison. As far as translation is concerned, the spatial metaphors we use rest on Latin etymology (*trans-ducere*, to bring across) and are common, arguably even unavoidable, in translation studies – when translation is presented as a bridge, a prism, a transfer across linguistic and cultural spaces. Yet, in Chesterman’s hypothesis, “closeness” as a spatial metaphor is used to qualify a relationship that is first and foremost a *textual* and a *temporal* (historical) one: “‘freer earlier’ and ‘closer later’” (2000, p. 22). If, indeed, ‘later’ implies ‘closer’, then we should ask ourselves: ‘closer’ to whom? Retranslations are in fact closer to *now*, and therefore closer to *us* (to the individual assessing a translation). Therefore, if we are to say that retranslations are ‘closer’ to the original than first translations (although further removed from it, from a temporal perspective), implicitly this has to mean that they are ‘closer’ to the original *to us* (to that individual). As a result, as translation critics or scholars we may well be, or at least are at the risk of, projecting our own cultural and socio-linguistic conventions, such as our own interpretation of ‘closeness’ today, onto translations of the past (see, also, Brisset, 2004, p. 40 and Massardier-Kenney, 2015).

Put otherwise, any attempt at measuring translations’ “closeness” to the source text, if at all possible, may well be a means of disregarding earlier translations’ historical specificity, or colouring it with today’s glasses. “Closeness”, so to say, is in the eye of the beholder. This is all the more problematic as ‘closeness’ is one of the main *topoi* of publishers’ paratexts when they market new translations (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, p. 30; Massardier-Kenney, 2015, p. 73; see, also, Veselica Majhut *et al.*, in the present volume), together with “faithfulness” to, or “respect” for the original’s “true spirit”, set off against the out-datedness of earlier translations. Put otherwise, “closeness” (or “truthfulness”, or “respect”) is a “value” (Venuti, 2004) *allegedly* created by retranslations, according to publishers and retranslators themselves, in the texts that accompany their new translations. All too often, these claims are then blindly repeated by reviewers who judge the (stylistic) result of the translational act on parameters of the target language adverse to Berman’s idea of literal translation (such as stylistic smoothness, idiomaticity and the invisibility of translation), without knowing the source text (or even the source language) well enough to be able to judge a translation’s ‘closeness’ to that source text. We must not forget that such claims of ‘closeness’ by editors and retranslators are made in epideictic discourse, i.e., according to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (I, 3 and I, 9; Aristotle 2007, pp. 46-51 and 75-83), a discourse of praise (or blame) that puts forward certain values by repeated insistence, so that the target audience is convinced into believing them. Such claims should not be taken for objective descriptions. In fact, any translation philosophy or strategy could fit the metaphor of ‘closeness’: translators and publishers will always claim to be ‘close’ to the source text, as well as ‘close’ to the contemporary target audience, for that matter.

With regard to the supposed ‘closeness’ of retranslations, Chesterman actually leaves the door open, when he hypothetically claims that “retranslations *tend to be* closer to the original than earlier ones” (2000, p. 23, our italics), by means of a “*potential S-universal*” (2004/2017, p. 260, our italics). He only states that “Later translations of a given text *will be found to be* closer than earlier ones” (2000, p. 25) to give an example of a predictive, rather than descriptive hypothesis, not to state that this is, or should be, objectively the case. Many publications, however, have taken Chesterman’s idea, often implicitly, as a predictive and “universal” *statement*. That is an issue, because a hypothesis, when predictive, determines the way in which scholars analyse a phenomenon, in this case retranslation, as if it were the only way to study the historical process of continuous reinterpretation of classical works by repeated translation (see Peeters *et al.*, 2022). The complexity of the textual relationship between retransla-

tion, translation and original cannot be grasped by the formula “tend to be closer”, and cannot be grasped outside of its historicity and its own cultural context. Nor can it be “measured”: when the passing of time is involved, there is no escaping the fundamental epistemological problem of historicity, and how to write that history (Brisset, 2004, p. 61).

2.2. “Earlier” and “later” translations: Historicity, ageing and evolution over time

Second, retranslations’ historicity brings us to the question of that textual relationship’s evolution over time. In this respect, Chesterman speaks of ‘earlier’ and ‘later’ translations. Yet, how much earlier or later would the time gap between two translations have to be, for them to qualify for the retranslation hypothesis? Do “passive” retranslations (Pym, 1988) fall out of its scope (as is argued by Deane-Cox, 2014, pp. 12-18), even though they might have been consulted by retranslators working in another language (Alevato do Amaral, 2019)? How can we account for the presence of several “active” retranslations on a given market, in the same place, at the same time (Brisset, 2004, p. 63): Even though they may have been carried out ‘earlier’, translations sometimes stay on the market alongside newer ones, or are re-issued, often when copyright expires, often in cheap paperback editions or e-books by small independent publishing houses. Sometimes retranslations appear at very short intervals as compared to ‘earlier’ or even ‘contemporary’ translations (Susam-Sarajeva, 2003, p. 5; Peeters *et al.*, 2022, pp. 17-18). Finally, in many cases there are several retranslations of a given work in a given language, often three or more, regularly up to ten, exceptionally even far more (see Cadera, 2017b, on the 31 Spanish translations of Kafka’s *Metamorphosis* or Ladmiral, 2011, p. 30, who mentions approximately 100 Corean translations of Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*!). Surely, in view of such overabundance, the idea of ageing as a motive for retranslation, or the idea that retranslations provide an increase in source-orientedness (whatever that may mean) becomes a caricature that cannot possibly hold for each and every retranslation, as compared to the previous one, or to all the previous ones. Far more decisive factors for the market of literary translations are the economic profitability of competing (re)translations and their re-editions, and the struggle for symbolic capital on the world literature market.

At stake here is the fact that Chesterman’s hypothesis homogenises and de-historicises the notions of “text” and “language” (“same ST, same TL”, 2000, p. 23), and therefore ignores the diversity, including historical diversity, of source and target literary and cultural contexts. For instance, are the 2004 French retranslators of Joyce’s *Ulysses* really translating the ‘same’ text into the ‘same’ target language as the 1926 first translators? Texts, including source texts, evolve and, even more importantly, so does their interpretation in evolving source and target contexts. This evolution of texts and their interpretation brings us to the many possible faces of the concept of “ageing”.

Supposedly, following Berman’s (1990) claim, translations age, while originals do not (although Berman stresses that the idea of ageing is far from evident, even enigmatic), with the exception of what he calls “*grandes traductions*” – “major” rather than “great” translations (see above). As we have seen, “major translations” endure as originals do (“*perdurent* [literally, “continue to last”] à l’égal des originaux”, 1990, p. 2), do not age (“*ne vieillissent pas*”, p. 2), and temporarily suspend the succession of retranslations (“pour un temps, suspend[ent], la succession des retraductions ou diminu[ent] leur nécessité”, p. 5; our emphasis). Berman is not as adamant here as he is sometimes made out to be: even “major” translations *do* age after a given period of time (as do originals by the way, that do not necessarily preserve their canonicity, as argued by Brisset, 2004, p. 52, though, admittedly, perhaps the retranslated ones do). What is at stake here, even if the metaphor of “age” used is a biological one, is not the passing of time as a linear, empirical, mechanical or biological given, nor is it a strictly

translation-inherent and teleological logic that would bring all translations, except the “major” (or “great”) ones, to “die”. Ageing is a socio-cultural, socio-ideological construct, a “cultural representation” (Massardier-Kenney, 2015, p. 76), as Bourdieu (1993) already argued, which, in the case of translations, is determined by all kinds of possible evolutions in the target language and culture (Collombat, 2004; Van Poucke, 2017), and not only the linguistic ones which are the main subject of the majority of literary reviews.

It is this construct that changes over time and brings translations to “age” (see, also, Topia, 1990, pp. 45-47), not the texts or translations *per se*:

The ageing of authors, schools and works is far from being the product of a mechanical, chronological slide into the past; it results from the struggle between those who have made their mark (*fait date*) and who are fighting to persist, and those who cannot make their own mark without pushing into the past those who have an interest in stopping the clock, eternalising the present stage of things. Making one’s mark, initiating a new epoch, means winning recognition, in both senses, of one’s difference from other producers, especially the most consecrated of them; it means, by the same token, creating a new position, ahead of positions already occupied (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 60; see, also, p. 187)

Interestingly, almost all the examples of “major translations” given by Berman (1990, p. 2) are translations by famous *authors*: Jacques Amyot’s translation of Plutarchus, Baudelaire’s Edgar Allen Poe, Hölderlin’s *Antigone*, Chateaubriand’s translation of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Schlegel’s Shakespeare, Tieck’s *Don Quixote*... It makes one wonder whether these “major translations” are “major” because they are retranslations, or – at least partly, perhaps even entirely – because their translators were *authors* endowed with symbolic capital in the target culture (see, also, Brisset, 2004, p. 59).

Perhaps, “major translations” are “major” *despite* being translations, a perhaps provocative yet not entirely incongruous thought, considering that most of these examples Berman gives hardly stand out for their source-orientedness! Even the “greatest” of these “great” translations, by the way, have been retranslated (see, also, Collombat, 2004, p. 6), although sometimes only quite recently and without much effect, although it is too early to evaluate this, on the immortality of Baudelaire’s and Chateaubriand’s versions which, at least for now, continue to dominate the French editorial market: Edgar Allen Poe was retranslated by Christian Garcin and Thierry Gillybœuf (Phébus, 2019); *Paradise Lost* / *Le Paradis perdu* just appeared in a bilingual edition reprinting the annotated 1951 French retranslation by scholars Pierre Messiaen and Jacques Blondel (Belles-Lettres, 2022).

2.3. Dichotomy and differentiality

A final problem with Chesterman’s hypothesis, when we look at it as a whole, is that these issues, which are highly complex ones, related to textual relationships between original, translation and retranslation, as well as to contextual evolutions over time that influence these relationships, are tied together in a dichotomic, differential way of conceptualising what goes on in retranslation. The overall reasoning expressed by the retranslation hypothesis, is in terms of *either* this *or* that: source *versus* target, close *versus* distant, earlier *versus* later translations. It is not clear why it would be impossible, for a translation, to be ‘closer’ to the source text as well as ‘closer’ to its target audience, at the same time. Or to be, at the same time, more ‘source-oriented’ for certain aspects (to the eye of whichever beholder, as we saw), while being more ‘target-oriented’ than another translation for other aspects.

To sum up, the retranslation hypothesis does not work, for a number of reasons, and should be dismissed as a whole. Rather than opening a window on the phenomenon of retranslation,

Chesterman's hypothesis has narrowed our views. Rather than providing a theory, it has become a mantra which has caused methodological issues with the way in which, to a certain extent, retranslation studies has evolved. These conceptual and methodological issues concern the very central problems at stake when texts get retranslated, that is, the textual relationship between retranslations, translations, and originals, involving the relationship between different historical time frames (including constructs of ageing and novelty), and different contexts (including linguistic and socio-ideological constructs of self and other, and cultural and translational norms and values related to these constructs). Such complex relationships cannot, and should not, be reduced to a dichotomic, essentialist and homogenising, de-historicising hypothesis. Rather, let us no longer consider retranslations as being more 'source-oriented' or 'closer' to the source text, or not, but as reformulations, across time and in a given language / culture, of *what it means* to be 'close' or 'faithful' to a source text stemming from another given language / culture, at a given time (Peeters *et al.*, 2022).

3. Inward and outward perspectives on retranslation

In the 21st Century, retranslation studies evolved in two opposite directions, that is, either following an "inward" perspective focusing on the textual dynamic of retranslation and more or less accepting the rationale of the retranslation hypothesis (at least as a hypothesis or a heuristic model worth of being tested), or subscribing to an "outward" perspective that studies the historical and contextual dynamics of retranslation and the socio-cultural factors involved.

On the one hand, numerous single case studies were conducted that have often taken the retranslation hypothesis as a starting point, either supporting the idea that retranslations are 'closer' to the source text than first or early translations, or, most often, stating that no conclusive evidence was found to support the hypothesis, for the specific texts and languages under study, or that the hypothesis itself does not lead to any conclusive statement regarding the case examined. Overviews of such case studies are discussed in Milton & Torres (2003), Desmidt (2009), Paloposki & Koskinen (2010), Monti & Schnyder (2011), Deane-Cox (2014), and Alvstad & Assis Rosa (2015). In recent years, more case studies based on Chesterman's views were published (e.g., Kaloh Vid, 2016; Bywood, 2019), including in non-European contexts (see Vahid Dastjerdi & Mohammadi, 2013; Feng, 2014; Al-Shaye, 2018; Zhang & Ma, 2018; Alshehri, 2020; Mesić, 2020; Saeedi, 2020; Tan, 2020; Sanatifar & Etemadi, 2021; Pan & Li, 2021; Sharifpour & Sharififar, 2021; Chen, 2022; among others), generally taking the retranslation hypothesis as a starting point, yet most often concluding either that it does not hold, or that it does not provide a sufficient methodological framework.

On the other hand, numerous studies have followed Koskinen & Paloposki's (2003) critique from the outset and have refused the retranslation hypothesis altogether, because "there seems to be no substantial body of evidence in support of or against the retranslation hypothesis" (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2004, p. 27). These studies stress the teleological illusion of translational progress (arguably) embedded in Berman's vision, toward the "original truth" supposedly enshrined in a supposedly stable source text (Brisset, 2004, pp. 39-42) and the importance of socio-cultural context, generally and rightfully criticising the hypothesis by stating that the reasons why retranslations occur, and why they occur in the way they do, are numerous and include ideological, commercial, subjective, and literary motives as well as translational ones (Venuti, 2004; Van Poucke, 2017).

Some of the motives for retranslation mentioned are the appearance of a new edition or interpretation of the source text (Vanderschelden, 2000, pp. 4-6; Tahir Gürçağlar, 2009, p. 235), deficiencies in earlier (direct or indirect) translations (Vanderschelden, 2000, p. 4; Tahir Gürçağlar, 2009, p. 235; Monti, 2011, p. 14; Tegelberg, 2011, p. 462), institutional or ideological

changes in the receiving culture (Vanderschelden, 2000; Monti, 2011; Massardier-Kenney, 2015; Roca Ugorri, 2017), the translator's personal preferences (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2004) or subjectivity (Brisset, 2004; Skibinska, 2007), changing translational norms in line with cultural changes, such as the ambition to free oneself from the principle of strict fidelity when retranslating the Bible (Collombat, 2004, p. 11), or commercial rivalry on the editorial market (Pym, 1998; Venuti, 2004; Ségeral, 2019; Peeters *et al.*, 2022, pp. 17-18).

This second type of multi-faceted, 'outward' approaches that privilege the socio-cultural or social-historical investigation of context has led to a plethora of scholarly work since the beginning of the century. Besides the series of "Retranslation in context"-conferences (Istanbul 2013 and 2015, Ghent 2017, Madrid 2019, Budapest 2022) and the dozens of articles that have appeared in all of the renowned translation studies journals (*Translation Studies*, *Translation Review*, *Meta*, *Perspectives*, *The Translator*, and so on), several special issues were published, namely "Tradução, retradução e adaptação", J. Milton & M.-H. Torres Eds., *Cadernos de Tradução*, 11, 2003; "Pourquoi retraduire?", P. Bensimon & D. Coupaye Eds., *Palimpsestes*, 15, 2004; "Voice in retranslation", C. Alvstad & A. Assis Rosa Eds., *Target*, 27(1), 2015; "Retranslation in context", P. Van Poucke & G. Sanz Gallego Eds., *Cadernos de Tradução*, 39(1), 2019; "Discourses on retranslation", Ş. Tahir Gürçağlar Ed., *TranscUlturAl*, 12(1), 2020; "Retranslation, multidisciplinary and multimodality", Ö. Berk Albachten & Ş. Tahir Gürçağlar Eds., *The Translator*, 26(1), 2020; and "(Re-)traduire les classiques français", M. Koffeman & M. Smeets Eds., *Relief*, 15(1), 2021. To this can be added several edited volumes (Banoun & Henking Eds., 2007; Kahn & Seth Eds., 2010; Monti & Schnyder Eds., 2011; Douglas & Cabaret Eds., 2014; Cadera & Walsh Eds., 2017; Berk Albachten & Tahir Gürçağlar Eds., 2019a and 2019b; Cadera & Walsh Eds., 2022) and monographs (O'Driscoll, 2011; Pokorn, 2012; Courtois, 2014; Deane-Cox, 2014).

Arguably, the socio-cultural focus of these numerous studies, although they have brought academic weight to the topic of retranslation which is now a well-established field of inquiry in translation studies – as is shown by its presence in handbooks and encyclopaedia of translation studies (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2009, 2019; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010; Koskinen, 2018) – has overshadowed the need for a solid and comprehensive theoretical or conceptual model for retranslation. The contextual complexity of the topic, its "spiral-like and vertiginous pattern" (Susam-Sarajeva, 2003), or "rhizomatic" nature (Brisset, 2004, p. 48; Brownlie, 2006) that requires thorough historical contextualisation, as well as the laboriousness of textual analyses of sometimes very large corpora of retranslations, have refrained retranslation scholars from developing another conceptual model than Chesterman's, that could underpin the extant descriptive approaches by the much needed conceptual grounding, in response to Cadera's (2017a, p. 7) claim that "there has been no significant evolution in Translation Studies on this question [retranslation]". Up to date, despite an almost general agreement on the retranslation hypothesis's insufficiency, there is no conceptual model to replace "an entire critical discourse on retranslations as expressing a default, a deficiency, or decaying of first translations" (Massardier-Kenney, 2015, p. 74). Even if the retranslation hypothesis is continuously criticised, it also is continuously present in the critical discourse on retranslation.

Massardier-Kenney (2015) for instance, tried to invert the "paradigm of lack" connoted by the retranslation hypothesis, by presenting retranslations as actualisations of the potential contained in a literary text, that do not necessarily stem from a weakness, or an inadequacy in previous translations. Peeters (2016), Peeters & Sanz Gallego (2020) and Peeters *et al.* (2022) have developed that argument into a Bakhtin-inspired conceptual model of retranslation as dialogical re-accentuation of a given source text's meaning potential in the target culture at a given time. Other models have been mentioned, though generally as tools for analysis within

a descriptive perspective on retranslation that remains pervaded by the differential paradigm that has been present since the early stages of retranslation studies, rather than conceptualise the phenomenon of retranslation *per se*. Brownlie (2006), Deane-Cox (2014), or Alvstad & Assis Rosa (2015), for instance, make use of narrative theory; Zhang & Ma (2018), Alevato do Amaral (2019) and Niskanen (2021) have proposed intertextual, hypertextual or polyphonic models for retranslation studies, close to the previously mentioned Bakhtinian one; Cadera (2017a) refers to system theory, while Deane-Cox (2014) or Martín González (2021) have used systemic-functional or conceptual linguistics to analyse retranslations.

Besides the need for theoretical development, there are some ‘blind spots’ of retranslation studies. Wardle (2019) and Vassallo (2022) stress the need for an alternative perspective on literary retranslation considering the reader’s role, whereas the main focus has been on the production rather than on the reception side. Second, we have little empirical data on the retranslators’ professional and personal profiles. Third, notwithstanding some examples of the contrary, the focus lies heavily on the subsequent translations of canonical literary works. Beckett, Camus, Cervantes, Dostoevsky, Flaubert, Joyce, Kafka, Lawrence, Lorca, Proust, Sartre, Scott Fitzgerald, Tolstoy, Verne, including the canon of children’s and youth literature (Carroll, Kipling, Milne, Perrault, Saint-Exupéry), those are the stars of retranslation studies. Some notable exceptions are Brisset (2004) on the French translations of Darwin; Siméoni (2000) and Susam-Sarajeva (2003) on the retranslations of literary and cultural theory; Tükel Kanra (2019), Konca (2019) and Uslu (2019) on the Turkish retranslations of Kant’s *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* and Marx’s *Das Kapital* and Marx’s and Engels’ *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*; Pan & Li (2021) and Tao (2020) on the retranslation of Chinese political and historical texts, respectively; Greenall (2015), Mus (2019) and Küven (2019) on song translation; Kim (2018) on the Korean translations of the American historiographer Iris Chang’s *Rape of Nanking*; or Bywood (2019) on audiovisual retranslation.

4. Beyond the beaten path

Finally, the dominant outward perspective on retranslation, as it implies a focus on the importance and diversity of socio-cultural contexts, has resulted in a series of predominantly monocultural accounts of retranslation, into a single given language and target context. Although such cases are interesting and deserve to be analysed, up to date little effort has been made at an encompassing synthesis. As a result, our knowledge of the specificity of retranslation as a phenomenon remains fragmented, and the necessary conceptualisation is still lacking, as was emphasised by Alvstad & Assis Rosa (2015, p. 8): “This endeavor has been only partially embraced by scattered studies that address the relation to previous translations, different source texts, revisions, new editions, reprints, adaptations, back translation or indirect translation, or that consider broad and specific contextual influences and constraints”. When launching our call for papers, we therefore deliberately aimed at original contributions to retranslation studies that develop perspectives on retranslation addressing understudied questions, while exceeding the level of a single case study.

Up to date, at least to our knowledge, the cultural specificity of retranslation, combined with the unavoidably limited knowledge of retranslation scholars in terms of languages they master and source and target contexts they are able to study, has impeded the realisation of transversal studies of retranslation, across languages and cultures. Although “the need to move beyond individual cases” (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2019, p. 25) has recently met general agreement, at the latest manifestation of the “Retranslation in context”-conference series in Budapest (April 2022), the wait is for concrete, large international projects that would bring together retranslation scholars of several target contexts, uniting their efforts in collaboration.

One possible approach to such transversal retranslation projects could be the cross-cultural comparison of retranslations of the ‘same’ work, in a given number of languages and target contexts.

As it now stands, some characteristics of retranslation and some questions related to the phenomenon are still understudied. In general, the majority of studies on retranslation so far have focused their attention, either on the motives for retranslation, trying to answer the WHY? question, or on confirming or denying the retranslation hypothesis for the specific cases studied, thus limiting the HOW? question to a single aspect and a single case. Far less time and energy were spent on other questions related to the HOW?, WHAT?, WHERE?, WHEN?, and WHO? of retranslation. With the current volume, we intended to fill a number of those gaps by taking a closer and more encompassing look at the retranslators and the product of their work – retranslation as a phenomenon, in order to answer the crucial question “what actually happens in retranslating” (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010, p. 295).

Each of these questions has been touched upon in previous research, but so far the motivation for retranslation “appears to be the most widely studied variable” (see Alvstad & Assis Rosa, 2015, p. 14; Monti, 2011, pp. 14-18). Two of the possible motives for retranslation have been extensively treated in the previous sections of this article. On the one hand, the retranslation hypothesis argues that retranslations are made with the purpose of bringing the target text ‘closer’ to the source text, while “brushing up” the language of an older (and – allegedly – old-sounding), earlier translation. On the other hand, the ageing of (the) previous translation(s) in itself is also pointed out as an important motive for retranslation. Apart from these two motives, many more possible answers to the WHY? question have been put forward in retranslation studies (for an overview, see, e.g., Vanderschelden, 2000; Monti, 2011; Tegelberg, 2011; Alvstad & Assis Rosa, 2015; Tahir Gürçağlar, 2019). In section 3. of this article, we referred to earlier research on this subject.

The WHAT? question has attracted less attention in academia, and has been answered in various ways, which illustrates both the terminological quest of early pioneering investigations and the multifaceted nature of the concept of retranslation. In the early years of retranslation studies, a clear distinction had to be made between “retranslation” in its purest form (“a new translation in the same language, of a text already translated, in full or in part”, Gambier, 1994, p. 413), a “translation of a translation” (not necessarily into the same language, which is now more often coined as “indirect translation”), or “back-translation” (into the source language) (Gambier, 1994, p. 413). However, this terminological discussion is not closed yet, as recently, Vitor Alevato do Amaral (2019) fuelled the long-standing debate by calling for a much broader interpretation of the concept than is ordinarily in use. By taking into account previous translations into *different* languages (thus going back to Berman’s somewhat larger definition of retranslation, see section 1. above), and including the “virtually ever-expanding intertextuality made by the original and its translations in different languages” (pp. 254-255) in the analysis, a plethora of new possibilities is created for retranslation research.

Another way of approaching the WHAT? question is by looking at the types of literary texts that are retranslated more often than others. As could be foreseen, there is an obvious, yet complex link between retranslation and canonicity. Here, reference should be made to the concepts of “hot” and “cold” translations. The former term is used for translations which follow the publication of a particular source text at a short time interval, while the latter phenomenon is characterised by a larger time gap between the original and its translation. Cold translations allow for the target culture to assess the literary merits of the author in its own, as well as in other receiving cultures (for a discussion of these concepts see Vanderschelden, 2000, p. 9, who borrowed the terminology from Claude Demanueli). The introduction of a new literary

name into a target culture by means of a “hot” translation includes a certain (symbolic and financial) risk for both the translator and the publisher, but even after studious consideration, miscalculations are made and “lesser names” get translated. Usually, they do not, however, get retranslated. Being retranslated is normally the prerogative of either sacred texts or literary works “endowed with canonical status in either the translated or the translating culture” (Alvstad & Assis Rosa, 2015, p. 10; see also Venuti, 2004; Brownlie, 2006, p. 146). Canonical status implies what Bourdieu called symbolic capital, which increases economic potential for the publisher. Research has shown how the economic potential of retranslating the canon may lead to unwanted side effects, such as large-scale plagiarism, or an uncontrollable flood of retranslations and reeditions in a very short time span (Şahin *et al.*, 2019), generally shortly after copyright – either of the original, or of an ‘old’ translation re-issued – expires.

This brings us to one of the other W-questions in the discussion, namely the WHEN? of retranslation. An “urban legend” of retranslation states that every generation deserves its own translation, of Shakespeare, Cervantes, Hugo, Goethe or Dostoevsky. Yet, as we saw above, this has more to do with the attraction (both in terms of symbolic and economic capital) of these canonical authors for potential translators and publishers, than with the actual process of ageing, whether of language, or translations. Apart from the fact that not all languages evolve or “age” at the same pace, research in retranslation studies has shown that not every literary genre experiences the same degree of ageing. For sacred and some classical literary texts, it is sometimes taken for granted that translations should not (over)modernise, thus de-historicise the register of the text; instead, historicisms and even archaic language use are more easily tolerated than in other genres (Rodriguez, 1990; Collombat, 2004). Virtually the same goes for the translation of poetry, which arguably has more to do with different possible interpretations than with changes in linguistic or translational norms.

Two important genres are notable exceptions to historicising language use being regarded as acceptable: theatre and children’s literature. Sirkku Aaltonen (2003) investigated the former into great detail and came to the conclusion that the “ageing rate” of theatre translations is determined by the “target” of the translation. When a retranslation is commissioned “for a particular theatrical production”, the “need to update the language” is usually stressed by the commissioner, even if the distance between the two translations is less than a generation (p. 154). Translations of children’s literature are equally often commissioned, and for this genre, the “rule” also seems to apply that retranslations are expected to comply with up-to-date linguistic norms and have to be “adjusted to target language norms more extensively than any other kind of text” (Du-Nour 1995, p. 330), because children are expected to usually be familiar with contemporary language use only.

What about the WHERE? in retranslation studies? As Alvstad & Assis Rosa (2015, p. 13) correctly state, “space can also be considered as geographical space, and as such it may correlate with different linguistic varieties within the same language”. So far, this line of investigation has not yet attracted much scholarly interest, but the analysis of (re)translations into Québécois French in contrast to international French (Brisset, 1996) revealed the promising character of this comparative type of research, which might be applied much more broadly to other pairs of language varieties as well: American *versus* British English, European *versus* Brazilian Portuguese, European *versus* South-American Spanish, among others. While Koskinen & Paloposki (2010) were still in doubt “whether a French translation produced for the Canadian market is a retranslation if a previous translation exists in France” (p. 294), the suggestion by Alevato do Amaral (2019) to open up the debate by interpreting intertextuality in a broader way than we did before, creates lines of research that could help remove the doubt in Koskinen & Paloposki’s question.

Since the emergence of the “personal turn” in translation studies and the correlated shift of attention to ‘translator studies’ (see, e.g., Kaindl *et al.*, 2021), more attention is being attached to the WHO? question as well, which as a matter of fact can be answered in various ways. As attention is shifting from the purely textual analysis of retranslations towards the contextual specificity of the phenomenon, the different agents in the process come to the fore, as for instance the (re)translators themselves, the publishers and editors, but also the readers. In one of the contributions to the current volume, Adrienn Gulyás tries to draw a portrait of the average retranslator in contemporary Hungary, focusing on age, gender, work experience and embeddedness in the publishing and academic circles. However, even the possibility to sketch this portrait can no longer be taken for granted in the fast-paced world of fandubbing and online crowdsourcing (see Gambier, 2011), in which the identities of the (re)translator(s) can no longer be pinpointed, hence blurring issues of responsibility and authorship (*auctoritas*). In the case of self-retranslation (Peng, 2017; Wang & Humblé, 2019), that authorship is unmistakably linked to one individual (or translation team), yet also questions the “definitive” character of any target text.

Finally, the HOW? question is obviously the object of the bulk of articles on retranslation, since traditionally, the majority of contributions in the field somehow dealt with translation strategies or shifts between different versions of one and the same source text. However, Alvstad & Assis Rosa (2015, p. 16) add one more interpretation of the HOW? question to the discussion by looking at how retranslations “are presented to the reader/viewer” and dividing retranslations, as Juliane House (1997, 2010) did for translations, into “overt” and “covert” ones. The latter option is pushed to the limit when plagiarism is involved, but even in less obvious cases, the “line between retranslating and revising” a previous translation is often an extremely fine one (see Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010). After all, the number of possible ways to translate large parts of one and the same source text cannot extend into infinity, as is convincingly demonstrated by Sanz Gallego *et al.* in the current volume.

5. Absence of retranslation

In the early years of retranslation research, the – obvious – way to go was an attempt to create an all-embracing analysis of the multiple aspects of the phenomenon itself, including the search for answers to the W- and H-questions, as described in the previous section. Since the start of the third millennium, however, part of the focus has shifted towards a less obvious aspect of retranslation, namely its absence and the reasons for texts not being retranslated. As a matter of fact, the majority of W- and H-questions can also be asked concerning the phenomenon of *non*-retranslation: Why are certain literary texts never retranslated? Why are other texts, even canonical ones, retranslated into some languages, yet not into other languages? Are there cultures and historical circumstances in which retranslation is not a self-evident appearance? Are there limits to retranslation, and, if yes, where are those limits, and what defines them?

For sure, there is a link between the existence of “major translations” (“*grandes traductions*”) and the “survival” of those particular translations over a longer stretch of time, without being challenged by other (re)translations. In such cases, the prestige of the (often well-known) translator and the assumed high quality of the translation (its cultural capital, which can also be the result of a given translator’s status as author) prevent competing attempts (which would entail a reputational and commercial risk). But often, the reasons for non-retranslation go beyond issues of quality and authorial fame. Nike Pokorn (2012) focused on publishing policies for translated children’s literature in former Yugoslavia and found that ideologically manipulated editions from socialist times were still being published in the “deficient” version,

long after the disappearance of the socialist regime in the country. In a similar way, Charlotte Bollaert (2019) investigated how Jean-Paul Sartre's oeuvre was introduced in the USSR in several consecutive stages. At first, only his theatre plays were translated, and even those translations showed a great deal of content-related manipulation. His political and philosophical prose had to wait until the 1990s before it could be translated, but at the same time, the theatre plays were reprinted in the same versions as before, seriously distorting Sartre's image for the Russian post-Soviet reader.

The latter two cases are clearly intertwined with ideology and politics, but apart from attempts to protect the public from unwanted influences through means of manipulation and censorship, a range of other motives for non-retranslation seem to exist and the role of different actors in the process can be discerned. The prestige of previously translated authors or cultures in general may drastically be altered throughout time, as a result of which particular writers and/or literary works no longer stand the test of the canonisation process, either in the source or in the target culture (Van Poucke, 2022). In some cases, only a given part of an author's oeuvre is canonised to the extent of being retranslated into a particular target culture, while other sections are mainly or altogether neglected, leading to non-reception and, as a result, non-retranslation, again producing a distorted picture.

In a curiously contradictory way, non-retranslation may be evidence of a failed reception, yet can also attest, in other circumstances, to successful canonisation. As we argued before, the reputation of a "major translation" may hamper the speed of the retranslation process, and result in non-retranslation for a given period of time, although the availability of a "*grande traduction*" does not stop the process altogether. Even in cases in which the reputation of a translation has no direct connection to the celebrity of the retranslator, or an assumed high quality of the translation, readers can still be unwilling to accept a new translation, as the result of an emotional reaction. Readers tend to cherish the translations in which they discovered, not seldom in their youth, authors that would become important to them – which is why readers' emotional and subjective reactions to new translations are especially relevant in the case of children's literature.

As an illustration of this phenomenon, Monika Woźniak (2014) investigated the unsuccessful reception of the Polish retranslation of Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Despite the retranslation being much more faithful to the source text than the first translation, the changes made by the retranslator – including the admittedly rather drastic decision to rename the Polish Winnie from *Kubuś Puchatek* into *Fredzia Phi-Phi* – were not accepted by Polish readers, who had often read the first translation as a child and had developed an emotional tie with the initial name, regardless of the underlying grounds to retranslate that name. The very fact that a globally renowned writer like Stanisław Lem took the side of the old and allegedly defective translation, proves how retranslation can strike a false note on the readership's emotional chord. A similar reluctance to accept changes in canonical translations, regardless of the (sound) reasoning behind the changes, can be found on other book markets as well. To give but one example, Pasternak's translations of Shakespeare's tragedies date back to the 1940s and although the tragedies have been retranslated repeatedly since then, aiming at a higher accuracy towards the source text, readers and stage directors still consider the Pasternak translations as the standard versions for stage performances.

One of the articles in the current volume illustrates another aspect of non-retranslation. Sanz Gallego *et al.* move forward the concept of "unretranslatability" and suggest an "unretranslatability hypothesis", which refers to the limitation of options for alternative translations in case a first (or other preceding) translation manages to find a suitable translation option, for which the retranslator is unable to find a better solution. This analysis departs from the observation

by Van Poucke (2020) that retranslations in general tend to show an overlap of 50% to 60% of the words, based on the fact that “a translator has only a limited number of ways to translate a source text” (p. 23).

In his 2004 article, Lawrence Venuti related retranslations to the creation of “value”. Under normal circumstances, any attempt at retranslation should have as purpose the creation of some kind of “added value”, whether that be literary, cultural, economic or ideological value. However, in hyperdynamic environments for (re)translations, as described by Şahin *et al.* (2019) for the Turkish publishing market, one could ask the question what added value can possibly be achieved by flooding the market with almost simultaneous retranslations of one and the same canonical work. The absence of added value in this case (or the sole commercial character of that “added value”, with no regard whatsoever for ethical considerations) again questions the alleged yet utopian teleological nature of the retranslation process that was embedded in early discussions of the phenomenon. Perhaps retranslations that are published in a vacuum in-between waves of competing translations should not be studied as retranslations at all, as they lack a characteristic present in ‘real’ retranslations, that is, the reconsideration of – at least – one of the intrinsic features of (the) earlier translation(s)?

6. New horizons

When Isabelle Collombat (2004) renamed the twenty first century the “age of retranslation”, she might still have been unaware of the multitude of new directions retranslation research would uncover. If early studies of retranslation almost exclusively focused on literary works, and most contributions of the past thirty years still did (we mentioned some notable exceptions at the end of section 3.), recently other text types have attracted scholars’ attention. A case in point is the recent special issue of *The Translator* on “Retranslation, multidisciplinary and multi-modality”, edited by Berk Albachten and Tahir Gürçağlar (2020), in which “various sign systems within the same text” (p. 2) are included in the traditional lines of retranslation research. With the growing importance of “audiovisual translation (dubbing, subtitling, voiceover, as well as fansubbing and fandubbing), opera and song translation, and game and comic translation” (p. 1), (re)translation studies evidently go with that flow.

Another new avenue of research that definitely broadens our perspective on retranslation, is represented by the recent and rather spectacular increase of articles that study retranslations in non-Western languages and cultures. Apart from the Turkish context that has received quite a bit of attention (see, e.g., the work done by Susam-Sarajeva, Berk Albachten, and Tahir Gürçağlar), more and more papers now address retranslations from or into Chinese, Arabic, or Persian (see section 3. for some examples), seeking new perspectives further away from the traditional spaces of translation studies.

The new horizons that are covered in the current volume constitute yet another endeavor at filling some of the gaps that still exist in retranslation studies. **Adrienn Gulyás’** attempt at profiling retranslators in contemporary Hungary, despite some of the typical methodological difficulties of working with library catalogues, leads to a comprehensive exploration of the agents behind the retranslations. Gulyás’ analysis reveals the portrait of the average Hungarian retranslator from English, French, Russian and German, and uncovers a number of power relations on the international translation market, which appear to be no less relevant in the Hungarian market as well. This raises important questions as to the typical profile of the retranslator in other European cultures, relatively small ones as is the case in Hungary, which could be compared to larger translation cultures, European as well as non-European ones.

One quite particular case in this respect is the Turkish (re)translation market, which, since the turn of the century, is flooded with counterfeit translations, often ascribed to non-existent

retranslators. **Sabri Gürses** and **Mehmet Şahin** continue their research on plagiarism in the Turkish translation market (Şahin *et al.*, 2019) by zooming in on its historical specificity and complexities as evidenced by the translation and reception history of Dostoevsky in Turkish. In particular, the authors stress the influence that government campaigns have had on the translation market, both in positive and in negative ways. Some of the questions raised can be traced back to the still open debates discussed above: How does retranslation relate to revision and plagiarism – i.e., is there a fundamental difference in the relationship between target and source texts, or only a difference in the degree of (un)changed translation solutions? Do retranslations always have added value, and to what extent does retranslation obey a translation-inherent logic, when the influence of socio-ideological context can be so invasive?

Snježana Veselica Majhut, **Edin Badić** and **Sandra Ljubas** investigate context as well, by attempting to unravel the complex web of motivations and attitudes of the agents involved in the production of retranslations of children's literature in Croatia. Semi-structured interviews with the retranslators, editors, and publishers of three recent retranslations in Croatian of Tolkien, Lindgren and Kästner reveal a variety of motivations for the retranslation of classics of youth literature, most of which are considerations of the more practical and commercial kind, such as source text copyright and translator copyright, or low stocks of the extant translations. As for the retranslators' position with regard to the earlier translation, most mention both an affective relationship to the first translation read as a child (see, also, the discussion above of Woźniak, 2014), and the topical aesthetic goals often echoed by translation scholars, such as respect for or closeness to the source text's true spirit, a return to the author's intentions, the ambition to correct flaws and omissions in the first translation or to update the outdated language. Paratextual and epitextual data, however, reveals, if (re)translation is mentioned at all, that publishers, as well as retranslators, resort to the source-text-related aesthetic argument of canonicity, while invoking a 'closeness' to the source text so sedulous that it activates the commonplace of translation's transparent invisibility: in the new Croatian translation, so the reader is told, *Pippi Långstrump* can be read as in the original, *The hobbit* even as if Tolkien wrote in Croatian... In the public eye, it seems, retranslations should be as close as possible to an illusion of non-translation.

Yet, non-translation can come to light in other guises as well, as is shown by **Elin Svahn's** contribution on translations in the Swedish context, which continue to be republished over an extended period of time, without ever being retranslated. Answering the call for more transversal retranslation studies at the macro-level (see section 4. above), Svahn investigates a bibliography of Swedish non-retranslations in search for trends and tendencies. Her analysis reveals how certain assumptions about retranslation and its motives from previous research on retranslation are invalid, at least in the Swedish context of the twentieth century. As she correctly points out, the concept of "halted canonisation" (i.e., when the canonisation process of a particular literary work or author starts, but never really takes off) deserves further attention in future transversal analyses of other cultures as well. Another possible line for future research deals with the different approaches to retranslation by major and minor publishing houses, to reveal how they handle the dichotomies of innovation and conservation, and cultural and economic capital.

Guillermo Sanz Gallego, **Erika Mihálycsa**, **Monica Paulis**, **Arvi Sepp** and **Jolanta Wawrzycka** explore yet another aspect of non-retranslation, which is observed on the micro-level of individual translated texts, in this case German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish and Spanish translations of Joyce's *Ulysses*, but covers a much broader phenomenon. The authors depart from the observation that even literary translators – despite the seemingly endless possibilities of linguistic variation and imagination – often have only a limited number of ways to translate a

given source text segment, especially if that segment contains “foregrounding devices”, that is, textual patterns or stylistic peculiarities that deviate from ‘standard’ linguistic norms, such as alliterations, ellipses, repetitions, irony, or unconventional syntactic structures. Sanz Gallego *et al.* then take stock of this argument to look for patterns of “unretranslatability”, which occurs when “a forced or imperative coincidence between first translation(s) and retranslation(s)” is at stake, because foregrounding devices have led to a successful earlier translation, thus leaving the retranslator(s) without alternative options. Accordingly, the authors suggest an “unretranslatability hypothesis”, formulated as follows: when “a first translation manages to reproduce a passage with foregrounding devices maintaining the same effect expressed in the source text, then the options for alternative translations are reduced to such an extent that a case of unretranslatability might be provoked”. Here again, a potential “highway” for further research is uncovered, that may lead to new – and transversal – horizons for retranslation studies.

Finally, three different contributions on retranslations in understudied areas and genres complete this volume, bringing novel insights into the retranslation of para- or non-literary genres. **Vivien Féasson** concentrates his attention on the extremely popular, yet rarely investigated genre of fantasy. In contrast to the bulk of retranslated literary works, which appear to belong to the (canonical) classics of highbrow literature, and for which the competition between different versions seems to have beneficial effects on the quality of translations, the problem with many first translations of fantasy literature is that these are of poor translational and even editorial quality. This then influences the “value” attributed to retranslations, which are inevitably compared, not with other high-quality translations, but with imperfect previous versions of the fantasy work. Moreover, Féasson seeks an answer to the question what exactly a “fantasy classic” is, and what are the considerations, made by publishers, behind their retranslation. The research reveals how retranslations of fantasy classics continue to be of inferior quality due to amateurism and suboptimal working conditions.

Retranslations of songs are equally underinvestigated, although attempts have been made before, especially in cases in which the boundary between a “song” and a “poem” is less obvious to draw (see, e.g., the analysis of retranslations of Cohen’s poetry by Mus, 2019). In her contribution to the current volume, **Giulia D’Andrea** researches retranslations of French *chansons* (by Georges Brassens and Jacques Brel) in search of a typology for song (re)translation, considering that a translation to be performed on stage may significantly differ from a *chanson* translation made for reading purposes only. Comparable research was done by Aaltonen (2003) for theatre translations, which led to a similar distinction between translations for the stage and for reading. While distinguishing both lyrics and music as integral parts of a song’s interpretation through translation, and interrogating the boundaries between translation, retranslation, relay translation, and back-translation, D’Andrea argues that song retranslations deserve “specific reflection” as they add yet another interpretation to the already existing “corpus” of versions, which may include covers, parodies and other reissues.

Gisela Marcelo Wirnitzer’s research on the retranslation of historical (travel) accounts of the 14th- and 15th-century discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands may well lead to new insights into historical (re)translation practices, and the complexities of working with unstable and/or unreliable source texts and pseudo-originals. Besides its very detailed account of an incredible variety of translational practices and sometimes very complex relations between source and target texts, Marcelo Wirnitzer’s article broadens the notion of “rettranslation” by questioning the traditional list of possible motives for retranslation. The author demonstrates how considerations other than ideological or literary ones have influenced the (re)translation process, which seems to have been the result of mainly contextual circumstances, such as

the “relevance” of the discovery narrative “for the European and Spanish history” and the “extended timeframe” between source and target texts. Even though we are dealing here with a specific and highly complex case of retranslation, which may therefore not be representative for the majority of retranslated texts, future research into the retranslation of historiography could definitely draw on the epistemological reflections offered, most notably with regard to the instability of source texts that can be at the origin of historical narratives.

As we have tried to show in a historical narrative of our own in this introductory article, some thirty-odd years after Berman, much has been done, yet much remains to be done. It is our hope that this volume may bring new ideas and new directions, and may inspire colleagues already working on the intriguing phenomenon of retranslation, as well as new generations of retranslation scholars. It is only through discussion and collaboration, across languages and cultures, and by refusing the easy yet misleading recipes such as the retranslation hypothesis, that our knowledge and understanding of some of the questions discussed above can be taken forward.

7. References


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 Kris Peeters

University of Antwerp
Prinsstraat 13
2000 Antwerpen
Belgium

kris.peeters@uantwerpen.be

Biography: Kris Peeters is professor and chair of the Department of Translation and Interpreting at the University of Antwerp (Belgium), where he teaches French culture, literature and text analysis. He is member of the TricS-research group, EST and the International James Joyce Foundation, and executive board member of the European Language Council. His research at the intersection of Bakhtinian discourse theory and translation studies mainly focuses on the poetics of retranslation, especially with regard to heteroglossia, (free) (in)direct discourse, narrative perspective and voice. He has published on retranslations of Flaubert and Laclos into English and Dutch, and on Joyce retranslations into several languages. Together with Guillermo Sanz Gallego (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), he coordinates the James Joyce in Translation Centre (www.uantwerpen.be/JJTC).



 Piet Van Poucke

Ghent University
Groot-Brittanniëlaan 45
9000 GENT
Belgium

piet.vanpoucke@ugent.be

Biography: Piet Van Poucke is Associate Professor in Russian Language and Culture and head of the Russian section of the Department of Translation, Interpreting and Communication (Ghent University). He obtained his PhD in East European Languages and Cultures in 1999 with a dissertation on the early literary work of Ilya Ehrenburg. His current research activities deal with retranslation and retranslation theory, literary and journalistic translation (from and into Russian), and translation policy of Russian literature into Western languages and vice versa. He was co-editor of the special volume of *Cadernos de Tradução* on “Retranslation in Context” (2019).



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Retranslation and retranslators in Hungary between 2000 and 2020

Adrienn Gulyás

University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary

Abstract

This study explores Hungarian retranslations between 2000 and 2020, on the basis of a restricted corpus of 19th- and 20th-century classic novels in four languages, with a special emphasis on the retranslators, in order to know more about their age, gender, work experience or embeddedness in the publishing and/or academic milieu. With a mixed (quantitative and qualitative) method, retranslations of classic English, French, Russian and German prose works published in Hungary between 2000 and 2020 are investigated with the help of bibliographical data provided by the catalog of the Hungarian National Library. The relatively small proportion of retranslation records and the low occurrence of parallel retranslations during the period examined suggest that publishers often opt for reissuing non-copyrighted previous translations. Retranslation activity in a given source language also reflects power relations of languages on the international translation market and results attest to the hyper-central role of English. Hungarian retranslators of classic novels are more likely to be men than women, are generally in their mid-fifties, and often work as editors in the publishing industry. Despite its non-representative nature, the present research highlights a number of issues related to the symbolic power of languages, gender, agents of translation and power relations between them, to be further investigated.

Keywords

retranslation, classics, retranslator, symbolic power, gender

1. Background and hypothesis

Ever since the 1990s, the number of studies on retranslation has been growing steadily, enriching translation studies through research on translation history, ideology, censorship, cultural policies, reception and gender, besides epistemological, bibliographical and methodological issues, to mention only a few of a vast array of topics (Alvstad & Assis Rosa, 2015; Cadera & Walsh, 2017, 2022; Deane-Cox, 2014; Kahn & Seth, 2010; Monti & Schnyder, 2011). As Berk Albachten and Gürçaglar point out, “[r]ettranslation is a gateway leading to various questions that are at the heart of translation as a cultural and sociological concept” (2019b, p. 2). If texts and their analyses have often and rightfully been at the fore of researchers’ attention, the agents who produce them – translators, especially retranslators, editors, and publishers – have so far received some, but definitely less interest (as an exception, see Milton & Bandia [2009] on translators as cultural/political agents, or Wolf & Fukari [2011] on interpreting translation from a meta-textual, sociological perspective).

This article seeks, on the one hand, to raise new questions and offer potential directions for research into what retranslation represents in the translation market, and, on the other hand, to identify who retranslators are, through the example of the Hungarian publishing context in the past two decades.

In post-communist Hungary, following the privatization of the book market during the 1990s, the first two decades of the 21st century have seen the emergence of a number of retranslations into Hungarian of world literature classics: novels by authors such as Camus, Dostoevsky, Fitzgerald, Kerouac or Proust. These retranslations have also attracted a fair amount of attention from the media and have made literary translators’ work in general more visible through a number of reviews and interviews with the retranslators in both print and online media, paratexts (booklets, prefaces and afterwords) accompanying the translations, book festival presentations, and reader/translator events organized in connection with the launch of new translations.

Considering individual cases of highly-mediatised retranslations, of Salinger or Camus for instance, one is tempted to conclude that these were mostly the work of experienced, highly-rated translators holding editorial or academic power. Salinger’s retranslator, Imre Barna, for instance, worked as an editor, editor-in-chief and, from 2006 to 2013, as the CEO of Európa, the publishing house that printed his retranslation of *The Catcher in the Rye* in 2015. Another highly visible, but academic, retranslator is Ádám Nádasdy, retranslator of Shakespeare and Dante. Nádasdy is a well-known linguist, poet and polyglot translator who works mostly on Shakespeare’s plays. His scholarly knowledge, experience as a translator and intensive media presence have made him into a successful initiator of retranslations, and a retranslation trendsetter, arguing for the primacy of meaning over faithfulness to form (as an example, see the debate on the importance of preserving the form of the source text between András Kappanyos, 2018, literary historian and translator, arguing for, and Ádám Nádasdy, 2018, arguing against remaining faithful to form, in the literary review, *Jelenkor*). If it indeed appeared that retranslators tend to be older, influential male figures, it may indicate that retranslations are perceived by translators as professionally prestigious challenges that typically crown the peak of a translator’s career.

However, considering the reception of new translations only through the press might be misleading. Some mediatised retranslations have been and are made by women or young translators. Júlia Jancsó has been retranslating the seven volumes of Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* [*À la recherche du temps perdu*] since the 1990s, and Laura Lukács’s retranslation of Orwell’s *1984* came out in 2022 (Scolar). There are also examples of young male translators obtaining contracts for retranslations: Mátyás Dunajcsik, for instance, has retranslated novels

by Camus (2020) and Saint-Exupéry (2015). In order to establish the profile of the prototypical retranslator, based on age, gender, work experience, and to assess retranslations in the Hungarian context more objectively, it seems necessary to verify intuitive inferences against data on the retranslations of classic novels in Hungary from 2000 to 2020.

2. Theoretical framework

From a sociological viewpoint, translation is an activity that simultaneously relates to the “international space” of transcultural exchanges, and to the “space of reception” (Heilbron & Sapiro, 2007, p. 102) – that of the target culture. Both types of space are governed by a complex interplay of cultural, political and economic dynamics changing over time. Translation fulfils its multiple functions in both spaces, but more prominently, in its space of reception: it serves as “an instrument of mediation and exchange, it may also fulfil political or economic functions, and constitute a mode of legitimation, in which authors as much as mediators may be the beneficiaries.” (Heilbron & Sapiro, 2007, p. 103)

The value of translation depends on the power relations among languages, as well as on the canonical status and prestige of the translated authors and their translators, both in the international and the national literary space (Casanova, 2002, p. 9). Translated books are marketable symbolic goods, so all agents or mediators (authors, translators, publishers) participating in their production benefit from their publication to accumulate – in Bourdieu’s (1996) terms – economic and cultural/symbolic capital. Translation helps legitimize authors, translators and publishers alike: its uses “vary from the consecration of the translated author to the self-consecration of the translator” (Heilbron & Sapiro, 2007, p. 103; see also the same idea in Gouanvic, 2005, pp. 161-162), and in the process, the publisher also acquires cultural and economic capital.

The present research focuses on retranslations of “classic” novels. Retranslation is understood as “a second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language” (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010a, p. 294). The term “classic” is difficult to grasp as a scientific concept, despite its generalized and widespread use, but it served as a keyword in the online search of authors to be considered. Publishers use the term “classic” as a label, implying that such a book has been valued for its excellence for an extended period of time, and has also maintained its popularity. Classics tend to overlap with the canon a great deal, most are taught in college curricula, and often published in collections of “classics”, by renowned publishers (e.g., Oxford World’s Classics, Penguin Classics). Classics are ideal candidates for retranslation because they not only represent cultural value, but are also popular: between Bourdieu’s extremes of “commercial” *versus* “pure” art, that is, low literary value/high sales numbers *versus* high literary value/low sales numbers (1996, p. 250), classics represent a middle ground. While they demonstrate high literary value, “works that come with the label ‘classic’ are generally consumed in large numbers” (Deane-Cox, 2014, p. 32).

Deane-Cox’s (2014) claim, however, needs to be tempered with regard to the space of reception studied here, i.e., the Hungarian publishing industry, which is a small, multi-actor and highly competitive market. Profitability, guaranteeing the survival of a publisher, prevails over cultural prestige, or, at least, entails compromises between cost-efficiency and earning literary prestige. Retranslations are not cost-effective, in the sense that publishers have to pay the retranslator, and exploitation rights, even if the original work is no longer under copyright. The return on their publication is neither immediate, nor large scale: they pay off in the long run, as opposed to bestsellers. Therefore, one of the hypotheses of this study, to be confirmed or disproved by the bibliographic data below, is that publishers might prefer to reedit existing translations, rather than pay for new ones.

If the previous hypothesis were confirmed by data, the question arises as to whether retranslations are essentially driven by the translator's desire "to leave a trace in cultural history by creating a personal, contemporary [...] artistically innovative interpretation" (Van Poucke & Sanz Gallego, 2019, p. 10; see also Berman's (1990) "*pulsion traduisante*"), or whether retranslating classics is where the translator's ambition and the publisher's interests meet, since both increase their symbolic and economic capital. If retranslators have the power to convince editors, it would be interesting to know whether they have a higher level of symbolic capital than the "average" translator: are they older or more experienced, are they mostly men or women, are they also involved in publishing, in academia or in the literary scene as writers or poets?

3. Corpus and method

The corpus for the analysis was assembled based on data provided by Hungary's National Széchényi Library (*Országos Széchényi Könyvtár*, hereafter: OSZK). The OSZK receives a mandatory copy of every book published in Hungarian and keeps track of publications both in paper and electronic format, which makes it the most comprehensive catalog in Hungary. The search included all translations of prose and drama, in paper or electronic format, issued between 2000 and 2020, by publishers based in Hungary. This precision is important because the OSZK catalog includes works in Hungarian of diasporic publishers in neighboring countries (Slovakia, Romania, etc.).

The filtering resulted in 39,794 entries, a corpus that far exceeds the scope and purposes of this research, but has the potential to provide valuable information on a number of topics related to literary translation in Hungary between 2000 and 2020. Each entry is comprised of the target and source languages of the translation, the author's name (with years of birth and death), the title of the original, the title of the translation, data about the Hungarian publication (name of the publisher, year and place of publication), the translator's name (date of birth and death included in most cases), and a categorization according to genre (novel, novella, short story, etc.) and format (electronic or printed).

The main challenge of working on the OSZK filtering is that retranslations are not tagged as such. Berk Albachten and Tahir Gürçağlar (2019a), as well as Paloposki and Koskinen (2010b, p. 36), who worked on bibliographies of retranslations, in Turkish and Finnish respectively, encountered the same problem (see also Pięta, 2010, Pym, 1998, and Poupaud, Pym & Torres Simon, 2009, on the construction of bibliographies for the translation scholar and the difficulties thereof). In order to distinguish translations published from 2000 to 2020 from retranslations released during the same period, the filtering had to be painstakingly double-checked against the OSZK catalog. Also, notations indicating whether the record in question was a reprint, a first or a second edition were inconsistent and often missing. Another shortcoming of the OSZK data was that the year of birth was unavailable for a number of translators, so additional internet research was required to find information on the translators' age and occupation. As publishers cannot disclose translators' personal data, whenever the internet search did not bear fruit, data were considered "not available" (N/A) in Tables 1 to 5.

Five lists of ten classic prose writers (American, British, French, Russian and German) were established, based on listings on Google and Goodreads, using the keywords "source language", "novels" and "classic". Google searches on books are based on what is "popular or trending in Google products, what is mentioned across the web, and what is new". Goodreads, a subsidiary of Amazon, bases its listings on the input of 6 million members and millions of books. Its recommendation engine "combines multiple proprietary algorithms which analyze

20 billion data points to better predict which books people will want to read next”¹. The study focuses on online sources to compile the list of authors to contrast what is currently trending as “classic” on the international scene to what is published and retranslated in Hungary as shown by the OSZK data. The lists of classic authors were compared to Bloom’s world literature canon (1994). Except for Russian, all lists contain a classic author of youth literature (Twain, Dickens, Kästner, Saint-Exupéry). Youth literature is defined here as literature targeting the teenage audience and also having children or teenagers as protagonists.

The reason why only four languages and five countries were selected for the purposes of the research is that culturally and/or historically speaking, these cultures had or still have an impact on the evolution of the Hungarian cultural and literary space. Up to the end of World War II, German was the language of culture in Hungary, but in the second half of the 20th century, until the 1980s, the translation of Russian literature increased in the communist bloc. French literature has been a source of inspiration for Hungarian writers from as early as the 18th century. From the 1980s, following international trends, English-language literature took the lead. According to the OSZK data for translations of prose and drama between 2000 and 2020, 19,937 out of the 39,793 records were translated from English (50.1%), 2,065 from German (5.1%), 1,682 from French (4.2%) and only 661 (1.6%) from Russian. The Hungarian data seem to confirm the unequal power relations of languages that structure the linguistic space worldwide: English “occupies the most central position – even hyper-central” with half of the books translated and “[w]ell behind come German and French” representing “between 10-12% of the world market of translations” (Heilbron & Sapiro, 2007, pp. 95-96). Russian, however, suffered a loss of prestige and power, resulting in a sharp drop of translation activity in the ex-communist countries (Heilbron & Sapiro, 2007, p. 97). Bart’s (2000, p. 113) data concerning Európa Publishing House, issuing most translated literature during communism, confirm that up until 1976, the number of Russian/Soviet titles exceeded Anglo-American ones by 20-30%; in 1977, the latter took the lead by five titles, and by 1984, there were twice as many English titles as Russian ones. In 1990, Russian titles represented only 17.5% of Anglo-American ones. Part of our aim, therefore, was to see whether retranslation activity in the Hungarian literary space reflected similar inequalities for these dominant or once dominant languages (for a more extensive discussion see Casanova’s monograph titled *La République mondiale des lettres* (1999), or de Swaan’s *Words of the world* (2001) on the power relations of languages and cultures that also structure the field of literary translation).

Despite its limitations, both in the scope of languages and the number of authors investigated, this study can potentially serve as a preliminary for larger-scale, representative research, or orient future projects in that direction. We do not claim to give an exhaustive list of retranslations in Hungary between 2000 and 2020, but seek to raise a number of questions and contribute to the debate on what is being retranslated and who the retranslators are.

4. Results

The data gathered for each list of classic novelists will be summarized in tables, and the content of the tables will be explained and commented upon in the text. The columns of the tables include the writer’s name, the number of records for retranslations (including their reprints, reeditions, e-book and audiobook editions) compared to the total records for the author, the number of source texts and retranslated texts (for example, 1/2 means the same source text was retranslated twice), the name of the retranslators, their gender, year of birth (and death), occupation (besides translation), and the publisher’s name with the year of publication.

¹ <https://www.goodreads.com/blog/show/303-announcing-goodreads-personalized-recommendations>

4.1. Retranslations of American classic authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Writer's name	Records for retranslations/ total records	Source texts/ retranslations	Translator's name	Gender	Year of birth/ death	Occupation beside translation	Publisher/ date of publication
Fitzgerald, Francis Scott	10/29	1/2	Bart István	M	1944–2019	editor, CEO of Corvina	Európa 2011
			Wertheimer Gábor	M	1963	college professor	Európa 2019
Harper, Lee	6/11	1/1	Pordán Ferenc	M	N/A	N/A	Geopen 2015
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	3/7	1/1	Feldmár Terézia	F	N/A	N/A	Ulpus 2013
James, Henry	2/4	1/1	Weisz Böbe	F	N/A	self-employed editor, proofreader	Alinea 2012
Kerouac, Jack	7/21	2/2	M. Nagy Miklós	M	1963	editor, CEO of Európa/Helikon	Európa 2011 Európa 2012
Salinger, Jerome David	4/24	1/1	Barna Imre	M	1951	ex editor, editor-in-chief, CEO of Európa	Európa 2015
Steinbeck, John	2/12	2/2	Bart István	M	1944–2019	editor, CEO of Corvina	Corvina 2001
			Oros Paulina	F	N/A	N/A	Auktor 2000
Twain, Mark	9/84	3/6 (Tom Sawyer /TS/, The pauper and the prince /PP/)	Kovácsné Kliment Emília (TS)	F	N/A	N/A	Új Ex Libris 2001
			Gerencsér Ferenc (TS)	M	N/A	N/A	Puedlo 2004
			Gyurkovics Máté (TS)	M	1991	poet	Könyvmolyképző 2015
			Kovácsné Kliment Emília (PP)	F	N/A	N/A	Új Ex Libris 2001
			Lengyel Tamás (PP)	M	1971	poet	Puedlo 2005
			Gergely Zsuzsa	F	N/A	N/A	Noran 2007

Table 1. Retranslations of 8 classic American authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Out of the ten classic American authors selected for the analysis, seven are treated by Bloom (1994, pp. 531–567) as part of the Western canon of world literature (Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, James, Salinger, Steinbeck, and Twain). Two of these, Faulkner and Hemingway, are absent from Table 1, as their works were not retranslated between 2000 and 2020 in Hungary; the records found for these authors were reprints of old translations (3 for Faulkner, 13 for Hemingway). Five of eight retranslated authors have only one of their novels retranslated (although Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* was retranslated twice in the 2000s), two of them have two titles (Kerouac and Steinbeck), and only Twain has three, as his work *Tom Sawyer* has three new Hungarian versions, while *The Prince and the pauper* has two. Altogether, the number of retranslated source texts amounts to 12, and the retranslations to 16. The percentage of records representing retranslations (including reprints), as compared to the total number of records in Table 1, is 29.6% (43/145 records). More than two-thirds of the total records are translations of other works by the same authors, or reeditions of previous translations. It can also be observed that the Hungarian retranslation activity concerning American classics that are also trending internationally is rather intense (80% of the authors had at least one of their novels retranslated).

As far as gender is considered, 10 of the 16 retranslations (representing 12 novels) were produced by men, 6 by women (62.5% vs 37.5%). Twain's retranslations showed an equal representation of sexes. Also, younger male translators (born in 1991 and 1971) were only active in retranslations of Twain, i.e., youth literature. If Twain is not taken into account, the

ratio is 70-30% in favor of men. The number of retranslations per retranslator does not exceed two: two men, Bart and M. Nagy, and one woman, Kovácsné, retranslated two novels each, Fitzgerald/Steinbeck, Kerouac and Twain, respectively.

As for age and occupation, it is interesting to observe the lack of data, both in the OSZK database and on the internet, for female retranslators: the year of birth is missing for all five women (versus 2 men), and the occupation cannot be traced for 4 of them (versus 2 for the men). The lack of data implies that their professional visibility is practically null. Male translators were much easier to trace both in the OSZK filtering for age and on the internet for occupation. Barna, Bart and M. Nagy are well-known figures in the publishing industry: prolific translators, experienced editors, CEOs of publishing houses (Corvina, Európa and Helikon). Note that Európa seemed the most involved in the publication of retranslations (5 out of 16) based on the data in Table 1. The only retranslator representing academia is a professor of American literature (Wertheimer). They were aged 48, 56, 57, 64 and 67 when their translations came out. The youngest male retranslators were Gyurkovics, 24, and Lengyel, 34, who both retranslated Twain, and both of whom are poets, as well as literary translators.

4.2. Retranslations of British classic authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Writer's name	Records for retranslations /total records	Source texts/ Retranslations	Translator's name	Gender	Year of birth/death	Occupation beside translation	Publisher/ date of publication
Austen, Jane	59/116	9/19 PP: Pride and Prejudice SS: Sense and Sensibility LS: Lady Susan NA: Northanger Abbey P: Persuasion E: Emma C: Catharine LF: Love and Friendship MP: Mansfield Park	Tomori Gábor (P) (E)	M	1967	–	Ulpus 2007 Ulpus 2008
			Greskovits Endre (LS)	M	1954	editor	Ulpus 2006
			Simonyi Ágnes (MP)	F	1953	–	Ulpus 2008
			Latorre Ágnes (NA)	F	N/A	interpreter	Ulpus 2007
			Loósz Vera (PP)	F	N/A	–	Ulpus 2006
			Bánki Dezső (PP)	M	1954–2010	college professor	Kossuth 2006
			Hegedűs Emőke (PP) (SS)	F	N/A	N/A	Rebeka és Panni 2007 Rebeka és Panni 2007
			Weisz Böbe (PP)	F	N/A	self-employed editor, proofreader	Alinea 2013
			Sárossy-Beck Anita (PP)	F	N/A	yoga instructor	Centrál Médiasoport 2017
			Barcza Gerda (C) (LS) (SS) (LF)	F	N/A	N/A	Lazi 2006 Lazi 2006 Lazi 2009 Lazi 2013
			Sillár Emőke (SS)	F	1941	–	Ulpus 2006
Brontë, Emily	5/13	1/1	Kada Júlia (C) (LF)	F	1939	critic	Helikon 2015 Helikon 2015
			Béresi Csilla (NA)	F	N/A	N/A	Lazi 2010 (2020)
Feldmár Terézia				F	N/A	N/A	Ulpus 2006

Dickens, Charles	11/74	5/7 CC: Christmas Carol	Szántó Judit	F	1932–2016	dramaturge, editor for Európa	Európa 2012
			Kovácsné Kliment Emilia	F	N/A	N/A	Új Ex Libris 2002
			Rindó Klára,	F	1961	ex-editor at Könyvmolyképző	Könyvmolyképző 2009
			Szabados Tamás (CC)	M	1963	–	
			Illés Róbert (CC)	M	N/A		Helikon 2015
			Barkóczy András (CC)	M	1955	editor at Európa	Európa 2004
			Sóvágó Katalin	F	N/A	–	Európa 2009
			Tábori Zoltán	M	1955	editor	Európa, 2011
Forster, Edward Morgan	1/6	1/1	Borbás Mária	F	1930–2020	editor at Európa, writer	Cartaphilus 2012
Golding, William	4/25	1/1	Gy. Horváth László	M	1950	ex-editor, editor-in-chief at Európa	Európa 2015 (2017, 2018, 2019)
Huxley, Aldous	5/18	2/2	Totth Benedek	M	1977	writer	Cartaphilus 2008
			Galamb Zoltán	M	1965	teacher	Szukits 2002, Cartaphilus 2008
			Szántai Zsolt	M	1966	N/A	
Orwell, George	4/53	3/3	Lázár Júlia	F	1960	teacher	Cartaphilus 2006
			M. Nagy Miklós	M	1963	editor, CEO of Európa/Helikon	Helikon 2020
			Papoczy Péter	M	1972	ex-president of the Literary Translators' Association	Európa 2003
Woolf, Virginia	5/23	3/3	Tandori Dezső	M	1938–2019	poet, writer	Európa 2004 Európa 2006 Európa 2007

Table 2. Retranslations of 8 classic British authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

All ten classic British authors, currently trending according to the Google search, are considered part of the Western literary canon (Bloom, 1994, pp. 531-567). Table 2 shows eight of them who were retranslated into Hungarian between 2000 and 2020; Joseph Conrad (16 records) and Thomas Hardy (6 records) were not. Retranslation activity seems even more intensive than in the case of American classics: three authors (Brontë, Forster, Golding) have one, Huxley two, Orwell and Woolf three, and Dickens, representing youth literature, seven retranslations (three of *A Christmas Carol*). Austen shows the highest number of retranslations throughout the study, with 19 (!) new translations (note that the sum of all the retranslations for the American corpus was 16). Two thirds of her novels came out in more than one version between 2006 and 2015: *Lady Susan*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Catharine* in two, *Sense and Sensibility* in three, *Pride and Prejudice* in five (!) new translations. The list of publishers indicates that Ulpius was aiming at publishing the oeuvre (6 retranslations were published between 2006 and 2010), employing different translators. This number is unusually high in the Hungarian context: perhaps the boom in film adaptations of Jane Austen's novels (from 2003 to 2009 there was a new Austen TV film or TV series almost every year) prompted Hungarian publishers to have her novels retranslated. The number of retranslated source texts amounts to 25, with 37 retranslations for the British corpus, which is, because of the surge of retranslations for Austen, more than double the figure for American authors. Records for retranslations including reprints and e-books account for 45% of the total records (94/209). Omitting Austen's extreme case (retranslation records amount to almost half the total records for Austen), that ratio is 37%. Without Dickens, who represents youth literature, this ratio drops to 34.8%, which is closer to the American results excluding Twain's works.

As for gender, Austen's retranslations differ significantly from what was found elsewhere: 15 of 19 texts were translated by women (78.9%, 10 women/3 men); in other words, for Austen's "romantic" novels, female retranslators heavily outnumber men, even though gender representation is rather balanced in Table 2 (17 women/14 men). All retranslations of British writers considered, the ratio of male and female translators is 39% and 61%. If Austen's retranslations are not considered, the ratio switches to 60% and 40% in favor of men. If we leave out Austen's and Dickens' retranslations, male retranslators outnumber females 81% to 19%. It seems worth exploring whether female translators are more involved in the retranslation of "romantic" and youth classics. However, the data in this study is not sufficiently representative to verify this assumption.

Age and occupation can once again be better traced for male retranslators: the year of birth is missing for 10 women (7 of which retranslators of Austen) versus 1 man, and no indication of occupation could be found for 5 women (3 retranslators of Austen) and 1 man. For the retranslators whose year of birth was available, it could be established that their average age when their retranslation was published was 47 for men and 64.5 for women. The youngest male translators were each 31, but most were in their late 40s or older, the oldest being a female retranslator aged 82, Borbás.

No data on occupation was available for 6 retranslators, but 9 of the remaining 25 also work(ed) as editors (5 of them were editors at Európa), 3 were writers and 3 worked in education (2 teachers, 1 college professor). Results of both the American and the British lists seem to suggest that experience in the publishing industry as a translator and editor might make one a better candidate for retranslation than, for instance, being an academic or a writer. The publisher that was most involved in publishing retranslations was again Európa (9 retranslations), followed by Ulpius (8) and Lazi (5): the three of them published 59%, 22 out of 37 British classic novels.

4.3. Retranslations of French classic authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Writer's name	Records for retranslations /total records	Source texts/ retranslations	Translator's name/ number of retranslations	Gender	Year of birth	Occupation beside translation	Publisher/ date of publication
Camus, Albert	5/15	3/3	Ádám Péter	M	1946	college professors	Európa 2016
			Kiss Kornélia	F	1969	professors	
			Dunajcsik Mátyás	M	1983	writer	Jelenkor 2020
			Vargyas Zoltán	M	1953	–	Jelenkor 2019
Flaubert, Gustave	1/27	1/1	Romhányi Török Gábor–	M	1945	–	Napkút 2010
Maupassant, Guy de	2/29	1/1	Bognár Róbert	M	1946	ex-editor at Európa	Ulpius 2007/2014
Rabelais, François	3/4	3/3	Gulyás Adrienn 2	F	1977	college professor	Osiris 2010 Osiris 2015
			Csordás Gábor 1	M	1950	editor, publisher	Jaffa 2017
de Saint-Exupéry, Antoine	12/59	1/6	Ádám Péter	M	1946	–	Lazi 2015/2017
			Dunajcsik Mátyás	M	1983	writer	Pájer D. 2015 Sztalker Csoport 2018
			Takács M. József	M	1961	editor at Helikon	Helikon 2015, 2019, 2020
			Burján Monika	F	1964	college professor	Könyvmolyképző 2017
			Pálfi Rita	F	N/A	N/A	Napraforgó 2014
			Vida Erika	F	1970	ethnographer, editor	Roland 2016
Zola, Émile	2/30	1/1	Jancsó Júlia	F	1955	teacher	Ulpius 2013

Table 3. Retranslations of six classic French authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Table 3 shows six of the ten French classic authors considered; four of them, Honoré de Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo and Jules Verne, were not retranslated into Hungarian between 2000 and 2020 (Dumas, Verne and Saint-Exupéry do not appear as canonical French writers in Bloom's listings, 1994, pp. 531-567, unlike the other French authors investigated). Several publishers reprinted translations from the 1920s for the last four novelists. Also, electronic editions abound (29 out of a total of 47 records for Balzac, 55 out of 88 for Dumas, 11 out of 22 for Hugo and 81 out of 189 for Verne). This might be seen as a cost-effective strategy of publishers, as they favor old translations instead of financing new ones, and publishing them in an e-book format rather than on paper. For the six retranslated authors, the percentage of records representing retranslations against the total number of records in Table 3 is 15.2% (25/164), i.e., considerably lower than for American (29.6%) and British authors (45%, or 37% without Austen). Retranslating classics seems a less intense activity from French than it is from English.

Four authors have only one of their novels retranslated, Camus and Rabelais have three each. Each text has only one retranslation except for Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* [*Le petit prince*], which was retranslated six times between 2014 and 2017. The rush of publishers to have the text retranslated can be explained by the expiration of Saint-Exupéry's copyright as of 1st January 2015 (a similar rush occurred in Turkey, where a few days after the expiration of Saint-Exupéry's copyright, twenty new editions and retranslations were released [Berk Albachten & Tahir Gürçağlar, 2019a, p. 225]). Also, 28 of 47, i.e., 60% of the total records for *The Little Prince*, were reeditions and reprints of György Rónay's 1970 translation published by Móra.

Altogether, ten source texts and fifteen retranslations were involved in the study. The sex ratio of translators was balanced (7 men, 6 women), although men retranslated more texts (56.6%) than women (43.3%). However, if you exclude Saint-Exupéry, whose *The Little Prince* shows an equal distribution of male and female translators, the sex ratio is 61.1% vs 38.8% in favor of men. The French corpus is well supplied with biographical data: only one female retranslator, Rita Pálfi, was not traceable. The average age of female retranslators for French is 47.4 years, and 57.8 years for men at the time their respective retranslations appeared, the average age of both sexes combined being 54 years. Dunajcsik, Ádám and Gulyás retranslated two novels each; all the other retranslators, one. Also, unlike retranslations in English, publishers seem more cautious with French classics: 9 of 12 editors published one retranslation based on the corpus, and the remaining three did not publish more than two. As for the occupations of retranslators besides translation, 5 of 13 (38.4%) work in education (4 college professors/1 teacher) and four are also editors (30.7%). Bognár, Csordás, Romhányi, Takács M. and Vargyas are all translators of French with an impressive record of translations, prizes and awards, with a well-developed professional network, still actively working for publishers. There is only one writer in Table 3, Dunajcsik, who is also the youngest retranslator.

4.4. Retranslations of Russian classic authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Writer's name	Records for retranslations/ total records	Source texts/ retranslations	Translator's name	Gender	Year of birth	Occupation beside translation	Publisher/ date of publication
Bulgakov, Mikhail Afanasyevich	4/29	1/1	Hetényi Zsuzsa	F	1954	college professor	GoodBooks 2011 Aliena 2013 Európa 2017
Dostoevsky, Fyodor Mikhailovich	1/55	1/1	Vári Erzsébet	F	1957–2011	college professor	Jelenkor 2004
Turgenev, Ivan Sergeevich	1/17	1/1	Gy. Horváth László	M	1950	ex-editor, editor-in-chief at Európa	Helikon 2019

Table 4. Retranslations of three classic Russian authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Table 4, which presents retranslations of Russian classic novels between 2000 and 2020, seems to illustrate a peculiar case of non-retranslation. Except for Pasternak, all of them are mentioned in Bloom's lists as canonized authors of Russian literature (1994, pp. 531-567). Of the ten writers, seven were not retranslated at all, and the low number of total records or the absence of records in the OSZK filtering also indicates a loss of interest in Russian literature in Hungary (Nikolai Gogol 20, Ivan Goncharov 0, Maxim Gorky 0, Mikhail Lermontov 1, Boris Pasternak 3, Aleksandr Pushkin 8, Lev Tolstoy 35). As already mentioned, prose and drama translations from Russian only represent 1.6%, 661 of a total of 39,793 records. Between 2000 and 2020, only three of ten authors and altogether three novels were retranslated: Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog* [*Sobach'e serdtse*], which had only existed in a 1986 samizdat translation, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* [*Prestuplenie i nakazanie*], and Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* [*Ottsy i deti*]. Statistics have improved since then, because Gy. Horváth retranslated Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* for Európa in 2021, and *War and Peace* [*Voyna i mir*] for 21. Század Kiadó in 2022.

The average age of the three retranslators is 57.6 years (52 for women, 69 for the only man, Gy. Horváth). Vári, 47 at the time of her Dostoevsky retranslation, worked and Hetényi still works as a college professor of Slavic languages. Hetényi has been active in organizing literary translation workshops for students, and has been the vice-president of the Hungarian Literary Translators' Association (Műfordítók Egyesülete) since 2020. Vári has translated books by Vladimir Nabokov and Venedikt Yerofeyev. Hetényi translated Nabokov, Joseph Brodsky, Isaac Babel and other famous authors. Hetényi has been and Vári was a well-known figure in academia as well as in literary translation. Gy. Horváth is probably the most prolific retranslator in Hungary: he worked at Európa as an editor and editor-in-chief and translates from English, as well as from Russian. After he retired, he retranslated *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper, three novels from Updike's *Rabbit Series* and the three Russian classics mentioned above.

4.5. Retranslations of German classic authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Writer's name	Records for retranslations/ total records	Source texts/ retranslations	Translator's name	Gender	Year of birth	Occupation beside translation	Publisher/ date of publication
Hesse, Hermann	11/49	3/3	Horváth Géza	M	1956	college professor, editor	Cartaphilus 2004/2016 Helikon 2016/2018
Kafka, Franz	4/19	1/1	Györfly Miklós	M	1942	college professor, editor	Palatinus 2002 Helikon 2015/2019/2020
Kästner, Erich	4/95	4/4	Perczel Enikő	F	N/A	dramaturge	Móra 2018
			Lendvay Katalin	F	1945	editor	Európa 2000
			Simon László	M	N/A	N/A	Akkord 2012
			Jeney Margit	F	N/A	N/A	General Press 2005
Mann, Thomas	1/34	1/1	Györfly Miklós	M	1942	college professor, editor	Gabo Kiadó 2016
Remarque, Erich Maria	1/26	1/1	Ortutay Katalin	F	1960	college professor	Cartaphilus 2008

Table 5. Retranslations of five classic German authors into Hungarian (2000–2020)

Half of the classic German prose writers selected for the analysis (Heinrich Böll, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Günter Grass, Patrick Süskind and Stefan Zweig with 6, 17, 13, 9 and 24 records in the OSZK filtering, respectively) were not retranslated between 2000 and 2020. Grass, translated into Hungarian from 1968 on, did not get retranslated despite his Nobel Prize in 1999: *The Tin Drum* [*Die Blechtrommel*] was republished in its 1973 translation three

times in the 2000s by Európa. Despite Tom Tykwer's movie of the same title in 2006, Süskind's *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* [*Das Parfum: Die Geschichte eines Mörders*] (5 out of 10 records) has not been retranslated either. Remarque, Süskind, Kästner and Zweig are not mentioned by Bloom as canonical authors (1994, pp. 531-567), so the overlap of canonical and popular or "trending" as classic is 60% for the German corpus. Only Hesse had three of his novels retranslated, the other four authors only one each. Altogether, ten novels of five authors were retranslated, and each has one new translation. The percentage of records representing retranslations from German (including reprints, e-book editions) as to the total number of records in Table 5 is 9.4% (21/223); excluding Kästner, representing youth literature with the highest number of 95 total records, the figure is 13.2% (17/128 records). That percentage is lower than what was found in French, but somewhat higher than the Russian result. It is also interesting that the number of retranslations for Kästner – 4 out of a total of 95 records – seems very low. Each of these four retranslations is of a different novel. *Emil and the Detectives* [*Emil und die Detektive*] appears in 20 records, 1 being the new translation and 19 representing writer Tibor Déry's 1957 translation. This confirms publishers' preference to reuse old translations, with no copyright issues involved.

The gender distribution seems to favor women (3 male versus 4 female translators), but for Kästner, women strongly outweigh men with a ratio of 3:1. Also, excluding Kästner, the sex ratio is 2:1 in favor of men, and the two male translators, Györffy and Horváth, authored five of the ten retranslations in the German corpus. As for other languages, the traceability for retranslators of German youth literature appears worse than for the others: the year of birth could not be found for two female and one male, and there were no data on professional occupation for one female and one male retranslator of Kästner.

The average age of male retranslators at the time of the publication of their retranslations was 60.5, for women, 51.5 years, the average age independent of gender being 56 years. As for their other professional activities, three of the translators work as college professors (two of whom are also editors), one only works as an editor, and another is a dramaturge. Györffy and Horváth illustrate a case in which the retranslator is in an editorial position for the retranslated author: Györffy was the editor in charge of the complete works of Kafka when he retranslated *The Trial* [*Der Prozess*] (2002), and translated *Lost in America* [*Der Verschollene*] (2003) for Palatinus, while Horváth edited the Hesse collection for Cartaphilus. Horváth's name appears as "translator" in 18 out of the 49 records for Hesse. Their editorial position for the collection might have helped them move forward their retranslation projects with the publisher. Two of Horváth's three retranslated Hesse novels, *Journey to the East* [*Die Morgenlandfahrt*] (2004) and *Demian* (2006) for Cartaphilus, appeared hardly a decade after they had been translated by Halasi (1998) and Kászonyi (1992) for Európa, which suggests that Horváth, tasked with editing the complete works, managed to convince the publisher to pay for two retranslations, instead of using Halasi's and Kászonyi's relatively recent versions.

5. Discussion

The corpus of this study involving Hungarian retranslations of fifty classic authors in four culturally dominant languages seems to confirm international trends in the translation market, as described by Heilbron and Sapiro (2007, pp. 95-97). As shown in Table 6, the hyper-central position of English in the translation market is also undeniable in retranslation: 37 classics gave rise to 53 new translations, which means that several texts were retranslated in Hungarian twice or more between 2000 and 2020. None of the French, German or Russian authors had the privilege of having more than one retranslation per source text, except for Saint-Exupéry. Also, the rate of retranslated authors is the highest for the American and British classics (80%),

and so is the percentage of records representing retranslations (reprints, reeditions, e-books and audiobooks,) as opposed to the total number of records for the authors investigated, with an average of 37.3%, i.e., more than one-third of the total number of records. The fact that retranslations from English are reprinted or reissued presupposes a steady demand for them on the Hungarian market.

Table 6 also suggests that the more dominant or central a source language, the more its authors and novels get retranslated, and the higher the frequency of retranslations (parallel retranslations, more reprints and reeditions). French and German produced similar results, well behind the Anglo-American lists, although retranslation seems a bit more intense in French than in German, with one more retranslated author, more retranslated texts and a higher percentage of records representing retranslations: 15.2% vs 9.4%. The loss of interest in the retranslation of Russian literature is obvious and confirms Heilbron and Sapiro's claim of a sharp drop in the number of translations from Russian in the ex-communist bloc after the disintegration of the Soviet Union (2007, p. 97).

The overall average percentage of retranslations versus the total number of records for all four languages considered is 21%, meaning that retranslations account for one-fifth of the total records for the authors retranslated. The remaining records concern older translations or translations of other works of the authors examined. This implies that, all four languages combined, older translations compete to a significant extent with new ones. The simultaneous publication of old and new translations by rival publishers is a recurring phenomenon observed throughout the corpus. To present just two examples, *Emil and the Detectives* by Erich Kästner appears in 20 records, 1 being the new translation and 19 representing reeditions and reprints of writer Tibor Déry's 1957 translation. Also, Könyvmolyképző published Maupassant's *Bel-Ami* in the 1952 translation by Marcell Benedek in 2007, the year Róbert Bognár's retranslation was published by Ulpus. The relatively small proportion of retranslation records (one-fifth to one-third of the total number of translation records, see the second columns in Table 1 to Table 5) and the low occurrence of parallel retranslations during the period examined seem to confirm the assumption that retranslation is a costly enterprise for publishers who would rather opt for non-copyrighted previous translations than pay for a new version of the same text.

Source language	Source texts/ retranslations	Retranslated authors out of ten	Percentage of retranslation vs total number of records
American English	12/16	8	29.6
British English	25/37	8	45
French	10/15	6	15.2
German	10/10	5	9.4
Russian	3/3	3	5.9

Table 6. Retranslation activity according to source language

As for age, gender and occupation, the main results we can induce from this study for Hungarian retranslators of classic literature between 2000 and 2020 are as follows. For retranslators whose year of birth was available, the average age for men is 56.8, for women it is 53.8, and for both sexes combined, 54.7 years, at the time their retranslations were published (Table 7). This number is lower than expected when compared to the highly-mediatized examples of retranslators mentioned in the introduction, and not significantly different for the two sexes. The fact that retranslators are on average in their mid-fifties implies, nonetheless, that they are not inexperienced translators. The lack of data and untraceability of certain retranslators

mentioned in Tables 1 to 5 needs to be highlighted, as “invisible” retranslators are mostly women retranslating youth classics or romantic literature (9 female versus 1 untraceable male retranslator in Table 2). Retranslators of non-youth literature enjoy better visibility according to Tables 1 to 5, yet in general men’s visibility remains superior to women’s.

Source language	Age of male retranslators	Age of female retranslators	Average
American English	50	N/A	50
British English	47	64.5	55.8
French	57.8	47.4	54
German	60.5	51.5	56
Russian	69	52	57.6
Average	56.86	53.85	54.7

Table 7. Average age of retranslators according to gender and source language

Table 8 summarizes the percentages of male retranslators for all authors in general and excluding youth (Twain, Dickens, Saint-Exupéry and Kästner) and romantic (Austen) authors. One tendency that can be observed is that the percentage of male retranslators is higher for all source languages, when youth and romantic authors are excluded, and their ratio varies between 2/3 for German and French and 4/5 for British and American English. The inclusion of youth classics and Austen in the British list, with 78.9% of her retranslators being women, mitigates this ratio and makes gender distribution look equal, with an average of 49.5% of male retranslators for the four lists that included a youth classic author. The issue of gender distribution among retranslators is, however, more complex and needs to be further investigated with a representative sample. For French literary translators, Kalinowski found that women with the same level of education and in the same position feel much less entitled to translate consecrated authors, and the masculinization of the translation of classics, more so than the translation of contemporary authors, was undeniable (2002, p. 53)². Her findings confirm what is shown in the third column of Table 8: classic works of literature do not seem to always carry the same symbolic value, and the ones targeting young or female audiences attract less male retranslators (i.e., have less symbolic value).

Source language	% of male retranslators	% of male retranslators excluding romantic and youth classics
American English	62.5	70
British English	39	81
French	53.8	61.1
German	42.8	66.6

Table 8. Percentage of male retranslators in general and excluding romantic and youth classics

Lindqvist’s (2021, p. 146) findings in a pool of 15 acknowledged translators of Spanish Caribbean literature into Swedish are also intriguing, and would introduce another factor to be considered regarding gender distribution: the unequal power relations of source languages. Besides the fact that most of the translators were of advanced age (8 born before 1950), Lindqvist found that 12 of the 15 translators were women. She also observed that the number

² “[O]n observe dans la traduction un primat de la variable sexuelle sur celle du capital académique : à niveau de diplômes et de positions égales, les femmes sont infiniment moins nombreuses que les hommes à se sentir investies du “droit” de traduire les auteurs consacrés. La masculinisation de la traduction des “classiques”, plus encore que celle de la littérature contemporaine, est un fait patent.” (2002, p. 53)

of novels translated from the Spanish Caribbean region by these 15 translators was low, and Spanish went from fourth place in the 1990s to sixth in 2015 in the translation market in the target culture (p. 146). Comparing her results with mine, it might be worth investigating whether there is a correlation between the prevalence of female translators and the symbolic power and cultural prestige of the source language.

As Bourdieu claims, “positions which become feminized are either already devalued ... or declining, their devaluation being intensified, in a snowball effect, by the desertion of the men which it helped to induce” (2001, p. 91). “[T]he progress made by women”, he continues, “must not conceal the progress made by men, so that ... the structure of the gaps is maintained”, which he refers to as “permanence in and through change” (2001, p. 91). Applied to the context of retranslation, Bourdieu’s logic would stipulate that female retranslators are more involved in retranslations of less central or dominant languages, and in books with less symbolic capital, targeting younger or specifically female audiences, while authors with more consecrating power writing in dominant languages will be more sought-after by male retranslators. Kalinowski’s (2002) and Lindquist’s (2021) findings and my results, partial as they might be, seem to support Bourdieu’s insight, but need to be verified against a representative corpus of data.

Source language	PUBLISHING	EDUCATION	LITERATURE
American English	5 editors	1 college professor	2 poets
British English	9 editors	1 college professor, 2 teachers	3 writers
French	4 editors, 1 publisher	4 college professors, 1 teacher	1 writer
German	3 editors	3 college professors	-
Russian	1 editor	2 college professors	-

Table 9. Occupation of retranslators outside translation, broken down by language

As for occupations of retranslators, not including translation, three relevant fields could be distinguished: publishing, education and literature. The most prominent occupation was that of editor. In 21st-century Hungary, editors seem very active in the retranslation of English-language classics (14 out of 22), representing the highest cultural value nowadays. 59% of them were men. Academia and education seem less relevant with 11 college professors and 3 teachers. German retranslators, Horváth and Györffy, who retranslated 5 out of 10 source texts in the German corpus, appear among both editors and professors. There are six writers and poets in the corpus, suggesting they are less interested in retranslations than editors or academic translators are. These results differ from those of Kalinowski, who found that consecrated foreign authors (published in the Bibliothèque de la Pléiade) are mostly translated by academic translators, with the rare exception of writers, well-endowed with symbolic capital (2002, pp. 50-51). In the Hungarian context, embeddedness in the publishing world, i.e. being an editor as well as a translator, possibly even an editor-in-chief, seems more relevant to becoming a retranslator than being an academic. The question of whether the retranslation of less central languages would attract more academic translators remains open for future research.

6. Conclusion

As a conclusion, it appears that the typical retranslator of classic literature in Hungary is more likely to be a man than a woman, in his mid-fifties, and an experienced translator, with strong

ties to publishing, having also worked as an editor. Despite its tentative nature, the present research conducted on a limited number of classic authors retranslated from four languages into Hungarian from 2000 to 2020 highlights a number of issues – mostly related to gender, agents of translation and power relations between them – that could, and should, be further investigated: Is the rate of female retranslators higher for classics targeting younger or female audiences? Does multi-level embeddedness into publishing (being a translator and an editor) help in acquiring retranslation commissions? Does the number of academic and/or female retranslators increase in less central or less dominant languages, and do male retranslators have greater visibility in the literary market than their female colleagues? The results found for the Hungarian context between 2000 and 2020 call for a large-scale, more representative study, preferably involving a group of researchers, to overcome the difficulties of identifying retranslations in large sets of data.

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 Adrienn Gulyás

University of Public Service
Ludovika tér 2.
1083 Budapest
Hungary

gulyas.adrienn@uni-nke.hu

Biography: Adrienn Gulyás is a Hungarian translator of French prose and an associate professor at the University of Public Service in Budapest. Among her most important literary translations are François Rabelais's *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua*, Patrick Modiano's *Honeymoon* and *Out of the Dark*, and Hervé Le Tellier's *Anomaly*. She was awarded the Centre national du livre's grant three times for her translations and was also the 2018 recipient of the Szekeres György medal for literary translation.



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The shifting value of retranslations and the devaluing effect of plagiarism: The complex history of Dostoevsky (re)translations in Turkish

Sabri Gürses & Mehmet Şahin

Boğaziçi University

Abstract

In this study, we use the history of translation and retranslation of Western literature into Turkish as the backdrop for a discussion of how the value of retranslations varies over time and in different contexts. We consider how the changing importance of key players influences the valorization of retranslations. Tracing the story of direct and indirect translations of Dostoevsky's works, we show how these variables change in the shifting target landscape. Our study also addresses the relationships, in the Turkish context, between copyright, commercial interests, and plagiarism in retranslations. We further the discussion, touching on the value and impact of retranslations in the age of artificial intelligence on the translation ecosystem. We also examine motivations for retranslations and how these change in the evolving cultural space. Our analysis of various periods of the (re)translational history of Dostoevsky in Turkish reveals shifts in the weight of different factors on the value of retranslations. State interventions, involvement of author-editors in the campaigns launched by publishing houses, plagiarism and digital technology have already had an impact on retranslations' value in the target context. The growing role of machine translation in the translation market is also expected to have substantial effects on value of retranslations.

Keywords

value of retranslation, direct and indirect translation, plagiarism in translation, machine translation, Dostoevsky

1. Introduction: The value of retranslations

Since Lawrence Venuti (2004) put forward the idea of retranslations' added value (either economic value, or symbolic value) in the target context, the issue of value has been discussed by translation scholars in terms of retranslations' novelty or the enriching effect they bring to the target culture and language. Even without an element of novelty, retranslations enrich the target context, whether the motivations for retranslating be commercial or literary. Commercial concerns are at play "when a publisher chooses to invest in a retranslation to capitalize on the sheer marketability of the source text," whereas literary motivations come to the fore when the aim is to produce "a more reliable edition of the source text or more incisive scholarly research or greater stylistic felicity" (Venuti, 2004, p. 97). It should be noted, however, that a publisher's commissioning a retranslation for commercial purposes can motivate a translator to build on the literary value of the translated work.

There is a strong body of research on retranslation in Turkey. Berk (1999) and Gürçağlar (2001) examined translations, and then retranslations (Berk Albachten & Tahir Gürçağlar, 2018) in Turkey, in the context of Westernization and modernization projects, but the effect of these projects on the value of translations and retranslations in the target system has not been thoroughly examined. Studies conducted since 2005 on the history of Turkish translations show that first translations, retranslations, and indirect translations are related in complex ways, and that serious issues such as plagiarism and copyright infringement have created a troubled history of retranslation in Turkish (Gürses, 2006), while similar cases had been revealed by Turell (2004) in Spanish. Turell's method of plagiarism analysis was expanded to work on Turkish retranslations of classics (Şahin et al., 2018) and since then the value of retranslations is being discussed in a new perspective.

Translations of Western literature into Turkish began in the 19th century and were generally indirect translations from French. The percentage of indirect translations remained high until the first half of the 20th century, a time when the state started subsidizing direct literary translations of Western classics. The late 1960s then saw the first wave of retranslations. A boom in retranslations started in the first years of the 21st century, and since then, the Turkish readership has been flooded with retranslations. Although translated literature has always been at the center of Turkish culture, the large number of retranslations raised suspicions about authorial ethics — were these indeed genuine retranslations? Research revealed that many of the so-called retranslations were in effect plagiarized versions or copies of earlier translations published under fake names (Gürses, 2008, 2011; Şahin, et al., 2018). This phenomenon is reminiscent of the concept of "revisions as assumed retranslations" (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010), yet most of these retranslations revealed to be plagiarisms.

Some scholars (e.g., Bensimon, 1990) have maintained that one reason for retranslating is a perceived need to get closer to the source text. Another reason is the ageing of previous translations. However, discussions in the last two decades have suggested that these are perhaps not the motivations for most retranslations (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004; Deane-Cox, 2014). Van Poucke (2017, p. 110), for example, argues on the basis of a multi-level corpus-based analysis of retranslations of Chekhov's plays, that "aging is relevant to register (style) and translation strategy, but not empirically proven on the lexical and syntactic levels." Does the assumption that "every generation deserves its own Dostoevsky, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Kafka, or Montaigne," as Van Poucke (2017, p. 93) says, also mean that the value of each retranslation in the target system is determined by the same factors?

The value of retranslations and specifically the question to know how that value could be assessed, is rarely discussed in the field of translation studies. Venuti's (2004) approach of looking at the issue from both commercial and literary perspectives is certainly helpful. In the

present study, however, we suggest that there are numerous other factors that come into play in determining the value of a translated work, and that it makes sense to consider how the weight of these factors changes over time in relation to the prevailing socio-cultural, political, and economic environment. Our goal is not, however, to present an economic analysis based on the retranslation process, nor do we seek a comparative stylistic analysis of retranslations to determine their literary, or stylistic value (e.g., Bolaños-Cuéllar, 2018). Instead, our analysis takes a historical approach to lay bare the multiple contextual factors that influence the value of a retranslation.

Social, cultural, political, technological, and economic conditions in the target language context can all affect the value of retranslations — in varying degrees — at any given time. This is only natural and to be expected, as the forces at play each have a different priority, or weight, in different periods. The value of a retranslation is also determined by the relative weight of the translator, the commissioner, the editor, or publisher, in the target translation system. Other factors include the popularity of the translated work in the target culture, the amount of time passed since the latest translation, the novelty of the retranslation, political relations between the source text country and the target text country — resulting, again, in a relative weight at a given point in time. Considering recent technological developments, we must also add to the list the share of human versus machine labor in the translation process. Each of these elements carries a different weight in determining the commercial and literary value of a translation product. The same is true for reception, a concept widely discussed in translation studies. Ziemann (2018), for example, discusses extratextual factors in the reception of retranslations from a critical perspective, arguing that even book covers can sometimes overshadow textual factors. The same can be applied to the discussion regarding the relative economic value of a retranslation, as positive reception usually translates into increased sales of the retranslated book.

Figure 1 shows the main factors leading to the first translation of a text (presented as pink boxes), the motivators of a retranslation (blue boxes), and factors that have a direct impact on the value of a retranslation (in black boxes). It should be kept in mind, however, that the importance of each of these factors is relative, as they carry a different weight in different contexts at the time of publication. For illustrative purposes and to concretize our argument, we will refer to Dostoevsky translations and retranslations into Turkish.

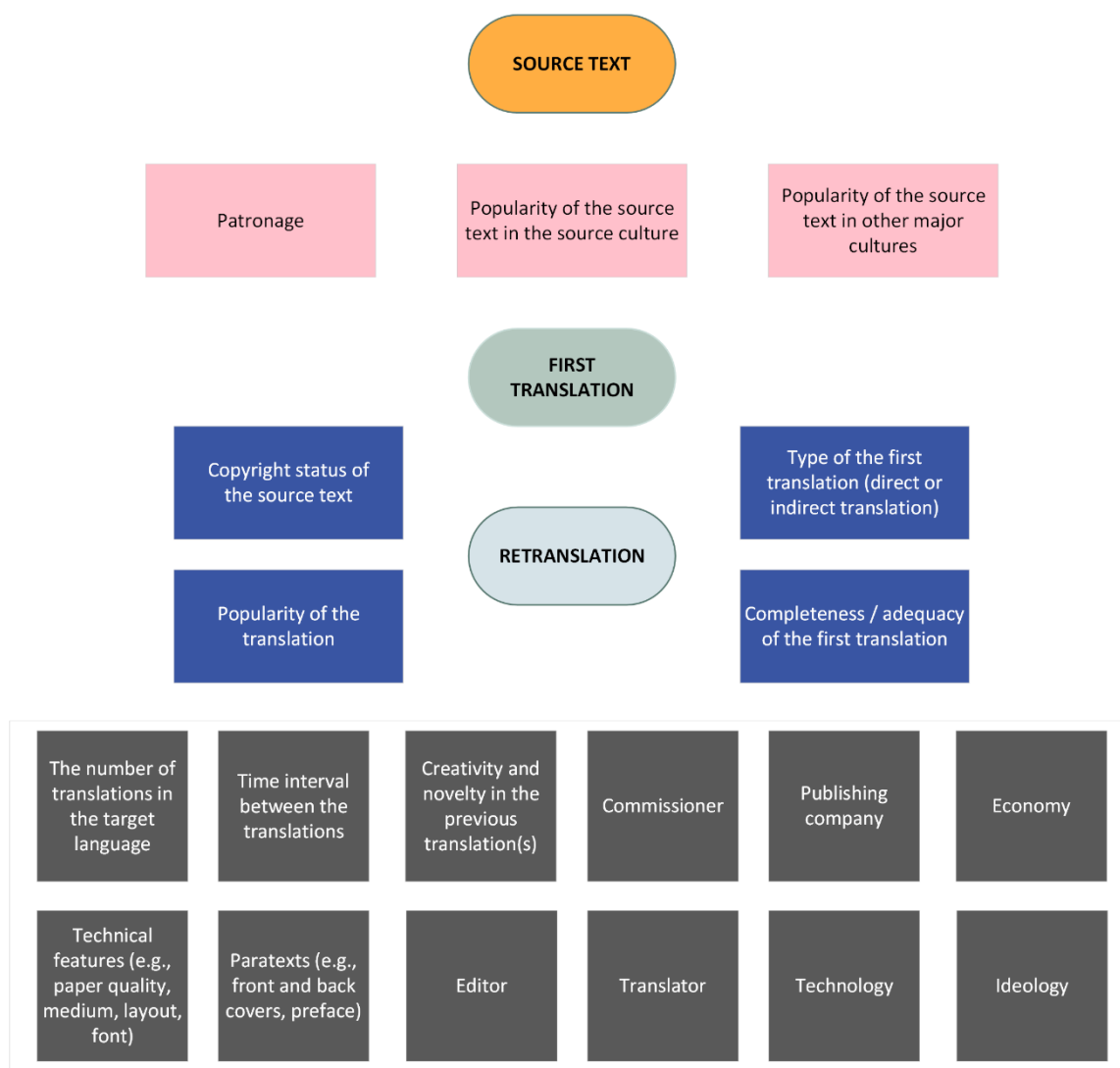


Figure 1. Factors that influence the value of a retranslation

2. Modernization and indirect translations

Translations played an important role in the Westernization and modernization of Turkey and Turkish literature at the end of the 19th century (Berk, 1999). The first translations had a unique value, as they introduced new genres, themes, and styles into the literary scene of the late Ottoman era. When the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, translated European literature was seen as an instrument of “literary canonization” (Gürçağlar, 2008, p. 37) and of achieving a desired place in Western civilization. Since then, the status and value of translated literature in the Turkish culture has evolved in phases. The translational history of Dostoyevsky’s works into Turkish reflects these subsequent phases (Gürses & Şahin, 2021).

During the Westernization period of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, the importation of Russian literature was believed to be a successful pathway to Westernization of Turkish society. One of the first histories of European literature in Ottoman Turkish was the *History of Russian Literature* (1895) by Madame Lebedeva-Gülnar, who was awarded by Abdülhamid II for her translations (Olçay, 2017, p. 46). Even as late as 1920, Celal Nuri İleri, an ideologue of Turkish modernization, exclaimed: “Oh, how I wish we Turks had a Pushkin, Lermontov,

Gogol, Tolstoy, or Turgenev!” (Gordlevski, 1961, p. 515). This opinion was widely shared. The admiration and imitation of Russian literature by the much-lauded Turkish poet Nâzım Hikmet, for example, is characteristic of the same period. In 1937, Nurullah Ataç, a literary critic and translator from French, noted, in an article on Pushkin and Russian literature, that translators should not forget that they were not only creating a beautiful pastime for readers, but also serving as models for national writers to emulate (Ataç, 1937). However, the importation of the Russian model was indirect, as the dominant European language for translations into Turkish, since the 19th century, was French. Until the late 1930’s, there were but a few examples, and these are more recent, of direct translations of Russian literature, including Dostoevsky. In 1942, Nihal Yalaza Taluy (1900–1968) became the first direct translator of Dostoevsky, from Russian into Turkish.

This situation is echoed by the English experience. Dostoevsky was admired by Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and other modernist writers, but English readers had few direct translations before Constance Garnett began translating Dostoevsky from Russian in 1912 (Moser, 1988, p. 435). Before that, the few 19th-century translations, by Maria von Thilo and Frederick Whishaw (an author himself) were stylized and condensed versions. Garnett’s effect on Virginia Woolf is exemplary. In 1912, she read Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* in an indirect translation from the French; after that, she read him in Garnett’s translations published between 1912 and 1920. In the end, Dostoevsky “provided her with valuable ammunition to topple the outworn edifice of the Edwardian novel, to define the merits of literature produced by ‘the moderns’ and to justify her own experimental approach” (Kaye, 1999, p. 67).

Dostoevsky’s effect on Turkish authors had to wait a little longer. The first Turkish translations of Dostoevsky’s works were made from French translations: *Белые ночи* (White Nights) (1918), *Кроткая* (A Gentle Creature) (1929), *Записки из Мёртвого дома* (The House of the Dead) (1933), *Братья Карамазовы* (The Brothers Karamazov) (1938), *Идиот* (The Idiot) (1941), *Преступление и наказание* (Crime and Punishment), *Игрок* (The Gambler) (1945). All of the translators responsible for these indirect translations were themselves authors, and their model texts were French translations; their translations were serialized in newspapers and adapted into plays. As Dostoevsky’s works garnered interest in the West, they had an impact in the Turkish context, as it was reflected in the growing number of translations.

3. The first state intervention and direct retranslations

In 1939, the Turkish Ministry of Education (hereinafter: MoE) started publishing direct translations of world literature from the original language. For the translation of Russian classics, they commissioned translators of Russian such as Taluy and others. The MoE distributed these commissioned translations to school libraries across the country, which had a substantial effect on the Turkish literary culture, as they helped villagers who had previously limited access to books to become readers of world literature. The government continued this enterprise by opening People’s Houses (*Halkevleri*) and Village Institutes (*Köy Enstitüleri*) and promoting Western ways of education and living (Gürçağlar, 2008, pp. 67-77). These institutions would be shut down during the Cold War owing to persistent claims that they were under Soviet-Russian influence, but before that, between 1942 and 1963, the MoE published translations of many Western authors, including the Russian canon: Pushkin, Tolstoy, Lermontov, and Dostoevsky. As for Dostoevsky, Taluy and other translators of Russian completed 15 translations for the ministry, three of which were retranslations, and one was an edited reprint of a previous translation from French (See Appendix 1). State intervention through the MoE encouraged direct translations (not only from Russian, French etc., but also from Greek, Latin, Persian, etc.). As a result, direct translation became the norm and helped translators such as Nihal Yalaza

Taluy to achieve the status of professional literary translators with regular job opportunities. Taluy became the leading name in Dostoevsky translations from that point forward.

4. The development of private publishing houses

The Turkish private publishing sector was still underdeveloped, and publishers were few until the MoE's 1939 intervention, which boosted the cultural market, increased the number of readers, and fostered the habit of reading. It also helped to establish the norm of direct translation from the original language, although that did not prevent some publishers from pursuing indirect translations and retranslations of long sellers such as Dostoevsky.

One of the translators who adapted to and benefited from this norm was an editor of the MoE's Translation Bureau: Yaşar Nabi Nayır. Nayır left the MoE in 1946 to start his own publishing house, Varlık. He was a translator from French and collaborated with Taluy to publish Russian literature in Turkish. After having translated three books of Dostoevsky for the MoE, in 1951 Taluy began translating Dostoevsky for Varlık Publishing, where she translated a total 11 works of Dostoevsky and became the near-official translator of Dostoevsky, just like Constance Garnett in the English context. Taluy produced over 50 translations from Russian literature (see Figure 2 and Appendix 1).

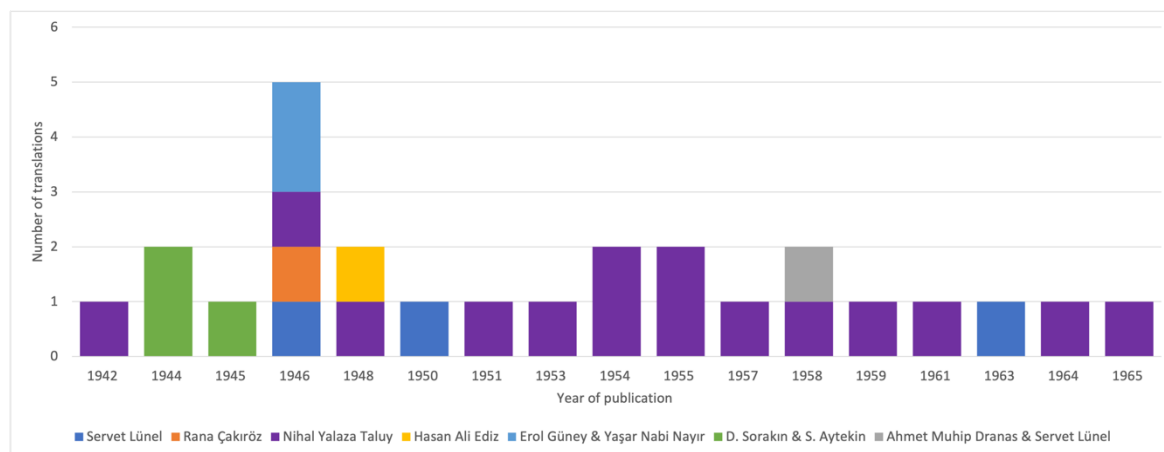


Figure 2. Translations of Dostoevsky from Russian published by the MoE (1942–1965)

After Taluy's death in 1958, Varlık Publishing commissioned two new translators from Russian, Mehmet Özgül (1936-) and Ergin Altay (1937-), to complete the Varlık-Dostoevsky collection with retranslations. At that time, other publishers produced retranslations of Dostoevsky, but there were only a few Turkish literary translators capable of translating from the Russian. As a result, they resorted again to indirect translations from French. In the 1960s, the publishing house Ak Kitabevi published two Dostoevsky retranslations from French (*The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment*). Then, the end of that decade saw the first wave of retranslations of Dostoevsky from Russian. And after that, each decade witnessed new retranslators of Dostoevsky: Leyla Soykut (1921-1974), Ahmet Ekeş (1944-2017), and Mazlum Beyhan (1948-) who worked for the new publishing houses: Altın, Ararat, Cem, and Sosyal (see Figure 3).

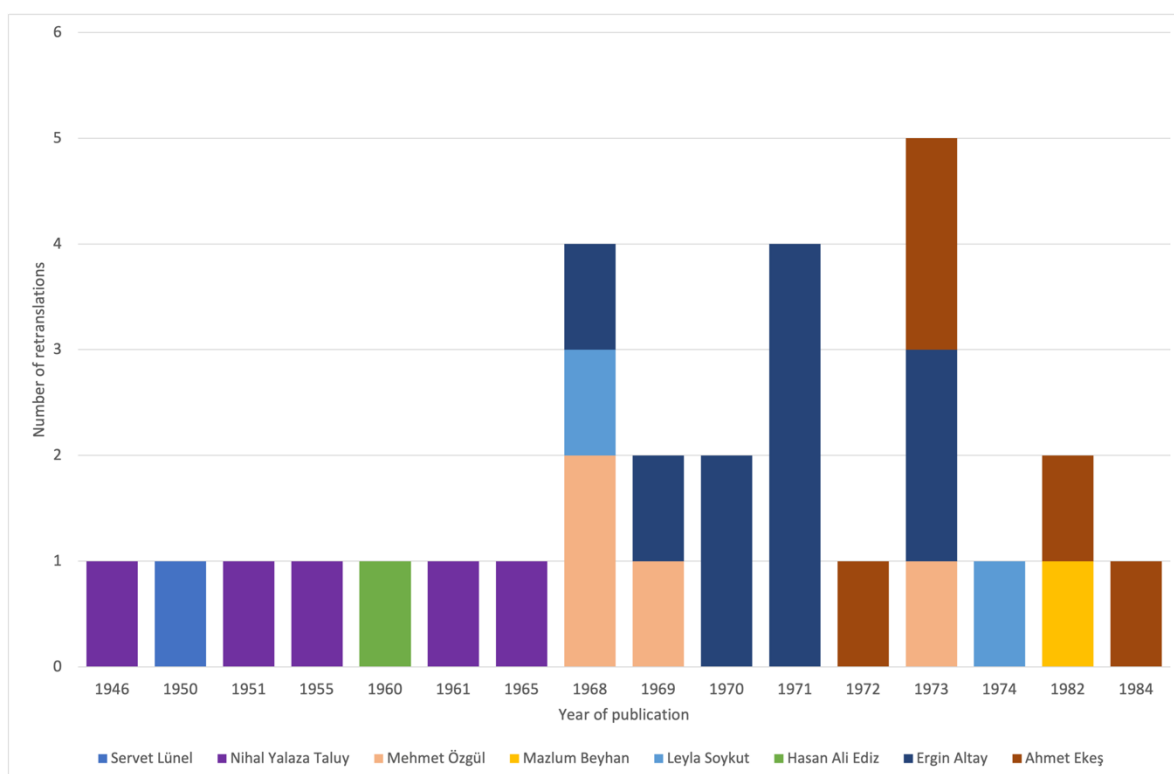


Figure 3. Early retranslations from Russian (1946–1984)

At the same time, to complete this complex picture, the MoE continued to reprint its Dostoevsky series until 2001, when it was stopped and Nihal Yalaza's translations were picked up by several publishers. Three of these were taken over by Can Publishing and five by İş Bankası Publishing, which added value to their already published collections of Russian literature, because her name attracted and persuaded readers. Can Publishing has reprinted the retranslations by Özgül and Altay until 2000, then both translators accepted a proposal by the famous author Orhan Pamuk for a complete collection of Dostoevsky. After adding translations by Nihal Yalaza to fill a few gaps in their collection, Can Publishing commissioned new retranslations of Dostoevsky from Russian by a new generation of translators (see Appendix 2).

5. The role of author-editors

In 2000, Orhan Pamuk started curating a collection of translated Russian classics for his publisher, İletişim Publishing. The collection included the works of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Gogol and others, and the translations included in the collection were a mix of old and new retranslations by Altay, Özgül, and Beyhan. Pamuk wrote prefaces for each book, in which he commented on his deep affinity with Russian literature, comparing his own craftsmanship to the artistry of these famous Russian authors, supporting the simile with selected articles by famous literary critics. This project helped to strengthen his reputation as a world class novelist, a few years prior to being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2006.

Dostoevsky was the first and central figure in Pamuk's project. The Dostoevsky collection was launched in 2000, with reprints of five retranslations: *Записки из подполья* (Notes from the Underground) (1968) and *Белые ночи* (White Nights, 1969) by Mehmet Özgül; *Униженные и оскорблённые* (The Insulted and the Injured), *Бесы* (The Possessed), and *Бедные люди* (Poor People) by Ergin Altay. In 2001, Altay retranslated *Crime and Punishment*, in 2003 Mazlum Beyhan retranslated *The Idiot*, and the rest of the collection was completed by Altay in 2014. The

collection was advertised as “Dostoevsky with his complete works, under the general direction of Orhan Pamuk. With unabridged translations from the original language. Including the most important articles and prefaces ever written about these books” (our own translation). Pamuk left the project in 2013 when he changed publisher, but by then the project had grown to include translations of English and French classics as well.

Pamuk’s collection gave Turkish readers a new perspective on Dostoevsky. By alluding to the similarity of his own writings to the style of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, and implying that Russians and Turks had a common sentimentality and attitudes toward the West, he initiated a new reading of Dostoevsky. This may have had an impact on the translations of his books into Russian, as in Russia he is known as a good commentator and admirer of Russian literature (Muratkali, 2017).

Authors who are also editors have always been able to valorize translations, as exemplified by Yaşar Nabi Nayır. Before establishing his publishing house, Nayır had launched a literary magazine under the same name (*Varlık*), and the books he published were presented and promoted in this magazine. Both the magazine and the publishing house still exist (Koçak & Yağcı, 2018).

6. Second state intervention

Pamuk’s Russian classics project coincided with another MoE intervention in 2005. To promote a reading habit in the country, the Ministry set up a commission tasked with compiling a list of “100 must-read books” for schools. The list included Russian works, among which Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*. This time, however, the MoE’s was not in the role of publisher, but a supporter of the publishers with an aim to encourage the Turkish youth to read quality literature. At the time of this second intervention, four translations of *Crime and Punishment* from Russian were already on the market. It is these extant translations that draw new added value from the new state intervention as such official book lists were still deemed principled as well as prescriptive by the general public.

However, this second intervention had a downside. Publishers began competing for translations and retranslations of the books on the list. This had a negative effect on their commercial value, as publishers tried to find ways to lower costs. In the case of Dostoevsky, previous translations and retranslations had already been purchased by several publishers (Can, İletişim, İş Bankası etc.). Now, the number of retranslations increased as other publishers tried to enter into this novel and promising market. Some used the translations they could acquire to enrich their collection of classical works; others commissioned new translations. Within a few years, three more retranslations of *Crime and Punishment* appeared in the market. This forced publishers to invent sales strategies to compete with other re/translations and lowering the price of the book was an effective strategy. The price differences and the sheer number of retranslations on offer brought readers to question the value of retranslations.

7. Copyright-free and plagiaristic publishing

Inadvertently, the 100-must-read-books campaign promoted by the MoE also flooded the book market with plagiaristic, forged so-called “rettranslations” of Dostoevsky and other authors on the list. To get their share of the commercial value, several publishing companies produced counterfeit translated books. Overnight, unknown “retranslators” appeared on the market, with over 50 new translations of classics they had supposedly produced. Their “publishers” advertised these purported retranslations in the media and bookstores, with attractive prices because they were not obliged to pay royalties or purchase the copyright for either the original text nor its translation. Readers found themselves caught in a dysfunctional translatisphere (Şahin & Gürses, 2022), in which it had become difficult, if not impossible

altogether, to differentiate between a genuine Dostoevsky re/translation and plagiarism. Unlike what happened during the first MoE intervention, when the Ministry vouched for the quality of the translations, this time readers had no other option than to choose between the available translations, without being able to differentiate between the actual translations, and the counterfeit ones. How are readers to know that so-called translators such as Celal Öner or Mustafa Bahar are fake names? Even though a few literary critics commented on this issue, they were not able to drive these impostor plagiarists out of the market. (See Appendix 3 for the huge number of fake and real Dostoevsky publishers according to the titles published in this period.)

When there are numerous retranslations and plagiarisms in the translation market, some readers pay attention to the quality and originality of translations; others become inured to inferior quality due to constant exposure to what could be described as a polluted translation ecosystem (Gürses, 2006). The youth, especially the generation born just after the turn of the millennium (Generation Z), may be considered more susceptible to the degenerative effects of plagiarism in translation, i.e., these so-called retranslations that are poorly produced through “transcollaging” (collating or copy-pasting parts of different translations). In addition, advances in translation technologies and the increasing use of raw, unedited machine translation (MT) output are likely to only exacerbate the vulnerability of the Turkish translation market to counterfeit translations.

8. Digital technology

The increasing role of digital technology in translation has paved the way for improved translation performance and sharper analytical skills. Translators are now able to delve deeper into the source text to produce more dialogical translations, which leads to a more successful transfer of the original. The arguments put forward by Berman (1990) and Bensimon (1990) as motivations for retranslation, namely ageing and getting closer to the source text, which were then developed into the “Retranslation Hypothesis” by Chesterman (2000), are perhaps outdated in this respect. Such arguments stemmed from a time when the transfer from a source into a target text was a matter of much effort and time; today, digital tools have changed and enriched the process of reproduction of a source text in a target text. It is now possible to create a translation almost instantly with the help of neural machine translation (NMT) or to modify an existing translation with editing tools powered by artificial intelligence (AI).

With the proliferation of personal computers and the advent of the Internet, the literary publishing sector as well began its digital journey, that is, translated texts began to circulate in the digital environment. In previous research, it was found that digital tools played an important part in the creation of plagiaristic, forged retranslations (Şahin et al., 2015). Today, plagiarisms of translations are usually reproduced with text editing software that alters the syntax, changes words, and amends the style of an original translation. There are cases in which a plagiarized translation becomes in turn the source text of yet another plagiarized version. Paloposki and Koskinen (2010, p. 46) referred to revisions that rely heavily on a previous translator’s work as plagiarism or “trans-piracy.” However, they could not have imagined the extent to which trans-piracy can corrupt a retranslation market like the one that has emerged in Turkey. In a retranslation, it is not uncommon to see the previous translations cited in a translator’s preface or editor’s note, but even that practice is now being subverted. The reprocessing power of digital tools poses a real danger to retranslation because such tools can lessen and devalue the originality of the work and lead to plagiarism, as has been observed in some academic publications. Foltýnek et al. (2020, p. 816), for example, describe “online paraphrasing tools as a severe threat to the effectiveness of plagiarism detection systems”. Gu, et al. (2022, p. 1)

highlight “the vast risk of potential image fraud based on artificial intelligence (AI) generative technologies in academic publications”. For example, the outputs produced by ChatGPT¹ tool developed by OpenAI have already intensified discussions on academic integrity (Gleason, 2022). Today’s digitized retranslation space is also filled with out-of-copyright translations. Apollonio (2015, pp. 239–240) underscores this fact with reference to English translations of Russian literature, noting that “[s]ome early translations are making a comeback in the digital age, for, whatever their literary value, they possess the economic benefit of expired copyright.” He cites as examples von Thilo’s *Записки из Мёртвого дома* (Buried Alive, 1881) and Whishaw’s *Преступление и наказание* (Crime and Punishment, 1886), which are currently available as e-books. As of 2023, the first Turkish indirect translations of *Преступление и наказание* (Crime and Punishment) and *Братья Карамазовы* (The Brothers Karamazov) by Hakkı Süha Gezgin will be out of copyright, with more to follow. It is to be expected that they will re-enter the market, either in print or as cheap e-books.

NMT has become yet another pressing issue for translators. It is widely recognized that for some language pairs, online MT systems provide satisfactory output, which can then be post-edited (Vieira, 2019), this increasing the speed of translation work. The increasing number of e-books in the market and the growing data traffic online have contributed to the improvement of MT, and neural machine translation systems provide increasingly better results even for language pairs such as English and Turkish, in several domains. MT researchers have now turned to a more challenging task: literary machine translation, and experiments have been conducted for the English-Turkish language pair (Şahin & Gürses, 2019, 2021), and will no doubt continue to be conducted in the future, given the ongoing need and demand for translation and retranslation. Such experiments and the increasing use of computer-aided translation (CAT) tools have the potential to change the very nature of retranslation, especially when the task is undertaken by novice translators.

Ever since the 1940s, the Turkish Dostoevsky retranslations have had a varying, yet significant cultural and market value in the target context, determined by different factors, and depending on when they were published. As NMT and AI technologies permeate the translation market, the scope of translators’ work and that of other agents in the translation process (e.g., editors, publishers) is changing. These technologies also affect translators’ level of engagement with texts. It is therefore to be expected that the value of retranslations will change significantly. In ten years or so, what will have the greatest impact on the value of a retranslation — either as a valorizing or a devalorizing factor? It might be the use of MT, or perhaps the customizability of retranslated texts through automatic transformation of the target text. As we move more and more to on-screen publishing and reading (especially in countries where paper prices have seen dramatic increases, this may become an unavoidable choice), the criteria by which a retranslation can be defined as a “rettranslation” might change. These might include the degree of difference between previous versions. Society at large has already accepted online-instant MTs such as Google’s as translators, but such NMT systems are also retranslators, and are changing the concept of retranslation as a new translation created after a previous translation’s linguistic ageing or out-datedness for literary or other reasons. The value of retranslations may well evolve in the direction of what we now already see in the Turkish context, that is, fast, easy, and perhaps fundamentally dishonest negation of human authority over translated texts. Yet, we would like to conclude with the hope that this will not be the case thanks to joint efforts by key actors including translators, translation studies scholars, translation organizations, publishers, and public institutions towards creating a fair translatisphere.

¹ <https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>

9. Conclusion

The history of retranslations of Dostoevsky's works into Turkish shows that the relative weight of the constituent elements of retranslation have changed over time. Measures designed to increase the value of a retranslation do not always lead to the desired outcomes. In the early retranslation period in Turkey, a relatively low value was placed on direct translations due to the existence of mostly indirect translations. However, in later periods, state support for direct translations added value to that practice. The retranslations of Dostoevsky in the 1960s and 1970s, on the other hand, regained value when they were integrated into Orhan Pamuk's project. Most of these are still on the market. The value of indirect translations, however, has declined in that second period, while direct retranslations are gaining ground. New retranslations created since the 1980s also seem to have added value, because they were created in a time of considerable advances in digital tools and online resources. But then, in the early 2000s, fake translations and plagiarisms inundated the translation market — usually under fake translator names. These were plagiarized versions of earlier translations and became to be placed alongside these earlier versions and real retranslations by well-known, real translators. The influence of these fakes on the value of retranslation in the Turkish context seems to be a two-sided coin. It can be regarded as positive, because the so-called retranslations, which were generally poorly done, raised readers' awareness of the efforts needed to produce a good and genuine translation, as evidenced by discussions on online platforms where readers evaluate and rate translations. Yet it is, quite obviously, also negative, because the presence of such counterfeit texts on both the physical and online market makes it difficult for the ordinary reader to find his way to truthful, genuine retranslations. We may also soon witness more involvement of MT and AI in the translation market. In another context, Gordin (2016) ironically referred to "The Dostoevsky Machine" in the title of his seminal article on the historical and political aspects of the Georgetown-IBM experiment². At the time of the experiment, the machines were not dealing with literary texts, but with scientific ones. But today, a Dostoevsky Machine — trained with Dostoevsky's original and translated texts — might not be far off. This is not mere speculation, for in a current research project (Şahin et al., 2022), translation and computer engineering researchers are already working to develop a MT system that will be able to reflect the style of a particular translator.³ The act of retranslating — which by its nature builds on previous work — will not be spared from the effects of further automation of the translation process, which will most probably change publishers', translators', and readers' reactions to, and perceptions of new translations.

Every Turkish translation of Dostoevsky, whether direct or indirect, has added value to the conception of his art in Turkey, and every translation has added something of its own time and creative environment. When a new Dostoevsky retranslation appears, it has the potential to build on the value created by previous translations, and its value often lies in factors other than the quality, novelty, or creativity of the new product. The value of a retranslation is revealed by its place in the cultural space, and in a cultural space with a weak tradition of literary criticism, underdeveloped or developing cultural institutions, or a market where the publishing of fake and plagiarized texts is allowed to proceed unchecked, the value of a retranslation is a fragile commodity.

² It was the first large-scale machine translation project in history. The experiment focused on the Russian-English language pair and received a significant amount of funding from institutions such as the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Science Foundation.

³ A scientific project entitled "Literary Machine Translation to Produce Translations that Reflect Translators' Style and Generate Retranslations" funded by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) started in November 2021 in Turkey.

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11. Acknowledgments

We dedicate our article to the people that were killed in the earthquake of February 6th, 2023 in Turkey and Syria. The magnitude of the earthquake was 7.4, but the high number of victims, over 48.000 and rising, is mostly due to the corrupt work of contractors and constructors who stole from the material. The blame also goes for the bureaucrats and officials that ignored this corrupt business. This is the same plagiarist culture that we have been trying to document for many years and in this article. May the victims of the earthquake rest in peace.

12. Appendix 1

Direct Translations of Dostoyevsky in the lifetime of Nihal Yalaza Taluy (Publishers: MoE and Varlık)

Title	Published in	Translator/s
*The Idiot (Идиот)	1942	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
Another Man's Wife and a Husband Under the Bed (Чужая жена и муж под кроватью)	1944	D. Sorakin and S. Aytekin
An Honest Thief (Честный вор)	1944	D. Sorakin and S. Aytekin
*A Gentle Creature (Кроткая)	1945	D. Sorakin and S. Aytekin
A Little Hero (Маленький герой)	1946	Rana Çakıröz
The Adolescent (Подросток)	1946	Servet Lünel
A Faint Heart (Слабое сердце)	1946	Erol Güney and Yaşar Nabi Nayır
A Christmas Tree and a Wedding (Елка и свадьба)	1946	Erol Güney and Yaşar Nabi Nayır
The House of the Dead (Записки из Мертвого дома)	1946	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
*Crime and Punishment (Преступление и наказание)	1948	Hasan Ali Ediz
The Village of Stepanichkovo (Село Степанчиково и его обитатели)	1948	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
Stories (Рассказы)	1950	Servet Lünel
The Landlady (Хозяйка)	1951	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
White Nights (Белые ночи)	1953	Nihal Yalaza Taluy

Title	Published in	Translator/s
The Gambler (Игрок)	1954	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
Poor People (Бедные люди)	1954	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
Notes from the Underground (Записки из подполья)	1955	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
The Eternal Husband (Вечный муж)	1955	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
The Insulted and the Injured (Униженные и оскорбленные)	1957	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
**The Possessed (Бесы)	1958	Ahmet Muhip Dranas, Servet Lünel
The Brothers Karamazov (Братья Карамазовы)	1958	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
Uncle's Dream (Дядюшкин сон)	1959	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
An Unpleasant Predicament (Скверный анекдот)	1961	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
*The Idiot (Идиот)	1963	Servet Lünel
Netochka Nezvanova (Нечка Незванова)	1964	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
The Double (Двойник)	1965	Nihal Yalaza Taluy

(* = retranslation; ** = edited by a direct translator)

13. Appendix 2

The publishing strategy of Can Publishing for Dostoevsky.

Title	Published in	Translator/s
White Nights	1982	Mehmet Özgül
The Brothers Karamazov	1982	Ergin Altay
The Idiot	1982	Mehmet Özgül
The Possessed	1982	Ergin Altay
The Adolescent	1994	Ergin Altay
The Idiot	2002	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
A Gentle Creature	2004	Mehmet Özgül
An Unpleasant Predicament	2005	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
Uncle's Dream	2005	Nihal Yalaza Taluy
White Nights	2009	Sabri Gürses
The Brothers Karamazov	2010	Ayşe Hacıhasanoğlu
The Double	2010	Sabri Gürses
Notes from the Underground	2011	Ergin Altay
The House of the Dead	2012	Sabri Gürses
Poor People	2013	Sabri Gürses
Crime and Punishment	2015	Sabri Gürses

When in 2001 Orhan Pamuk's collection was created in another company, İletişim and Özgül's and Altay's retranslations started to be published there. Can Publishing bought Taluy's translations and commissioned new retranslations.

14. Appendix 3

Dostoevsky titles and their publishers between 2000-2022.

The high number of publishers rings the plagiarism alert. Because, for example it is impossible

to have 68 translators to translate *Crime and Punishment*. But this doesn't imply that low number is plagiarism-free. For example, 7 out of 12 publishers of *The Adolescent* are known to be plagiarist-publishers, or the Zümer edition of *Another Man's Wife* is known to be fake. This list has been created from the data of two online bookstores, Kitapyurdu and Idefix. There are still a few other publishers-brands that have published Dostoevsky and other 100-books-to-read. Many of the publishers who published fake translations and plagiarisms no longer exist, but the books are still available in public libraries and bookstores.

An important thing to consider is this: Unlike Constance Garnett's and some other translators in English, not a single translation into Turkish is out of copyright yet. So, it is impossible for these publishers to print out-of-copyright texts.

A) *The Idiot* (31 publishers):

Aden, Akvaryum, Alfa, Alter, Amfora, Antik, Can, Dionis, Dorlion, Ema, Everest, Evrensel İletişim, Goa, Güven, İletişim, İlyas, İş Bankası, İskele, İthaki, Klas, Kum Saati, Kutup Yıldızı, Morpa, Nora, Oda, Ötüken, Sonsuz Kitap, Şule, Timaş, Üç Harf, Yason

B) *Another Man's Wife* (13 publishers):

Araf, Aslı, Helikopter, İletişim, İş Bankası, Kafekültür, Kapra, Karbon Kitaplar, Klas, Maviçatı, Mütena, Tutku, Zümer

C) *A Honest Thief* (6 publishers):

Can, Helikopter, İletişim, İş Bankası, Karbon Kitaplar, Kapra

D) *A Gentle Creature* (9 publishers):

Araf, Antik, Can, Doğan Kitap, İletişim, Karmen, Mütena, Notos, Oda, Yason

E) *The Adolescent* (13 publishers):

Can, Dionis, Engin, İletişim, İskele, Kapra, Kitap Zamanı, Kum Saati, Oda, Sonsuz Kitap, Üç Harf, Yason, Yordam

F) *The House of the Dead* (20 publishers):

Akyüz, Alter, Amfora, Antik, Bordo Siyah, Can, Dionis, Dorlion, Goa, İmge, İş Bankası, İskele, Kitap Zamanı, Kutup Yıldızı, Metropol, Oda, Olympia, Şule, Timaş, Zeplin

G) *Crime and Punishment* (68 publishers):

Aden, Akçağ, Akvaryum, Alfa, Alter, Amfora, Antik, Araf, Athena, Ayrıntı, Beda, Bilge Karınca, Bookcase, Bordo Siyah, Can, Cem, Dionis, Dionis, Doğan, Doğan, Doğu Batı, Dorlion, Elips, Ema, Evrensel İletişim, Goa, Gönül, İletişim, İlgi, İlyas, İmge, İş Bankası, İskele, İspinoz, İthaki, Kabalcı, Kaldırım, Kapra, Karaca, Karanfil, Karatay, Karbon Kitaplar, Kare, Kitap Zamanı, Klas, Kum Saati, Kuşak, Martı, Müjde, Mum, Mütena, Okumuş Adam, Pan, Panama, Papatya, Sahaf, Semele, Sis, Sonsuz, Timaş, Tropikal, Turna, Tutku, Uğur Tuna, Yason, Yılmaz, Yordam, Zambak

H) *The Landlady* (14 publishers):

Aslı, Can, Beda, Berikan, Helikopter, İletişim, İş Bankası, Kitap Zamanı, Klas, Kum Saati, Mütena, Oda, Timaş, Varlık

I) *White Nights* (45 publishers):

Akvaryum, Amfora, Antik, Araf, Araf, Aslı, Bahar, Beda, Beşir, Bilge, Bordo Siyah, Can,

Destek, Ema, Evrensel, Fark, İletişim, İş Bankası, İskele, Kafekültür, Kapra, Karbon Kitaplar, Karmen, Kavis, Kolektif Kitap, Kum Saati, Mahzen, Martı, Martı, Metropol, Mütena, Oda, Palto, Panama, Puslu, Ren, Sis, Timaş, Turkuvaz, Tutku, Varlık, Vaveyla, Zeplin

J) The Gambler (40 publishers):

Akvaryum, Alter, Amfora, Antik, Araf, Beda, Berikan, Bordo Siyah, Can, Dionis, Doğu Batı, Dorlion, Ema, Helikopter, İlgı, İlya, İmge, İş Bankası, İskele, İthaki, Kaldırım, Kapra, Karaca, Karbon Kitaplar, Kitap Zamanı, Kum Saati, Kutup Yıldızı, Mavi Yelken, Maviçatı, Mitra, Mütena, Oda, Panama, Rönesans, Salkımsöğüt, Sis, Tutku, Varlık, Yason

K) Poor People (28 publishers):

Akvaryum, Altınpost, Antik, Bahar, Can, Ema, Fark, Hece, İletişim, İlgı, İlya, İnkılap, Kanca, Kapra, Karaca, Karbon Kitaplar, Kenta, Kitap Zamanı, Mahzen, Maviçatı, Metropol, Oda, Toker, Tutku, Varlık, Yason, Zambak

L) Notes from the Underground (51 publishers):

Alfa, Alter, Altınpost, Antik, Araf, Armoni, Ayrıntı, Bahar, Berikan, Birey, Bordo Siyah, Can, Çeviribilim, Destek, Doğu Batı, Dorlion, Ema, Engin, Everest, Fide, Gülhane, Hayy, İletişim, İlgı, İlya, İş Bankası, İskele, İthaki, Kaldırım, Kapra, Karbon Kitaplar, Kum Saati, Librum, Mahzen, Martı, Maviçatı, Maviçatı, Metropol, Mütena, Notos, Oda, Puslu, Ren, Terapi, Timaş, Tutku, Yabancı, Yason, Yordam, Zeplin

M) The Eternal Husband (7 publishers):

Dorlion, Mütena, Araf, İmge, İletişim, Karmen, Oda

N) The Insulted and the Injured (19 publishers):

Alter, Amfora, Athena, Bordo Siyah, Dionis, Dorlion, Goa, İletişim, İmge, İş Bankası, İskele, Karbon Kitaplar, Kitap Zamanı, Kutup Yıldızı, Maviçatı, Oda, Sonsuz Kitap, Tutku, Üç Harf, Yason

O) The Possessed (9 publishers):

Akvaryum, Antik, Dorlion, Engin, İletişim, İnkılap, İş Bankası, Oda, Timaş

P) The Brothers Karamazov (25 publishers):

Akvaryum, Alfa, Alter, Amfora, Antik, Athena, Can, Dionis, Evrensel İletişim, İlasos, İletişim, İş Bankası, İskele, Kitap Zamanı, Maviçatı, Morpa, Oda, Ötüken, Sis, Sonsuz Kitap, Timaş, Üç Harf, Yason, Yordam

R) Netochka Nezvanova (5 publishers):

Aslı, İletişim, Klas, Oda, Varlık

S) The Double (11 publishers):

Antik, Bordo Siyah, Can, Dorlion, Fark, İletişim, İş Bankası, Kapra, Karbon Kitaplar, Varlık, Yason

T) The Village of Stepanichkovo (2 publishers):


İletişim, İş Bankası

	Dostoevsky Titles																		
Publishers	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Name/ Total Number	31	13	6	9	13	20	68	14	45	40	28	51	7	19	9	25	5	11	2
Aden																			
Akçağ																			
Akvaryum																			
Akyüz																			
Alfa																			
Altınpost																			
Alter																			
Amfora																			
Antik																			
Araf																			
Armoni																			
Aslı																			
Athena																			
Ayrıntı																			
Bahar																			
Beda																			
Berikan																			
Birey																			
Bilge Karınca																			
Bookcase																			
Bordo Siyah																			
Can																			
Cem																			
Çeviribilim																			
Destek																			
Dionis																			
Doğan Kitap																			
Doğu Batı																			
Dorlion																			
Elips																			
Ema																			
Engin																			
Everest																			
Evrensel İletişim																			
Fark																			
Fide																			
Goa																			
Gönül																			
Gülhane																			

	Dostoevsky Titles																		
Publishers	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Name/ Total Number	31	13	6	9	13	20	68	14	45	40	28	51	7	19	9	25	5	11	2
Güven																			
Hayy																			
Hece																			
Helikopter																			
İasos																			
İletişim																			X
İlgi																			
İlyâ																			
İmge																			
İnkılap																			
İskele																			
İspinoz																			
İş Bankası																			X
İthaki																			
Kabalcı																			
Kafe Kültür																			
Kaldırım																			
Kanca																			
Kapra																			
Karaca																			
Karanfil																			
Karatay																			
Karbon Kitaplar																			
Kare																			
Karmen																			
Kitap Zamanı																			
Klas																			
Kum Saati																			
Kuşak																			
Kutup Yıldızı																			
Librum																			
Mahzen																			
Martı																			
Maviçatı																			
Mavi Yelken																			
Metropol																			
Mitra																			
Morpa																			
Mum																			
Müşde																			

	Dostoevsky Titles																			
Publishers	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	
Name/ Total Number	31	13	6	9	13	20	68	14	45	40	28	51	7	19	9	25	5	11	2	
Mütena																				
Nora																				
Notos																				
Oda																				
Okumuş Adam																				
Olympia																				
Ötüken																				
Pan																				
Panama																				
Papatya																				
Puslu																				
Remzi																				
Ren																				
Rönesans																				
Sahaf																				
Salkımsöğüt																				
Semele																				
Sis																				
Sonsuz Kitap																				
Şule																				
Terapi																				
Timaş																				
Tropikal																				
Turna																				
Tutku																				
Üç Harf																				
Varlık																				
Yabancı																				
Yason																				
Yordam																				
Zambak																				
Zeplin																				
Zümer																				



 Sabri Gürses

Boğaziçi University
Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies
34342 / İstanbul
Turkey

sabri.gurses@boun.edu.tr

Biography: Sabri Gürses is a scholar in translation studies and an author and literary translator who specializes in translating Russian and English texts to Turkish. He graduated from Istanbul University in Russian Language and Literature and earned a master's degree in Translation Studies at the same institution. He then received a PhD in Russian Language and Literature from Erciyes University, with a concentration in Russian semiotics and Yuri Lotman. He is the editor of *Çeviribilim*, an online translation journal, and runs the *Çeviribilim* Publishing House. He has worked on plagiarism issues in translation since 2005 and has published numerous articles on the topic. His research interests include translation studies, history of translation and its technology, comparative literature, Russian culture and literature. He has several awards for his literary works and translations.



 Mehmet Şahin

Boğaziçi University
Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies
34342 / İstanbul
Turkey

mehmet.sahin5@boun.edu.tr

Biography: Mehmet Şahin is professor in the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. He completed his undergraduate studies in Translation and Interpretation at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey, where he also received a master's degree in Teacher Education. He holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Applied Linguistics/TESOL from Iowa State University. His doctoral research focused on computer-assisted language learning and educational technology. His current research interests include translation studies, translation and interpreting technologies, machine translation, and translator and interpreter education.



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Classic tales fresh from the oven: New perspectives on recent retranslations of children's literature in Croatia

Snježana Veselica Majhut

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Zagreb University

Edin Badić

University of Zadar

Sandra Ljubas

University of Zadar

Abstract

As the majority of research on retranslation has focused on comparing first translations and retranslations by conducting text analysis of a first translation and subsequent retranslation(s), some important elements pertinent to the context of retranslations have remained under-researched. This study aims to shed a better light on the motives and attitudes of various agents involved in the production of retranslations of children's literature. Three recent retranslations into Croatian of canonical works of children's literature (The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien, Pippi Långstrump [Pippi Longstocking] by Astrid Lindgren and Das doppelte Lottchen [Lisa and Lottie] by Erich Kästner) are explored. The data were obtained by semi-structured interviews with the retranslators, editors, and publishers of the selected retranslations. In addition, the peritext (afterwords) and epitext of the retranslations have been analyzed in order to reconstruct the attitude of publishers, editors, and retranslators to the particular retranslation and its predecessor(s). The findings suggest that retranslations of children's literature are motivated by various practical considerations, such as the translator copyright or requirements of the source text copyright holders. However, the analysis of the peritextual and epitextual material also suggests that both the retranslators and editors find firm ground in presenting the retranslations as anchored in the authority of source text authors.

Keywords

retranslation, editors, epitext, peritext, children's literature

1. Introduction

In the growing body of research on retranslation the initial focus was placed on verifying or refuting what came to be known as the Retranslation Hypothesis (RH). In short, the Retranslation Hypothesis, as summarized by Yves Gambier (1994), postulates that first translations tend to be more assimilating and that subsequent translations tend to get closer to the source text. A number of case studies (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004; Desmidt, 2009; O'Driscoll, 2011; Dastjerdi & Mohammadi, 2013; Prinzl, 2016) have been conducted in order to verify or refute RH by comparing source texts with their first translations and (re)translations. Two aspects of retranslations have attracted a particular scholarly attention: textual relations of first translations and retranslations and causes or motives for producing retranslations. With regard to the first aspect, a number of studies focused on establishing whether, as Bensimon claimed, first translations are often "naturalizations of the foreign works" (1990, p. ix, qtd. in Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004, p. 27), which, in the words of Gambier (1994, p. 414) tend to be "more assimilating" and "to reduce the otherness in the name of cultural or editorial requirements" while subsequent translations of the same work into the same language "mark a return to the source-text" (original emphasis)¹. In brief, this aspect of RH has been verified by some of the case studies conducted (Dastjerdi & Mohammadi, 2013) and rejected by others (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004, 2010; O'Driscoll, 2011; Desmidt, 2009), which leads us to agree with the following conclusion:

To sum up, the retranslations are affected by a multitude of factors, relating to publishers, intended readers, accompanying illustrations and—not least—the translators themselves. These are not adequately covered by the retranslation hypothesis. [...] RH only covers part of the ground of all retranslations: while there are numerous (re)translations that fit in the RH schema, there also exist several counter-examples where the schema is turned the other way round, and also cases where the whole issue of domestication/assimilation versus foreignization/source-text orientation is irrelevant. (Paloposki and Koskinen, 2004, pp. 34-36) (our emphasis)

In a similar vein, proposing the systemic approach to retranslation, Susanne M. Cadera describes the relations between the source text and its (re)translations as

a reciprocal, almost circular and truly complex one. Between these texts there is an interrelation that cannot be considered to be straight, linear or one-directional. More precisely, there is a circular relationship between the original and translated text, *where multiple actors, situations and contexts are involved*. (2016, p.11) (our emphasis).

Another aspect of retranslations that has attracted particularly close attention is related to the motives underlying the production of retranslations, or, in other words, to unravelling the "Why" of retranslations. Already in the early phases of scholarly engagement with retranslation Pym (1998, p. 144) pointed out that "[t]here are so many factors involved in translation that causation is more likely to be diffuse and multiple than focused and unitary". Several sets of motives underlying the production of retranslations have come to the fore: adaptation to changing cultural and translational norms (Du-Nour, 1995; Horton, 2013), ideological changes in target society (Kujamäki, 2001; Pokorn, 2012; Walsh, 2017; Ségeral, 2019; Özmen, 2019), introducing a new interpretation and addressing a different readership (Venuti, 2013), ageing of translations and a need to modernize target texts in order to accommodate them to changing language norms (Du-Nour, 1995). As for ageing of translations, Van Poucke (2017) points out that though frequently referred to, particularly in non-academic discussions, the concept

¹ All translations by the authors of this chapter, unless otherwise noted.

of ageing of translations has not been sufficiently elaborated to allow operationalization in translation studies research.

Other motives considered to deserve more thorough scholarly attention are economic considerations that may influence a publisher's decision to opt for a retranslation rather than some other mode of text reprocessing (such as revisions) as well as the roles played by different agents in the process of retranslation. Aware of the complexity of the retranslation phenomenon and the ensuing methodological difficulties, Paloposki and Koskinen (2010) suggest limiting the area of study instead of striving for an all-encompassing approach to retranslation. More precisely, they have decided to limit the area of study of retranslation in Finland by examining three areas and using different types of data and research methodologies. The three main areas they have focused on include "the extent and proportion of retranslation in Finland; the motives for and reception of retranslations (publishers, critics); and finally, what happens to a text when it is either retranslated or revised (textual analysis)" (2010, p. 30).

In this study we focus on one of the suggested areas: the motives for retranslations. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to unravel a complex web of motivations which lie behind the decisions taken by agents involved in the production of retranslations of classic children's novels in Croatia. In addition to the motives, we will also examine the attitudes of retranslators to previous translations and the ways retranslations are presented in the target culture.

Retranslation research is mainly focused on literary translation, particularly of canonized works. Among few studies of retranslation of non-literary texts, one should mention Susam-Sarajeva's study (2003) of retranslation of Barthes' theoretical works from French into Turkish and of Cixous's work English, von Flotow's study (2009) of the retranslation into English of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and Hawkins' study (2018) of the retranslation of Freud's works into English. As works of children's literature are very often translated several times, they constitute a substantial portion of retranslated literature. However, it seems that scholarly interest in retranslations of children's literature is not proportional to the volume of retranslations of such works produced. Still, retranslation of children's literature has been the topic of few studies. A particularly interesting is the study conducted by Myriam Du-Nour (1995), who studied a set of translations and retranslations of children's literature into Hebrew produced over a period of 70 years in "an attempt to trace some of the changes of norms of translation into Hebrew, especially in the linguistic-stylistic domain" (1995, p. 328). However, it should be noted that the study's primary aim is not to examine retranslation *per se*, but rather to use it as a suitable tool for tracing down changes in norms (cf. Susam-Sarajeva, 2003). Still, Du-Nour's findings cast a new light, empirically underpinned, on the phenomenon of retranslation of children's books. The study shows that the broader socio-cultural context and the particular historical moment in which retranslations and revised editions were published played a vital role in the linguistic shaping of (re)translations. Thus, Du-Nour found that an "elevated", quasi-biblical style of early translations for children, produced in the 1920s and 1930s, when the didactic role of translated children's literature was considered paramount, was gradually replaced with a more colloquial style and lexical choices that take into account ordinary, everyday language.

Since the early 1990s, when Croatia became independent, a substantial increase in the production of retranslations has been visible. However, not much research on Croatian retranslations has been conducted. Although her primary interest are retranslations of children's literature in the post-socialist period in Slovenia, Pokorn (2012) has also taken into account retranslations of children's literature in Croatia.

Therefore, the present study is an attempt to contribute to further research on the retranslation phenomenon by concentrating on two relatively under-researched aspects: motivation of the agents involved in retranslation projects and retranslation practices in the Croatian context.

2. Research aims and methodology

This study aims to shed a clearer light on the motives of various agents, primarily editors and translators, involved in the production of retranslations of children's literature in Croatia, as well as on the attitudes of retranslators towards previous translations in the target culture. In order to gain a more layered picture of the practice of retranslation in Croatia, three recent retranslations into Croatian of canonical works of children's literature, namely, *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, *Pippi Långstrump* by Astrid Lindgren, and *Das doppelte Lottchen* by Erich Kästner, were explored. The selected retranslations were published within a short time span. Thus, *Hobit ili Tamo i natrag* [*The Hobbit*], by Marko Maras was published in 2020 by *Lumen izdavaštvo*, *Pipi Duga Čarapa* [*Pippi Långstrump*] translated by Edin Badić, also an author of this paper, was published in 2021 by the publishing company *Znanje*, and *Blizanke* [*Das doppelte Lottchen*] translated by Vanda Kušpilić was published in 2021, also by *Znanje*. All of them are first retranslations of the corresponding source texts into Croatian and they all appeared after a long period during which the first translations were reprinted or published in revised editions. The first Croatian translation of *Pippi Långstrump* was published in 1973 by *Mladost*, at the time the largest Croatian publisher, which published a popular series of children's books *Vjeverica* [*The Squirrel*]. The first translation of *Pippi* comprised translations of three source texts *Pippi Långstrump* (1945/2016), *Pippi Långstrump går ombord* (1946/2016), and *Pippi Långstrump i Söderhavet* (1948/2016), which were merged into one target text. This translation was reprinted or published in revised and expanded editions from 1973 to 2015. The first translation of *Das doppelte Lottchen* into Croatian was published in 1969, also by *Mladost*, and was continually reprinted until 2012. The first translation of *The Hobbit* was first published in 1994 by *Algoritam*, at the time one of the largest publishers in Croatia. It had many reprints, with the last one published in 2014. Therefore, it should be noted that in all three cases the first translations were published and reprinted continually until the early 2010s. There followed a period of several years in which no reprints were published, and it ended with the appearance of the retranslations.

The first set of data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with the retranslators, editors, and publishers of the selected retranslations. The main research questions addressed were:

1. Who has commissioned a retranslation of the particular source text?
2. Why was it decided to commission a retranslation rather than to use some other mode of updating a translation (a revised edition)?
3. What motives lay behind this specific decision (commercial considerations, copyright issues, the ageing of previous translations, directness of a previous translation, ideological changes)?
4. How were the retranslators selected?
5. What was the attitude of the retranslators towards the previous translation?
6. What was the impact of the previous translation on the retranslators' decisions?

Due to the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19 at the time when the research study was carried out, four of the respondents replied to the questions sent to them by electronic mail: two retranslators (Edin Badić and Vanda Kušpilić) and two editors at *Znanje* (Silvia Sinković and Mirna Šimat). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with Marko Maras, the retranslator of

The Hobbit and Miroslava Vučić, the editor-in-chief at *Lumen izdavaštvo*. In addition to the data collected in semi-structured interviews, the peritext (afterwords) and available epitext (both material and digital) of the retranslations were analyzed with a view to reconstructing the attitudes of publishers, editors, and retranslators to the particular retranslation and the corresponding first translation.

The data on the retranslation of *Pippi Långstrump* from Swedish into Croatian were obtained in the interviews with the former editor-in-chief at *Znanje*, who was involved in the retranslation project and the retranslator. Additionally, the retranslator's afterword to the retranslation was analyzed, as well as his article published on the website *Moderna vremena*.²

The data on the retranslation of *Das doppelte Lottchen*, another very popular work of children's literature, were primarily collected in the interviews with the editor involved in this particular project, and the retranslator. This retranslation was also addressed in the interview with the former editor-in-chief of *Znanje*. In addition, the afterword to the retranslation written by Croatian children's literature scholar Dubravka Težak was analyzed.

The data on the retranslation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* from English into Croatian were collected in face-to-face interviews with the editor-in-chief of *Lumen izdavaštvo*, and the retranslator. The retranslator's afterword was also analyzed, as well as various elements belonging to the epitext.

3. Analysis of the data obtained in interviews with the agents in the process of retranslation

In this section the data obtained in the interviews with the agents involved in the process of retranslation of each source text are presented and analyzed. All the following quotations in Section 3 are taken from the interviews, unless otherwise noted. The interviews with respondents were held in January and February 2022.

3.1. *Pipi Duga Čarapa*

With regard to *Pippi Långstrump*'s retranslation the data were obtained in two semi-structured interviews: with the former editor-in-chief of the publisher *Znanje*, Sinković, who was also the editor of the particular retranslation and with Badić, the retranslator, and as mentioned earlier, one of the authors of this paper. To ensure impartiality and transparency, Badić did not participate in the analysis and the drafting of the paragraphs pertinent to his retranslation of *Pippi Långstrump*.

According to Sinković, the process of revamping the Croatian edition of *Pipi Duga Čarapa* was initiated by The Astrid Lindgren Company, the Swedish copyright holders of Lindgren's literary *oeuvre*, who insisted that the new Croatian edition of the book should include the original illustrations by Danish illustrator Ingrid Vang Nyman instead of illustrations by Croatian illustrators Zlata Živković-Žilić (the editions from 1973 to 1991 published by *Mladost*), and Ninoslav Kunc (the editions from 1996 to 2015 published by *Znanje*). Sinković disclosed details of the chain reaction that followed this demand: "While we were comparing the authorized source text and the existing Croatian translation and, trying to decide on the layout of the illustrations, we noticed that the first translation of the book did not fully adhere to the source text, and that one chapter was missing." Sinković and her team then decided to contact a Swedish-to-Croatian translator to help them uncover potential discrepancies and determine exactly to what extent the first translation did not correspond to the original text. The publisher then learned that the earlier editions of the first translation that were published continuously until 1991 were evidently censored and that, while the later editions of the first

² <https://mvinfo.hr/clanak/najava-prijevod-astrid-lindgren-pipi-duga-carapa> (Accessed on February 28 2022).

translation came closer to the source text, “the translation was still incomplete.” Therefore, the publisher’s initial idea was to revise the existing translation, but as the copyright holders were hesitant to allow further circulation of the existing Croatian translation because it was incomplete and contained rearranged chapters, the publisher had to either substantially revise the first translation or opt for a retranslation. According to Sinković, *Znanje* aimed to publish a complete translation of this seminal work of children’s literature once they realized that the first translation was not complete, but this decision was also supported by their belief that revising the text would be just as demanding as producing a new translation. The respondent also mentioned that their decision was largely influenced by the realization that the omitted chunks of the text needed to be translated either way and that the line between revising and retranslating is rather thin. They also had to take into account the time that would be invested in both editing and completing the existing translation, as well as the comparative costs of revising or retranslating the text. Nevertheless, Sinković pointed out that this decision was not taken as a result of a negative assessment of the first translation: “We were aware that many translations [of this children’s classic] around the globe have been partially censored, and we did not question the quality of this translation, as the previous translator, Mirko Rumac, also collaborated with our editor at the time – but we simply thought that a complete translation into Croatian was deemed necessary and that such translation could be a contribution to the culture of translation and literature in general.”

Being the editor-in-chief in *Znanje*, Sinković, was involved in the selection of the translator. Since Badić was asked to compare the STs with the first translation, she thought it was “logical to also offer him to do a sample translation”. As the sample translation was of high quality, Badić was selected to do the retranslation.

In his interview, the retranslator explained that he had previously worked for *Znanje* as a translator, and in September 2020 had received a call from the editor-in-chief, who informed him that *Znanje* was in the process of redesigning their popular series for children *Stribor*, and that they would like to reprint *Pipi Duga Čarapa* using the original illustrations, but that they noticed one chapter was missing from the translation. At the time Badić was conducting a study of the first Croatian translation of *Pippi Långstrump*, in which he found out that “it was not just one chapter missing, but many paragraphs from other chapters as well, which in the first edition of the first translation, published back in 1973, were completely omitted, and then partially added back in 1996”. With this in mind, the editorial board soon decided to commission a retranslation.

Apart from reading the first Croatian translation as a child, Badić, owing to his research, was very much aware of the existence of the first translation: “An in-depth comparison of the three source texts of *Pippi Långstrump* and the ‘integral’ Croatian translation was conducted to detect all changes that may have been introduced. Usually, when only one edition of a translation exists, there is seldom any need for a deeper critical analysis, but since I was studying taboos in translations of children’s literature as part of my doctoral research, I noticed that several Croatian scholars had already pointed out that some chapters from the first Croatian translation of *Pippi Långstrump* were left out, and I found this topic interesting.”

Badić claims to have had a neutral opinion of the previous translation, although he noticed that both the first translation and its reprints contained errors on various linguistic levels. The retranslator also took notice of numerous interventions in the numbering and layout of chapters when compared to the three source texts, as well as in the story line, and these were mostly related to taboos. On the other hand, he was also aware that the first translation had been well-received by the public and that the adults of today may feel sentimental about the stories that might have defined their childhood. At the same time, he was aware that experts

in Scandinavian literature and translation studies as well as more critical readers had long called for a new translation of this children's classic that would be more in touch with the current linguistic and translation norms. These factors have had an impact on his micro-level decisions. Badić explained: "I was aware that some of the successful translation solutions had already taken deep roots among the readers. For example, *Villa Villekulla*, the house where Pippi lives, was very inventively culturally transplanted as *Pipinovac*, and in some cases, I decided to adopt some of those solutions in order not to create confusion. But I cannot say that I used the available translation as a model, nor that I deliberately tried to shy away from it. Even the source texts I got to translate slightly differed from the texts Mirko Rumac used as the source texts as they have been revised since they were first published in 1945." For instance, the Swedish word "neger", now considered a racial slur, was substituted for a more neutral "Söderhavsborna" ("the inhabitants of the South Seas") in the latest edition of the source texts from 2016.

Looking back at his work on the retranslation of *Pippi Långstrump*, Badić said that his main goal had been to faithfully follow the source text and produce a complete translation, *in line with the intent of the source text author* (our emphasis) and respect the intended function of the text. The idea was to build a dialogical relationship between the target text and target readers that would come very close to the relationship between the source text and its readers that Lindgren created more than seventy-five years ago. In Badić's words, he had tried to retain the creativity and wittiness of the original texts, and at the same time convey all the nuances woven into this literary masterpiece, which required adept attention to detail, especially when it came to translating humor, word plays, jokes, symbolical names, and songs that these stories abound with.

3.2. *Blizanke*

In the interview on the retranslation of *Das doppelte Lottchen*, Šimat, the editor who worked on this particular retranslation, disclosed that the stock of copies of Krklec's translation was running low and that the publisher had not considered editing the old translation: "As an editor, I would not feel very comfortable intervening in translations produced by deceased translators with whom we cannot check whether they would agree with the suggested changes or not." There was also a need for a more up-to-date translation, and along the way, another oddity was revealed, which according to Šimat, "made the decision even more justified". In fact, the retranslator noticed that the part where Lotte and Luise pray to God that their parents be together again was omitted from Krklec's translation, probably due to political and ideological factors that were at play in Yugoslavia in the mid-1960s. Moreover, Šimat feels that the decision to retranslate was justified in any case since she knows of multiple examples of different translations coexisting on the Croatian market, for instance, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*. Sinković, the former editor-in-chief at *Znanje*, the publisher of both *Pipi Duga Čarapa* and *Blizanke*, commented that the situation was not the same with both retranslations. The copyright on the first translation of *Das doppelte Lottchen* was owned by the translator, Gustav Krklec, also a prominent Croatian children's author. After his death, the copyright was passed on to his heirs, many of them scattered around the world. In contact with the Croatian Copyright Agency, it became evident that the process of acquiring the right to use the translation would be legally intricate and would have an uncertain outcome. In Sinković's words, *Znanje* could not "wait that long – as the novel is on the reading lists for Croatian primary schoolers, and it would be a great inconvenience to have the novel out of print for months or even years."

The decision to commission a retranslation was reached quickly and Šimat suggested that Kušpilić be engaged as the retranslator, since *Znanje* had already successfully collaborated with her on other German-to-Croatian translation projects. In line with the routine procedure, the retranslator was asked to produce a sample translation and, as this translation satisfied the publisher's expectations, Kušpilić was entrusted with the retranslation. As regards the potential reasons for commissioning the retranslation of *Das doppelte Lottchen*, Kušpilić said that she had not really discussed this with the editor, but that she was told that the publisher commissioned a new translation because the first translation had been published a long time ago, so the target text needed to be modernized. Speculating on the main reasons why retranslations could be commissioned, Kušpilić added: "I believe that the ageing factor and the general need for a more up-to-date translation are among the most common reasons for retranslating canon literature, but I could imagine that retranslations are also produced out of enthusiasm, i.e., that they are initiated by either translators or publishers."

When asked to comment on how the first translation affected her retranslation, Kušpilić also admitted having read the translation twice, first as a child and once again before she started translating. She expressed a rather positive attitude towards the first translation: "I liked the translation as a child reader, who usually does not pay much attention to it, and even later when I re-read the book. And as with almost every translation I read, whose source text I can fully understand, I would translate a lot of things differently, but I also think that a large number of the solutions used are brilliant." Kušpilić believes that the previous translation had an impact on her decisions, but she does not exactly know how: she neither used it as a model nor did she try to necessarily steer clear of it, but she claims to have felt respect for Krklec's text even when she "least agreed with it".

3.3. *Hobit ili tamo i natrag*

The interview with the retranslator of Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, Marko Maras, revealed that the decision of the publisher, *Lumen*, to commission a retranslation was largely motivated by practical considerations. The publisher realized that the copyright for the first translation was about to expire and could not reach a financially satisfying agreement with the late translator Zlatko Crnković's assignees. At that moment, the publisher concluded that it was less expensive to commission a new translation than to pay for the translator's copyright. In the words of Maras, before taking on the commission he was familiar with *The Hobbit* in English and did not wish to read the first translation of *The Hobbit* into Croatian particularly because he did not want to be, even unconsciously, under the influence of the existing, Crnković's solutions. This was not the first time Maras undertook to produce a retranslation, and his principle is never to read first translations of the works he retranslates. As he admitted in the interview, later, during the work on the retranslation, it nagged him that he had not read criticism of the first translation.

The specific element relevant to (re)translating Tolkien's works is the fact that Tolkien himself compiled *The Guide to the Names in The Lord of the Rings*, a manual with instructions for translators of his trilogy. *The Hobbit or There and Back Again* (1937) was first translated into Swedish in 1947. The Swedish translator altered the name of the main character Bilbo to Bimbo, and intervened in the text segmentation, removing certain passages. This provoked Tolkien's reaction to the planned translation of *The Lord of the Rings* into Dutch. Thus, in a letter to the British publisher, Tolkien pointed out that he wished "to avoid a repetition of my experience with the Swedish translation of *The Hobbit*" (Carpenter & Tolkien 1981, p. 69). Maras relied consistently on the manual and says that he later realized that the first translator probably was either not aware of the existence of the manual or deliberately ignored it.

In her interview, Miroslava Vučić, the editor-in-chief at *Lumen*, expressed a strong preference for publishing retranslations rather than revising existing translations. Reasons for this are, in her words, both extra-textual and textual, and usually intertwined. During her long experience as an editor, she became aware that, on the one hand, old translations very often cannot function in changed circumstances and, on the other hand, thoroughly revising a translation may be rather tiresome and expensive, with the final product never fully satisfying. With regard to *Hobit*, she is delighted that the retranslation was launched as the previous translation, in her opinion, was not satisfactory, primarily because the translator did not treat the toponyms and character names consistently and thus disrupted the coherence of the imaginary world created by Tolkien. On the other hand, publishers encounter various practical problems with obtaining the copyright on the translation, which further pushes them to decide to commission a retranslation, considered to be a less expensive and easier solution. Vučić admitted that in the case of Tolkien they encountered problems because the late translator's assignees expected hefty fees. An interesting point, related to the way retranslations are produced and presented in target cultures, is that, according to the retranslator, the reasons for the publisher's decision to commission a retranslation were at first largely practical. However, when it became evident that the retranslator's strategy was to rely on Tolkien's manual, i.e., to "return to the author", they found it a suitable element in their promotional strategy, based on presenting the retranslation as "the genuine Tolkien".

4. Analysis of paratextual material

4.1. *Pipi Duga Čarapa*

Even though the retranslator's afterword to *Pipi Duga Čarapa* is primarily addressed to the child reader, it also addresses the retranslation process itself. To be more precise, the retranslator points out to the ideological shifts that influenced the textual profile of the target text that went from "guarding" the children from possible negative influences, if necessary, even by means of censoring (as seen in the first translation), to an unbiased approach (as seen in the retranslation), with an afterword motivating the child reader to actively think about what the author truly wanted to convey. Thus, in the afterword the reader learns how *Pippi Långstrump* was received in other countries, gets introduced to the reasoning behind the interventions later made in the source texts, and is encouraged to reflect on the ethical values that the novels foster. The reasons for launching a retranslation are briefly mentioned: the data analyzed in a study co-conducted by the retranslator have shown that nine chapters were omitted from the first Croatian translation (1973), as well as that many paragraphs from the retained chapters were left out. Since the afterword is primarily written for a child reader, the retranslator does not go into a deeper analysis of the taboos, but in a footnote shares a link to the published study (Badić and Ljubas, 2020) for those who want to learn more.

Interesting epitextual material is to be found on the website of *Moderna vremena*³, where translators, in collaboration with the Croatian Literary Translators' Association, present their recently published translations. Careful reading of this text reveals the underlying attitude to this retranslation. Thus, the retranslation of *Pippi* is announced in the following way:

Along with the original illustrations by Danish illustrator Ingrid Vang Nyman, the book will finally get a new and complete translation in which all three stories – *Pippi Långstrump*, *Pippi Långstrump går ombord* and *Pippi Långstrump i Söderhavet* can be read as in the Swedish original – separately! (our emphasis)

³ <https://mvinfo.hr/clanak/najava-prijevod-astrid-lindgren-pipi-duga-carapa> (Accessed on February 28 2022).

We should note that the first element mentioned refers to the paratext (the inclusion of original illustrations), and not the translation itself. Further, this retranslation is announced as “the first complete Croatian translation, in which all three stories...*can be read as in the original... separately!*” (our emphasis). Moreover, the retranslator explains why the new translation was made. In his words that he wished the book to get a new attire that would finally do justice to the Swedish original we may read a wish to be closer to the original text.

4.2. *Blizanke*

The 2021 retranslation of *Das doppelte Lottchen* contains the afterword written by children's literature scholar Dubravka Težak, which has been republished in numerous editions of the first translation since the 1990s. In the afterword there is no mention of the fact that the translation in question is in fact a retranslation. This indicates that the publisher did not care to acknowledge a retranslation in the paratext. That the publishing of this retranslation attracted less attention, when compared to *Pipi Duga Čarapa* and *Hobit*, may be inferred from the following brief reference on the news portal *Nacional*⁴, which announces new translations of children's classics: “A new edition of the novel *Blizanke*, by German author Erich Kästner, was published in the translation by Vanda Kušpilić.”

4.3. *Hobit ili Tamo i natrag*

The retranslation of *The Hobbit* has received a considerable public attention, which is rarely the case with translations in Croatia. It may be explained by the fact that the retranslation introduced new names of characters and toponyms, which was not received well by quite a large and agile community of Tolkien's fans. This unusually rich epitextual material will enable us to gain a deeper insight into how motivation for this retranslation is presented.

Information on the reasons behind the production of this retranslation can be found in a blog post on the publisher's website. In the text titled “Why have we made a new translation of Tolkien?”⁵ the retranslation of *The Hobbit* is presented as “*the only genuine Croatian translation of The Hobbit* according to the author's instructions for translators from all over the world!” (our emphasis). There follows: “The readers might be surprised when they find out in the new translation by Marko Maras that the main character is not called Baggins but Torbar, that he does not live in Shire, but in Kotar and that hundreds of other character names and toponyms are finally translated into Croatian. This is not the translator's whim. To the contrary, unlike his predecessor, Zlatko Crnković, Marko Maras, *faithfully followed the wishes of J.R.R. Tolkien.*” (our emphasis). In a similar vein, the news portal *tportal.hr*⁶ reports on the publishing of a new translated book (new translations are rarely given attention of news media) with the headline “*The Hobbit* in a new attire: The only Croatian translation that would have been approved by Tolkien!” The Croatian daily *Slobodna Dalmacija*⁷ in its culture section published an article about the release of the new translation of *The Hobbit*. While this article does not bring much information that has not already been published on the publisher's website, the following remark by the editor deserves attention: “Translations by Marko Maras read as if Tolkien wrote in the Croatian language, in the same way as these translations in France read as if he wrote in French, and in Germany as if he wrote in German. Owing to Maras's translation

⁴ <https://www.nacional.hr/biblioteka-stribor-u-novom-ruhu-u-knjizarama-vec-pipi-duga-carapa-blizanke-i-djevojica-iz-afganistana/> (Accessed on February 28 2022).

⁵ <https://shop.skolskajknjiga.hr/novosti/zasto-smo-iznova-prevodili-tolkiena/> (Accessed on February 15 2022).

⁶ <https://www.tportal.hr/kultura/clanak/hobit-u-novome-ruhu-jedini-hrvatski-prijevod-koji-bi-odobrio-tolkien-20200708> (Accessed on February 15 2022).

⁷ <https://slobodnadalmacija.hr/kultura/knjizevnost/bilbo-se-preziva-torbar-i-zivi-u-kotaru-uz-koji-tece-rijeka-bevanda-1028716> (Accessed on February 28 2022).

of Tolkien's masterpieces and owing to *Lumen's* project the Croatian publishing sector made a step forward and entered the family of civilized countries, where the author's poetics and the linguistic wealth of this text had been respected since long ago. Tolkien would be delighted." (our emphasis). The retranslator also gave an interview to *Vijenac*⁸, a prominent magazine for culture, where he explained why he had decided to follow Tolkien's instructions in his translation. Thus, Maras says:

I completely understand older readers, who got accustomed to the translation by Zlatko Crnković. For them it represents the canon and they stick to the canon. Even Tolkien himself once said that he would like that names in his work were not translated, but then he realized that translators wanted to translate them. Crnković himself translated some names, but he was not consistent, and that is what I did not like because Tolkien said that either all or no names should be translated. The rule is that all names that have some meaning in English should be translated. That is exactly what I did. Before me, the same village was inhabited by Baggins and Pamuković, and now there live Torbari and Priselci.

The same arguments are also presented in the retranslator's afterword to *Hobit*.

5. Conclusion

As we have seen in the analysis above, all three retranslations were commissioned by publishers, who also selected the retranslators. With regard to the motives underlying the decisions to commission these particular retranslations, it seems that a web of various practical considerations took priority in the publishers' decisions to commission the retranslations. Thus, in the case of *Pipi Duga Čarapa*, the requirement imposed by The Astrid Lindgren Company, the Swedish copyright holders, that the new Croatian edition should contain original illustrations stimulated the editor to commission a thorough comparison of the first translation and the source text. In addition to the realization that the first translation and its revised editions did not fully follow the source text, the issue with the copyright holders for the first translation, made a retranslation an elegant solution. However, in the case of *Blizanke* the reasons behind the decision to commission a retranslation were purely of practical nature: the process of acquiring the right to reprint the existing translation involved an intricate legal process with a number of heirs of the late translator. Since the novel had to be back in print as soon as possible, the publisher opted for a retranslation. In the case of *The Hobbit*, the publisher, according to the translator, was aware of the problems with the copyright on the translation, as the translator's assignees expected hefty fees, and commissioning a new translation seemed both a less troublesome and less expensive process.

As for the relation of the retranslators to the first translation, the interviews with the retranslators showed that they did not have any particular opinion of the preceding translation. The retranslator of *The Hobbit* deliberately did not wish to read the first translation, and followed closely Tolkien's instructions to translators. The retranslator of *Pippi* was deeply familiar with the source text, as well with the first translation and its revised editions. However, this knowledge was not gained as part of his preparation to do a retranslation, but as part of his previous academic research. The retranslator of *Das doppelte Lottchen* had a rather positive attitude to the first translation although she did not always agree with all the translation solutions.

The retranslators were, to a different extent, aware of the previous translations and their reception among Croatian readers, but for the most part decided that these would not affect their work. In their words, the retranslators adhered in the first place to the original texts and

⁸ <https://www.matica.hr/vijenac/691%20-%20962/tolkien-na-hrvatski-nacin-30702/> (Accessed on February 28 2022).

the intent of their authors to the best of their abilities, in no way copying the first translations, but also not deliberately deviating from them as much as possible.

Comparing the data obtained in the interviews with the editors and retranslators with the peritextual and epitextual material an interesting discrepancy between the way this process was described and the way retranslations are presented in the paratext may be observed. The interviews with the editors showed that practical considerations related to the translators' copyright made commissioning a retranslation less expensive and less troublesome than revising the existing translation and paying copyright fees and for them these considerations tipped the scales in favor of a retranslation. On the other hand, the peritextual and epitextual material seems to be focused on presenting and, in a way "justifying", these retranslations as a way of offering a translation that is more faithful to the ideas or wishes of the author of the source text, who is obviously considered to be the highest authority.

An interesting angle to the study of retranslation arises from the insight that both the editors and retranslators share common ground in presenting and "justifying" their retranslations as a return to the author of the source text, either in the form of following the segmentation of the source text (*Pippi*) or the author's instructions for translators (*The Hobbit*). In conclusion, it should be noted that this study is not concerned with the textual comparison of first translations and retranslations in order to see whether, and in which aspects, retranslations are closer to source texts, as postulated by RH. Still, in the paratextual and epitextual presentation of the retranslations studied it is difficult not to hear the echoes of the discourse pertaining to the notion of a retranslation as a "return" to the source text and its author.

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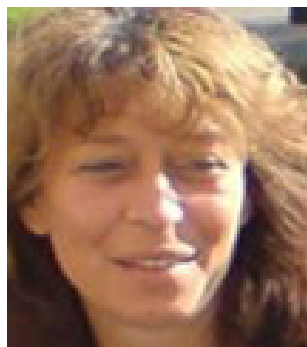
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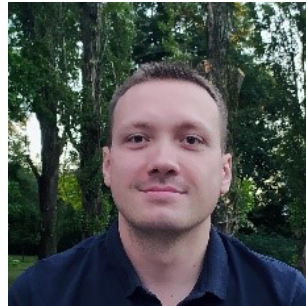


Snježana Veselica Majhut

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Zagreb University
I. Lučića 3
10 000 Zagreb
Croatia

veselicamajhut@gmail.com

Biography: Snježana Veselica Majhut is Associated Professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She holds an MA in British Cultural Studies from Strathclyde University, Glasgow, UK and a PhD in Translation and Intercultural Studies from Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain. Currently, she teaches translation courses at the graduate level (Translation of Specialized and Academic Texts, Translation and Intercultural Communication). Her main research interests lie in translation studies (in particular in cross-cultural aspects of translation), discourse analysis and broad relations of language and culture.



 Edin Badić

University of Zadar
Ulica Mihovila Pavlinovića 1
23000 Zadar
Croatia

badic.edin@gmail.com

Biography: Edin Badić holds a Master's degree in English and Swedish from the University of Zagreb, Croatia. Currently, he is a PhD student in Interdisciplinary Humanities (Translation Studies) at the University of Zadar, Croatia. His research interests include descriptive translation studies, translation history, cultural translation, translation criticism, as well as lexicology and lexicography. He works as a freelance translator from English, Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish.



 Sandra Ljubas

University of Zadar
Ulica Mihovila Pavlinovića 1
23000 Zadar
Croatia

sandra.ljubas1@gmail.com

Biography: Sandra Ljubas holds a Master's degree in German and Swedish from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, and is a PhD candidate at the University of Zadar, Croatia, focusing on Philology – Linguistics. Her research interests include translation studies, machine translation, computational linguistics, as well as lexicology and lexicography. She works as a translator from Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and German.



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The many questions of non-retranslation. Swedish non-retranslations from the 20th Century

Elin Svahn

Stockholm University

Abstract

The phenomenon of non-retranslation, here defined as translations that are continuously being republished over an extended period of time *without* being retranslated, has attracted scholarly attention in recent years. Yet, there has been no systematic exploration of the phenomenon to date. This article aims to fill this gap by reporting on a bibliography of Swedish non-retranslations, which has been constructed as an answer to previous calls on macro-studies in retranslation studies. In particular, this article offers a first overview of the bibliography with a point of departure in the five W and one H approach. Hence, this article aims to answer some questions regarding non-retranslation, such as *what* (establishing a definition; categories), *who* (authors; translators), *when* (publication timespan; publication interval), *where* (source languages; publishers; series), *how* (overt and covert revisions), and *why* (hypotheses). Some of the findings, regarding for example publication timespans and publication intervals, counter some of the assumptions often prevailing on retranslations. The article concludes with pointing out new avenues for research, such as exploring the role of publishing houses in relation to non-retranslation and case studies on specific titles. In sum, the article presents a macro-perspective of non-retranslation, with implications for both research on retranslation and non-retranslation.

Keywords

non-retranslation, retranslation, bibliography, macro-scale study, Swedish

1. Introduction

In recent years, “the curious concept of non-retranslation” (Van Poucke & Sanz Gallego, 2019, p. 14), i.e., translations that are continuously being republished over an extended period of time *without* being retranslated, has attracted some scholarly attention (Bollaert, 2019; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2019). This newfound interest appears timely as the phenomenon of non-retranslation has the potential to counter some of the prevailing assumptions about retranslations, such as the assumption that a retranslation is inevitable for canonical works (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2019, p. 31) or that a retranslation is required for each generation (Van Poucke, 2017, p. 93). However, despite the curiousness surrounding non-retranslation, there has been no systematic exploration of the phenomenon to date.

The project “Non-retranslation in 20th-century Sweden” aims to explore the phenomenon of non-retranslation broadly through the means of a bibliography collecting non-retranslations into Swedish. The bibliography is further introduced in the *Method and material* section below. As such, the project answers previous calls for macro-level approaches within retranslation studies (Berk Albachten & Tahir Gürçağlar, 2018; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2019) and offers a novel perspective on retranslation research.

This article presents the first overview of the bibliography in its current state, with 200 titles and 1002 editions. In particular, this article seeks to answer some of the many questions of non-retranslations by applying the five W and one H approach: *what* (establishing a definition; categories), *who* (authors; translators), *where* (source languages; publishers; series), *when* (publication timespan; publication interval), and *how* (overt and covert revisions). In the *why* section, I propose a hypothesis for why non-retranslated texts have not been retranslated. First, however, I discuss some key concepts for retranslation research and how they relate to non-retranslation, after which I then introduce the bibliography and selection criteria.

2. Non-retranslation as opposed to retranslation

Retranslation has often been discussed in terms of when a new translation is required. For example, Koskinen and Paloposki (2019, p. 31) conclude:

Among our most solid findings is the observation that getting retranslated is actually the normal case for any title with some lasting value in the literary system, and not the special event it has been portrayed to be.

Similarly, Berk Albachten and Tahir Gürçağlar (2018, p. 219) state that they found that “works that have attained the status of classics [are] retranslated more frequently than others”. These findings from the Finnish and Turkish context, respectively, are intriguing concerning non-retranslations as a phenomenon. As will be shown in this article, some of the titles found in this bibliography can be considered to have “some lasting value in the literary system” and “attained the status of classics”, and yet have not been retranslated.

Bollaert (2019) discusses the critical question of reprinting in relation to (non-)retranslation. Building on the work of Gómez Castro (2008), Pokorn (2012), and Suleymanova (2016), Bollaert concentrates on translation within totalitarian regimes, with the result that manipulated (non-) retranslations still circulate after the fall of the regimes. The present article differs in scope from Bollaert’s since the investigated time frame and place – 20th-century Sweden – does not have a totalitarian past. Hence, the main focus is not ideologically manipulated translations but the phenomenon of non-retranslations more broadly. However, Bollaert’s (2019, p. 45) claim that reprinting can be seen as “an instance of non-retranslation” is highly relevant for this article. Bollaert (2019, p. 60) concludes:

Indeed, reprinting, as retranslating, presupposes an active choice. It means a work is kept in motion and available for readers. Although both reprinting and retranslating cause a similar movement, they are different in the message they convey. Retranslating is bringing something new, reprinting is keeping something old.

Although I have chosen to discuss non-retranslations in terms of republishing and editions instead of reprinting and reprints, which I elaborate on in the *Method and material* section below, the implications are the same as Bollaert's contention: that republishing an old translation means that an old, in a certain sense "frozen", representation of a target work is represented to readers. For example, when readers in Sweden 2022 wish to buy John Steinbeck's *Vredens druvor* [Grapes of Wrath] in a bookshop, they effectively buy Nils Holmberg's unrevised translation from 1949. Obviously, this is an instance of "keeping something old", and it brings several important questions to the fore. The most overarching question is, of course, why this work has not been retranslated, although the number of editions – 17 between 1949 and 2019 – would suggest a steady interest in the title over 70 years. Since both Steinbeck's status as an author and the status of *Vredens druvor* as a 20th-century classic have changed since 1949, it is probable that a potential retranslator would approach the novel in a more faithful manner than when the first translation was carried out in the 1940s. This evokes Koskinen and Paloposki's (2015, p. 27) reasoning on the first translation being "faulty" in some sense:

The process [of retranslation] is initiated because there is an understanding that the existing translation is somehow faulty: too old, too outdated, too free, too domesticated or too foreignized, and so on.

Regarding the temporal aspect, both translation norms and the Swedish language have developed since the 1950s. For instance, Larsson (2007) has explored how the Swedish language has become "shorter, more informal and more intimate, more visual, more international and more oral" (2007, p. 55, my translation) since 1945. He compared how these changes were manifested in the retranslation of Jaroslav Hašek's *Soldaten Svejk* [Dobrý voják Švejk] from 1994 compared to the first Swedish translation from 1930. He found that the retranslation was slightly more colloquial and more idiomatic than the first translation, but that the most significant change concerned a more source-oriented approach; Larsson concludes that the retranslation is "considerably more international, more Czech" than the first translation (Larsson, 2007, p. 71, my translation).

On a more general level, Steinbeck's *Vredens druvor* represents a kind of longseller, which has been active in Sweden for a long time. Vanderschelden (2000, p. 11) discusses translations that "have acquired a long-standing status in the target language" with reference to Berman's (1990) notion of 'great translation'. Similarly, Van Poucke refers to 'great translations' as translations that "resist time" (2017, p. 96). I have discussed the relationship between non-retranslations and 'great translations' elsewhere (Svahn, 2023), but suffice to say here that Berman's writing does not rule out the fact that first translations, and hence non-retranslations, may be seen as a sort of 'great translation', although this is not how the concept has generally been understood. By the definition of non-retranslation proposed in this article, non-retranslations are the only translations of a source text. As such, they can be said to have acquired some sort of status in the target culture and, thus, resisted time. As we will see, however, not all non-retranslations can be considered classics in the same way as Steinbeck's *Vredens druvor*.

3. Method and material

Recently, several retranslation scholars have called for macro-investigations of retranslations (Berk Albachten & Tahir Gürçağlar, 2018; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2019). Concerning non-

retranslations, Koskinen and Paloposki (2019, p. 31) have suggested that “[a] corpus of these special cases of “non-aging” translations [i.e., non-retranslations] might allow us to advance our understanding of the processes of aging”. As an answer to these calls, I have constructed a bibliography of Swedish non-retranslations, with the aim that it can be developed into an open-access database in the future. Currently, the bibliography consists of 200 titles and 1002 editions. Because of the difficulties associated with locating non-retranslations, the bibliography does not aim to be representative of all Swedish non-retranslations. Still, the material is large enough to point towards important patterns regarding non-retranslation as a phenomenon in the Swedish target culture.

The titles and editions have been located using the Swedish National Catalogue *Libris*. In the bibliography, a post includes author, title, original title, translator, year of the first edition in source culture, year of the first edition in the target culture, number of editions, year of each Swedish edition, the publishing house of each Swedish edition, additional notes (e.g., foreword). To be included in the bibliography, each title must have been published at least three times in the same translation, and the first edition must have been published in Sweden between 1900 and 1990. This criterion is appropriate since it would theoretically be possible for a title to be published in three editions between 1990 and 2022 when this article was written. Furthermore, the bibliography only includes novels and short story collections. In practical terms, locating non-retranslations means manually looking through authors’, translators’, and publishers’ posts searching for titles that matched the criteria. This process, which has been both cumbersome and tedious, evokes Paloposki’s (2018, p. 18) sentiment that “[t]ranslations need to be teased out of general bibliographies”.

It should be noted that *Libris* has some shortcomings, not least in relation to what kind of information is available. The bibliography’s material spans over 120 years (1900–2022), and it comes as no surprise that cataloging practices have shifted over this period. This is particularly evident in the early 1900s. Another great shift can be seen in 1970, when ISBN numbers were introduced. In only some cases is the cover included in the post. Further, some posts include the print run of the title, in thousands, but also this is an inconsistent practice. Another important distinction is the inconsistent use of the terms *utgåva* (edition) and *upplaga* (reprint). Like Rüegg (2021, p. 30), in her work on Nobel laureates in Swedish translation, I define an edition as “a new version of a work” (my translation). In the context of non-retranslations, the new version naturally does not refer to the translation, but to, e.g., the publisher, the format, page number, or cover. Also, an edition can be printed in several reprints (*upplaga*). In *Libris*, however, the terms edition and reprint are sometimes used interchangeably, which in practice means that although several aspects point to a new edition of a title – signaled by, e.g., a new publishing house and a new page number – it can still be labeled as a reprint. Conversely, a post can be labeled a reprint although, e.g., a new publishing house would suggest that it is, in fact, a new edition. Yet another problematic circumstance is that some posts of an edition contain a ‘Detail’ folder, which in some cases includes a “Note” of reprints that are not visible in *Libris*. These reprints seem to adhere to what is usually considered a reprint, i.e., a new print of an existing edition, but since the only information given is the year of publication, it is hard to be certain that this is the case.

My pragmatic approach to these dilemmas has been to include the original posts in *Libris* and, for ease of expression, refer to these as *editions*, regardless of some of them being labeled as *reprints* in *Libris*. Further, I have chosen not to include the reprints in the ‘Detail’ folder, partly because it would require a great deal of effort to manually check all the posts for the 1002 editions. Also important for this decision is the lack of information concerning these reprints, such as publishing house, ISBN number, etc. My terminology thus differs from Bollaert’s, who

largely discusses non-retranslation using the term reprinting. Following the outline above, I'm using the term 'republished' instead of 'reprinting' to signal that the majority of the titles in the bibliography are not simply "reprinted", in the sense that they are reprinted in the same format, with the same word font, with the same cover, and by the same publisher, but that they have also been "repackaged" in some sense.

In the following, I will present the analysis of the non-retranslations in the bibliography with a point of departure in the questions What, Who, When, Where, How, and Why?

4. Analysis

4.1. The What of non-retranslation

The first important question to investigate is the 'What?' question. Although non-retranslations have slowly begun to attract scholarly interest in recent years, there is no established definition of what non-retranslation is. The few scholars who have explicitly mentioned non-retranslation as a phenomenon have had different approaches to non-retranslation and have not elaborated on the definition. For example, Bollaert (2019, p. 48) discusses Russian translations of Sartre's work "through the lens of non-retranslation", but she does not define what she means by non-retranslation. In general, she discusses non-retranslation in terms of reprinting, which she defines as "first translations and retranslations that are published anew" (2019, p. 54). Koskinen and Paloposki (2019, pp. 31–32), in turn, refer to non-retranslations as "works that remain relevant and read but do not get retranslated or revised", which excludes revised translations from the description. Revisions commonly refer to "making changes to an existing TT while retaining the major part, including the overall structure and tone of the former version" (Vanderschelden, 2000, p. 1). In a previous study (Svahn, 2023), I investigated the titles in the bibliography that had been published in most editions, including a small-scale textual investigation to detect covert revisions. Out of the fourteen titles, one (*Spionen som kom in från kylan* [The Spy Who Came in From the Cold] by John le Carré) was acknowledged as being a revision in the colophon but not in the post in *Libris*.¹ Nevertheless, the textual investigation showed that another six titles had been subject to covert revision, mainly on a grammatical level and mainly conducted in the 1950–1960s, although the majority of the titles were last published in the 2000s.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following definition: non-retranslations are translations that are continuously being republished over an extended period of time *without* being retranslated. This definition includes revisions, which means that it is possible to work with non-retranslation in large-scale studies such as the present one without manually checking whether each edition of each title has been subject to revision. Further, what "an extended period of time" means is, of course, open to interpretation. In this bibliography, I have chosen the minimum limit of three editions without any restrictions regarding the time between the first and latest editions. However, as we shall see below, some of these have been published over a rather short period of time.

Another way to approach the "What?" question is by exploring what kind of literature is included in the bibliography. To gain an overview, the material has been divided into three categories:

1. The 'one-hit wonder' category (3 editions, i.e., the minimum to enter the bibliography);
2. the 'once-popular' category (4 editions or more);
3. the 'classic' category (a minimum of 5 editions the latest of which came out in the 2010s).

¹ The novel was subsequently retranslated in 2021 and has therefore been excluded from the bibliography.

The choice to construct this categorization based on the number of editions, instead of e.g. the status of the title in Sweden, derives from its advantages when it comes to detecting different sorts of non-retranslations within the material. For example, when discussing non-retranslation as a phenomenon, it is easy to focus on classic and long-sellers since these are extraordinary cases. However, this categorization reveals that such titles only account for 18% of the material as a whole (Figure 1).

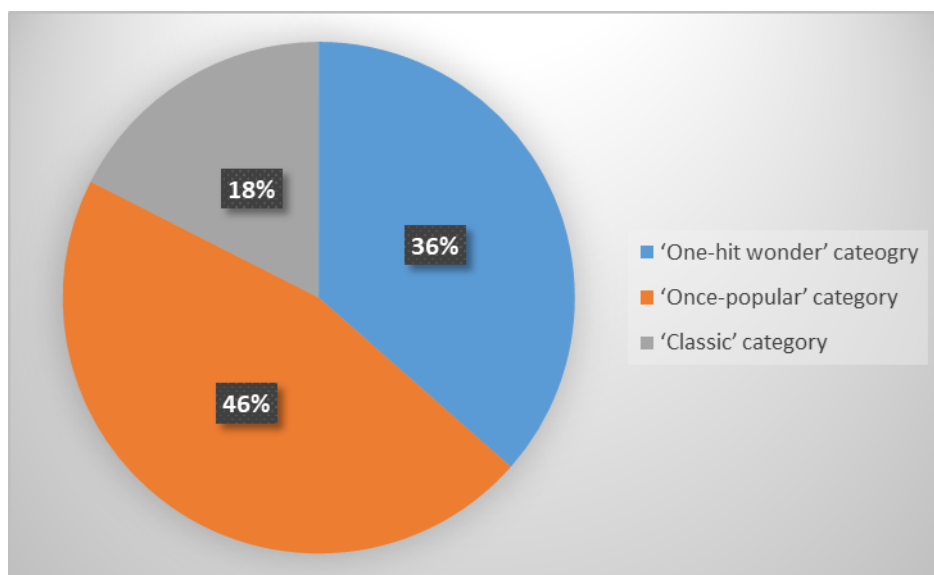


Figure 1. Categories of non-retranslations based on titles

The three categories also represent different processes of non-retranslation. The 'one-hit wonder' category gathers titles with only three editions. This category includes 73 titles and 219 editions, which represents 36% of all titles, written by a total of 46 authors. Here we can see how a sort of consecration process has started but then quickly ended. There are, however, exceptions to this tendency: the Norwegian Nobel laureate Sigrid Undset appears the most with seven titles, e.g., *Katarina av Siena* [Catarina av Siena], *Fru Marta Oulie* [Fru Marta Oulie], and *Den lyckliga åldern* [Den lykkelige alder].

The second category – the 'once-popular' category – shows a consecration process that for some reason has either halted or ended completely. It includes 92 titles and 500 editions and is the largest category with 46% of the titles. The category's name comes from the assumption that these titles were once popular to the extent that they have been published in at least four editions. The author with most titles in this category is the nowadays mostly forgotten Scottish author Archibald Joseph Cronin with 16 titles. He is a good example of an author who was once indeed popular; his novel *Hattmakarens borg* [The Hatter's Castle] was published in 11 editions between 1935 and 1985, but none of his titles have been published since then.

The third category includes the remaining 35 titles (18%) and 283 editions. As opposed to the two previous categories, the 'classic' category includes both a numerical and temporal aspect: it requires at least five editions, of which the latest has been published in the 2010s. The temporal aspect is included in order to ensure that there is still an editorial interest in the titles and echoes a certain temporalism often included in retranslation research. Here we find many familiar names such as Virginia Woolf's *Vågorna* [The Waves], Elsa Morante's *Historien* [La storia], and Gabriel García Márquez' *Kärlek i kolerans tid* [El amor en los tiempos del cólera]. These are titles that could be described as "having a long-standing status" in Sweden, and thus this category has some affinities with the concept of 'great translations'.

Naturally, this categorization means that some authors appear in several categories. This is, for example, the case of John Steinbeck, whose well-known novels *Öster om Eden* [East of Eden] and *Vredens druvor* are found in the 'classic' category, whereas for example *Missnöjets vinter* [The Winter of Discontent] is in the 'once-popular' category, and *Loggbok från Cortez hav* [The Log from the Sea of Cortez] is found in the 'one-hit wonder' category. Conversely, the majority of Vicki Baum's titles are found in the 'one-hit wonder' category, while *Den huvudlösa ängeln* [Headless Angel] is in the 'once-popular' category.

4.2. The Who of non-retranslation

The two most prominent agents of non-retranslation are, of course, the authors and the translators, and this section presents an overview of the persons involved in the titles in the bibliography.

Out of the 83 authors in the bibliography, 34% are women and 66% are men. 33 (40%) of the authors are represented with two titles or more, while more than half (50 authors; 60%) are only represented with one title each. Of course, the high number of authors with only one title might be a reflection that they have few translations into Swedish generally, that their other titles have been retranslated, or that the titles fail to meet the selection criteria. An overview of these is found in Table 1.

Author	Number of titles
Archibald Joseph Cronin	16
John Steinbeck	11
Daphne du Maurier; Sigrid Undset	9
Pearl Buck; Vicki Baum	8
Dorothy L. Sayers; Marguerite Duras	7
Doris Lessing; Desmond Bagley; John Irving	5
André Gide; Alberto Moravia; Italo Calvino; Knut Hamsun; Mary Stewart; P.G. Wodehouse	4
Anatole France; Herman Hesse; Jean-Paul Sartre; Joseph Conrad; Ray Bradbury; Sinclair Lewis; Trygve Gullbrandsen; Virginia Woolf	3
Agatha Christie; Albert Camus; André Malraux; Erich Maria Remarque; Günter Grass; Hammond Innes; Nathalie Sarraute; William Golding	2
Aksel Sandemose; Aleksander Solzenicyn; Anne Tyler, Bernard Malamud; Boris Pasternak; Colette; Cornelius Ryan; Dashiell Hammett; Edison Marshall; Elsa Morante; Evgenij Zamjatin; François Mauriac; Françoise Sagan; Frans Eemil Sillanpää; Frederick Marryat; Gabriel García Márquez; Georges Bernanos; Graham Greene; Grazia Deledda; Heinrich Böll; Herman Melville; Italo Svevo; James M. Cain; Jane Austen; Anne Telscome; Jean Stubbs; John Carter Dickson; John Le Carré; Joseph Heller; Karen Blixen; Kenzaburo Oe; Kobo Abe; M. Agejev; Margaret Drabble; Marguerite Steen; Mazo de la Roche; Miguel Angel Asturias; P.D. James; Phyllis Eleanor Bentley; Richard Adams; Samuel Shellabarger; Saul Bellow; Sigrid Boo; Simone de Beauvoir; Sofie Lazarsfeld; Somerset Maugham; Svetlana Aleksijevitj; Sylvia Plath; Vasilij Grossman; Claudio Magris	1

Table 1. Authors and number of titles

As Table 2 demonstrates, the names vary from very well-established authors to authors that may not be well-known for a contemporary reader. It should be noted that Bollaert (2019, p. 48) mentions authors like Steinbeck and Sinclair as examples of authors with Russian non-retranslations; her third author, Hemingway, has been retranslated in Sweden fairly recently. Whereas there is an imbalance when it comes to the authors' gender, an overview of the translators displays a fairly equal share: out of the 85 translators in the bibliography 45 (52%) are women and 41 (48%) are men.

Translator	Number of titles
Sonja Bergvall	22
Nils Holmberg	17
Lisbeth Renner	16
Torsten Blomqvist	14
Louis Renner	8
Karin Alin	6
Elsa Thulin; Eva Alexanderson; Teresia Eurén	5
Hans Björkegren; Birgitta Hammar; Karin De Laval; Torsten Jonsson	4
Harry Blomberg; Rose-Marie Nielsen	3
Alvar Zacke; Axel Claëson; Gunnar Ekelöf; Gösta Olzon; Harald Heyman; Hugo Hultenberg; Ingmar Forsström; Lorenz von Numers; Nils Jacobsson; Per E. Rundquist; Sven Stolpe; Sven Wallmark; Lily Vallquist; Vanja Lantz	2
Aida Törnelli; Anna Beijer; Anne Marie Hansen; Ingalisa Munck; Britt Arenander; Britt G. Hallqvist; Britt-Marie Bergström; Sven Bergström; Christina Liljencrantz; Cilla Johnson; Glaes Gripenberg; Einar Thermae; Else Lundgren; Estrid Tenngren; Eva Marstrander; Eyvind Johnson; Gabriel Hedengren; Gallie Åkerhielm; Gerg Lilliehöök; Gunnar Barklund; Gunnar Brandell; Bengt John; Hadar Högberg; Hagar Olsson; Håkan Norlén; Inge Barhnson-Rosenborg; Irmelin Fritzell; Keiko Kockum; Jane Lundblad; Johan W Walldén; Josef Almqvist; Karin Hirn; Karin Jensen; Karin Lindgren; Karin Stolpe; Katarina Frostenson; Madeleine Gustafsson; Margareta Ekström; Margareta Nylander; Margareta Ångström; Marianne Lindström; Marie Werup; Märta Lindquist; Olov Jonason; Pelle Fritz-Cronne; Peter Landelius; Ragnar Ågren; Reidar Ekner; Signe Bodorff; Signhild Borgström; Sigrid Elmlad; Sten Söderberg; Suzanne Palme; Sven Barthel; Vera von Kraemer; Thomas Warburton; Barbro Andersson	1

Table 2. Translators and number of titles

Several of these translators are known as some of the most noteworthy from the 20th century. For example, several of them were interviewed in *12 + 1*, an interview series published in the evening paper *Aftonbladet* in 1955 (Liffner, 2013). In 1953, some answered a questionnaire aimed for literary translators in *Bonniers litterära magasin* (BLM 1953). Two translators – Madeleine Gustafsson and Katarina Frostenson – are still active today.

Several of the translators translated in pairs, either occasionally or regularly. The couple Louis and Lisbeth Renner are, for example, known to have translated together (Liffner 2013), whereas in other cases, the collaboration might have been in the form of a division of parts or short stories. This is, for instance, the case with Eva Alexanderson and Eyvind Johansson's translation of Jean-Paul Sartre's *Le mur*, where Johansson translated the title short story and Alexanderson translated the rest. In the bibliography, the following translators occur in the same post in *Libris*: Anne Marie Hansen and Ingalisa Munck (*Historien* by Elsa Morante); Louis and Lisbeth Renner (e.g., *Hotell Shanghai* [Hotel Shanghai] by Vicki Baum), Aslög Davidson and

Elsa Thulin (*Det blåser över Dödingfjäll* [Det blåser frau Dauingfjell] by Trygve Gullbranssen), Eva Alexandersson and Eyvind Johnson (*Muren* [Le mur] by Jean-Paul Sartre), Birgitta Hammar and Vanja Lantz (*Pion* [Peony] by Pearl Buck), Britt-Marie Bergström and Sven Bergström (*Ett mord annonseras* [A Murder is Announced] by Agatha Christie), Gunnar Brandell and Bengt John (*Myten av Sisyfos* [Le myth de Sisyphé] by Albert Camus); Hadar Högberg and Alvar Zacke (*Det var en gång ett krig* [Once There Was a War] by John Steinbeck), Irmelin Frizell and Keiko Kockum (*Kvinnan i sanden* [Suna no onna] by Kobo Abé); and Karin Lindgren and Elsa Thulin (*Värdshuset Jamaica* [Jamaica Inn] by Daphne du Maurier).

4.3. The When of non-retranslation

The “when?” question of non-retranslation is dealt with by exploring certain aspects of the publication time span and publication interval.

The time span, i.e., the time between the first and last edition, ranges from 1 year to 104 years, with the mean time span for all 200 titles being 38.7 years. For the ‘one-hit wonder’ category, this number is 33.2 years, which reflects the fact that only titles with three editions are included in that category. For the ‘once-popular’ category, the number is 36.2 years between the first and last edition. Finally, for the ‘classic’ category, the mean timespan is 58.5 years, which stems from the higher number of editions required to be included in this category.

Figure 2 presents an overview of when the first and last editions of all titles were published; the figure shows when the first and last editions were published by decade, but not the relationship between the first and last edition.

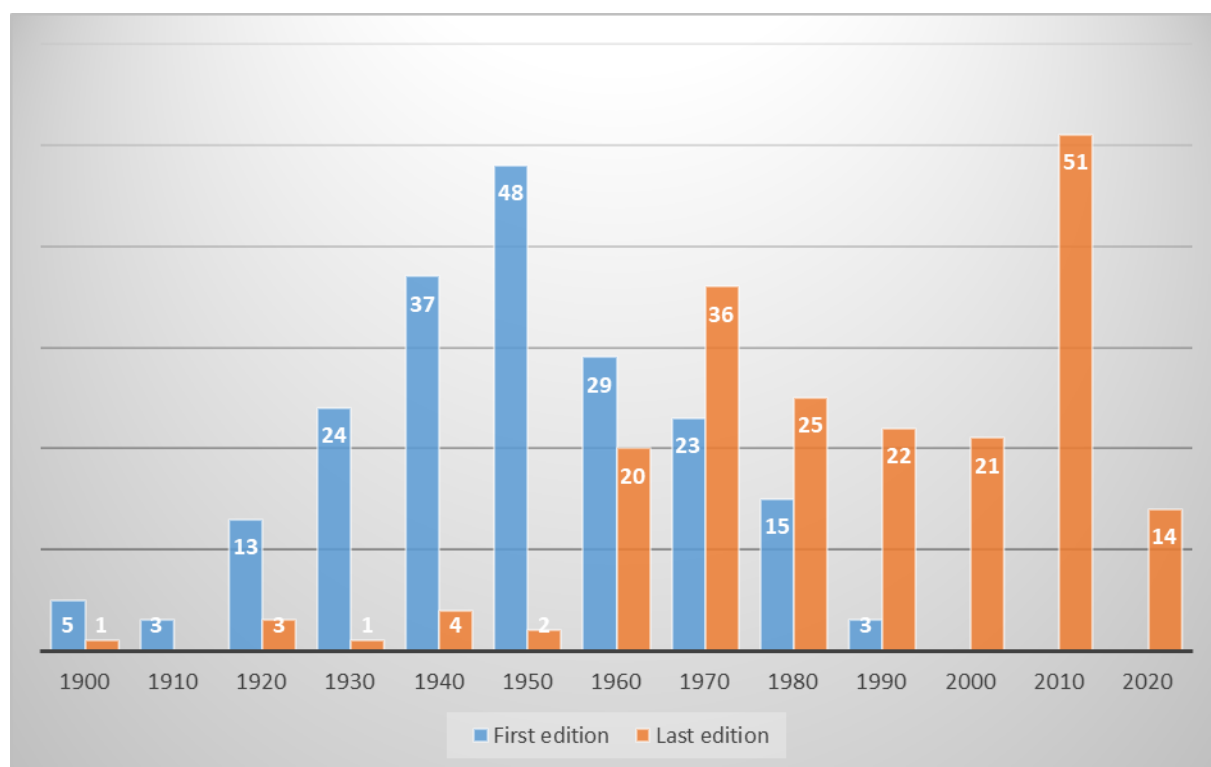


Figure 2. Overview over first and latest edition according to decade

From Figure 2, it is clear that most titles were first published in 1940s–1960s: 48 titles (24%) in the 1950s, followed by the 1940s (18.5%), and the 1960s (14.5%). The latest editions were predominantly published from the 1960s and onwards, with a peak in the 2010s, when 51 of the titles (25.5%) were published in their latest editions. It is striking that 14 titles (7%) were published in the 2020s, which in practice means 2020–2021. In total, 65 of the titles

(32.5%) were last published in the 21st century, which clearly shows that non-retranslations are not only a practice of the past. Among the most striking examples is the Norwegian Nobel laureate Sigrid Undset, whose novels *Den lyckliga åldern*, *Skärvan av trollspegeln* [Splinten av trolldspeilet], and *På livets skuggsida* [Fattige skjæbner] were published in the 1920s, and thereafter in 2020 – a time span of roughly a hundred years.

Yet another interesting aspect of the “When?” question is the relationship between the number of editions and the number of years between the first and last editions, presented in Figure 3.

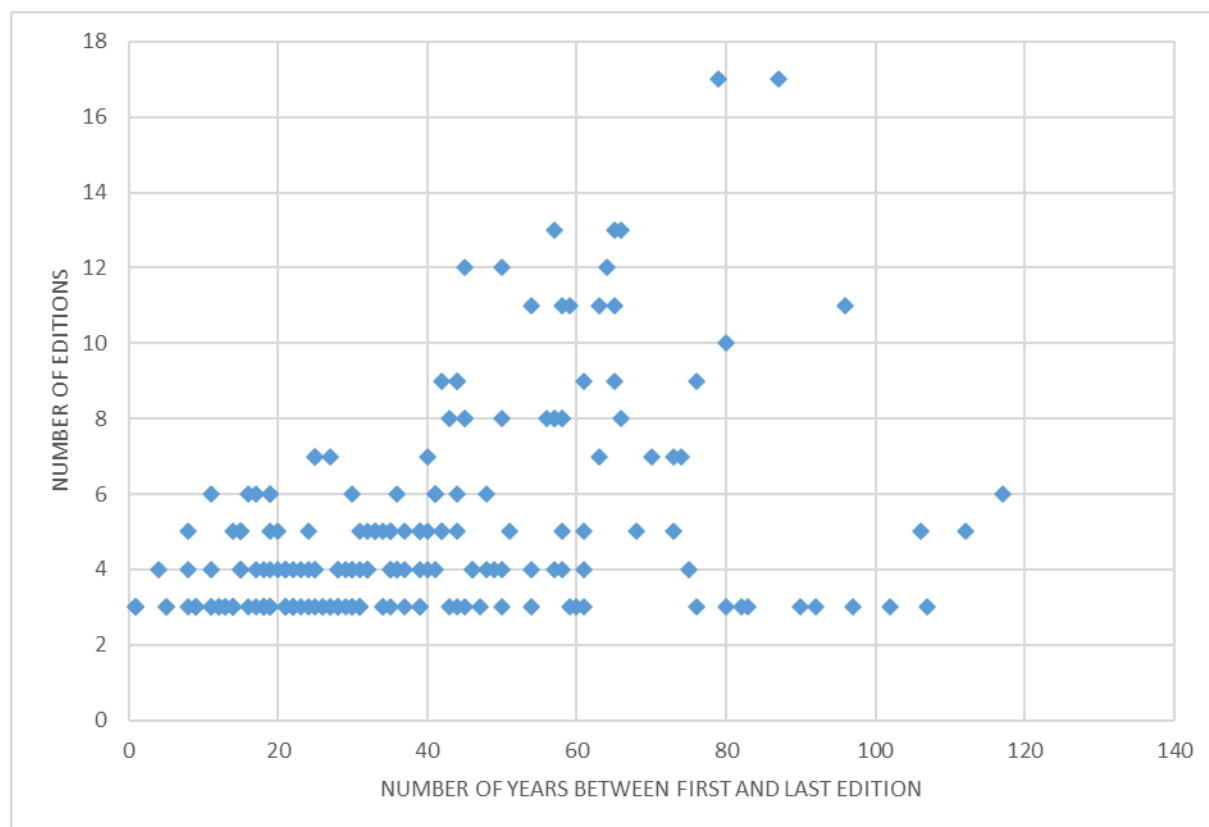


Figure 3. Overview number of editions and number of active years

Figure 3 reveals a number of interesting findings. Firstly, it is clear that the titles published only in three editions can still be published over a long period of time, the most extreme example being the three novels by Sigrid Undset mentioned above. Secondly, two titles have been published in 17 editions – *Vredens druvor* by John Steinbeck and *Stäppvargen* [Der Steppenwolf] by Hermann Hesse – and they have been published over 79 and 87 years respectively. Thirdly, it is possible to distinguish a cluster of titles with 3–6 editions that were published during sixty years. When examining this cluster in more detail, we can note that up to six editions were published in the first twenty years. Fourthly, another, looser, cluster can be distinguished with 8–13 editions and 40–80 years. In addition, there are a number of outliers that are not as easily categorized. This is the case for the two titles being published in five editions over 106 years (*En fredlös på öarna* [An outcast of the islands] by Joseph Conrad) and 112 years (*Ametistringen* [L’anneau d’améthyste] by Anatole France). The same goes for Knut Hamsun’s *Svärmare* [Sværmere], which was published in 6 editions over 117 years, and Pearl Buck’s *Den goda jorden* [The Good Earth], in 11 editions over 96 years.

We turn now to publication interval, i.e., the mean range between the publication of a title’s different editions. The publication interval ranges from 0.2 years (*Ridå. Hercule Poirots sista fall* [Curtain: Poirot’s last case] by Agatha Christie) to 53.5 years (*Den lyckliga åldern* by Sigrid

Undset). The mean publication interval amounts to 11.8 years, revealing that the editions in the bibliography have on average been published with an interval of a little over ten years. The mean publication interval for the different categories ranges from 8.8 to 16.3 years, with the higher number belonging to the ‘one-hit wonder’ category. The ‘once-popular’ category has the lowest mean score, 8.8 years, whereas the titles in the ‘classic’ category on average have been published every 9.8 years. As previously mentioned, some of Sigrid Undset’s novels have time spans bridging roughly a century and they have contributed to raising the mean publication interval in the ‘one-hit wonder’ category. The same tendency can be observed when investigating publication intervals in relation to source languages: Norwegian displays the highest number – on average, a Norwegian title was published every 25.1 years. Interestingly, however, different source languages do display different mean publication intervals, in contrast to the different categories. French and Italian have the second and the third highest mean score with a title translated from French being published every 14.1 years, and a title translated from Italian every 11.8 years. English and German have the lowest mean publication interval with 9.5 (English) and 9.9 (German) years. These numbers suggest that the source language seems to influence the pace of the republishing process, although the low number of titles for some languages makes it hard to draw any far-reaching conclusions.

4.4. The Where of non-retranslations

This section looks into three aspects of the “where?” question: source languages, publishers, and series. There are a total of ten source languages in the bibliography (Figure 4); with the exception of Japanese, the material only includes titles in European languages. There is one example of an indirect translation: Warburton’s translation of *Mardrömmen* [Kojinteka na taiken] by Kenzaburo Oe, which was translated from English.

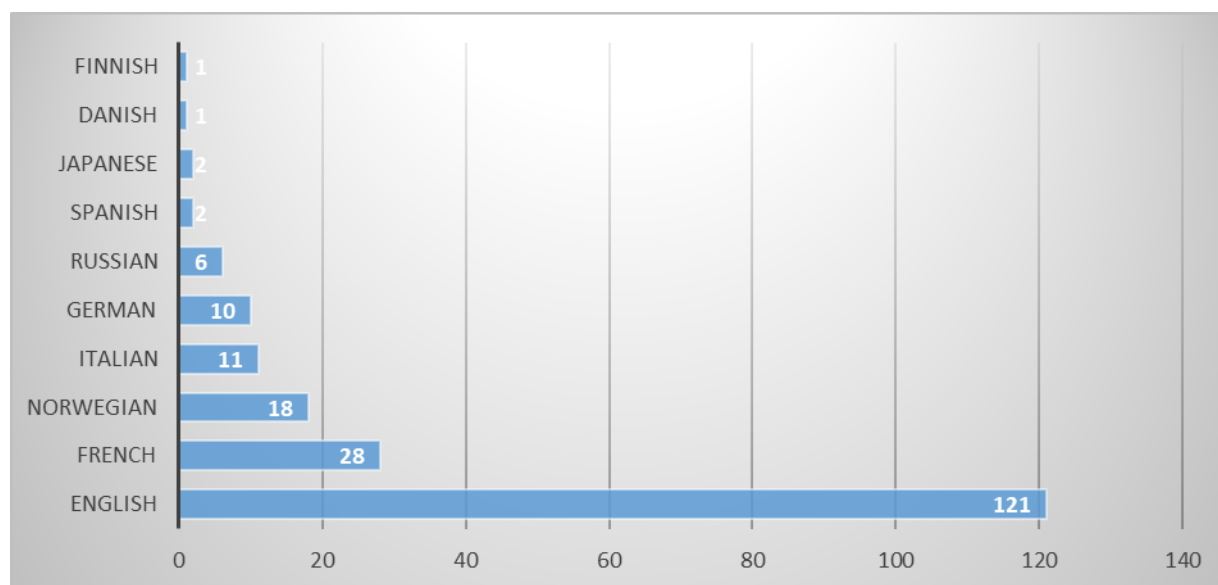


Figure 4. Source languages

English (60.5%) is the most common language, followed by French (14%), Norwegian (9%), Italian (5.5%), German (5%), and Russian (3%). The remaining source languages count 0.5–1% each. The dominance of the English language is in line with Sweden’s general dominance of English in publishing statistics over time (e.g., Lindqvist, 2016). However, the rather low share of German is surprising given its fairly prominent position in publishing statistics (Lindqvist, 2016, p. 181). One possible explanation is that I have not managed to locate titles from more minor source languages.

Table 3 shows the source languages according to the three categories.

	'One-hit wonder' category		'Once-popular' category		'Classic' category		Total
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n
English	42	57	59	65	20	56	121
French	10	13	12	13	6	16	28
Norwegian	8	11	8	9	2	6	18
Italian	5	7	4	4	2	6	11
German	2	3	6	7	2	6	10
Russian	2	3	2	2	2	6	6
Japanese	2	3	0	0	0	0	2
Spanish	1	2	0	0	1	3	2
Danish	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Finnish	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Total	73	100	91	100	36	100	200

Table 3. Number of percentages of the three categories according to source languages

Table 3 shows that there are only minor changes across the three categories when adjusted for different source languages: the percentage of English ranges between 56%–65%, with a peak in the 'once-popular' category. French ranges from 13%–16%, while the change is larger regarding Norwegian, where the 'one-hit wonder' category amounts to 11%, followed by 9% in the 'once-popular' category, and 6% in the 'Classic' category. Here, the changing status of Norwegian may be reflected in the uneven percentages in the different categories. Again, many of the Norwegian titles in the 'one-hit wonder' category are those of Sigrid Undset, as discussed earlier. Regarding Italian, the 'one-hit wonder' category amounts to 7%, and the 'classic' category to 8%, while the 'once-popular' category only amounts to 3%. In general, no clear tendency can be found regarding source languages according to the three categories, which suggests that the source language does not seem to be a decisive factor for the practice of non-retranslations.

Regarding the publishing houses, the 1002 editions in the bibliography have been published by 72 publishing houses. The 12 publishing houses with more than ten editions are shown in Figure 5, which clearly demonstrates Albert Bonniers förlag's total dominance in the bibliography, contributing 315 editions (31.5%).

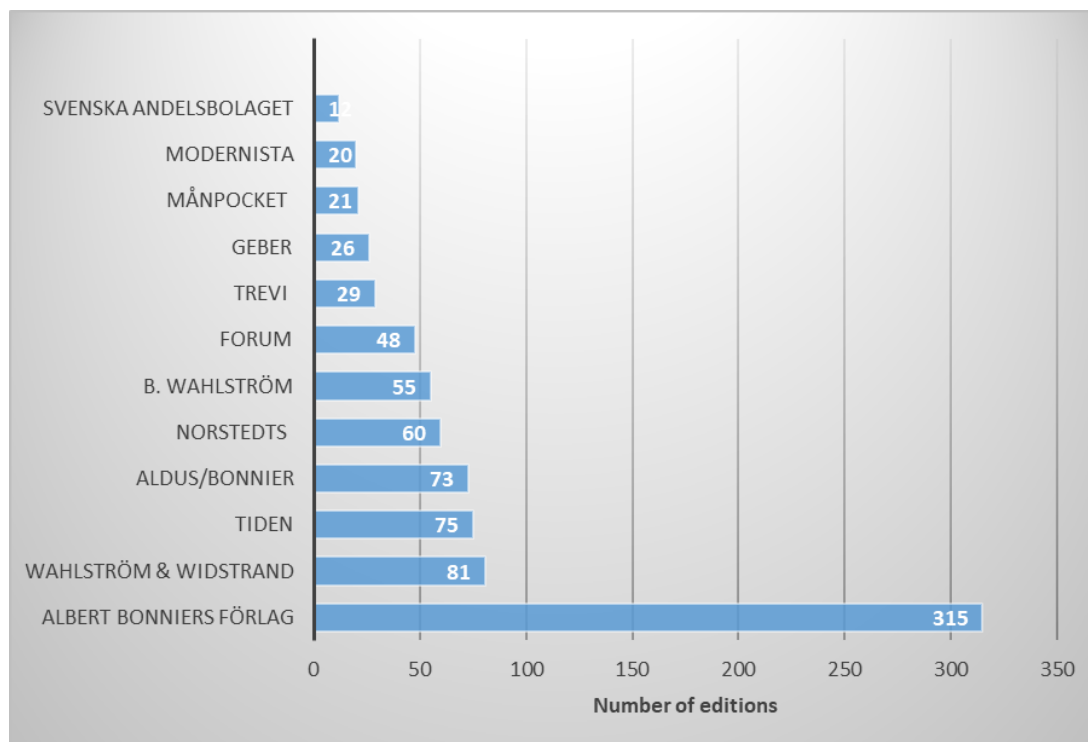


Figure 5. Publishing houses in relation to number of editions

A number of these publishing houses are no longer active, such as Svenska Andelsbolaget, Geber, Trevi, Aldus, and Tiden. It is also worth noting that Mån-pocket is owned by Bonniers and Norstedts together and publishes pocket books. The remaining six publishing houses are still active today. Figure 6 displays these publishing houses' *total* amount of editions by decade, irrespective of whether these are first or later editions (cf. Figure 2 above).

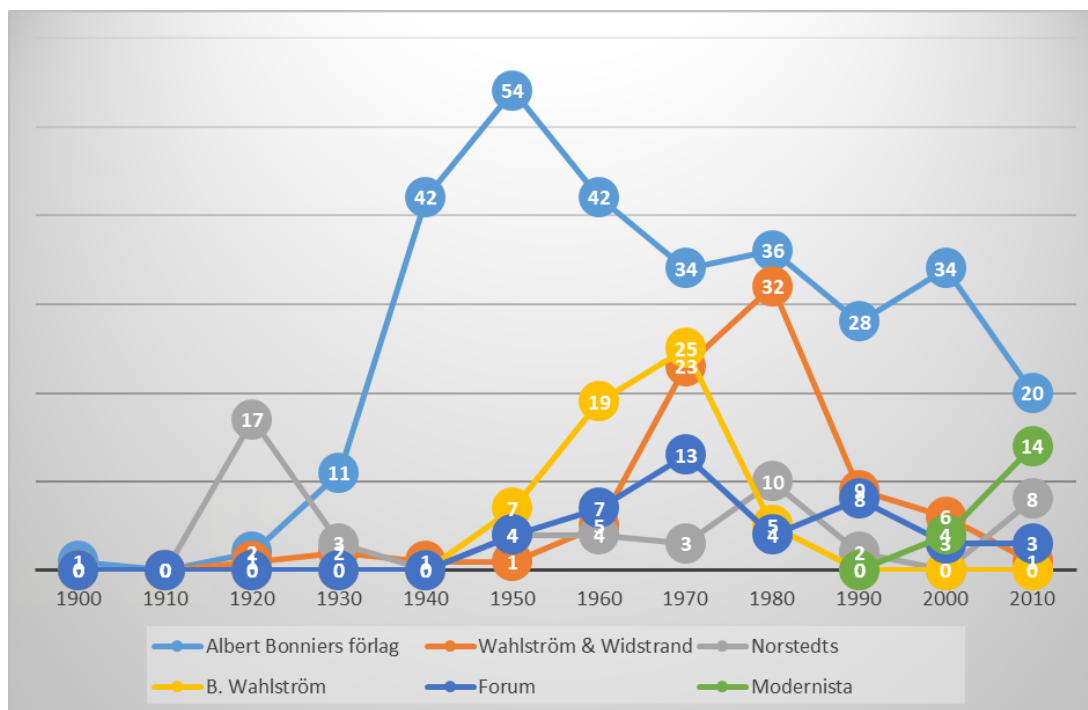


Figure 6. Publishing houses' number of editions per decade

The most noteworthy tendency is, again, Albert Bonniers förlag's dominance. Interestingly, the two largest publishing houses historically in Sweden – Albert Bonniers förlag and Norstedts – seem to have entirely different approaches to non-retranslations: whereas Albert Bonniers förlag have published the highest number of editions during the whole time period, except during the 1920s, Norstedts has a different strategy. In fact, the 17 editions published in 1920 are the highest number of editions registered, followed by ten in the 1980s – a decade when Albert Bonniers förlag published 36 editions. The same tendency can be seen in the 2010s, when Albert Bonniers publishes 20 editions and Norstedts 8 editions.

The other four publishing houses display diverse publication patterns. Wahlström & Widstrand and Forum are both owned by Bonniers. Wahlström & Widstrand has the most widespread practice of publishing non-retranslation, especially in the 1970s and 1980s with 23 and 32 titles. Forum has a much more subtle approach but also has its own highest score in the 1970s with 13 titles. B. Wahlström is generally known for publishing youth and children's literature, but previously also published novels aimed at an adult readership in different series. Perhaps due to this development, they have not published any non-retranslations in the bibliography since the 1980s. Lastly, Modernista was founded in 2002 and is therefore only present in the last two decades. Interestingly, they have quickly established themselves as the publisher who published the second most non-retranslations in the 2010s, with 14 titles compared to Bonnier's 20 titles.

Yet another aspect of the "Where" question concerns series. In a case study on Françoise Sagan's *Bonjour tristesse* [Bonjour tristesse] (Svahn 2022), I noticed that book series, and especially classic series, played a crucial role in both the consecration of specific editions and the overall long-term canonization of *Bonjour tristesse* as a classic in Sweden. In the bibliography, there are 87 different series mentioned. In total, 478 (48%) of all titles are published in a series. Some of these series are clearly aimed toward high prestige literature, such as the Delfin series (117 editions), the Panache series (21 editions), and Bonnier's classic pocket series (18 editions). While these three series have slightly different themes, they are all published by Albert Bonniers förlag, which suggest that their practice of publishing non-retranslations are linked to different sorts of series. Two book club series are especially prominent: Svalans book club (34 editions), also published by Albert Bonniers förlag, and Tidens book club (27 editions), published by Tiden förlag. Some series are more general without any particular theme, such as Forumbiblioteket (15 editions) by Forum förlag and W&W pocket (4 editions) by Wahlström & Widstrand. Yet others have more specific focus; such as Nobel classics (5), Moderna unga människor [Modern young people] (2 editions) and Böcker som förnyat människans tänkande [Books that have renewed the thinking of man] (1 edition). Considering the high number of editions being published in series, continuing to explore book series as a site of non-retranslations seems to be a fruitful avenue for future research.

4.5. The How of non-retranslation

As previously discussed, my definition of non-retranslations includes both overt and covert revisions. The bibliography reveals a very low number of overt revisions: out of 1002 editions, only 15 explicitly state being revised in *Libris*. These are:

- the 1962 edition of *Ametistringen* by Anatole France.²
- the 2017 and 2018 editions of *Sånt händer inte här* [It Can't Happen Here] by Sinclair Lewis.
- the 1994 edition of *Doktor Zjivago* [Doktor Živago] by Boris Pasternak.

² The latest edition from 2018 does not mention a revision.

- the 2012 and 2014 editions of *De gyllene frukterna* [Les fruits d'or] by Nathalie Sarraute.
- the 2011 edition of *Lord Peters smekmånad: en kärlekshistoria med detektiva avbrott* [Busman's Honeymoon] by Dorothy L. Sayer.
- The 2017 edition of *Smileys sixties*, a collection including several novels, by John Le Carré.
- The 1987, 2004, and 2005 editions of *Muren* by Jean-Paul Sartre.
- The 1999 and 2000 editions of *Blecktrumman* [Die Blechtrommel] by Günter Grass.
- The 1969 edition of *Människans lott* [La condition humaine] by André Malraux.
- The 1983 edition of *Mysterier* [Mysterier] by Knut Hamsun.

Apart from the novel by Anatole France, the editions where the revisions took place are the latest ones being published. Based on the information in *Libris*, it would seem like only a small number of non-retranslations have been overtly revised. However, a previous study (Svahn, 2003) focusing on the titles in the bibliography with most editions showed that 7 out of 14 titles had been covertly revised, although mainly at a fairly low, linguistic level (e.g., punctuation). Based on this case study, a number of editions in the bibliography are likely to have been revised. The extent and nature of these revisions need to be explored in case studies in the future.

4.6. The Why of non-retranslation

Finally, it is of course hard, not to say impossible, to draw a definitive conclusion of why certain titles are not retranslated, despite the fact that they appear to qualify for being retranslated.

One possibility, put forward by Bollaert (2019, p. 65; see also Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004), is that non-retranslations are more inclined to be published by large publishers, who are more marked by economic capital (see Sapiro, 2008). Smaller publishers, on the other hand, are more directed towards cultural capital and literary value and are thus more inclined toward retranslating. The high number of large publishers in this material would, at first sight, speak in favor of this explanation. The *raison d'être* for non-retranslations could then be interpreted as an above all economic question: it is less expensive to republish old translations and gives them a new look by a new setting, cover, and peritexts. Also, large publishers are generally considered to play a more "traditional" or "conserving" role (Sapiro, 2008; Schwartz, 2021). This may be a part of the explanation, and future studies should more closely investigate the publishers' role in publishing non-retranslations, either in a historical setting through archival work or in a contemporary setting through interviews.

Yet, my work with this material has also led me to consider non-retranslations in terms of value making and to see non-retranslations as bearers of a specific form of cultural capital. Bollaert (2019, p. 63) states that:

The position of a particular translation is reinforced by conferring its legitimacy, even canonicity, through the repeated act of reprinting. [...] The difference [compared to retranslation], however, is that reprints, although technically also keeping the memory of the source text alive, rather reinforce a very specific interpretation of it.

One common perception of retranslation is that the first translation is inevitably flawed in some sense and can be summarized in Koskinen and Paloposki's (2015, p. 27) words: "too old, too outdated, too free, too domesticated or too foreign, and so on". The material here, and especially the non-retranslations found in the 'classics' and 'once-popular' categories, rather point towards the opposite: that the translations – marked by older translations norms as they may be – have become one with the titles they represent in the target culture. As such, they are an asset in the title's canonicity in the target culture. Thus, contrarily to previous theories

on retranslations, outdated language is not necessarily a drawback but may in certain cases speak in favour of a title not being retranslated. The titles in the 'classic' category can serve as an example of this. It is reasonable to think that these titles, which can be described as a sort of modern 20th-century classic, benefit from some kind of linguistic patina; they are still easily understood by contemporary readers while at the same time their old-fashioned language signals their status as classics. This hypothesis could perhaps be called the non-retranslation hypothesis and deserves further exploration in the future.

5. Discussion – so what?

After having explored a number of questions related to non-retranslation, one remains: So what? What is the point of exploring non-retranslations and in what ways do non-retranslations relate to retranslations? In this final section, I will discuss some theoretical and methodological implications for (non-)retranslation research as well as some tendencies concerning non-retranslations in Sweden.

From a theoretical viewpoint, as this article has hopefully shown, non-retranslations can call into question some assumptions of retranslations. These assumptions include the notion that outdated language is always a drawback for a translated title as well as the temporal aspects of when a retranslation is "required". The article has also presented a way to explore non-retranslations in a large scale study by focusing on trends and tendencies.

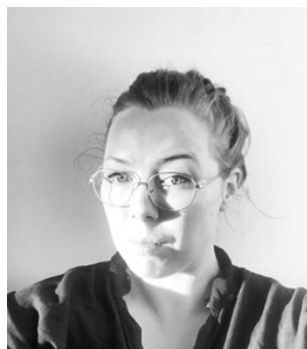
When it comes to the bibliography, the findings presented here are naturally limited by the present scope of the material and are likely to change as more titles are added to the bibliography. Yet, some conclusions can still be made. For example, the categorization of titles has shown that, perhaps counterintuitively, a large share of the titles cannot be described as classics, but rather as titles where some sort of canonization process started but never took off. This sort of halted canonization deserves further attention. In a longer perspective, I wish that the bibliography give rise to case studies and thus, just as Berk Albachten's and Tahir Gürçağlar's write about their bibliography of retranslations, "creat[e] intersections between macro- and micro-level analyses" (2018, p. 221).

In terms of the findings regarding the situation for non-retranslations in Sweden, a prominent finding is the total dominance of Albert Bonniers förlag, which is especially intriguing since the second major publishing house, Norstedts, seems to have a completely different publication strategy for non-retranslations. This article is not comparative, but it would be interesting to investigate whether Norstedts' lack of non-retranslations parallels a comparable practice of retranslation. Similarly, it would be interesting to explore minor publishing houses' strategies for non-retranslation and retranslation. In particular, further attention should be devoted to how innovation and conservation, as well as cultural and economic capital, are associated with the two practices. To conclude, this article has answered some questions on the curious concept of non-retranslation, but many questions and answers still remain.

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 Elin Svahn

Stockholm University
Institute for Interpreting and Translation Studies
Department of Swedish Language and Multilingualism
106 91 Stockholm
Sweden

elin.svahn@su.se

Biography: Elin Svahn holds a PhD in Translation Studies from Stockholm University. She defended her PhD dissertation *The dynamics of extratextual translatorship in contemporary Sweden. A mixed methods approach* in 2020. Her research interests include (non-)retranslation, translation history, and translation sociology. She has co-edited two publications (2018, 2020) and her articles have appeared in journals such *Meta*, *Perspectives*, and *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*.



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The influence of foregrounding on retranslation: The phenomenon of ‘unretranslatability’ in Joyce’s *Ulysses*

Guillermo Sanz Gallego

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, VUB

Erika Mihálycsa

Babeş-Bolyai University

Monica Paulis

University of Antwerp

Arvi Sepp

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, VUB

Jolanta Wawrzycka

Radford University

Abstract

The present paper aims at exploring patterns of translational overlap in passages that retranslators recover from previous translations in a series of excerpts from Joyce’s *Ulysses* in German, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, and Spanish. Drawing on Van Poucke (2020), who has proved that retranslations tend to show an overlap of 50% to 60% of the words compared to previous translations, we aim at outlining patterns of ‘unretranslatability’ – a phenomenon that we define as a forced or imperative coincidence between first translation(s) and retranslation(s) – by reducing the number of translation options, and focusing on passages with foregrounding. Accordingly, we suggest the ‘unretranslatability hypothesis’: If a first translation manages to reproduce a passage with foregrounding maintaining the same effect expressed in the source text, then the options for alternative translations are reduced to such an extent that a case of unretranslatability might be provoked. In the present study we observe that the ‘unretranslatability hypothesis’ can hold in a variety of language combinations if the two premises are met. One of the major implications of the study is that we can trace patterns of overlap in retranslations. Future research should further sketch those patterns in detail at different levels.

Keywords

retranslation, unretranslatability hypothesis, *Ulysses*, James Joyce, literary translation

1. Introduction

The past thirty years have witnessed a growing interest in what started as a research topic, and has now become a branch within translation studies, or even a discipline *in se*, “retranslation studies”, as Berk Albachten and Tahir Gürçağlar (2019, p. 1) claim. The large amount of conferences, special issues, and case studies that since then revolve around retranslation show that the current academic fascination toward the topic might not be an ephemeral trend, but rather the emergence of a new subdiscipline that has come to stay. Thanks to the specificity of its cases, approaches, hypotheses, and research methodologies, studies on retranslation manage to shed light on other aspects of the phenomenon of translation.

It is undeniable that within “retranslation studies”, a specific theory has dominated the academic debate since the beginning. The ubiquitous character of the “retranslation hypothesis” – as coined by Chesterman (2000), referring to Berman (1990) – has had a huge impact on research into retranslation, and, in particular, on the approaches adopted by researchers. Throughout the years, the academic community has witnessed how innumerable scholars have attempted to test this hypothesis with mixed results. The main conclusion we can draw in this regard is that, depending on the language combination – among other aspects –, the retranslation hypothesis may be confirmed in some case studies, but it may not be valid in many others.

With its name, the “retranslation hypothesis” has linked the phenomenon of retranslation as a whole to 1) a specific methodology – of comparative, contrastive analysis between first or early translation(s) and retranslation(s); and 2) to a specific and pre-defined conclusion – retranslations are supposed to be ‘closer’ to the original (Berman, 1990; Bensimon, 1990; Chesterman, 2000). Despite Chesterman’s (2000, p. 23) insistence that what he says about retranslation is but a descriptive, and not a universal nor even predictive hypothesis, and that exceptions are surely to be found, and despite evidence showing that such a conclusion cannot be assumed for all languages combinations (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004), the influence of the “retranslation hypothesis” is still widespread, and case studies aiming to confirm or infirm it for specific language combinations and historical periods are still being undertaken (see Peeters & Van Poucke, in the current volume).

Indeed, the “retranslation hypothesis” has provoked a biased and misleading effect in academic research on the topic. The numerous case studies that aim at testing the “retranslation hypothesis” are based on a contrastive analysis between first translation and retranslation, and accordingly, they all start from a very clear premise, namely that the first translation and the retranslation differ in one way or another. As a result, most case studies neglect any type of overlapping between versions in the comparative analyses performed.

Yet, in a recent research study, Van Poucke (2020) did focus on overlapping in retranslations. By focusing on the effect of previous translations on retranslations, Van Poucke managed to show that retranslations tend to reproduce – or “recycle”, as Van Poucke states – between 50% and 60% of the words contained in previous translations. These results are extremely significant and are in fact evidence of the need to follow this underexplored and novel research path. Indeed, as Van Poucke points out, “a translator has only a limited number of ways to translate a ST” (2020, p. 23). Of course, this situation is applied to circumstances in which the source text provides the translator with a certain degree of freedom in the form of different translation options. Yet, there are cases in which the source text does not provide the translator with different translation options. This applies when specific elements of the source text reduce the number of translation options because of explicit and/or prominent foregrounding devices.

The novel focus on such foregrounding devices allows us to explore possible patterns of what we could call ‘unretranslatability’, that is, a phenomenon which we understand as a forced or

imperative coincidence between first translation(s) and retranslation(s) in a specific segment, sentence or passage¹. We would therefore suggest the 'unretranslatability hypothesis', which can be stated as follows: If a first translation manages to reproduce a passage with foregrounding devices maintaining the same effect as expressed in the source text (i.e., by approximating the original's foregrounding device), then the options for alternative translations are reduced to such an extent that a case of unretranslatability might be provoked in specific segments, sentences or passages.

The present research study aims at exploring possible patterns in overlapping between first translations and retranslations. By comparing a corpus of translations and retranslations in different languages we intend to identify patterns in which the retranslators recycle entire segments from former translations. We believe that these cases of overlapping might share a combination of features that provoke a situation in which the translation options are reduced to such an extent that retranslators – and re-retranslators – are forced to reuse former translations.

In order to explore these (non-)retranslation patterns across languages, we will discuss a series of excerpts from Joyce's *Ulysses* in German, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, and Spanish. The selection of the source text is due to two factors. On the one hand, Joyce's *Ulysses* is a work that has been retranslated to all these languages – among others – at least once, as made explicit in a recent collection, *Retranslating Joyce for the 21st Century* (Wawrzycka & Mihálycsa, 2020). The second reason for selecting *Ulysses* as a source text is due to Joyce's style, which is rich in foregrounding devices, a crucial aspect for the hypothesis we will be testing. A third reason for selecting *Ulysses* as source text is due to the fact that the first translations have managed to render the foregrounding devices in such a way that they achieve a corresponding effect of the original. As a result, the use of *Ulysses* as a source text will allow us to create a large multilingual corpus of translations and retranslations, in which the source text is characterized by a challenging style for translators and retranslators.

2. Foregrounding

The analysis and test of the 'unretranslatability hypothesis' will be based on the notion of foregrounding. The working definition that will be used as a main reference is based on the taxonomies by Simpson (2004) – for whom foregrounding is “a form of textual patterning which is motivated specifically for literary-aesthetic purposes [... and], typically involves a stylistic distortion of some sort, either through an aspect of the text which deviates from a linguistic norm or, alternatively, where an aspect of the text is brought to the fore through repetition or parallelism” (2004, p. 50) – and by Miall and Kuiken (1994) – for whom foregrounding “refers to the range of stylistic variations that occur in literature, whether at the phonetic level (e.g., alliteration, rhyme), the grammatical level (e.g., inversion, ellipsis), or the semantic level (e.g., metaphor, irony)” (1994, p. 390). This description of foregrounded features can be further developed with other stylistic aspects characteristic of Joyce's style, such as unconventional syntactic constructions – e.g., ellipsis –, non-standard grammar, repetitions, alliterations, anaphora, assonance, consonance, overtones, multilingualism, rhyme, rhythm, as well as canonized intertextual references.

For the purpose of this research study, we will be comparing passages of the source text in which foregrounding devices are visible to their translations and retranslations into German, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, and Spanish. First, we will be discussing the foregrounding devices

¹ The difference between 'sentence' and 'segment' that we have taken into consideration for our study follows the one adopted by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) in their taxonomy of translation procedures, i.e., a sentence would be placed at a higher level and may comprise more segments.

found in the source text, and then we will compare the different versions to analyze patterns of overlapping.

3. Theoretical framework and methodology

As stated above, the present study aims at providing an answer to whether patterns of overlapping can be found in retranslations. Therefore, we would like to test what we call the 'unretranslatability hypothesis', which is based on two specific premises: 1) the source text contains foregrounding devices, and 2) the first translator manages to reproduce in his/her translation a similar foregrounding device. If these two premises occur, the translation options for retranslators – and re-retranslators – are reduced to such an extent that they might recover the segment of the first translation in the retranslation, and/or in the re-retranslation.

Of course, these two premises are not always likely to coincide. In some instances, different foregrounding devices may occur in the same excerpt, and the first translator may only manage to reproduce part of the translation unit with the same foregrounding effect in the target text. Therefore, we believe that we should also broaden the scope of our research to observe different phenomena that take place when foregrounding devices are retranslated. In this regard, a discussion of the different possible scenarios that may occur seems appropriate.

3.1. Cases with two versions (T1 and RT)

In cases in which a source text has been retranslated only once, there are only three possible scenarios: 1) full overlapping or unretranslatability, 2) partial overlapping, and 3) full discrepancy. Firstly, we find a scenario of full unretranslatability when an entire coincidence occurs between T1 and RT. In these situations, the retranslator recycles an entire segment of the first translation. Yet, the overlapping may also occur only partially. These scenarios of partial overlapping would imply that the retranslator discards a part of the T1 segment but recycles another part of the segment. Finally, there are cases of full discrepancy between T1 and RT.

3.2. Cases with three versions (T1, RT and RRT)

Cases with first translations (T1s), retranslations (RTs), and re-retranslations (RRTs) are more complex, and, therefore, instead of three, there are five possible scenarios of full overlapping and discrepancy, and nine possible scenarios of partial overlap.

1. $RRT=RT=T1$: First of all, a full overlapping may occur in the three versions, which is what we call a case of unretranslatability;
2. $RRT=RT\neq T1$: A case in which the RRT only recycles the RT can be understood as a confirmation of the latter version (RT), and as neglecting the first version (T1);
3. $RRT=T1\neq RT$: A case in which the RRT only recycles T1 can be understood as a confirmation of that first version (T1), and as neglecting the latter version (RT);
4. $RRT\neq RT=T1$: We may also find coincidence between the two first versions, but the re-retranslators, in their role as proofreaders of former versions, may discard them and opt for an alternative new version;
5. $RRT\neq RT\neq T1$: We may also find cases in which the three versions differ;
6. And then there are numerous possible cases of partial overlapping:
 - 6.1. $RRT(+X)=T1+RT$: We may observe cases in which the first two versions show discrepancy, and the re-retranslation is formed by a combination of parts of each version – with possible additions –, i.e., the RRT recovers part of T1 and RT, but it also discards part of T1 and part of RT;

- 6.2. $RRT=RT+X \neq T1$: We may also observe cases in which the re-retranslation is formed by a part of the retranslation and other additions, but no overlapping with the first translation;
- 6.3. $RRT=T1+X \neq RT$: Or cases in which the re-retranslation is formed by a part of the first translation and other additions, but no overlapping with the retranslation;
- 6.4. $RT(+X)=T1+RRT$: Cases are also possible in which the first translation and the re-retranslation show discrepancy, and the retranslation both recovers a part of the first translation – with possible additions – and provides inspiration for parts of the re-retranslation;
- 6.5. $RT=T1+X \neq RRT$: A fifth possibility consists of cases in which the retranslation is formed by a part of the first translation and other additions, but the re-retranslation shows discrepancy;
- 6.6. $RT=RRT+X \neq T1$: We may also observe cases in which the retranslation is formed by a part of the re-retranslation and other additions, but the first translation shows discrepancy;
- 6.7. $T1(+X)=RT+RRT$: Cases could also be found in which the latest two versions show discrepancy, and the first translation provides inspiration for parts of each version – with possible additions –, i.e., RT and RRT recover different parts of T1, while showing discrepancy with regard to one another;
- 6.8. $T1=RT+X \neq RRT$: It is also possible that the first translation provides inspiration for a part of the retranslation, but the re-retranslation shows discrepancy;
- 6.9. $T1=RRT+X \neq RT$: Finally, there could be cases in which the first translation provides inspiration for a part of the re-retranslation, but the retranslation shows discrepancy.

Retranslations and re-retranslations can be seen as quality assessment material, because an overlapping with a former translation can be understood as a confirmation or positive evaluation of that former version, whereas a discrepancy indicates that a specific version is discarded or unknown by the re-retranslators, who, accordingly, acquire the category of proofreaders or evaluators of former translations. In fact, former translations can be consulted by retranslators and re-retranslators as a form of reference work that helps them to compare different possible interpretations of the source text so that they can select the most appropriate one for that particular segment. If both retranslators and re-retranslators recover a segment of a first translation we can conclude that that specific segment has received a double positive evaluation, and, accordingly, an improvement of that translation would seem improbable. These are the cases that can be understood as examples of the phenomenon of 'unretranslatability'.

4. Discussion of the corpus

The work selected as a source text to test the 'unretranslatability hypothesis' is James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922)². After the 100th anniversary of its publication, Joyce's work has undoubtedly managed to stand the test of time, and has long ago become a canonized reference in world literature. The numerous translations, retranslations, and re-retranslations of this work are an evidence of the high influence of Joyce's work and style in modern literature. The selection of *Ulysses* as a source text is also due to Joyce's style, which provides an ideal setting to explore overlapping patterns and to test the 'unretranslatability hypothesis', since the first requirement of this hypothesis – foregrounding devices in the source text – is sure to be fulfilled. Also, the fact that this work has been extensively translated and retranslated provides us with a valuable

² In the analysis section, references to the source text will follow the conventions used in Joyce studies, i.e., *Ulysses* abbreviated as *U*, followed by the chapter number and the line.

corpus. The comparative analysis between translations and retranslations will be discussed below in subsections per target language. The selected passage of the source text will be compared to three translations per language, except for the case of the German translations, in which we will compare the source text to only two translations since the third translation is in fact a re-edition of the second translation.

There are three German translations of *Ulysses*. The first translation was carried out by Georg Goyert and it was published in Zürich by Rhein Verlag in 1927. The Goyert translation underwent two revisions, one still in Joyce's lifetime. After this version, two other translations have been published, the former in 1975 and the latter in 2018, both of them by Hans Wollschläger and with the publishing house Suhrkamp. Wollschläger's latest translation was revised by Harald Beck, Ruth Frehner, and Ursula Zeller, in consultation with Fritz Senn. The "revised Wollschläger" could not be published officially, not having the permission of the Wollschläger Estate. As said above, for the German analysis, we have compared the first translation by Goyert with the commented re-edition of the second translation by Wollschläger, published by Suhrkamp in 2004.

Joyce's *Ulysses* was first translated into Italian in 1960 by De Angelis. During the following six decades, however, six retranslations were published: in 1995 (Flecchia), 2012 (Terrinoni – later updated and re-edited in 2021), 2013 (Celati), 2020 (Biondi), and 2021 (Ceni). Some of the retranslators (e.g., Flecchia and Terrinoni) have made use of critical texts, such as Gifford's annotations (Gifford, 1974), and have paid attention to intertextual references and to the translational solutions presented in previous (re)translations, striving moreover to produce an apparatus of footnotes as extensive and exhaustive as possible. Others, by contrast, have imprinted a more personal linguistic and stylistic character on the text, e.g., by prioritizing the rendering of the original musicality over accuracy (e.g., Celati), or by letting their own colloquial voice be clearly perceivable in more informal notes to the text (e.g., Biondi). The Italian translations that will be analysed within this project are De Angelis's (1960), Terrinoni's (2012) and Biondi's (2020).

To date, three Hungarian translations of *Ulysses* exist, by Endre Gáspár (1947), Miklós Szentkuthy (1974, revised in 1986), and by the translator team András Kappanyos – Marianna Gula – Dávid Szolláth – Gábor Zoltán Kiss (2012, revised in 2021). However, the 2012 *Ulysses* (RRT) is a partial retranslation and thorough re-editing of Szentkuthy's stylistically exuberant version (RT), occasionally also reverting to Gáspár's solutions (T1), described by the team members as a 'remake' of the 'canonic' Szentkuthy text (Gula, 2012, 2020), a circumstance that renders the term 're-retranslation' somewhat problematic. Nevertheless, a correlation can be established between the taking over into RRT of those segments and passages where T1 and/or RT achieve a high level of foregrounding of characteristic Joycean style effects.

For over half a century, the Polish language had only one full translation of *Ulysses*, published by Maciej Słomczyński in 1969/1992 (T1). In October 2021, the second translation (RT) was published by Maciej Świerkocki. In her on-going, unpublished translation (RRT), Jolanta Wawrzycka is producing a new text which will not be a "corrected" text based on Słomczyński's (or Świerkocki's) translation.

The first Spanish translation of *Ulysses*, finally, was published in 1945 in Argentina by José Salas Subirat. Despite Franco's totalitarian regime, there is evidence that this version circulated in Spain since 1947 (Lázaro, 2001; Sanz Gallego, 2013). A second translation by Spanish poet and scholar José María Valverde was published in Barcelona in 1976, a translation in which, among other features, the Americanisms of the former version by Salas Subirat were replaced by a more peninsular linguistic variation. The third translation that we will cover in our analysis will be the one published in 1999 and conducted in duo by the Spanish scholars Francisco García

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5. Analysis

5.1. German translations

The selected passages for the German analysis have been taken from the episode 'Scylla and Charybdis', due to the evident foregrounding in the form of numerous intertextual references to *Hamlet*, and in Joyce's imitation of Shakespeare's style, and in particular, of his syntactic constructions.

Excerpt 1:

ST:

Elizabethan London lay as far from Stratford as corrupt Paris lies from virgin Dublin. Who is the ghost from the *limbo patrum*, returning to the world that has forgotten him? Who is king Hamlet? (U 9.149-150)

T1:

Das elisabethanische London lag ebenso weit von Stratford wie das verderbte Paris vom jungfräulichen Dublin liegt. Wer ist der Geist aus dem *limbo patrum*, der auf die Welt zurückkehrt, die ihn vergessen hat? Wer ist König Hamlet? (p. 305)

RT:

Das elisabethanische London lag von Stratford so weit entfernt, wie das verderbte Paris liegt vom jungfräulichen Dublin. Wer ist der Geist aus dem *limbo patrum*, der zu der Welt zurückkehrt, die ihn vergessen hat? Wer ist König Hamlet? (p. 273)

This excerpt contains a series of foregrounding devices, such as the impersonation of the cities – in which one observes an overlap in both translations regarding the selection of adjectives –, the syntactic pattern of two rhetorical questions emulating Shakespeare's style in *Hamlet* – where overlap is also evident in both translations – and the intertextual references to Shakespeare – which are not only explicit, such as in the reference to King Hamlet and to the ghost in *Hamlet*, but also implicit, such as in the case of the Latin reference to *limbo patrum*, which, according to Gifford, is "Elizabethan slang for a lockup or jail, as in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*" (Gifford, 1974, p. 203). We must add that the multilingualism observed in the use of Latin is also understood as a foregrounding device.

Excerpt 2:

ST:

Hamlet, I am thy father's spirit

[...] To a son he speaks, the son of his soul, the prince, young Hamlet and to the son of his body, Hamnet Shakespeare, who has died in Stratford that his namesake may live for ever. (U 9.170-172)

T1:

Hamlet, ich bin deines Vaters Geist

[...] Zu einem Sohne spricht er, dem Sohne seiner Seele, dem Prinzen, zu dem jungen Hamlet und zu dem Sohne seines Leibes, Hamnet Shakespeare, der in Stratford starb, damit sein Namensvetter ewig lebe. (p. 306)

RT:

Hamlet, ich bin deines Vaters Geist!

[...] Zu einem Sohn spricht er da, dem Sohn seiner Seele, dem Prinzen, dem jungen Hamlet, und zu dem Sohn seines Leibes, Hamnet Shakespeare, der in Stratford starb, auf daß sein Namensvetter ewig lebe. (p. 275)

Here we observe a case of unretranslatability or perfect match between translations in an explicit reference to Hamlet – or rather a “misquotation”, according to Gifford (1974, p. 203). After that reference, an example of auxesis or amplification can be observed in the marked syntactic pattern in the reference to the son, which is further explained by means of an enumeration of his different facets. In this case, although we cannot speak of a perfect match or a case of unretranslatability *stricto sensu*, we observe that the overlapping between the two translations is remarkable.

Excerpt 3:

ST:

– Is it possible that that player Shakespeare, a ghost by absence, and in the vesture of buried Denmark, a ghost by death, speaking his own words to his own son's name (had Hamnet Shakespeare lived he would have been prince Hamlet's twin) is it possible, I want to know, or probable that he did not draw or foresee the logical conclusion of those premises: you are the dispossessed son: I am the murdered father: your mother is the guilty queen. Ann Shakespeare, born Hathaway? (U 9.173-180)

T1:

“Ist es möglich, dass dieser Schauspieler Shakespeare, ein Geist durch Abwesenheit und **in der Kleidung** des begrabenen Dänemark, ein Geist durch Tod, der seine eigenen Worte zu seines eigenen Sohnes Namen spricht, (hätte Hamnet Shakespeare gelebt, er wäre Prinz Hamlets Zwillingbruder gewesen), ist es möglich, **das möchte ich wissen**, oder wahrscheinlich, dass er den logischen Schluss **dieser** Prämissen nicht zog oder vorhersah: du bist der enterbte Sohn: ich bin der ermordete Vater: deine Mutter ist die schuldige Königin, Ann Shakespeare geborene Hathaway?” (p. 307; our boldface)

RT:

– Ist es möglich, daß dieser Schauspieler Shakespeare, ein Geist durch Abwesenheit und **im Gewand** des begrabenen Dänemark, ein Geist durch Tod, der seine eigenen Worte zu seines eigenen Sohnes Namen spricht, (hätte Hamnet Shakespeare gelebt, er wäre Prinz Hamlets Zwillingbruder gewesen), ist es möglich, **will ich wissen**, oder **auch nur** wahrscheinlich, daß er den logischen Schluß **aus diesen** Prämissen nicht zog oder **doch** vorhersah: du bist der enterbte Sohn: ich bin der ermordete Vater: deine Mutter ist die schuldige Königin, Ann Shakespeare, geborene Hathaway? (p. 275; our boldface)

The final example has been selected because of the repetitive syntactic patterns – evocative of Shakespeare's style –, and of the explicit intertextual reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* – such as “the vesture of buried Denmark”, which, according to Gifford, alludes to Horatio's words (*Hamlet*, I. i. 46-49): “the majesty of buried Denmark” (Gifford, 1974, p. 205). This final excerpt is extremely significant because of the high level of overlapping between the translations. In this case, we have marked in bold the words that differ in both translations, which are only 8 out of 82 in the first translation, or more than a 90% of overlapping or unretranslatability.

5.2. Hungarian translations

The passages for the Hungarian analyses come from “Scylla and Charybdis” and “Penelope” and concern foregrounding devices of heteroglossia/dialogism, the echoing and parodying of

the voice and speech mannerisms of others, combined with a range of stylistic foregrounding devices such as rhythm, repetition, or unconventional syntax. They also attest to the translatorial creativity and fine-tuning still possible under conditions of (partial) unretranslatability.

The sentence below from 'Scylla and Charybdis', which satirizes the aesthetic principles of Dublin literati, displays an echo of the librarian's grandiloquent words, 'in the larger analysis', with striking foregrounding effects of unconventional syntax, rhythm and musicality. It illustrates an instance of RT/RRT adopting a previous solution combined with retranslation (thus, an instance of unretranslatability combined with translatorial creativity), where the level of microtextual foregrounding may be said to slightly decrease from T1 to RRT:

Excerpt 1:

ST:

Twicecreakingly analysis he corantoed off. (U 9.12)

T1:

Duplán elemzést csikorogva kitáncolt. (Gáspár, I, p. 146) [Doubly squeaking analysis he danced off.]

RT:

Renyiknyekkenve eltűnt a látóhatáron. (Szentkuthy, p. 226) [Re-squea-creakingly he vanished on the horizon.]

RRT:

Duplanyikorgó corantóban kitáncolt a nézőpontból. (Revised, p. 190) [In double-creaking coranto he danced off the perspective.]

The first sentence's syntactic, stylistic and semantic defamiliarization differs between T1 and RT. While T1 replicates the original's unconventional accusative construction 'creak[ing] analysis' (where 'analysis' echoes the librarian's words), for the latter phrase RT employs the rhetorically inflated 'a teljes látóhatárhoz mérve' ['measured against the entire horizon']; accordingly, in the excerpted sentence the librarian disappears 'on the horizon'. Neither T1 nor RT salvages *coranto*, but the rhythm of RT potentially evokes the dance's sprightly iambic-trochaic lilt. In RT the striking, rhythmic 'renyiknyekkenve' (a combination of the Latin prefix *re-* and a doubling of the onomatopoeia 'nyikk[an]' and 'nyekk[en]', whose standard use implies making a sound, respectively of bodies violently hitting against a surface, rather than creaking) result in a carnivalesque satire, whose degree of defamiliarization approximates and potentially exceeds that of the original.

RRT doesn't adopt the accusative 'creak[ing] analysis' but employs a phrase on 'perspective' (echoing the librarian's 'átfogóbb nézőpontból', 'from a wider perspective') which clearly follows the pattern set by RT. The phrase also imitates the dance rhythm. Apart from restoring *coranto*, its single most foregrounding effect is the compound 'duplanyikorgó' ('double-creaking'), with the appropriate Hungarian onomatopoeia for creaking. However, since T1 and RT already introduced the frontal 'duplán' and respectively the conceit of glueing a Latin prefix to Hungarian onomatopoeia, the RRT compound is arguably prefigured by these solutions and can be treated as partial overlapping. The passage illustrates a certain degree of structural repetitiveness or unretranslatability when it comes to foregrounding unconventional style.

The next two examples of dialogism/heteroglossia come from Molly Bloom's monologue. An account of the monotony of life in Gibraltar features the sound of enervating, repetitive music with an acquaintance's remembered infelicity of speech. By linguistic accident, 'heass', the

plural of the repetitive syllables sung, also becomes a hilarious pejorative term:

Excerpt 2:

ST:

listening to that old Arab with the one eye and his heass of an instrument singing his heah
heah aheah all my compriments on your hotchapotch of your heass (U 18.700)

T1:

ha azt a félszemű arabot hallgatnám és a recsegő hangszerét és közben azt énekli hogy
hi hi ahi *gaturálok* a *hisz hisz retyerutyához* (Gáspár, II, p. 267) [if I were listening to that
one-eyed Arab and his cracking instrument while he's singing hee hee ahee compliments
on the hiss hiss ragbag]

RT:

mikor az a vén félszemű arab elkezdett énekelni hija hija ahija **azon az ütődött hangszerén
adja át szíves üdvözlésemet az egész hija hija csürhéjének** (Szentkuthy, p. 861) [when
that old one-eyed Arab started singing heah heah aheah on that imbecilic instrument of
his give my greetings to all his heah heah scum]

RRT:

annak a vén félszemű arabnak is mikor nekiállt **azon a hülye hangszerén hija hija ahija
adja át szíves üdvöszletemet az egész hija hija ahija csürhéjének** (Revised, p. 697) [(to)
that old one-eyed Arab (too) when he started on that idiotic instrument of his heah heah
aheah give my greetings to all his heah heah scum]

The level of foregrounding the error in T1 is the highest: 'gaturál[ok]' (corr. 'gratulál[ok]') implies a sorely uneducated speaker at odds with loan words. RT opts for gaucheness, using the wrong suffix ('üdvözlés', instead of the normative 'üdvözlét'), whereas RRT slips in a blatant mistake, the phonetic misspelling 'üdvöszlet' for the normative 'üdvözlét'. T1 adds one curious effect by rendering the second *aheah aheah* with 'hisz hisz': the hissing onomatopoeia is polysemic in Hungarian, potentially standing for H sharp in music, 'because', and the root of the verb 'believe/ trust' – compensating for the inevitable loss of the polysemy of *he-ass*. RRT adopts from RT the phrase 'give my greetings' with a variation, and also the translation of 'hotchapotch' (which in T1, in line with the original, is a mishmash of notes rather than a mishmash of people) with the strongly pejorative *csürhe*, 'scum'. This is a problematic slippage, as it adds a note of strident racism not corroborated by other passages in Molly's monologue. In the next example, Molly sardonically recalls her consultation by the gynaecologist Dr Collins, whose medical terminology is beyond her reach, thus parodying another voice and likely mixing up omissions and emissions:

Excerpt 3:

ST:

asking me had I frequent omissions where do those old fellows get all the words they have
omissions (U 18.1169)

T1:

megkérdezte gyakori-e nálam a *kimaradás* hogy ezek az öreg fickók honnan szedik az
ilyeneket hogy *kimaradás* (Gáspár, II, p. 285) [he asked if missing/leaving out is frequent
with me where do these old fellows get such words as missing/leaving out]

RT:

kérdezgeti hogy gyakran szokott-e lenni nálam *emisszió* honnan szedik ezek a vén *trógerek* ezeket a szavakat (Szentkuthy, p. 879) [asking again and again if emission occurs frequently with me where do these old churls/bumpkins get these words]

RRT:

kérdezgeti hogy gyakran *van e misszióm* honnan szedik ezek a vén *trógerek* ezeket a szavakat *van e misszióm* (Revised, p. 711) [asking again and again if I frequently have missions where do these old churls/bumpkins get these words do I have missions]

T1 is a literalist rendering of the original; the Hungarian term 'kimaradás' is suggestive of amenorrhea, not the discharges from which Molly suffers, and it makes visible no emissions-omissions error. RT strangely 'corrects' Molly's slippage, foregrounding the outlandishness of the term in Hungarian. Since in Hungarian both 'emisszió' and 'omisszió' are pretentious foreign terms whose semantic field slightly differs from English, mixing them up wouldn't be an adequate translation of the English original, as a speaker's unfamiliarity with the one makes familiarity with the other highly questionable. RRT, while adopting the structure of the phrase in RT, brilliantly smuggles back the error: by abolishing all punctuation marks, including hyphens, it blurs the line between the question tag '-e' (normative 'van-e', 'is there') and the potential front vowel of emission (the doctor's plausible word), regaling Molly with hilarious *missions*. Example 3 also shows that, even with a high degree of repetition of earlier solutions, (re)retranslations can always foreground micro- or macrotextual style effects that play a pivotal role in Joyce's revolutionary textuality.

5.3. Italian translations

The following examples are taken from De Angelis's first translation (T1), and Terrinoni's (RT) and Biondi's (RRT) retranslations, and represent four situations in which the phenomenon of unretranslatability can be observed. Each example, moreover, presents a different pattern, displaying either an overlapping of all three (re)translations, or an overlapping of T1 and RT, or of RT and RRT. The first two examples illustrate what might happen in translation, retranslation and re-retranslation to elements pertaining to the source culture, such as idiomatic expressions (non-standard Hiberno-English grammatical constructions) and canonized intertextual references (Shakespeare citations), while the common theme of the last two excerpts is target culture intertextuality, introduced by Joyce either in the target language (Dantean citations) or in English (Dantean allusions).

Excerpt 1:

ST:

Give us [that key, Kinch, Buck Mulligan said, to keep my chemise flat]. (U 1.720)

T1:

Dacci (p. 170)

RT:

Dammi (p. 57)

RRT:

Dammi (p. 38)

In this first example, an overlapping of RT and RRT can be observed.

The Irish English 'give us', which turns in T1 into the literal but improbable "dacci", is in fact more accurately rendered by Terrinoni (RT) with the singular "dammi" (give me), as the Irish usage of this expression, and the context, actually imply. Since this solution already offers a correction of De Angelis' misinterpretation, Biondi seems to be presented with a case of unretranslatability. As can be observed, he takes over the singular form, agreeing with Terrinoni and hinting that he must also have noticed that De Angelis' rendering was based on a misinterpretation of the text, which was most certainly due to lack of familiarity on his part with this nonstandard grammatical construction.

Excerpt 2:

ST:

Names! What's in a name? (U 9.901)

T1:

Nomi! **Cosa c'è in un nome?** (p. 567)

RT:

Nomi! **Cosa c'è in un nome?** (p. 242)

RRT:

Nomi! Cosa significa un nome? (p. 264)

Although De Angelis does not add any note to explicitate the passage, he clearly recognizes Juliet's line from Act 2, Scene 2, as he provides its canonized Italian translation ("*Cosa c'è in un nome?*"). Terrinoni, on the other hand, not only recognizes the passage, but refers in a footnote to its exact location in *Romeo and Juliet*. Biondi alludes to Shakespeare's piece in a note as well, but at the same time states that he translated the citation freely.

Concerning the phenomenon of unretranslatability, the pattern that can be observed in this first example is the overlapping of T1 and RT. It can however be remarked that, although a fundamental prerogative for this phenomenon to take place is that retranslators recognize that intertextuality has been translated according to canonized texts in previous editions already, this does not automatically set the path for unretranslatability to actually occur. The fact that not all three versions overlap, might in this case be explained by Biondi's conscious choice to translate Juliet's line freely instead.

Excerpt 3:

ST:

Maestro di color che sanno. (U 3.6-7)

T1:

*maestro di **color** che sanno* (p. 204)

RT:

*maestro di **color** che sanno* (p. 70)

RRT:

maestro di coloro che sanno (p. 59)

Similarly, as in the second example, an overlapping of only T1 and RT can be observed here as well. In this case, however, although Biondi highlights in a note that the sentence was in Italian in the original already, he seems to have not recognized it as a Dantean citation, as he

transforms the poetical “*color*” into the standard “*coloro*”, despite the fact that De Angelis had redirected the reader to the exact line in Dante’s *Inferno* already in T1, and that Terrinoni, like his predecessor, had also recognized and taken over the citation as it is, furthermore specifying in a note that the verse in question can be found in Canto IV of Dante’s *Inferno*. Since a scenario of consistent overlapping stretching from T1 to RT would have been expected here, this example might reinforce the idea that a fundamental prerogative for the phenomenon of unretranslatability to take place, is that retranslators recognize that intertextuality has been translated according to canonized texts in previous editions already.

Excerpt 4:

ST:

Now I eat his salt bread. (U 1.631)

T1:

Ora mangio il suo pane che **sa di sale**. (p. 164)

RT:

Ora mangio il suo pane che **sa di sale**. (p. 54)

RRT:

Ora mangio il suo pane che **sa di sale**. (p. 36)

In this final example, although Terrinoni is the only (re)translator to explicitate in a note that the sentence is an allusion to a verse from Canto XVII of Dante’s *Paradiso*, the three (re) translations perfectly overlap, showing that both Terrinoni and Biondi recognized the allusion and agreed with De Angelis’ identification of the original Dantean verse, which made this line unretranslatable.

Worth noticing in this case is the fact that a more literal translation of Joyce’s text would have been “ora mangio il suo pane **salato**” (salted bread), as opposed to “[...] **che sa di sale**” (that tastes like salt). Therefore, Biondi’s choice of not retranslating the sentence indicates that he did indeed recognize this Dantean allusion and consciously opted to offer, like his predecessors, the original Dantean citation (“sa di sale”).

5.4. Polish translations

The examples below show that the issues surrounding unretranslatability are quite complex in Polish; it is a fusional/inflected language whose intricate morphological plasticity gives translators a great flexibility to convey semantic layers or to resolve the conundrums of stylistic and grammatical formulations foregrounded in ST. It is tempting to give in to such a built-in linguistic suppleness. T1 handles Joyce’s foregrounding of non-standard grammar quite successfully, though not without occasional writerly flourishes (Wawrzycka, pp. 128-130). T1 is also, for the most part, well-tuned to Joyce’s register, something that RRT prioritizes as well (in addition to rhythm, cadences, and texture of word-sounds). Judging from the fragments under study here, RT pays great attention to semantics and occasionally slips into explicitation; it also eschews some of T1’s straightforward solutions, effecting changes to the tenor of Joyce’s phrases, as illustrated below. Though RRT proceeds independently, it frequently lands on solutions that are similar/identical to T1, corroborating aspects of the unretranslatability hypothesis.

Excerpt 1:

ST:

Stately, plump Buck Mulligan **came from** the stairhead (U 1.1)

T1:

Stateczny, pulchny Buck Mulligan **wynurzył się z** wylotu schodów (p. 5) [Stately [and] plump Buck Mulligan **emerged from** the top of the stairway]

RT:

Solennie napuszony, pulchny Goguś Mulligan **zstąpił z progu** u wylotu schodów (p. 4) [Solemnly bombastic, plump Dandy Mulligan **stepped down from the threshold** at the top of the stairs]

RRT:

Statecznie, pulchny Buck Mulligan **wystąpił z** wylotu schodów [Stately, plump Buck Mulligan **stepped out from** the top of the stairway]

The opening phrase of the book can trip translators whose languages hinder the possibility of "recreat[ing] exact grammatical equivalents" (Senn, 1986, p. 155). Where the English readers can enjoy the ambiguity of "Stately," the Polish translators must decide whether "Stately" is a descriptor of Mulligan or of the manner of his emergence from the staircase. In T1, "Stateczny" is an adjective and, in RRT, "Statecznie" is an adverb. RT opens with two words: an adverb "Solennie" ("solemnly", "earnestly") that replaces Joyce's staccato *t*-sounds, giving way to the mellow flow of *o*, *le*, *-nie*, and an adjectival qualifier, "napuszony" ("bombastic"), that arguably alters Joyce's depiction of Mulligan, nicknamed Goguś. Joyce's "Buck" conjures up both an animal and a dandy of yore (Senn, 1984, p. 201); "Goguś" hovers between a "dandy/fop" and a somewhat effeminate "pretty boy." RRT's priority here is to stay close to Joyce's meaning, sound, rhythm, and lexical economy: ST and RRT convey Buck's emergence in eight words. And other than "plump" and "stairhead," this sentence has proven to be retranslatable in RT, courtesy of the dual nature of "Stately," though RRT returns it closer to T1.

Excerpt 2:

ST:

Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, **thought through my eyes** (U 3.1)

T1:

Nieunikniona modalność widzialnego: co najmniej to, jeśli nie więcej, **pomyślane poprzez** moje oczy. (p. 31) [Ineluctable/unavoidable modality of the visible: at least this if no more, **thought through** my eyes]

RT:

Nieunikniona modalność tego, co widzialne; przynajmniej tyle, jeśli nie więcej, **myśl za pośrednictwem przez mój wzrok**. (p. 76) [Ineluctable/unavoidable modality of that, which can be seen; at least this [much], if no more, [a] **thought mediated through my eyesight**]

RRT:

Nieuchronna modalność widzialnego: przynajmniej to, jak nic więcej, **pomyślane przez me oczy**. [Ineluctable/unavoidable modality of the visible: at least this, if no/nothing]

more, **thought through my eyes**]

The registers of this phrase in T1 and RRT correspond to Joyce's original, with the caveat that both translations treat "thought" as a past participle (the "that" in the preceding phrase seems to support it). But it could be a noun. Indeed, RT interprets it as such, and explicates "thought" with a six-syllable consonantal cluster, "zapośredniczona" ("mediated"), further thickened by consonantal "przez" and "wzrok" ("through" and "eyesight"). RT also explicates Joyce's "visible" as "that, which can be seen", which alters the rhythm of Stephen's thought flow. Although, like ST, RT uses fifteen words, the phrase takes much longer to articulate.

Excerpt 3:

ST:

BLOOM: There is a memory attached to it. I should like **to have** it.

STEPHEN: **To have** or not to have, that is the question (U 15.3522)

T1:

BLOOM: Jest z nim związane pewne wspomnienie. Chciałbym go **mieć**.

STEFAN: **Mieć** albo nie mieć, oto jest pytanie. (p. 397)

RT:

BLOOM: Wiąże się z nim pewne wspomnienie. Chciałbym go **odzyskać**.

STEFAN: **Mieć** albo nie mieć, oto jest pytanie.

RRT:

BLOOM: Jest z nim związane pewne wspomnienie. Chciałbym go **mieć**.

STEFAN: **Mieć** albo nie mieć, oto jest pytanie.

The Shakespearian echo in Stephen's rejoinder is preserved well in all three translations, but in RT, Bloom's trigger word "to have it" ("mieć") is rendered as synonym "odzyskać" ("get [it] back; "retrieve") and offers no connection between Bloom's wish "to have" his potato back and Stephen's waxing Shakespearian. The exchange is, in a way, unretranslatable, and RT's rendition would qualify as a rewrite.

5.5. Spanish translations

For the comparative analysis of the Spanish translations we have selected excerpts that display interior monologues by the three main characters: Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus, and Molly Bloom. These passages contain foregrounding devices in the form of ellipsis, alliteration, repetitions, and intertextual references.

Excerpt 1:

ST:

Heavenly weather really. If life was always like that. Cricket weather. Sit around under sunshades. Over after over. Out. [...] Heatwave. Won't last. Always passing, the stream of life, which in the stream of life we trace is dearer than them all. [...] and saw the dark tangled curls of his bush floating, floating hair of the stream around the limp father of thousands, a languid floating flower. (U 5.558-572)

T1:

Tiempo celestial realmente. Si la vida fuera siempre así. Tiempo de cricquet. Sentarse por ahí bajo parasoles. Partido tras partido. ¡**Out!** [...] Ola de calor. No **puede durar**. Siempre **huyendo**, la corriente la vida, y nuestro paso en la corriente de la vida que **recorremos**

es **lo** más querido **de** todo. [...] y vio los oscuros rizos enredados de su **pubis** flotando, flotante **cabello** de la corriente alrededor del **indolente** padre de millares: **una** lánguida flor flotante. (p. 116)

RT:

Tiempo celestial realmente. Si la vida fuera siempre así. Tiempo **para jugar al** cricket. Sentarse por ahí bajo **grandes sombrillas**. Partido tras partido. Fuera. [...] Ola de calor. No durará. Siempre pasando, la corriente de la vida, aquello que **perseguimos** en la corriente de la vida **nos** es más **caro** queee todo **lo demás**. [...] y **veía** los oscuros rizos enredados de su mata flotando, flotante pelo de la corriente **en torno al flojo** padre de millares, lánguida flor flotante. (p. 136)

RRT:

Tiempo **divino** realmente. Si la vida fuera siempre así. Tiempo de críquet. Sentarse bajo los parasoles. **Tiempo** tras **tiempo**. Fuera. [...] Ola de calor. No durará. Siempre pasando, **fluir de** la vida, que en **el fluir** de la vida **rastreamos** es más querido queee todo. [...] y vio la **maraña** de oscuros rizos de su mata flotando, pelo flotante del fluir en derredor del **lacio** padre de **miles**, lánguida flor flotante. (p. 97)

This excerpt is taken from the fifth chapter, 'Lotus-Eaters', in which Bloom wanders around in Dublin. In this passage we observe Leopold Bloom's interior monologue, a broken syntactic discourse characterized by ellipsis and unfinished sentences. An additional foregrounding device is noticeable in this passage, namely the repetitions and alliterations at the end of the passage. Despite the length of the passage, the three translations coincide in a series of segments, such as the main alliterative elements ("flotante", "flotando", and "lánguida flor flotante"), whereas alternative versions are only observable at lexical level (see items marked in bold), but not at syntactical level.

Excerpt 2:

ST:

STEPHEN: (Brings the match nearer his eye) Lynx eye. Must get glasses. Broke them yesterday. Sixteen years ago. Distance. The eye sees all flat. (He draws the match away. It goes out.) Brain thinks. Near: far. Ineluctable modality of the visible. (He frowns mysteriously). Hm. Sphinx. The beast that has two backs at midnight. Married. (U 15.3629-32)

T1:

ESTEBAN: (Se acerca el **fósforo** a **los ojos**.) **Ojos** de lince. Tengo que **comprar anteojos**. **Los** rompí ayer. Hace dieciséis años. La distancia. El ojo ve todo **chato**. (Aleja el **fósforo**. Se le apaga.) **La mente** piensa. Cerca: lejos. Ineluctable modalidad de lo visible. (**Arruga** el entrecejo **intrigado**.) **Hm**. **Esfinge**, la bestia que tiene dos **lomos** a medianoche. Casada. (p. 529)

RT:

STEPHEN: (acerca más la cerilla al ojo) Ojo de lince. Tengo que **buscarme** unas gafas. Las rompí ayer. Hace dieciséis años. La distancia. El ojo lo ve todo plano. (aleja la cerilla. Se apaga) El cerebro piensa. Cerca: lejos. Ineluctable modalidad de lo visible. (frunce el ceño misteriosamente) **Humm**. **La esfinge**. La bestia que tiene dos espaldas a medianoche. Casada. (p. 495)

RRT:

STEPHEN: (acerca la cerilla al ojo) Ojo de lince. **Debo conseguir** unas gafas. Las rompí ayer. Hace dieciséis años. Distancia. El ojo lo ve todo plano. (**Aparta** la cerilla. Ésta se apaga) El cerebro piensa. Cerca: lejos. Ineluctable modalidad de lo visible. (frunce el ceño misteriosamente) **Ummm. Esfinge**. La bestia que tiene dos espaldas a medianoche. Casada. (p. 639)

This excerpt displays Stephen Dedalus in his stream of consciousness in 'Circe'. In this specific excerpt, we witness Stephen's thoughts in segmented sentences, similar to Bloom's elliptical interior monologue in the former excerpt from 'Lotus-Eaters'. Yet, Stephen's scholarly style differs from Bloom's in his frequent intertextual utterances, such as, in this case, echoes to Aristotle and to Shakespeare. Besides the high level of coincidence in the three versions (the differences are marked in bold), we observe a case of unretranslatability in the translation of the Aristotelian reference ("ineluctable modality of the visible"). In the case of the allusion to Shakespeare's *Othello* ("the beast that has two backs"), the only difference that can be found is the use of "lomos" in T1 instead of "espaldas".

Excerpt 3:

ST:

and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes. (U 18.1603-06)

T1:

y yo pensé bueno **tanto** da él como otro y **después** le pedí con los ojos que me lo preguntara otra vez y **después** el [sic] me preguntó si yo quería sí **para que dijera** sí mi flor de la montaña y yo primero lo rodeé con mis brazos sí y lo atraje hacia mí para que pudiera sentir mis **senos** todo perfume sí y su corazón **golpeaba** loco y sí **yo** dije quiero sí. (p. 728)

RT:

y yo pensé bueno **igual** da él que otro y **luego** le pedí con los ojos que lo **volviera a pedir** sí y entonces me **pidió** si quería yo decir sí mi flor de la montaña y primero le rodeé con los brazos sí y le atraje **encima de mí** para que él me pudiera sentir los pechos **todos** perfume sí y **el** corazón **le corría** como loco y sí dije sí quiero Sí. (p. 671)

RRT:

y yo **pensaba bien lo mismo** da él que otro y **entonces** le pedí con **la mirada** que me lo **pidiera** otra vez sí y entonces me preguntó si quería sí decir sí mi flor de la montaña y **al principio** le **estreché entre** mis brazos sí y **le apreté contra** mí para que **sintiera** mis pechos todo perfume sí y su corazón **parecía desbocado** y dije sí quiero Sí. (p. 908)

In this excerpt from 'Penelope', Molly's interior monologue shows this character springing from her role as a narrator of her first encounter with Leopold Bloom in the past to her role of a character with her repeated "yeses". The repetition of these "yeses" – a remarkable foregrounding device *in se* –, does not only help the reader to see the alternation of Molly's roles as a narrator and as character, but is also related to the rhythmic pattern of her interior monologue, since it also manages to set the pace of her narration. Again, the variations among the different versions are limited and remain at lexical level.

6. Conclusion

The comparative analysis proves that the 'Unretranslatability Hypothesis' does indeed have a certain degree of validity across the five language combinations tested. We have observed that, despite the varied range of languages – Germanic, Romance, Slavic, and Finno-Ugric languages –, the hypothesis is valid if the requirements are fulfilled, i.e., if the source text contains foregrounding devices, and if the first translator has managed to reproduce a similar foregrounding device. An additional conclusion we can draw from this study is that in these circumstances, the translation options that are left for retranslators and re-retranslators are reduced significantly, and, accordingly, they tend to consider the first translation not only as the most convincing option for that segment, but also as the only possible translation option. One can also argue that, in a way, in such challenging passages retranslators may be influenced – and/or even biased – by first translators.

Indeed, the results of the analysis are in line with the expectations of the hypothesis and overlapping tends to occur in passages with repetitions, alliterations, ellipsis, and intertextual references. Yet, we must also point out that the degree of unretranslatability observed differs, and some examples show a remarkable level of overlap even along passages with a considerable length. That is the case in the selected German passages from 'Scylla and Charybdis' due to the intertextual references, and in the Spanish selected excerpts with interior monologues by Bloom, Stephen and Molly due to the use of ellipsis.

Further research should be carried out in order to explore whether specific foregrounding devices are always more prone to provoke unretranslatability patterns than others. In the same vein, we have to bear in mind that the translations used for this experiment have been published in a short time span. Therefore, future research studies could benefit from comparative analyses among translations published with a larger time gap. Such an approach could shed light on the validity of the "Unretranslatability Hypothesis" in cases in which T1, RT and RRT were published in different centuries. We believe that further tests on the validity of this hypothesis from different perspectives and using different methodologies might be revealing not only in terms of translation assessment, but also in relation to other fields of study, such as the cognitive process of translation, and translator training, among others.

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Guillermo Sanz Gallego
Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
Pleinlaan 2
1050 Brussels
Belgium

Guillermo.Sanz.Gallego@vub.be

Biography: Guillermo Sanz Gallego is Professor of Translation Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), where he teaches Translation Studies, research methodology, and literary translation, among others. He is member of the CLIC research group (VUB) and of the International James Joyce Foundation. He has co-edited journal issues and published numerous articles and book chapters on Joyce's studies, on the translation and retranslation of literature and historic texts, as well as on the influence of ideology and censorship in translation. Together with Kris Peeters (University of Antwerp), he coordinates the James Joyce in Translation Centre (www.uantwerpen.be/JJTC).

Erika Mihálycsa
Babeş-Bolyai University
Str. Godeanu 7/53
400414/Cluj-Napoca
Romania

erika.mihalycsa@gmail.com / erika.mihalycsa@ubbcluj.ro

Biography: Erika Mihálycsa is Associate Professor at Babeş-Bolyai University, where she teaches 20th century and contemporary British and Irish literature. She has mainly published in the field of Joyce and Beckett studies, various aspects of European literary and visual modernism, and translation studies. Her articles and reviews have come out in *Word and Image*, *Joyce Studies Annual*, *European Joyce Studies*, *Textual Practice*, *James Joyce Quarterly*, *Joyce Studies in Italy*, *HJEAS* and in numerous edited volumes. She co-edited the volume *Retranslating Joyce for the 21st Century* (Brill 2020) and published *"A wretchedness to defend": Reading Beckett's Letters* (2022). Editor of Rareş Moldovan's new, annotated Romanian translation of *Ulysses* (Polirom, 2023), she herself translates between Hungarian and English.



 Monica Paulis

University of Antwerp
Prinsstraat 13
2000 Antwerpen
Belgium

paulis.monica@gmail.com

Biography: Monica Paulis holds an MA in Book and digital Media Studies from Leiden University (The Netherlands) and a Master's degree in Translation. She is a translator (Italian-English-German), and a PhD candidate in Translation Studies at the University of Antwerp (Belgium), where she is writing a dissertation on the Italian (re)translations of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, under the supervision of Professor Kris Peeters.



 Arvi Sepp

Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Pleinlaan 2
1050 Brussels
Belgium

arvi.sepp@vub.be

Biography: Arvi Sepp studied German and English Literature, Sociology, and Literary Theory in Leuven, Louvain-la-Neuve, Gießen and Berlin. He is Professor in Literary Studies and Translation Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and research fellow at the Institute of Jewish Studies in Antwerp. His research interests center on comparative literature, twentieth-century German (Jewish) literature, literary translation, and autobiographical writing. In the context of his research, he was e.g. awarded the Tauber Institute Research Award (Brandeis University) and the Prix de la Fondation Auschwitz.



 Jolanta Wawrzycka

Radford University

801 East Main St., Radford, Virginia 24142
USA

jolanta@radford.edu

Biography: Jolanta Wawrzycka is professor of English at Radford University, Virginia. She has lectured at the Joyce Schools in Dublin and Trieste and served as Trustee of the International James Joyce Foundation. Her recent edited/co-edited books include *Re-Translating Joyce for the 21st Century* (Brill 2020), *Reading Joycean Temporalities* (Brill 2018), and *James Joyce's Silences* (Bloomsbury 2018). She guest-edited Joyce/translation issues of *James Joyce Quarterly* (2010) and *Scientia Traductionis* (2010; 2012) and published numerous book chapters and articles on Joyce. Her translation of *Chamber Music* into Polish appeared in Kraków (2019). She has also translated works of Roman Ingarden, Czesław Miłosz and W. B. Yeats.



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La retraduction en fantasy : phénomène marchand ou littéraire ?

Vivien Féasson

Laboratoire PRISMES

Fantasy novels retranslated: A literary or commercial phenomenon? – Abstract

Following the success of cinematographic and televisual adaptations, the beginning of the 21st century has seen numerous retranslations of so-called “fantasy classics” appear on the French market, supported by positive peritexts and enthusiastic communities. One can wonder, however, to what extent such an idyllic landscape is the reflection of a movement towards a greater integration of authentic masterworks in all their complexity, following Antoine Berman’s theory of retranslation, or if other, non-literary reasons are at stake? This essay examines official discourses from publishers and fan communities as well as commercial data, to answer those crucial questions: what is a fantasy classic? Why are these works retranslated, with what translation project? To this end, it goes beyond publishers’ statements of principle and analyses textual realizations, thus showing a darker reality where translators are often fantasy experts capable of repairing diegetic incoherence but also inexperienced professionals working in substandard conditions, a context that has detrimental effects on the more stylistic aspects.

Keywords

Fantasy, retranslation, Berman, France

1. Introduction

Trente ans après sa publication, aucune recherche touchant de près ou de loin au phénomène de la retraduction ne semble pouvoir faire l'impasse sur l'hypothèse posée par Antoine Berman dans le numéro 4 de la revue *Palimpseste* (1990). Pour le traductologue, les retraductions successives des œuvres dessinent des mouvements de nature essentiellement téléologique, tendant vers une meilleure intégration de l'original au sein de la langue-culture cible et donc vers une plus grande « fidélité ».

Le phénomène retraductif qui s'est emparé de la fantasy à partir du début du XXI^e siècle nous semble annoncer une mise à l'épreuve de cette théorie dans un domaine éloigné des « grandes œuvres » sur lesquelles a porté jusqu'à présent la majorité des travaux traductologiques. Sous l'influence probable du vieillissement du genre en France (importé dans les années 1965-1970) et du succès récent de plusieurs adaptations audiovisuelles (*Harry Potter*, *Le Seigneur des anneaux* et *Le Hobbit* au cinéma, *Le Trône de fer* à la télévision – voir Féasson, 2019, pp. 135-136), le marché littéraire de la fantasy a vu en effet certains éditeurs se lancer dans plusieurs retraductions de textes apparemment considérés comme des « classiques » du genre. Ces initiatives s'accompagnent de paratextes communicationnels louangeurs et reçoivent en retour des commentaires dithyrambiques de la communauté des fans.

La porosité des frontières entre producteurs et consommateurs de littératures de l'imaginaire, ainsi que l'absence de véritable institution critique professionnelle, laissent cependant de nombreuses zones d'ombres planer sur un paysage aux apparences idylliques, et l'on peut s'interroger sur les véritables intentions qui sous-tendent ces opérations retraductives : assiste-t-on ici à une mise en application des théories de Berman, de « grandes œuvres » se révélant via une retraduction plus « fidèle », ou s'agit-il là au contraire d'opérations mues par des raisons essentiellement extralittéraires – ce qu'Yves Gambier appelle des « retraductions exogénétiques » (Gambier, 2011, p. 7) ? Pour répondre, nous nous intéresserons d'abord aux motivations humaines et économiques qui sous-tendent les projets de retraduction en fantasy et sont susceptibles d'en influencer la teneur, avant de nous pencher sur leurs manifestations plus littéraires.

2. (Pour)quoi retraduire ? Aspects exogénétiques de la retraduction

S'il est tentant d'étudier les phénomènes de retraduction à travers le seul texte, il nous semble, avec Gambier, nécessaire de prendre d'abord en considération la place qu'occupent l'œuvre et le projet retraductif au sein du système culturel de réception :

Toute stratégie traductionnelle implique un projet, un pacte, un contrat, c'est-à-dire une réponse aux questions : qui traduit ?, pourquoi et quoi ?, avec quelles intentions, déclarées ou pas ? (Gambier, 1994, p. 416)

Cela comprend bien évidemment le rapport du traducteur lui-même avec son métier ainsi qu'avec le texte à traduire – ce que Berman appelle sa « position traductive » (Berman, 1995, p. 74) –, mais également un certain nombre de facteurs extra-littéraires. Comme le rappelle André Lefevere, il existe des forces situées en-dehors du système littéraire qui ont la capacité d'influencer la lecture, l'écriture et la réécriture des œuvres et donc également leur traduction, des forces qu'il regroupe sous le terme « patronage » (Lefevere, 1992, p. 15). La (re)traduction n'est que rarement à l'initiative du traducteur et demeure, quoi qu'il en soit, soumise aux contraintes du marché telles que le commanditaire les perçoit. L'influence de l'éditeur (au sens le plus large du terme à savoir une entité aussi abstraite que plurielle, masquant une grande diversité de postes et d'organisations hiérarchiques) se ressent notamment dans le choix des œuvres mais aussi dans celui des traducteurs eux-mêmes, employés *freelance* dont

l'éditeur fixe les conditions de travail (rémunération, délais). Le pouvoir de ce dernier peut aussi s'exercer plus directement sur la matière textuelle, par exemple via les relectures. C'est lui, enfin, qui décide de la forme finale que prendra l'objet livre (illustrations, quatrième de couverture, péri-texte, etc.) et de la communication qui l'entourera, affectant ainsi sa réception par les lecteurs. Son influence sur le projet est renforcée par les risques économiques qu'il prend à faire entrer l'œuvre retraduite dans un marché extrêmement concurrentiel (Féasson, 2019, pp. 142-144) : une retraduction coûte plus cher à produire qu'une « simple » réédition, alors même que le risque est grand de se couper des personnes ayant déjà lu une version précédente ou préférant des romans plus récents. De plus, alors que dans d'autres pans du champ littéraire on attend fréquemment l'entrée d'un original dans le domaine public pour retraduire et s'épargner ainsi les droits d'exploitation (dans le genre voisin de l'horreur, on pensera notamment aux travaux de H.P. Lovecraft exploités simultanément par Bragelonne et Mnemos), la relative jeunesse de la fantasy prive encore les maisons d'édition de cette stratégie.

Que retraduit-on, alors ? Comme le dit Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, « on ne retraduit pas n'importe quoi, mais uniquement ce qui a déjà acquis la notoriété, et parfois l'amour des lecteurs. Le traducteur touche une œuvre déjà touchée par la grâce » (2008, p. 8). En France, du fait de son caractère « paralittéraire », la fantasy a longtemps vu son patrimoine ignoré par les traditionnelles institutions de canonisation – école, université, critique générale (Observatoire de l'imaginaire, 2021), etc. Les œuvres associées au genre n'intègrent que très rarement le canon généraliste ; on pourra offrir comme contre-exemple *Le Seigneur des anneaux* (Tolkien, 1972), traduit par les Éditions Christian Bourgois et ayant bénéficié lors de sa sortie initiale de critiques élogieuses (Féasson, 2019, pp. 112-113) avant de finalement concentrer la majorité des articles universitaires parus sur le genre (p. 141). Ce n'est d'ailleurs pas un hasard si les quatrièmes de couverture de nombreuses retraductions invoquent l'œuvre de J.R.R. Tolkien pour mieux légitimer leur poulain : ainsi, celle de *L'Œil du monde* n'hésite pas à associer deux fois Robert Jordan à son illustre ancêtre, quand la retraduction de *Conan le Cimmérien* ose faire de R.E. Howard son égal (Jordan, 2012, 4^e de couverture ; Howard, 2007, 4^e de couverture). Ce dernier cas montre cependant la possibilité pour la retraduction d'initier un mouvement de légitimation rétrospectif : fort d'une thèse soutenue à la Sorbonne (Louinet, 2019), Patrice Louinet a en effet profité de l'intérêt médiatique généré par les nouvelles traductions de Howard pour reprendre le contrôle du discours critique porté sur l'auteur texan – comme en témoigne l'évolution positive dans la réception des romans de ce dernier (Louinet, 2011, pp. 163-170). Pareille stratégie ne va cependant pas sans soulever un certain nombre de questions d'ordre déontologique puisque, en qualité de spécialiste français, Louinet avait en parallèle été chargé de retraduire l'œuvre de Howard pour le compte des Éditions Bragelonne.

Parce que le genre s'est essentiellement construit en marge des institutions, la majorité des « classiques » de la fantasy semble plutôt s'inscrire dans une perspective historique du genre : les grandes œuvres sont moins souvent l'expression de plumes se démarquant de leur contexte de production que des textes bénéficiant d'une forme de *kairos* au moment de leur sortie. Ainsi, *The Sword of Shannara* de Terry Brooks (1977) a pu profiter d'une période où la demande pour des récits proches de l'univers de Tolkien dépassait largement ce que la production pouvait offrir (Williamson, 2015, pp. 196-198), et c'est encore auréolé de ce statut de pastiche accessible de Tolkien que le roman a pu sortir en version française quelques années plus tard (Brooks, 1992). De même, les collections de *ludic fantasy* des *Royaumes oubliés* et de *Dragonlance* (Awlinson, 1994 ; Weis et Hickman, 1996) ont suivi de près le pic de popularité des jeux de rôle en France, répondant ainsi aux demandes d'un public avide de retrouver les *topoi* de ses parties de *Donjons et dragons* (Besson, 2011, pp. 197-209). Cette approche

historique se double d'une mise en récit personnelle : les amateurs reconnaissent des défauts, notamment stylistiques (La Pierre de Tear, 2008), aux textes fondateurs de la fantasy, mais ils les contrebalancent généralement par des arguments de nature plus nostalgique (Gilthanas, 2019 ; Symphonie, 2021). Preuve des frontières poreuses entre producteurs et consommateurs, la confusion qui règne entre qualité littéraire, importance historique et sentiments personnels se retrouve parfois jusque chez les éditeurs eux-mêmes. Lors d'une interview en 2018, Stéphane Marsan affirmait par exemple vouloir constituer au sein des Éditions Bragelonne un fonds de « fantasy patrimoniale » avec, entre autres, les livres de Brooks, jugés comparables en importance à ceux d'Agatha Christie et de James Ellroy pour le roman policier ; interrogé sur les qualités littéraires discutables du cycle de *Shannara*, Marsan justifiait alors ses choix en évoquant ses émois de jeune lecteur (Lawson *et al.*, 2013, 15'30-17'30).

Cette conception subjective du « classique » se conjugue également au pluriel à travers les communautés de fans dont l'influence est grande au sein des littératures de l'imaginaire (Féasson, 2019, pp. 91-94). La relative absence de la fantasy dans les journaux et magazines généralistes jusqu'au début du XXI^e siècle ainsi que le manque de connaissances des journalistes a laissé le champ libre à des revues spécialisées, blogs et sites web qui sont devenus *de facto* de véritables organes prescripteurs – il ne faudrait pas, d'ailleurs, négliger les classements des « meilleures œuvres » qui prospèrent sur la toile et se nourrissent fréquemment les uns des autres, contribuant à asseoir une forme de canon « officiel » par la force de la répétition – l'existence de classements anglo-saxons dans des publications plus prestigieuses ne semblant pas offrir de véritable contre-proposition (Time, 2021). Le rétrécissement du marché a d'ailleurs entraîné une prise en considération plus grande de ces fans influents par les maisons d'édition, ce jusque dans les choix de publication – l'exemple le plus marquant étant sans doute le colossal projet de retraduction du *Livre des martyrs* de Steven Erikson, porté pendant plusieurs années par un lecteur passionné et une partie de la communauté du site Elbakin.net avant d'intégrer les Éditions Leha (Daidin, 2017).

Bien évidemment, les critères de sélection ne sont pas uniquement subjectifs. Un grand nombre de ventes effectuées à l'étranger est souvent pris pour un gage de qualité et certains éditeurs n'hésitent pas à utiliser ces chiffres dans leurs communications : pour *La Roue du temps*, les Éditions Bragelonne mettent ainsi en avant « une référence de par le monde [...] avec plus de 80 millions de lecteurs » (Jordan, 2012, 4^e de couverture), quand une interview de Jean-Philippe Mocchi des Éditions Leha présente *Le Livre des martyrs* comme l'une des « grandes sagas de la Fantasy mondiale, traduite dans 21 langues et vendue à plus de 3,5 millions d'exemplaires » (Gillosen, 2017). Cette association entre réussite commerciale et puissance littéraire peut se voir redoublée par l'annonce d'une adaptation audiovisuelle, la plupart des œuvres voyant notamment les ventes augmenter dans leur sillage (Besson, 2011, pp. 10-11).

Une fois le « classique » identifié, reste la question du « pourquoi retraduire ? ». Dans de nombreux cas, la raison première semble moins artistique que légale : les droits d'exploitation de la précédente traduction sont parfois impossibles à acquérir (trop coûteux, conservés jalousement par la concurrence, avec des ayants-droits impossibles à contacter ou refusant toute révision, etc.) et une nouvelle traduction s'avère alors nécessaire – comme ce fut le cas pour *La Roue du temps* (Lawson 2013, 2h04-2h05). Bien évidemment, pareille entreprise peut constituer un argument commercial en soi, la retraduction ayant ceci pour elle qu'elle réussit à conjuguer nouveauté et classicisme – raison pour laquelle les maisons d'édition parlent de « nouvelles traductions » et jamais de « retraductions » (Monti, 2011, p. 12). Dans le cas du *Seigneur des anneaux*, elle fut l'occasion pour une œuvre ayant déjà atteint la quasi-totalité de son public potentiel (Ferré et Bourgois, 2004, p. 41) de régénérer son lectorat, mais elle est aussi susceptible de justifier son existence par le cas inverse, lorsque la première traduction

d'un best-seller anglosaxon a échoué à trouver son public, les ventes décevantes d'un tel « classique » étant perçues comme une anomalie à corriger. De surcroît, la fantasy affectionnant généralement les sagas au long cours, de mauvais résultats commerciaux se doublent parfois d'une interruption en cours de publication, un phénomène particulièrement détesté par les lecteurs qui exigent alors de pouvoir terminer leur lecture ; les sites et autres forums voient alors fleurir discussions animées et initiatives populaires qui visent à faire pression sur les éditeurs (voir par exemple *La Pierre de Tear*, 2004), assurant ainsi un vivier de lecteurs prêts à soutenir la nouvelle version.

Reste enfin la dimension passionnelle de l'éditeur qui, nous l'avons mentionné, est souvent d'abord un lecteur voire un fan ayant pour les « classiques » un attachement quasi-nostalgique. Le commanditaire peut croire sincèrement au potentiel patrimonial de son action et apprécier de remettre à la disposition du public un texte qu'il considère comme fondateur du genre ; tel était en tout cas le discours de l'ancien responsable des Éditions Bragelonne, qui affirmait vouloir créer un véritable fonds patrimonial afin que des œuvres comme *La Roue du temps* puissent être découvertes par plusieurs générations successives de lecteurs (Lawson *et al.*, 2013 ; Bragelonne, 2016). Pareille passion s'accompagne sans doute d'un besoin de légitimer son existence autrement que par la seule réussite financière : en retraduisant un « classique » plutôt qu'en le rééditant, l'éditeur gagne une occasion d'inscrire son nom dans l'histoire d'un genre auquel il a consacré sa carrière.

Bien évidemment, tous ces facteurs se conjuguent à différents degrés pour justifier l'existence des retraductions, et la majorité des discours accompagnant ces dernières affirment vouloir avant tout respecter l'œuvre, l'auteur, la famille de l'auteur et même les communautés de fans (voir par exemple Bourdais, 2015 ; Bragelonne, 2016 ; Howard, 2007, 4^e de couverture). Il ne faudrait pas pour autant oublier que les déclarations, aussi sincères soient-elles, ne vont pas systématiquement de pair avec les moyens déployés. Le resserrement du marché conduit les éditeurs à la course au best-seller et à la rotation rapide des titres plutôt qu'à la constitution d'un véritable fonds (ActuSF, 2018). La réussite d'un financement participatif comme celui de Clark Ashton Smith, qui a permis aux Éditions Mnémos de rentrer immédiatement dans leurs frais mais aussi de mieux payer leurs traducteurs, ou les pratiques d'une maison généraliste comme Bourgois, ne doivent pas occulter les conditions de travail auxquelles se plient la majorité des traducteurs des littératures de l'imaginaire, conditions qui n'ont cessé de se dégrader au fil des ans – nos sources, qui préfèrent demeurer anonymes, font état de 23 euros le feuillet pour Mnémos et 21 euros pour Bourgois, quand la majorité des traducteurs de fantasy est plutôt payée entre 10 et 16 euros (Féasson, 2019, pp. 145-147). Sans surprise, bien des retraductions se voient traitées comme de « simples » traductions, tout en promettant davantage aux lecteurs. Dans les quelques cas de reprises de séries interrompues, le coût potentiellement prohibitif lié au traitement de textes pléthoriques se conjugue à la nécessité de convaincre des lecteurs échaudés de la solidité de l'engagement éditorial, conduisant ainsi à des rythmes de publication effrénés – voir par exemple les Éditions Bragelonne qui mettaient en avant « neuf immenses pavés [traduits] en moins de quatre ans » (Bragelonne, 2016) sans que quiconque émette de doute quant à la qualité finale du texte (laissant entrevoir un lectorat davantage intéressé par la garantie de finitude que par la précision du travail de traduction). Pareille situation contribue sans doute au côté « amateur » des acteurs principaux : Daniel Lauzon, traducteur de Tolkien, est à notre connaissance le seul à avoir suivi une formation professionnelle ; à l'inverse, Nicolas Merrien, qui pendant plusieurs années a porté le projet de faire retraduire *Le Livre des martyrs*, a fréquemment mis en avant son inexpérience (Ser Garland, 2013), et si Louinet est bel et bien un authentique spécialiste d'Howard, *Conan* n'en constitue pas moins son premier travail de traduction littéraire. Jean-Claude Mallé, quant à lui,

bénéficie d'années d'expérience au moment de se lancer dans *Le Cycle des épées* ou *La Roue du temps*, mais le rythme de travail auquel il s'astreint semble incompatible avec une approche fine de l'œuvre (pour la seule année 2012, sont sortis de sa plume cinq tomes de mille pages en moyenne, liés à la retraduction de *La Roue du temps*, plus trois autres traductions inédites).

3. Des réalisations littéraires hétérogènes

Ces conditions de travail problématiques posent la question de la réalisation littéraire de la retraduction. Dans notre thèse, nous nous sommes penché sur quatre œuvres représentatives des principaux courants historiques du genre et ayant bénéficié d'au moins deux traductions : *Le Seigneur des anneaux* de Tolkien, les *Conan* de Howard, *La Roue du temps* de Jordan et *Les Chroniques de Dragonlance* de Weis et Hickman (Féasson, 2019). Toutes les quatre sont d'origine anglo-saxonne (la majorité des romans de fantasy traduits en France provient des États-Unis et du Royaume-Uni, deux pays qui à notre connaissance constituent la source de la totalité des retraductions). Les extraits analysés eux-mêmes ont été choisis en fonction de tropes littéraires majeurs du genre (dialogues royaux et monstrueux, descriptions nostalgiques, duels). En tenant compte du discours qui entoure chaque retraduction mais aussi en comparant l'original avec ses traductions successives, il nous semble aujourd'hui possible d'esquisser une typologie rudimentaire des processus mis en œuvre à divers degrés dans les retraductions de ces « classiques » de la fantasy.

Le premier type peut être qualifié de « retraduction correctrice ». S'il semble difficile de contester la passion pour l'imaginaire qui animait les premiers traducteurs, des défaillances objectives semblent avoir affecté des pans de leur travail. Ces défaillances peuvent avoir une origine éditoriale tout d'abord, lorsque le commanditaire intervient directement sur le contenu pour des raisons extra-artistiques. Le cas des romans *Donjons et dragons* est sans doute le plus visible : l'éditeur Fleuve Noir contraignait en effet les romans de la gamme à une limite stricte de 250 pages, et la retraduction récente des *Chroniques de Dragonlance* montre des textes entre 41 et 57% plus volumineux que leurs prédécesseurs (Weis et Hickman, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c) ! Les torts peuvent parfois être imputés au choix de certaines parutions en langue anglaise comme dans le cas des *Conan*, qui furent réédités bien après la mort de l'auteur sous la houlette de Lyon Sprague de Camp. Ce dernier se permit de réorganiser les aventures en un tout linéaire, chronologique, et d'y ajouter modifications de son cru, introductions, brouillons remaniés et autres pastiches. Ce sont ces collections qui servirent de support à la première traduction française, et ce n'est pas un hasard si Louinet, le traducteur de la nouvelle édition, est en premier lieu l'un des principaux moteurs de l'entreprise de retour aux sources qu'a connue l'œuvre d'Howard ces dernières années (Louinet, 2011, pp. 166-167).

Les défaillances peuvent aussi provenir du travail des précédents traducteurs eux-mêmes. Les cas les plus fréquents relèvent de la cohérence diégétique : en tant qu'amateurs de réalités parallèles, les lecteurs de fantasy accordent souvent une grande importance à la complexité et à la rigueur de la diégèse, ainsi qu'à l'immersion que cette dernière est susceptible de favoriser. La majorité des discussions publiques évoquant la traduction en fantasy portent avant tout sur des problèmes d'incohérences diégétiques : Louinet ainsi met en avant la traduction erronée de « Nameless Old Ones » par « Aïeux », qui montre l'ignorance par Éric Chédaille des liens unissant Howard et Lovecraft (Louinet, 2015, p. 178), tandis que la communauté des fans de *La Roue du temps* reproche à Simone Hilling de changer des épées en lances ou d'embarquer un peuple du désert dans des conflits maritimes (DS, 2012). Ce n'est enfin que parce qu'il n'a pas eu accès à l'ensemble des documents du *Lépendaire* de Tolkien que les critiques « pardonnent » à Francis Ledoux ses erreurs – comme faire mourir des personnages immortels qui ne font en réalité que partir pour l'Ouest (Ferré et al., 2003, p. 55). Si elle participe bien

d'une transposition plus pointue de l'œuvre originelle, cette traque de la faute diégétique tend à privilégier la mise en avant d'« experts » de l'univers fictionnel, au détriment des aspects plus transformateurs de l'acte traductif. Notons tout de même l'existence de problèmes stylistiques si visibles qu'ils semblent à eux seuls justifier la mise en chantier d'une nouvelle version, tant du point de vue des lecteurs que de celui des acteurs. La première traduction de *La Roue du temps* présente notamment une littéralité excessive qui a souvent été accusée d'avoir empêché son appropriation par le lectorat français – nous nous sommes attachés à en démontrer la véracité dans notre thèse (Féasson, 2019) et nous contenterons donc d'un court exemple où l'accumulation des écarts vis-à-vis de la norme de la langue d'arrivée finit par créer une impression de maladresse (multiplication des conjonctions de coordination et des adverbes interrogatifs, agencement inhabituel des nombreux compléments du verbe « revendiquer », parallélisme imparfait entre « un percepteur d'impôts » et « les Gardes de la Reine », étrangeté de la construction « penser à se souvenir » renforcée par la disposition en subordonnées imbriquées, ajout d'une ultime proposition en incise) :

<p>“Now there is the problem of this young man”—she gestured to Rand without taking her eyes off Elayne’s face—“and how and why he came here, and why you claimed guest-right for him to your brother.”</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>“A loyal subject from the Two Rivers.” Morgase sighed. “My child, you should pay more heed to those books. The Two Rivers has not seen a tax collector in six generations, nor the Queen’s Guards in seven. I daresay they seldom even think to remember they are part of the Realm.”</p> <p>(Jordan, 2009, par. 134-136, c’est nous qui soulignons)</p>	<p>(Traduction d’Arlette Rosenblum)</p> <p>« Maintenant, il y a le problème de ce jeune homme » – elle désigna Rand du geste sans quitter des yeux le visage d’Élayne – « et comment et pourquoi il est venu ici, et pourquoi tu as revendiqué pour lui le droit des invités à ton frère. »</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>— Un sujet loyal des Deux Rivières. » Morgase soupira. « Mon enfant, tu devrais prêter plus d’attention à ces livres. Les Deux Rivières n’ont pas vu un percepteur d’impôts en six générations ni les Gardes de la Reine en sept. Ils pensent même rarement à se souvenir qu’ils font partie du Royaume, c’est probable. »</p> <p>(Jordan, 1995, p. 226, c’est nous qui soulignons)</p>
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Le cas des traductions ostensiblement défailtantes au niveau stylistique nous amène à un second type, plus classique en traductologie, celui de la « retraduction modernisante » liée au phénomène du vieillissement des textes. Il semble que le problème ne soit pas aussi prégnant que dans d’autres littératures, en raison sans doute de la jeunesse relative du genre, mais peut-être aussi de la relative simplicité littéraire de certaines œuvres (en lien avec l’attachement des lecteurs à la complexité du récit plutôt qu’à celle du style). Le sujet n’est que rarement abordé directement, les éditeurs semblant craindre d’associer trop ouvertement fantasy et modernisation – les Éditions Mnémos proposent par exemple de « renouveler la traduction sans pour autant trop moderniser le style de [Clark Ashton Smith] » (Mnémos, 2016). Dès lors, nombre de communications préfèrent renverser la charge de la modernité : ce n’est plus la nouvelle traduction qui modernise mais la précédente qui avait pris le parti de vieillir l’original. Mallé dit vouloir s’éloigner légèrement du style médiévalisant de Rosenblum afin de rendre aux personnages leur mode de pensée « pré-moderne » (Brigelonne, 2012) et Ferré voit chez Ledoux une volonté de légitimation poussant la première traduction vers un style quelque peu corseté, marqué « par le choix du vouvoiement systématique, de l’imparfait du subjonctif, qui

donnent une sorte de littérarité au texte, et tranchent avec la diversité des registres que l'on observe en anglais » (Bourdais, 2015). Les textes eux-mêmes montrent des signes évidents de changements : en témoigne par exemple l'augmentation du nombre de tutoiements dans « Le peuple du Cercle noir » de Howard ou *L'Œil du monde* de Jordan (Féasson, 2019, pp. 182, 212, 257), quand les premières traductions préféraient un vouvoiement aux allures plus ampoulées (le cas inverse se présente cependant dans les *Chroniques de Dragonlance*, les dialogues de la version antérieure prenant souvent des allures plus modernes encore que ce que laissait entendre l'original (pp. 196-197)). Dans le cas du *Seigneur des anneaux*, cette volonté de révéler toute la modernité de l'auteur se manifeste également dans une mise en valeur des différences de registres de l'original, au risque parfois de flirter avec la caricature (pp. 225-242), mais aussi dans un retour à des formulations plus idiomatiques dont le passage suivant constitue un exemple (on notera ainsi chez Ledoux l'étrange « Il y a peu de confiance à faire à Eomer », les adverbes dont la position apporte un sentiment d'ambiguïté ou de surcharge, le doublement de la conjonction QUE ou l'emploi de la préposition DE devant un nom de pays masculin) :

<p>(Traduction de Ledoux)</p> <p>« Vous parlez justement, Seigneur, dit l'homme pâle qui était assis sur les marches de l'estrade. Il n'y a que cinq jours qu'est venue l'amère nouvelle de la mort de votre fils Théodred aux Marches de l'Ouest : votre bras droit, le Second Maréchal de la Marche. Il y a peu de confiance à faire à Eomer. Il resterait peu d'hommes pour garder vos murs s'il lui avait été permis de gouverner. Et à présent même, nous apprenons de Gondor que le Seigneur des Ténèbres bouge à l'Est. Telle est l'heure où cet errant choisit de revenir. Pourquoi, en vérité, vous ferions-nous bon accueil, Maître Corbeau de Tempête ? Je vous nomme Lathspell, Mauvaises Nouvelles, et mauvaises nouvelles font mauvais hôte, dit-on. »</p> <p>(Tolkien, 2002, p. 185, c'est nous qui soulignons)</p>	<p>(Traduction de Lauzon)</p> <p>« Vos paroles sont justes, sire, dit l'homme au teint livide assis sur les marches de l'estrade. Il ne s'est pas passé cinq jours depuis la terrible nouvelle de la mort de votre fils Théodred, tué sur les Marches Occidentales : votre bras droit, Deuxième Maréchal de la Marche. En Éomer, on ne peut avoir foi. Il resterait peu d'hommes pour garder vos murs si la direction du pays lui avait été confiée. Et du Gondor, nous apprenons à l'instant que le Seigneur Sombre se meut dans l'Est. C'est en pareille heure que ce vagabond choisit de se représenter à nous. Pourquoi devrions-nous en effet vous souhaiter la bienvenue, maître Corbeau de Tourmente ? Je vous nomme Lathspell, Mauvaises Nouvelles ; et les mauvaises nouvelles font les mauvais hôtes, dit-on. »</p> <p>(Tolkien, 2015, p. 137, c'est nous qui soulignons)</p>
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Autre aspect rattachable au vieillissement des œuvres et à l'évolution de la langue-culture de réception, celui des marqueurs connotatifs de racisme qui se voient souvent effacés des versions plus récentes. Face aux accusations susceptibles de toucher l'original, les acteurs des retraductions s'empressent bien souvent de protéger l'auteur, quitte à reporter la faute sur la première traduction – Ledoux est ainsi accusé d'avoir aggravé les aspects problématiques du *Seigneur des anneaux* en traduisant des syntagmes comme « black-like », « black chap » ou « black fellow » en « Noiraud » (Ferré et al., 2003, p. 52) ou en reproduisant le mot « race » malgré les différences d'acceptions entre l'anglais et le français (Lauzon lui préférant « espèce », voir Féasson, 2019, pp. 320-321). Il faut dire que ce dernier terme est courant en fantasy, le genre dépeignant souvent des peuples dont les caractéristiques interrogent les

limites mêmes de l'humain, et si la retraduction de *Shannara* s'est efforcée de gommer les innombrables occurrences problématiques de son prédécesseur, ce n'est apparemment pas le cas des *Chroniques de Dragonlance* ni des *Conan* (pp. 410-411, 286-288).

Toutes les interventions retraductives ne se justifient cependant pas aussi aisément, et des comparaisons traductologiques des textes révèlent un dernier type, une forme de « retraduction aléatoire » qui s'oppose à la vision téléologique exprimée par Berman, mais aussi par les maisons d'édition elles-mêmes en ce qu'elle est moins mue par une volonté de se rapprocher de l'original que par un refus de suivre la traduction précédente de trop près – nous nous approchons ici de ce que Lefebvre appelle « distraire » à savoir « traduire «différemment», quitte à renoncer à nombre de solutions qui semblaient aller de soi » simplement parce que la « place idiomatique » est déjà prise (Lefebvre, 2008, p. 7). Encore trop souvent jugée sur sa bonne mine et sur la sincérité du paratexte qui l'entoure, la retraduction de fantasy est un domaine où s'exerce largement l'impunité du traducteur. Ainsi, si Louinet corrige bien des défaillances de la première traduction, son travail sur *Conan* présente parfois des lourdeurs et peine quoi qu'il en soit à maintenir les réseaux symboliques tissés par Howard (Féasson, 2019, pp. 283-303). Quant à Malle, le rythme de travail auquel il s'astreint semble le pousser fréquemment à se détacher de l'original et opter pour une conception personnelle de ce à quoi ressemble un « véritable » texte de fantasy, comme le montre le court extrait ci-dessous qui voit le traducteur ajouter plusieurs adjectifs et pencher régulièrement pour des termes plus expressifs que dans l'original :

<p>No, what the Snow Women hated so venomously and which each year caused them to wage cold war with hardly any material or magical holds barred, was the theatrical show which inevitably came shivering north with the traders, its daring troupers with faces chapped and legs chilblained, but hearts a-beat for soft northern gold and easy if rampageous audiences — a show so blasphemous and obscene that the men preempted Godshall for its performance (God being unshockable) and refused to let the women and youths view it; a show whose actors were, according to the women, solely dirty old men and even dirtier scrawny southern girls, as loose in their morals as in the lacing of their skimpy garments, when they went clothed at all.</p> <p>(Leiber, 2014, par. 7, c'est nous qui soulignons)</p>	<p>La cause de l'ire des femmes et de la guerre froide, dans laquelle elles ne reculaient devant l'emploi d'aucune arme, qu'elle fût physique ou magique, était l'exécrable troupe théâtrale qui accompagnait chaque année les marchands. Grelottant de froid, les jambes et le visage constellés d'engelures, ces maudits acteurs, avides d'or et ravis de séduire un public indiscipliné mais crédule, proposaient un spectacle si blasphématoire et obscène que les hommes annexaient le Hall – car rien ne saurait offenser les dieux – et en interdisaient l'entrée aux femmes et aux enfants pour se repaître en paix de ces horreurs. Une infâme exhibition dont les interprètes, selon leurs compagnes, étaient un ramassis de vieillards crasseux et de souillons rachitiques du Sud à la morale aussi relâchée que les lacets de leurs misérables corsages – quand elles se donnaient la peine d'en porter.</p> <p>(Leiber, 2015, p. 12, c'est nous qui soulignons)</p>
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4. Conclusion

Ainsi, si plusieurs retraductions en fantasy peuvent être considérées comme s'inscrivant dans un processus téléologique, c'est avant tout grâce aux défaillances manifestes que présentaient les versions précédentes – problèmes de cohérence diégétique ou intertextuelle liés à une vision trop restreinte du traducteur mais aussi, parfois, coupes éditoriales ou bien

encore littéralité poussée à l'extrême. Si ces tendances semblent dans une certaine mesure corroborer les théories de Berman, elles soulèvent cependant des questions quant au statut de « classique » de l'original retraduit. Ce dernier, nous l'avons vu, voit son statut reposer au moins partiellement sur des arguments d'ordre extra-littéraire que lecteurs et acteurs semblent parfois avoir du mal à discriminer du reste : une injustice peut-elle changer une œuvre dite mineure en jalon du genre ? La saga *Dragonlance* est-elle retraduite parce qu'il s'agit là d'un classique du genre injustement maltraité, ou est-ce le travail de découpe de l'ancien éditeur qui la pare aujourd'hui d'une illusoire aura ? Lorsqu'il devient possible de relever des défaillances stylistiques dans les textes sources eux-mêmes comme des descriptions ampoulées ou des tournures peu idiomatiques (voir par exemple les critiques du style de Jordan par Alison Flood (2021)), le dogme de la fidélité maximale à l'original comme objectif ultime de la retraduction en vient à son tour à être remise en question.

Tout cela ne doit bien sûr pas occulter les quelques textes qui semblent se montrer à la hauteur des enjeux. Malheureusement, face à ces œuvres plus complexes, le statut d'expert ne suffit pas toujours à compenser l'inexpérience, et les réussites d'un Lauzon ne masquent que difficilement un paysage encore dominé par une forme d'amateurisme. Pour une solution élégante ou un choix judicieux, combien de passages plus ternes, de défaillances nouvelles ou de sacrifices ? L'absence de véritable critique des traductions indépendante dans les littératures de genre (quand ce n'est pas l'absence de critique littéraire tout court) ne permet pas de rendre compte des retraductions dans leur complexité, quand les conditions d'embauche et de travail des traducteurs n'autorisent que rarement un niveau de qualité constant – deux paramètres qui ne peuvent que nuire à l'activité traductive en fantasy.

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Vivien Féasson

Laboratoire PRISMES

Université Sorbonne nouvelle, Maison de la recherche, Bureau A110

4, rue des Irlandais

75005 Paris

France

v.feasson@gmail.com

Biographie: Vivien Féasson est actuellement professeur agrégé au lycée Charlemagne de Paris. Il possède un doctorat en Langue et cultures des sociétés anglophones avec une spécialisation en traduction littéraire et a également travaillé en tant que traducteur professionnel (jeux vidéo, romans, jeux de rôle, etc.). Sa thèse et ses recherches ultérieures portent sur le phénomène des retraductions de romans de fantasy en France et comprennent à la fois une analyse des discours paratextuels ainsi que des études traductologiques et littéraires des textes eux-mêmes.



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Sur la retraduction des chansons

Giulia D'Andrea

Université du Salento, Italie

Re-translating songs – *Abstract*

This paper deals with retranslating songs, a subject which, until now, has not been given much attention apart from a few studies (Froeliger, 2020 ; Aronsson, 2021). In particular, we focus on the Golden Age of French Popular Songs, also known as *chansons*, in order to identify their specificities within the research field of translation studies. Examples are taken from the works by singer-songwriters such as Georges Brassens and Jacques Brel. After defining songs as an object of translation studies, we make a distinction between translations to be sung, and written translations whose essential purpose is to facilitate the understanding of the lyrics. As a result of this distinction, the various meanings of retranslation can be taken into account, from the “creation of a new target text when one or more target texts already exist” (Apter & Herman, 2016, p. 65) to ‘relay’ translations and back translations. The findings point towards an important characteristic of songs, i.e., that every performance can be considered, in a broader sense, as a retranslation. From a cognitive perspective, the study also reveals the need to consider the impact of auditory memory when researching sung retranslation. The research raises important questions, which need to be developed by other linguists to deepen the notion of singability.

Keywords

retranslation, songs, sung translations, relay translations, back translations

1. Introduction

Les premières études sur la retraduction datent des années 1990. On a coutume de faire remonter leur apparition au numéro 4 de la revue *Palimpsestes* (1990). Depuis lors, la notion de retraduction a été étudiée à différents niveaux, dans le but d'en approfondir notamment la dimension conceptuelle (Ladmiral, 2011) et les implications littéraires et traductologiques (voir entre autres Gambier, 1994 ; Monti & Schnyder, 2011 ; *Palimpsestes*, 2004). Que ce soit à partir d'études de cas ou dans une perspective plus généraliste, la plupart des recherches sur la retraduction ont jusqu'à présent porté sur la traduction littéraire. En effet, selon Ladmiral (2011, p. 46), la littérature est « le terrain privilégié où se manifestent l'insatisfaction devant les traductions existantes, ainsi que la subjectivité d'interprétations multiples et différentes ». Néanmoins, des retraductions sont effectuées aussi dans d'autres domaines comme ceux des textes spécialisés ou sacrés.

Le phénomène de la retraduction des chansons semble à première vue marginal si on le compare au domaine de la littérature. La quantité limitée de recherches ponctuelles en la matière s'explique notamment par le retard avec lequel la chanson traduite et, plus généralement, la traduction des textes chantés a fait l'objet d'études académiques en français et en italien. Si l'on excepte les recherches sur la traduction des livrets d'opéra (Marschall, 2004, entre autres) et celles menées plus récemment dans le cadre des études italiennes (Abbrugiati, 2011 ; Pruvost, 2017), la plupart des études proprement traductologiques dans ce domaine se focalisent sur la chanson d'auteur (Garzone & Schena, 2000) et sur les traductions des chansons de Georges Brassens en particulier (Conenna, 1987, 1998 ; *Équivalences*, 1992-1993). En revanche, la littérature scientifique en anglais est relativement plus fournie (Gorlée, 2005 ; Susam-Sarajeva, 2008) et ne cesse de s'enrichir de nouvelles contributions (Apter & Herman, 2016 ; Low, 2017 ; Desblache, 2019).

Les publications qui portent particulièrement sur la retraduction des chansons sont encore moins nombreuses. Pour nous limiter à la langue française, nous tenons à mentionner les contributions de Froeliger (2020) et de Aronsson (2021). Bien qu'elles diffèrent quant au corpus et aux langues comparées, ces deux études ont mis en lumière certains éléments de réflexion concernant notre objet d'étude.

Tout en se concentrant sur un seul morceau, Froeliger (2020) vise « l'adaptation des chansons en général », à travers un principe d'exemplarité. Le cas d'étude est représenté par la chanson de Bob Dylan *Blowin' in the wind* et par ses trois reprises en français, dont chacune est présentée comme « une réponse à la précédente ». D'après Froeliger, la vulgate selon laquelle la première traduction serait une acclimatation alors que la véritable traduction viendrait après, se fonde sur « un postulat parmi d'autres », à savoir l'unicité de l'original. Dans le sillon de Gambier (1994) et de Guillemain (2019), Froeliger (2020) s'attache à dépasser l'opposition classique entre traduction et adaptation, une dichotomie dont il soutient qu'elle ne tient pas en traduction de chansons.

L'étude de Aronsson (2021) est fondée sur un corpus de 200 chansons françaises de la période 1920-2020 et de leurs 247 traductions en suédois. Un des critères de classement établis par Aronsson (2021, p. 40) est la distinction entre « 'traductions immédiates' (traduites la même année ou l'année suivant la parution de l'original français) » et « traductions *a posteriori* ». Son étude montre qu'en Suède, la première catégorie inclut notamment des chansons pop ou sentimentales ; au contraire, les traductions *a posteriori* et les retraductions concernent plutôt les classiques de l'âge d'or de la chanson française et démontrent ainsi une « volonté de transférer [...] un héritage culturel déjà canonisé dans le monde francophone ».

Notre contribution se veut une introduction générale à la problématique de la retraduction des chansons visant à dresser une typologie des chansons (re)traduites. Pour étayer nos propos, nous nous appuierons sur des exemples tirés du domaine de la chanson à texte, plus précisément du répertoire de Georges Brassens et de celui de Jacques Brel. Après avoir évoqué la polysémie du terme *retraduction* (2.) et les spécificités traductologiques de l'objet 'chanson' en comparaison de la traduction littéraire (3.), nous proposerons un classement des chansons (re)traduites fondé sur les trois significations principales que nous reconnaitrons au terme de *retraduction* (4.).

2. La retraduction des chansons... oui, mais dans quel sens ?

Les nombreuses recherches menées sur la retraduction d'œuvres littéraires au fil des trois dernières décennies ont privilégié, de façon plus ou moins explicite, une acception bien précise du terme *retraduction*, à savoir la « traduction dans une même langue d'un même texte de départ, réalisée après une autre traduction » (Gambier, 2011, p. 53). À ce propos, Enrico Monti rappelle que, dans le langage éditorial, le produit de cette opération est appelé « nouvelle traduction » (2011, p. 18).

Comme le montre Pöckl (2016, p. 22), le terme *retraduction* présente une certaine ambiguïté, au moins dans les langues romanes, car il peut également indiquer « la traduction d'un texte qui a lui-même été traduit d'une autre langue ». Attestée en français à partir du XVII^e siècle, cette acception se réfère à un phénomène aussi connu sous le nom de « traduction indirecte » ou de « traduction par relais » (Monti, 2011, p. 11). Ce procédé est adopté de plus en plus dans le cas de traductions en des langues peu utilisées, notamment en interprétation et dans le domaine de la traduction audiovisuelle (Gambier, 1994, p. 413 et 2011, p. 52). Néanmoins, Monti et Schnyder (2011) l'excluent de leur domaine d'étude à cause de ses spécificités, car il « pose des problématiques complètement différentes par rapport au concept de "nouvelle traduction" » (Monti, 2011, p. 12).

Une troisième acception du terme *retraduction*, souvent mentionnée dans les écrits sur le sujet, renvoie à l'acte de « traduire de nouveau une traduction vers sa langue de départ » (Gambier, 1994, p. 413). Il n'est peut-être pas inutile de signaler que pour Vinay et Darbelnet (1958, p. 12), la retraduction est uniquement un « (p)rocédé de vérification qui part de [la langue d'arrivée] pour retrouver [la langue de départ] ». Il s'agit d'un phénomène rare ayant des finalités spécifiques et pour lequel Ladmiral (2011, p. 31) suggère d'employer le terme *rétro-traduction* afin de lever toute ambiguïté.

Or, vu la complexité de l'objet *chanson*, la polysémie déjà évoquée mérite d'être prise en considération. Notre étude explore par conséquent la notion de retraduction sous de multiples facettes. Son but consiste à décrire les différentes formes par lesquelles elle se manifeste dans la chanson.

3. La chanson, objet d'étude traductologique

Avant d'entrer dans le vif du sujet, il y a lieu de donner quelques éléments définitoires de la chanson en tant qu'objet d'étude traductologique. Pour que notre réflexion puisse s'insérer plus aisément dans le débat autour de la retraduction, nous mettrons également en lumière certains points de divergence entre la chanson et le domaine littéraire. Tout comme les genres littéraires¹, la chanson peut être considérée comme un genre textuel à visée esthétique ; néanmoins, la chanson diffère à plusieurs égards des genres littéraires et notamment par ses

¹ Nous n'abordons pas ici la question des liens entre la chanson et la poésie, qui excède les limites de la présente étude.

implications traductologiques. D'ailleurs, comme le soulignent Koskinen et Paloposki (2010, p. 295), il faut être prudent lorsqu'on veut étendre les acquis et les conclusions de la recherche sur la retraduction au-delà du domaine littéraire.

3.1. Paroles, musique et... interprétation

« Une chanson – se plaisait à dire Georges Brassens – c'est une petite fête de mots et de notes » (Sève, 1975, p. 43). Au niveau structural, la chanson résulte donc de la « mise en correspondance entre un objet linguistique, le texte, et un objet musical, l'air » (Dell, 2003, p. 515). La spécificité de la chanson sur le plan traductologique réside précisément dans cette complexité sémiotique : le texte en langue cible destiné au chant se devra de respecter non seulement le contenu du message et le style des paroles, mais aussi de considérer le principe de la chantabilité, selon lequel le texte de départ et le(s) texte(s) d'arrivée sont interchangeables, car chantés sur la même musique. En réalité, quelques toutes petites modifications d'ordre musical sont possibles, mais elles ne doivent pas compromettre la structure mélodico-rythmique sous-jacente.

Comme nous l'avons montré ailleurs (D'Andrea, 2014), cette activité de traduction est plutôt comparable au travail des paroliers. Autrement dit, « au lieu d'être considérée comme une traduction poétique ayant la contrainte supplémentaire de la musique, la traduction d'une chanson serait à interpréter comme la création d'un texte chantable sur une musique donnée et ayant une contrainte sémantique » (D'Andrea, 2020, p. 56). D'un point de vue plus strictement pratique, les contraintes prosodiques varient en fonction des langues concernées.

Dans le cadre de sa sémiologie de la chanson, Louis-Jean Calvet (1995, p. 18) a proposé d'étudier les rapports entre les syllabes et les notes d'une chanson selon deux niveaux d'analyse distincts, la « chanson écrite » et la « chanson chantée ». La chanson écrite, assimilable à la partition, est une structure abstraite pour ainsi dire, un invariant qui se cache derrière les variations apportées par la chanson chantée. Cette dernière, en revanche, correspondrait aux différentes interprétations de la même partition. Par cette distinction, Calvet a pavé la voie aux études cantologiques. Là où, au niveau structural, une chanson est composée de paroles et de musique, dans l'optique cantologique, elle est par contre conçue comme un tout organique : elle est donc à la fois texte, musique et interprétation (Hirschi, 2008). Sur le plan de la réception, on observe par ailleurs une certaine tendance à identifier une chanson à son premier interprète, plutôt qu'à l'auteur des paroles et/ou au compositeur, quitte à parfois engendrer une image d'auctorialité trompeuse lorsqu'une chanson est interprétée par un chanteur célèbre qui n'en est pas cependant l'auteur-compositeur.

Quant aux chansons traduites, là aussi le rôle de l'interprète n'est pas des moindres. Aronsson (2021, p. 31) souligne que les traducteurs suédois se sont souvent inspirés des interprètes de chansons françaises pour choisir les chansons à traduire. Plus en général, le public étant souvent enclin à croire que le créateur d'une chanson coïncide avec son interprète, il est même rarement au courant du statut de traduction d'une chanson. En outre, la retraduction d'une chanson n'est généralement pas présentée comme telle, ni comme une « nouvelle traduction », ce qui rend particulièrement laborieuse, sinon stérile, la tentative de rétablir la succession chronologique des différentes versions. D'autre part, qu'il s'agisse ou non de son traducteur, l'interprète d'une chanson (re)traduite sera facilement identifié comme son auteur. Bref, contrairement à ce qui se produit dans le domaine littéraire, où toute traduction est reçue comme étant du cru de l'auteur du texte source et où l'unicité du texte original ne fait pas de doute, le propre d'une chanson traduite est d'être généralement reçue comme si c'était un original.

Quand on parle ici de réception de chansons traduites, il convient de préciser qu'on fait autant abstraction des professionnels qui gravitent autour du produit 'chanson' que des chercheurs considérant la chanson comme un véritable objet d'étude. En effet, si le grand public est rarement conscient du processus créateur d'une chanson traduite, le traductologue ne peut ignorer l'identité de l'auteur² de la chanson de départ, mais se doit d'appuyer son analyse sur la chanson originale et sur les traductions antérieures.

3.2. « Texte écrit, partition et texte oral »

Outre la musique et le rôle joué par l'interprète, la chanson présente un autre trait qui la distingue des produits littéraires et dont il convient de tenir compte, à savoir celui du médium. Si la littérature – du moins dans nos civilisations occidentales et à partir d'un certain moment de l'histoire – se sert du code graphique, la chanson relève au premier chef du code phonique³. Ce qui ne veut pas forcément dire que ces deux genres diffèrent en termes de stabilité ou d'instabilité, selon la dichotomie relevant du lieu commun *verba volant, scripta manent*. En effet, comme le rappelle Dominique Maingueneau (2007, pp. 51-52), la chanson fait partie des genres de discours oraux « figés car destinés à être répétés indéfiniment ». En outre, grâce aux techniques modernes d'enregistrement sonore, elle profite du même degré de stabilité traditionnellement attribué à l'écrit.

Par ailleurs, la chanson est un objet dont la complexité sémiotique et communicative est bien saisie par la définition suivante :

Orale mais strictement codée selon des modèles extérieurs à l'oralité, forme de communication face à face mais dépourvue des contextualisateurs caractéristiques de l'oral, enfermée dans les contraintes extra-linguistiques, celles de la musique, la chanson est tout à la fois et tour à tour texte écrit, partition et texte oral. (Giaufret Colombani, 2001, p. 4)

Pour notre propos, les implications les plus intéressantes concernent la traduction et la réception : contrairement à la traduction littéraire, véhiculée essentiellement par le code graphique, la traduction d'une chanson est principalement transmise par le code phonique. Que ce soit en direct, lors d'un concert ou d'une représentation en scène, ou via un support d'enregistrement, la traduction d'une chanson est reçue par un public d'auditeurs et non pas de lecteurs⁴.

Or, la plupart des recherches sur la retraduction concernent des traductions destinées à la « lecture » (Chevrel, 2010, p. 14 ; Gambier, 2011, p. 62). Et quand bien même le mot *lecture* et ses dérivés seraient-ils pris au sens figuré de « compréhension » ou d'« interprétation », on pourrait difficilement parler de « lisibilité » (Rodriguez, 1990, p. 73 ; Ladmiral, 2011, p. 37) pour une traduction chantée. S'il est clair que le texte d'une chanson joue bien son rôle quand il s'agit de sa traduction, il ne peut jouer ce rôle indépendamment des autres caractéristiques

² Par souci de simplification, nous parlons ici d'« auteur », tout en sachant qu'il faudrait distinguer entre l'auteur (ou les auteurs) des paroles d'une chanson et le(s) compositeur(s) de sa musique.

³ Pour nous référer à la réalisation médiale d'un énoncé, nous préférons adopter les termes *graphique* et *phonique* au lieu de la paire *écrit/oral*, qui prête à une certaine ambiguïté sémantique (Koch & Oesterreicher, 2001).

⁴ Bien évidemment, nous nous référons ici à la traduction de chansons proprement dite, celle qui est destinée au chant et non pas à la lecture. Pour la distinction entre traductions à lire et traductions à chanter v. *infra* et D'Andrea, 2020, p. 44. Par ailleurs, il est des cas où la traduction littéraire aussi fait l'objet d'une performance, notamment au théâtre. Là aussi, la traduction doit être « performable », prononçable, jouable par des comédiens. Lorsque nous opposons la traduction des chansons à celle des textes littéraires, nous nous référons donc notamment à la traduction de romans et d'autres œuvres qui sont destinées à être lues.

de la chanson ; l'interprétation de ce texte va main dans la main avec sa chantabilité.

Les réflexions qui précèdent concernent la traduction comme produit. En revanche, si l'on considère le processus traductif, on peut se demander comment travaille le traducteur d'une chanson : s'appuie-t-il uniquement sur des versions chantées, ou sur les différentes sources disponibles y compris des sources écrites ? Puisqu'il doit sauvegarder autant la chantabilité du texte d'arrivée que le message contenu dans la chanson de départ, le traducteur pourra tirer profit non seulement du ou des enregistrement(s) sonore(s) et de la partition disponible(s), mais aussi des paroles de la chanson de départ transmises sur le papier.

3.3. Un niveau de représentation qui néglige la musique : les paroles de chanson

Comme nous l'avons démontré ailleurs (D'Andrea, 2016), les paroles de chanson sont un troisième niveau de représentation qui – tout en étant partiel – peut apporter des informations complémentaires par rapport à celles qui découlent de la « chanson écrite » et de la « chanson chantée », ces deux expressions indiquant respectivement la structure abstraite de la chanson, assimilable à la partition, et son ou ses interprétation(s) (Calvet, 1995, p. 18).

Les paroles de chansons s'avèrent particulièrement utiles lorsque l'opération de traduction se limite volontairement à la composante verbale. En effet, jusqu'à présent, nous avons parlé de (re)traduction de chansons pour renvoyer implicitement aux traductions destinées au chant et qui partagent avec les paroles de la chanson de départ la compatibilité avec la musique d'origine. Dans ce cas, la chanson d'arrivée est un produit autonome qui, à son tour, sera actualisé par un ou plusieurs interprètes ainsi que par des arrangements musicaux.

Néanmoins, à côté de ce type de (re)traductions, il en existe un autre qui, n'étant pas destiné à être chanté, n'est pas soumis à la contrainte de la chantabilité. Parmi les traductions de chansons avec changement de médium, Peter Low (2017, p. 41) mentionne celles où un texte de départ destiné au chant est traduit dans un texte à lire, sur le papier ou à l'écran. En plus des traductions à lire qui accompagnent l'écoute des chansons (sous-titres, livrets de CD, programmes de concert), des livres sont publiés dans le but de permettre une meilleure compréhension et une étude plus approfondie des chansons étrangères. Lorsqu'une traduction de ce type porte sur l'œuvre intégrale d'un auteur de chansons, elle peut même contribuer à la réception de cette œuvre dans la culture d'arrivée.

4. Typologie de retraductions de chansons

De tout ce qui précède, il s'ensuit que la notion de retraduction telle qu'elle a été décrite dans le domaine littéraire (notamment par rapport aux romans et à d'autres œuvres destinées à être lues) s'avère insuffisante pour le domaine de la chanson. Néanmoins, les retraductions de chansons sont un sujet d'étude qui s'annonce prometteur, car elles témoignent de la popularité de certaines chansons et du respect, dans le contexte cible, envers certains auteurs.

Avant d'entrer dans les détails des différentes formes de retraduction de chansons, il nous semble utile de nous focaliser sur les raisons qui se cachent derrière la vogue des traductions des chansons étrangères qui a fait florès dans l'Italie des années 1960-1970. Comme le rappelle Franco Fabbri (2008), grâce aux lois en vigueur à l'époque en matière de droits d'auteur, les traducteurs et les adaptateurs recevaient une rémunération à l'occasion de chaque utilisation sur le territoire italien non seulement de la nouvelle version, mais aussi de la version originale. Il en allait de même pour la vente de disques, ce qui explique la présence dans les catalogues des éditeurs italiens de nombreuses versions italiennes des chansons à succès étrangères, même tirées du répertoire rock en anglais.

Roberto Vecchioni (2003), qui a été traducteur de chansons avant de devenir un des *cantautori* les plus connus et appréciés en Italie, raconte qu'il s'agissait souvent de traductions de faible

qualité dont le résultat n'était pas à la hauteur de l'original, ni en termes de fidélité, ni en termes de chantabilité. Pour que le mécanisme fonctionne, il n'était même pas nécessaire d'enregistrer les traductions, il suffisait d'en déposer les droits à la SIAE (la Société des auteurs et des éditeurs, équivalent italien de la SACEM) et cela allait bien ainsi. Lorsqu'un interprète de renom les lançait, elles pouvaient devenir des succès, comme c'est le cas pour la célèbre *Tous les garçons et les filles* (1961), coécrite et chantée par Françoise Hardy, dont la version italienne *Quelli della mia età*, réalisée par Vito Pallavicini, a été chantée en 1963 par la même artiste française et, par la suite, avec quelques toutes petites modifications, par Catherine Spaak et par Gigliola Cinquetti.

À ce type de traductions, visant l'exploitation d'un succès pour des intérêts commerciaux, s'oppose un autre type de traductions, que l'on pourrait qualifier de traductions-hommages. Elles sont généralement réalisées sous l'impulsion des traducteurs-chanteurs eux-mêmes qui, s'identifiant à l'interprète de la chanson de départ, se reconnaissent dans les valeurs transmises par l'œuvre. Les exemples cités dans les paragraphes qui suivent concernent notamment des chansons françaises (re)traduites dans ce deuxième but. Seront notamment privilégiées des chansons tirées du répertoire de Georges Brassens et de celui de Jacques Brel.

4.1. Les retraductions chantées

Selon une des définitions les plus citées, la « retraduction serait une nouvelle traduction, dans une même langue, d'un texte déjà traduit, en entier ou en partie » (Gambier, 1994, p. 413). Le critère de l'unicité de la langue cible a été récemment remis en discussion par Alevato do Amaral (2019), d'après qui la prise en compte des traductions dans d'autres langues-cultures aurait l'avantage d'amplifier les possibilités en termes d'intertextualité et de contribuer à l'amélioration du niveau linguistique, culturel et esthétique des retraductions.

Le caractère multilingue et intertextuel de la retraduction défendu par Alevato do Amaral nous semble particulièrement pertinent pour l'étude de la chanson, un genre qui se déploie souvent au-delà des frontières linguistiques et nationales. Dans ce paragraphe, nous focalisons donc notre attention sur la traduction de chansons françaises qui ont déjà fait l'objet d'une traduction chantée dans la même langue d'arrivée ou dans une autre langue.

Prenons une célèbre chanson de Jacques Brel, *Ne me quitte pas*. Écrite en 1959, elle a connu plusieurs versions dans différentes langues. Elle compte au moins quatre traductions italiennes : les deux premières, signées par Gino Paoli, s'intitulent *Non andare via* ; les deux autres, signées respectivement par Sergio Sacchi et par Duilio Del Prete, s'intitulent *Non lasciarmi solo*. La première version de Gino Paoli (1962, éd. Ricordi) a été chantée non seulement par ce représentant de l'« école génoise », mais aussi par d'autres interprètes de renom comme Ornella Vanoni (1982). La deuxième version de Paoli, popularisée par Patty Pravo (1970, éd. RCA), se distingue par un plus grand soin porté à l'idiomaticité et aux aspects phoniques tels que la rime. Quant aux versions intitulées *Non lasciarmi solo*, celle créée par Sergio Sacchi – sauf erreur de notre part – n'a été interprétée que par Franco Visentin (1979), dans son album d'hommage consacré à Jacques Brel ; l'autre, publiée de manière posthume en 2002, a été interprétée par Duilio Del Prete. Cette dernière se caractérise par une plus forte densité lexicale et un style plus recherché. Parmi les multiples versions de *Ne me quitte pas* dans le monde entier, existent une traduction en anglais et une en allemand, qui ont été interprétées par des voix à succès : *If you go away*, chantée non seulement par son traducteur Rod McKuen, mais aussi par des artistes tels Franck Sinatra et Shirley Bassey ; *Bitte, geh' nicht fort*, par Max Colpet, portée au succès par Marlene Dietrich.

Par ailleurs, en Italie, on observe un phénomène singulier attesté au moins à partir des années soixante : pour traduire des chansons d'auteurs-compositeurs-interprètes français de renom,

même les différents dialectes peuvent être choisis comme langue cible. Ainsi *Le Gorille* de Georges Brassens devient *El gorila* en milanais (trad. de N. Svampa, 1965), *U scimmiuni* en sicilien (trad. de Salvatore Pagano, 1997), *Ocjo al gorila* en frioulan (trad. de G. Ferigo, 2001)⁵. Certaines chansons de Jacques Brel ont été traduites en dialecte milanais par Walter Di Gemma, en dialecte génois par Joe Sentieri, en dialecte émilien par Dino Sarti.

Pour ces retraductions en dialecte, l'« identification positive qui est à l'œuvre dans la pulsion de traduire » (Ladmiral, 2011, pp. 36-37) n'est pas seulement aux traducteurs précédents, mais aussi et surtout à l'auteur du texte de départ. « Voilà, je voudrais écrire et chanter comme ce monsieur-là », c'est ce que raconte avoir affirmé Nanni Svampa (2000, p. 150, notre trad.) après avoir écouté pour la première fois, dans sa jeunesse, un disque de Georges Brassens. Cet orfèvre de la langue française, qui a su mêler langage cultivé et langage populaire, occupe une place de choix dans le répertoire français traduit en italien. Par son emploi original de la phraséologie et par la variété des registres linguistiques adoptés, Brassens est un des auteurs-compositeurs-interprètes francophones les plus difficiles à traduire, ce qui ne l'empêche pas d'être un des plus traduits et des plus étudiés. Ce paradoxe fait de lui un cas d'étude incontournable en traductologie : beaucoup de ses chansons ont été traduites au lendemain de leur publication, mais elles ont continué de l'être aussi bien du vivant de leur auteur qu'après sa mort, survenue il y a plus de 40 ans.

Certains traducteurs italiens de Brassens, comme Alberto Patrucco⁶, déclarent s'être focalisés sur des chansons qui n'avaient pas encore fait l'objet d'une traduction. D'autres se plaisent à (re)traduire des chansons ayant déjà été traduites : ainsi, *Dans l'eau de la claire fontaine* (1961) est devenue *Nell'acqua della chiara fontana* dans la première version en italien signée par Fabrizio De André (1968) et dans celle de Beppe Chierici (1969), *Nell'acqua del laghetto* dans celle de Nanni Svampa (2004), pour ne citer que quelques exemples. Une comparaison entre ces textes montre certaines analogies : au vers 3, la « saute de vent soudaine » se transforme dans un « soffio di tramontana » aussi bien chez De André que chez Chierici ; au vers 12 et au vers 16, la version de Svampa (« Una sola rosa bastò / [...] Una sola foglia bastò ») fait écho à celle de Chierici (« E una sola rosa bastò / [...] Che una sola rosa bastò ») pour traduire les vers de Brassens « Une seule rose a suffi / [...] Qu'une seule feuille a suffi ». Même en l'absence d'une influence directe, ces analogies pourraient s'expliquer au niveau de l'inconscient, le retraducteur ayant dans sa mémoire musicale non seulement la chanson originale mais aussi les traductions qu'il aura éventuellement écoutées. Les retraducteurs de chansons sont donc inévitablement confrontés aux choix des traducteurs précédents.

Pour revenir à la question majeure des raisons qui poussent à la retraduction, il a été souvent remarqué que les traductions ont tendance à vieillir ou, pour mieux dire, que les conventions auxquelles elles obéissent changent au fil du temps. D'après Berman (1990, p. 1), non seulement les traductions vieillissent mais elles sont par définition caduques et inachevées. C'est alors aux retraductions d'atteindre l'accompli. Pour la chanson, nous partageons plutôt l'avis d'Yves Gambier (2011, p. 63), d'après qui

[c]e n'est pas toujours, ni surtout, parce qu'une traduction est "désuète" qu'on retraduit. Simplement comme un metteur en scène propose un nouveau spectacle, un musicien une nouvelle interprétation d'un morceau, un traducteur peut avancer une interprétation autre d'un texte déjà interprété. Mais on ne parle pas de redramaturgie d'une pièce, de recomposition musicale, tout au plus de nouvelle performance, de nouvelle interprétation.

⁵ Les dates de ces traductions se réfèrent aux enregistrements tels qu'ils sont cités dans De Angelis et al. (2017).

⁶ Cf. l'entretien transmis sur la chaîne *Radio Onde furlane* dans le cadre de l'audio-documentaire *100 Brassens*, téléchargeable à l'adresse: <https://www.spreker.com/user/ondefurlane/100-brassens-6-alberto-patrucco>.

Cette position resitue la retraduction et, plus généralement, toute traduction parmi les formes d'interprétation, telles les reprises ou les nouveaux arrangements.

L'insatisfaction à l'égard des traductions précédentes figure parmi les raisons qui poussent à la retraduction d'une œuvre littéraire. Pour la chanson, en l'absence de notes du traducteur, le souci d'amélioration est plutôt difficile à démontrer. Quand on retraduit des chansons, entre en jeu le désir de réaliser un travail créatif qui porte en soi non seulement la marque de la fidélité mais aussi celle de l'empreinte personnelle. La marge de créativité inhérente à la traduction d'une chanson, en somme, semble être plus ample que dans d'autres cas.

La chanson des vieux amants (Jacques Brel / Jacques Brel – Gérard Jouannest) a eu un certain succès à l'étranger et notamment en Italie, où elle a connu au moins deux traductions. La première, intitulée *La canzone degli amanti* (Del Prete et Bardotti), a été portée au succès par Patty Pravo (1971). Elle a été reprise avec quelques petites modifications du texte par Filipponio (1984) et par Rossana Casale (1999), qui l'intitule *La canzone dei vecchi amanti*. La seconde traduction, ayant pour titre *La canzone dei vecchi amanti*, après avoir été enregistrée par son traducteur Duilio Del Prete dans l'album *La bassa landa* (1970), a été chantée par Renato Dibi (1992) et par Franco Battiato (1999). Ayant comparé les versions enregistrées par ces artistes (qui ne sont certes pas les seules), nous avons pu remarquer que chaque interprétation diffère non seulement du point de vue de l'arrangement musical mais aussi du point de vue textuel. Au deuxième couplet, par exemple, Filipponio modifie la version chantée par Patty Pravo en renversant la première et la deuxième personne du singulier :

<i>La chanson des vieux amants</i> (J. Brel)	<i>La canzone degli amanti</i> (chantée par P. Pravo)	<i>La canzone degli amanti</i> (chantée par Filipponio)
Moi, je sais tous tes sortilèges	Conosco tutti i tuoi problemi	Conosci tutti i miei problemi
Tu sais tous mes envoûtements	Di me conosci la magia	Di te conosco la magia
Tu m'as gardé de piège en piège	Ti leggo in viso se hai segreti	Mi leggi in viso se ho segreti
Je t'ai perdue de temps en temps	E quando hai voglia di andar via	E quando ho voglia di andar via

Tableau 1. *La chanson des vieux amants/La canzone degli amanti*, vv. 15-18

Ce changement n'affecte pas la signification globale de la chanson, qui porte sur la crise d'un couple usé par le temps. Quant à *La canzone dei vecchi amanti*, la version chantée par Del Prete (1970) et celle reprise par Dibi sont presque identiques, sauf quelques petites modifications d'ordre lexical et morphologique. Dans la reprise de Battiato, des changements plus consistants concernent le troisième couplet.

Le constat de ces différences entraîne une réflexion importante sur la difficulté à établir, compter et classer les traductions des chansons, ainsi que sur leur paternité. Pour Ronnie Apter et Mark Herman (2016, p. 67), dans certains cas, les retraductions de textes chantés ou prétendues telles ne sont que des « collages » de plusieurs traductions existantes ; dans d'autres, les « retraducteurs » préfèrent puiser dans les traductions précédentes et n'y changer que quelques mots, dans le but d'éviter de payer des droits d'auteur. D'ailleurs, bien qu'il s'agisse d'un aspect qui est hors de la portée de notre étude, il ne faut pas oublier que le marché de la chanson est dominé par les intérêts économiques.

4.2. Les traductions de traductions

Après avoir illustré les retraductions chantées de chansons, nous nous focalisons à présent sur la deuxième acception du terme *retraduction*, à savoir celle de traduction d'une autre traduction (Gambier, 2011, p. 52). Il s'agit d'une opération connue aussi sous le nom de *traduction-relais* qui, en premier lieu, concerne une traduction chantée dont la source n'est pas la chanson originale, mais une de ses traductions chantées dans une autre langue. Pour donner un exemple, nous pouvons citer *U sciavuort^e*, version du *Gorille* de Georges Brassens réalisée dans un dialecte de Basilicate par Adriano Cozza à partir de la traduction-pivot *Il Gorilla* de Fabrizio De Andrè.

Les traductions-relais des chansons ne se limitent pas aux traductions chantées à partir d'autres traductions chantées, mais elles incluent aussi une autre forme, assez singulière, celle des traductions à chanter réalisées à partir d'une traduction à lire. Il s'agit d'une opération de « traduction intralinguale ou reformulation » (au sens de Jakobson, 1963, p. 79) soumise aux contraintes de la chantabilité. Mais dans quels cas et pourquoi pourrait-on avoir besoin de consulter une traduction à lire afin de réaliser une traduction chantée ? Les traductions à lire sont indispensables comme textes-pivots pour traduire des chansons dont la langue est inconnue au traducteur. Un exemple très significatif à cet égard est représenté par les traductions des chansons de Georges Brassens effectuées à partir des traductions à lire signées par Nanni Svampa et Mario Mascioli (1991). Réalisées comme hommage au poète de la chanson d'auteur mais aussi dans le but de diffuser son œuvre auprès du public italien, ces traductions-pivots continuent de nos jours à inspirer des générations de jeunes traducteurs italiens.

En bref, les spécificités de l'objet-chanson induisent à repenser la notion de 'retraduction' telle qu'elle a été élaborée dans le domaine de la littérature. Si, d'après Gambier (2011, p. 52), la « traduction intermédiaire, ou pivot [...] permet [...] de relayer l'original à une troisième langue-culture, selon un processus indirect », dans le cas d'une chanson traduite par le biais d'une traduction à lire, l'enjeu traductif ne concerne pas une troisième langue-culture mais la capacité de reformuler un texte jusqu'à ce qu'il soit compatible avec la musique de la chanson de départ. La prise en compte du médium, en somme, est un élément décisif pour réfléchir à la fonction des retraductions des chansons et, plus en général, des textes chantés.

En plus de la situation que nous venons de décrire, pour laquelle une traduction chantée de chanson est la traduction intralinguistique et intersémiotique d'une traduction à lire, il faut considérer que d'un point de vue strictement chronologique, les traductions à lire peuvent aussi suivre les premières traductions chantées. Les traductions à lire peuvent donc remplir aussi bien la fonction de pivot qu'être elles-mêmes des retraductions. Elles sont particulièrement intéressantes à étudier, notamment lorsqu'elles sont créées par le même traducteur qui, en l'absence de contraintes musicales, sera en principe plus libre d'exprimer les nuances sémantiques du texte de départ. Son but sera aussi de réduire le degré d'entropie par rapport à sa propre version chantée de la même chanson étrangère. Il existe cependant un contre-exemple à cela : dans la note du traducteur antéposée à sa traduction à lire de l'œuvre complète de Jacques Brel, Duilio Del Prete (1994) déclare que dans certains cas, il n'a pas pu se passer d'obéir aussi au critère de la chantabilité, pour des raisons liées à la mémoire auditive.

4.3. Les rétro-traductions

En faisant temporairement abstraction du médium pour lequel elles sont conçues, les retraductions de chansons décrites jusqu'à présent mettent en place un ou plusieurs passages interlinguistiques. Nous venons de décrire les retraductions chantées réalisées à partir de la chanson originale (4.1.), et le phénomène des traductions par relais (4.2.). Pour ces dernières,

on assiste au moins à deux configurations distinctes : dans le premier cas, chanson de départ, chanson-pivot et chanson d'arrivée sont créées dans trois langues distinctes ; dans l'autre cas, lorsque la chanson-pivot et la chanson d'arrivée sont créées dans la même langue, les langues ne sont qu'au nombre de deux.

Il est une troisième possibilité, consistant à reproduire les paroles d'une traduction chantée dans la langue de la chanson de départ. Connue aussi sous le nom de *rétro-traduction*, cette technique a une fonction essentiellement explicative. Ces rétro-traductions, qui ne sont pas autonomes par rapport au texte dont elles découlent, sont conçues pour les besoins de la compréhension et sont utilisées dans des domaines très diversifiés. Les traductions des chansons sont parfois soumises à une forme particulière de rétro-traduction, afin d'être approuvées par l'auteur ou par ses ayants droit. Par exemple, Georges Brassens avait demandé à Nanni Svampa de lui retraduire en français ses traductions en milanais, avant de donner son approbation⁷. Quant aux ayants droit de Jacques Brel, ils sont relativement méfiants (ainsi que les Éditions Jacques Brel) à l'égard de ce type de documents et préfèrent soumettre les nouvelles traductions en quête d'autorisation à des vérificateurs chargés de les évaluer selon des critères assez stricts⁸. Un autre exemple, tiré du contexte académique, serait : un discours traductologique ayant pour but d'expliquer les procédés de traduction d'une chanson, rédigé dans la même langue que la chanson de départ. Dans ce cas, une rétro-traduction vers-à-vers permettra de mieux comprendre les enjeux traductifs et les nuances apportées par le traducteur⁹.

5. Conclusions

Dans cet article, nous avons présenté un tour d'horizon des rapports possibles entre chanson et (re)traduction. En particulier, après avoir exploré la polysémie du terme *retraduction* (2.), nous avons défini la chanson en tant qu'objet d'étude traductologique (3.). Notre recherche a mis en évidence l'utilité d'élargir la définition de *retraduction* pour la chanson, jusqu'à inclure non seulement des (re)traductions chantées dans une même langue ou dans des langues différentes (4.1.), mais aussi les deux acceptions de traduction par relais (4.2.) et de rétro-traduction (4.3.), généralement délaissées. En effet, vu son caractère multisémiotique, la chanson impose des opérations traductives particulièrement complexes, notamment si le but est la création d'une traduction chantée. En simplifiant quelque peu, le texte d'arrivée se devra de répondre aux contraintes sémantiques et musicales de la chanson de départ. Lorsque le terme *retraduction* est pris au sens propre (4.1.), ces deux opérations sont pratiquement simultanées. Il en va autrement pour les traductions dont le relais est assuré par une traduction à lire (4.2.) : dans ce cas, le traducteur s'appuie sur deux sources distinctes, d'une part la chanson originale, dont il ne retient que la forme musicale, d'une autre part la traduction à lire, qu'il reformule en la pliant aux exigences musicales. En plus de la fonction de pivot dans une traduction-relais, la traduction à lire d'un texte de chanson peut aussi représenter le point d'arrivée d'une retraduction au sens de rétro-traduction (4.3.).

Les retraductions de chansons méritent donc une réflexion spécifique, car elles contribuent à élargir le corpus des multiples versions d'une chanson (comme les covers, les parodies, les reprises), et que leur comparaison sert à approfondir des notions encore par trop floues, comme celle de chantabilité. Par ailleurs, la complexité de la chanson, genre ancré dans une dimension interprétative, nous oblige à revisiter la notion même de retraduction. Si toute

⁷ Mirella Conenna, communication personnelle, juillet 2022.

⁸ Francis de Laveleye (Fondation Jacques Brel), communication personnelle, juillet 2022.

⁹ C'est ce que nous avons fait dans D'Andrea (2021).

traduction est une interprétation, toute (re)traduction de chanson est, à plus forte raison, une réinterprétation, car en plus de l'interprétation du traducteur intervient celle des artistes qui, par leur propre voix, la chantent. Le terme *voix* serait donc à entendre non seulement au sens métaphorique (l'instance énonciative associée à l'auteur du texte de départ, ou celle de ses traducteurs, etc.), mais aussi au sens propre (l'ensemble des sons produits par le chanteur).

À ce propos, il serait souhaitable de poursuivre notre recherche afin de mieux cerner le rôle joué par la mémoire auditive dans la genèse des retraductions de chansons. Il serait également intéressant d'approfondir la dimension dialogique et polyphonique du texte-chanson : s'il est vrai que toute traduction peut être analysée à la lumière de la notion de 'polyphonie', ceci est à plus forte raison vrai pour la chanson, en raison du rôle incontournable de l'interprète.

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 Giulia D'Andrea

Université du Salento
Via Taranto, 35
73100 Lecce
Italie

giulia.dandrea@unisalento.it

Biographie: Giulia D'Andrea est enseignante-chercheuse en Langue française et Traduction à l'Université du Salento (Lecce – Italie) depuis 2008. En 2007, elle a soutenu sa thèse de doctorat en Linguistique française à l'Université de Bari Aldo Moro, intitulée *Le rythme dans les proverbes français*. Parallèlement à sa formation universitaire, elle a étudié au Conservatoire de musique de Lecce, où elle a obtenu deux diplômes, en piano et en musique ancienne (clavecin). Ses recherches actuelles privilégient la traduction chantée et le langage technique de la musique.



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A new approach to retranslating: (Re)translations of the chronicles of the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands

Gisela Marcelo Wirnitzer

University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Abstract

Expeditions throughout the Atlantic Ocean in the Middle Ages gave rise to numerous chronicles narrating the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands, by direct or indirect witnesses of the events and in different languages. The brief accounts accredited to the Italians Niccoloso da Recco and Alvise Cadamosto and to the Normans Gadifer de La Salle and Jean de Béthencourt are likewise essential to the broader historiography of the European advances into Africa and America. These chronicles have been translated and retranslated into Spanish in multiple occasions practically from their appearance up to present times. The incessant translational activity linked to these chronicles gave rise to a tangle of versions, translations, retranslations and revisions stemming from a variety of diverging source texts. The aim of this study is thus to discuss the multiple (re)translations practices of these chronicles (translations from original or pseudo-original or from complete or partial source texts, existence of diverging source texts, translations in very short periods, etc.), which reveal multiple motives beyond those currently identified by retranslation theory (revisions, a lack of awareness of previous versions, the desire to distinguish a translation from previous ones, etc.). The study thus offers a new way to analyse the causality and circumstances for retranslating texts and challenges the traditional retranslation model.

Keywords

motives for retranslations, chronicles, Canary Islands, Late Middle Ages

1. Introduction

European explorers throughout the Late Middle Ages embarked on numerous expeditions into the Atlantic Ocean giving rise to a series of chronicles written by direct witnesses and participants. The numerous (re)translations of these works linked to the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands in the 14th and 15th centuries have yielded a very complex framework of translational practices and relations between source and target texts. Both the retranslations of the chronicles by Niccoloso da Recco and Alvise Cadamosto and the retranslation known as *Le Canarien* ascribed to Jean de Béthencourt and Gadifer de La Salle offer new insights into the phenomenon, as the translation practices they demonstrate do not conform with the prevalent model of retranslation theory. Indeed, this model (Berman, 1990; Gambier 1994, 2011; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010; Deane-Cox, 2014) does not take into account variables such as the loss of the original text, or the fact that source and target texts may be subjected to multiple revisions. Furthermore, the model is based, generally speaking, on the idea that second or subsequent translations, in the same language and of a unique source text, were undertaken after a certain period of time, and with the aim of improving or challenging earlier versions.

The main characteristics of the three cases presented in this study are firstly the great number of retranslations of these chronicles and secondly the multiple diverging motives for retranslating them into Spanish. These have been drawn from the few available testimonies of the translators themselves and from an analysis of the circumstances of publication of the different (re)translations.

The aim of this study therefore is to offer a broader outlook on the circumstances in which retranslations can be undertaken, and on the varying motives behind them. And the retranslation of historical texts sheds new light on this translation phenomenon. It is for this reason that this paper, based on the definitions advanced by Zaro (2007, p. 21) and Koskinen and Paloposki (2010, p. 294) and Zaro (2007, p. 21), views the concept of 'retranslation' as a second (subsequent or contemporary) translation into the same language of a complete or partial source text, or of a *pseudo-original* when the original text was either manipulated and/or lost. The resulting translation(s) thus preserved a great amount of the initial essence and content of the original text.

To offer a comprehensive vision of the complexity of the case at hand, we tracked down all the source texts – including *pseudo-originals* – and their (re)translations, including versions that possibly are only reproductions, revisions, or modifications of previous translations (see Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010, p. 294). We contextualised the circumstances in which they were drafted and how they surfaced throughout the centuries. The translations were compared with each other in an attempt to elucidate the exact source text of each translation and to determine who took the initiative to carry out the translations and why.

Finally, it is worth highlighting the relevance of such a broad scope, given that the original chronicles date back six centuries and have survived thanks to different copies, not always identical, and to their (re)translations. The variety of issues brought up in this study thus aims to offer a more complete overview of the enigma of the retranslation into Spanish of the chronicles describing the discovery and conquest of the Canarian Archipelago. In previous studies (Marcelo 2017, 2022) all the source texts, translations and circumstances of the Italian and French versions were tracked down and presented. The current analysis, however, places a particular emphasis on the practice of retranslation and the real motives behind the multiple retranslations.

2. Motives behind retranslations

Although there are multiple motives behind retranslations (Brownlie, 2006; Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, p. 46; van Poucke, 2017), the main reason invoked seems to be the ageing of the renderings (Berman, 1990; Paloposki & Koskinen, 2001; Zaro, 2007; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010; Venuti, 2012), resulting in a perceived lack of credibility, quality or acceptability. The ageing of translation thus is presented as the consequence of the passage of time, affecting the perceived validity of a translation in a certain target culture, due to changing linguistic, stylistic, ideological or social norms (Vanderschelden, 2000; Brownlie, 2006, pp. 150-151; Paloposki & Koskinen, 2010, pp. 29-30). It could likewise reflect changing translation norms and strategies (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010, p. 295), especially in the case of texts that present a high degree of complexity (Pym, 1998, p. 82). These perceptions of earlier translations trigger the necessity of offering improved versions (Paloposki & Koskinen, 2004, p. 27; Brownlie, 2006; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010, p. 296; Venuti, 2012; Van Poucke, 2017). Other motives for retranslating a text are the open-ended nature entailing ambiguity or obscurity of certain genres and texts that lend themselves to multiple interpretations (Brownlie, 2006, p. 152), or the fact that such interpretations of the source text are linked to specific time and space coordinates (Vanderschelden, 2000, pp. 4-6; Venuti, 2012). It has also been argued that “retranslations can contribute to the revival of interest in a forgotten literary text, and publishers often use new translations as a positive marketing device” (Vanderschelden, 2000, p. 7), or even that a different function can be assigned to a certain work in the target language (Vanderschelden, 2000, pp. 4-6; Brisset, 2004). Alternative motives for retranslating a text stem from power struggles (Susam-Sarajeva, 2006; Venuti, 2012, p. 26), economic aspects (Vanderschelden, 2000; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2003), the “... bid to achieve canonicity through inscription of a different interpretation” (Brownlie, 2006, p. 153), or a change of focus switching from a target-oriented to a source-oriented translation (Bensimon 1990, in Brownlie, 2006, p. 148).

As most scholarship on retranslation has focused on literary texts (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2010, p. 295), the study of retranslations of other types of texts can offer a broader grasp of the aspects influencing this phenomenon. Analysing retranslations of historical texts offers a vastly different panorama as their value resides in actual historical facts and not literary values. Besides, the value of old written sources may change considerably with the discovery of new unknown writings, evidence, or facts giving rise, for instance, to a desire by the scientific community to share these findings and to offer new research perspectives – and potentially new retranslations.

Although retranslations can be viewed as narratives constrained by specific social forces, changing ideologies and linguistic, literary, and translational norms or situational conditions (Brownlie, 2006, p. 167), these factors are not as relevant in the case of these chronicles, as their retranslations respond to other criteria, as we will show in our analysis.

3. The chronicles of the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands and their (re)translations

Italian, French, Portuguese, Majorcan, and Catalan navigators in the 13th and ensuing centuries undertook a series of explorations of the African coastline (Aznar *et al.* 2006, v. I, p. 11) leading to the discovery and conquest of new territories and archipelagos. Their motives were mainly commercial to identify new sources of wealth (Berthelot, 1849, p. 276), as well as the need of tracing new trade routes to India after the occupation by the Ottomans of the link between the Italian Republics and the Near East (Lobo *et al.*, 1994, p. 67; Pellegrini, 1995, p. 789). The technical advances in navigation and cartography developed by Italians facilitated these missions (Serra, 1961, p. 230; Martínez, 2002) and led to an expansion of knowledge on the African continent. These types of endeavours were promoted by Prince Henry of Portugal,

known as ‘Henry the Navigator’ (Millares, 1893, v. I, p. 30; Azevedo, 1913, in Padoan, 1993, p. 131; Vázquez, 2003, p. 84). The different expeditions generated brief, handwritten accounts and chronicles in French, Portuguese, Latin and Italian from the 14th century onwards (for the distinction between ‘narratives’, ‘chronicles’, ‘stories’, etc. see Baucells Mesa, 2004, pp. 71-76). These not only describe the missions, including the first real specifics as to the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands, but cast light on aspects of anthropological, ethnographic, cultural and linguistic nature, and allow to reconstruct a part of the history of the Islands, as well as of the European expansion towards Africa and America (Lobo *et al.*, 1994, p. 67).

The relevance of these chronicles and their (re)translations is justified by the following reasons: a) they offer key historiographic evidence shedding light on the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands in the 14th and 15th centuries; b) they were originally written or copied as manuscripts, undergoing a variety of circumstances such as the disappearance of the originals, subsequent manipulations and diverging copies, the emergence of unknown copies, contradictory testimonies, etc.; c) the contents of certain copies of the same manuscript can vary; and d) the source text of each translation is not always indicated by the translator. This scenario reflects the great complexity of analysing (re)translations of records from expeditions in the Middle Ages bearing evidence of the palpable instability of the source texts. As such, its analysis may serve to shed new light on the phenomenon of retranslation.

The chronicles selected for the present study are among the oldest reporting the European expansion towards Africa. They were either written by, or accredited to respectively Niccoloso da Recco (circa 1346), Alvise Cadamosto (circa 1463, see Marcelo 2022), Gadifer de La Salle and Jean de Béthencourt (circa the first half of the 15th century, see Marcelo, 2017). Furthermore, all engendered multiple Spanish translations and retranslations.

3.1. Niccoloso da Recco: *De Canaria et insulis ultra Hispaniam noviter repertis*

Niccoloso da Recco’s chronicle is the first to describe the arrival of Europeans in the Canarian Archipelago. This brief account dating appr. 1346 includes ethnographic, linguistic, and other cultural data relative to the indigenous Canarians (Millares, 1860, pp. 63-67).

The chronicle states that three Portuguese vessels commanded by Alfonso IV of Portugal and manned by Florentines, Genovese and Spaniards, sailed from Lisbon towards Africa at the outset of July, 1341. One was led by the Genovese Niccoloso da Recco (Padoan, 1993, p. 133) and after five days they reached the coasts of the Canary Islands before returning four months later. The chronicle narrating the events of this mission was probably drawn up in vulgar Latin (Padoan, 1993, p. 132), presumably deriving from information about the journey transmitted by Recco to confidants. Florentine merchants gained knowledge of the account and transmitted it by letter to the Bardi banking company. The humanist Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375) then gained access to the letter before translating it into classical Latin, and incorporating it into his volume *De Canaria et insulis ultra Hispaniam noviter repertis* (Pellegrini, 1995, p. 121), an undertaking marked by clear “literary intentions” (Peloso, 1988, in Martínez, 2001, p. 103).

The chronicle was then discovered four centuries later by the Italian philologist Sebastiano Ciampi (1769-1847) in the Magliabechi Library. This narrative, known as the *Ciampi Chronicle* (Berthelot, 1849, p. 18), was published in Latin on four occasions. The first came out in Florence in 1826 in the compilation entitled *Monumenti d’un manuscritto autógrafo di Messer Gio. Boccacci da Certaldo trovati ed illustrati* (Chil, 1876, v. I, p. 258; Millares, 1893, v. I, p. 24; Bonnet, 1943, p. 112; Padoan, 1993, p. 132; Vázquez, 2003, p. 81; García, 2016, p. 16), titled *De Canaria et Insules reliquis ultra Ispaniem in Oceano Moviter repertis*. It also appeared in two revised editions (1827 and 1828), as *Monumenti d’un manuscritto autógrafo di Messer Giovanni. Boccaccio da Certaldo trovati e illustrat da S. Ciampi, Firenze 1827*. The fourth was

published in 1830 in a bilingual edition with a Latin version and an Italian back-translation. In 1928, the Italian editor Rinaldo Caddeo (1881-1956) printed an improved version of the Recco chronicle and in 1959 Manlio Pastore Stocchi provided a revised edition of Ciampi's text (Pellegrini, 1995, p. 121). The original text of this chronicle ultimately disappeared, as a result of which its translations came to serve as source texts and pseudo-originals (Marcelo, 2022).

The chronicle then was translated into Italian, French, Portuguese, German, English (Martínez 2001, p. 96) and Spanish (Marcelo, 2022). The following is a list of the Spanish (re)translations we will use for the purposes of this study:

1. Sabin Berthelot (1794-1880), a French naturalist and ethnologist residing in the Canary Islands, included a commented French translation of *De Canaria et insulis* in the version of 1827 in his *L'Ethnographie et les Annales de la Conquête*. This formed part of the first volume of the *Histoire Naturelle des Iles Canaries* (1842), drafted in collaboration with Philip Barker Webb. Its Spanish translation was undertaken by Juan Arturo Malibrán y Autet (1818-1882), a specialist of ethnography and archaeology and member of the Real Academia Canaria de Bellas Artes. Malibrán thus translated Recco's chronicle into Spanish most likely on the basis of Berthelot's French version in a volume that was published in 1849.

2. A second, abridged translation was undertaken by the Canarian historian Agustín Millares Torres (1826-1896) based on Ciampi's version and incorporated into his study *Historia de la Gran Canaria* (1860, pp. 63-66). In a footnote, although declaring knowledge of Berthelot's French rendering, he made no allusion to the earlier Spanish version, neither clarified the reasons behind the new translation. He was potentially unaware of Malibrán's work and thus deemed it necessary to render it in Spanish.

3. The medical doctor, anthropologist and historian Gregorio Chil y Naranjo (1831-1901) published a third translation incorporated into his volume *Estudios históricos, climatológicos y patológicos de las Islas Canarias* (1876, v. I, pp. 259-267). He explicitly declared to be the translator of this version, also based on Ciampi's version of 1927: "*La importancia de este relato me obliga á trasladarlo del texto latino en que fué escrito*" [The importance of this account obliges me to translate it from the Latin text in which it was written] (1876, p. 259). Chil y Naranjo was most likely aware of Malibrán's version and his intention for retranslating it appears to be a desire to align it with his own style, and possibly as a personal challenge or eagerness to display his mastery of Latin (Marcelo, 2022).

4. In 1893, the historian Millares Torres again incorporated another translation (in this case complete) of the Recco chronicle in his *Historia General de las Islas Canarias* (1893, v. II, pp. 46-54). He once again declared to be its translator: "*creemos conveniente trasladar íntegra á nuestras columnas*" [we deem it necessary to translate it in its entirety] (1893, pp. 46). This may reveal an attempt to improve Malibrán's rendering as it is unlikely that he was unaware of Malibrán's version published 44 years earlier (Marcelo, 2022). A comparison of the rendering by Malibrán suggests, in fact, that both Millares and Chil y Naranjo consulted the Malibrán version.

5. In 1974, the Venezuelan Marisa Vannini de Gerulewicz (1928-2016) translated the Recco chronicle in Caracas from Ciampi's 1926 version and incorporated it into her book *El mar de los descubrimientos*, accompanied by other texts related to the discovery of America. This rendering is accompanied by explanatory information making explicit her aspiration to search for the 'sources of sources', thus questioning the validity of previous translations: "*estamos conscientes de que la transcripción de transcripciones y la traducción de traducciones perjudican la verdad histórica*" [we are conscious that transcribing transcriptions and translating translations is detrimental to historical truth] (1974, p. 8).

6. In 1993, Miguel Martínón (1945), lecturer at the University of La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain), translated the article *Ad insulas ultra Hispaniam noviter repertas: el redescubrimiento de las islas atlánticas (1336-1341)* by the Italian philologist Giorgio Padoan (1993), a work including Ciampi's Latin version.

7. In 1998, the Canarian translator José Antonio Delgado Luis published a compilation of narratives of voyages through the Atlantic from the 14th to 17th centuries including a translation of Recco's chronicle. The translator declared to have knowledge of the earlier Ciampi versions of 1826 and 1827 and offered another stemming from the text published by Rinaldo Caddeo (1928) due to the differences between Ciampi's and Caddeo's versions that Delgado Luis had found.

8. In 2003, the Arts graduate María José Vázquez de Parga y Chueca printed a volume on the rediscovery and conquest of the Canary Islands entitled *Redescubrimiento y Conquista de Las Afortunadas*. In spite of containing all the texts known since the Middle Ages related to the Islands accompanied by comments, contextualisations and translations (mostly personal undertakings), she did not cite the earlier translations.

9. In 2012, the Italian magistrate Alfonso Licatta published *Lanzarotto Malocello, dall'Italia alle Canarie* to celebrate the 7th centenary of the discovery of Lanzarote. The volume included his Italian translation of the Recco chronicle stemming from the Stocchi text. This was then translated into Spanish in 2016 by Elena Martínez Cornet from Licatta's Italian version.

These retranslations of the Recco chronicle clearly reveal different paths taken by the source text, notably from vulgar Latin to pure Latin, prior to several revisions, before finally passing through French and Italian translations into Spanish. The retranslators in certain cases cite their motive to be the relevance of incorporating the fundamental chronicles into their history treatises, as these texts are key to shedding light on the historical facts, and contextualising the historical framework. New translations such as Delgado Luis's were likewise justified by the need to offer a translation of a non-translated version, thus highlighting the problematic existence of different pseudo-originals. In other cases, the reasons behind these ventures could have derived from fulfilling a commission, such as those of Malibrán and Martínez from previous contemporary translations and not from the known pseudo-originals. This leads to speculate as to different scenarios. The first is that the brevity of Recco's chronicle appears to have favoured new translations. Moreover, it is also highly relevant due to the fact that most of the translations were carried out by historians rather than by professional translators. Comparisons reveal that certain translators discarded the idea of resorting to previous undertakings and created their own, maybe as a yearning to display their erudition and mastery of dead languages, or to undertake the linguistic challenge themselves. The following diagram offers a breakdown of the different translations of the Recco chronicle.

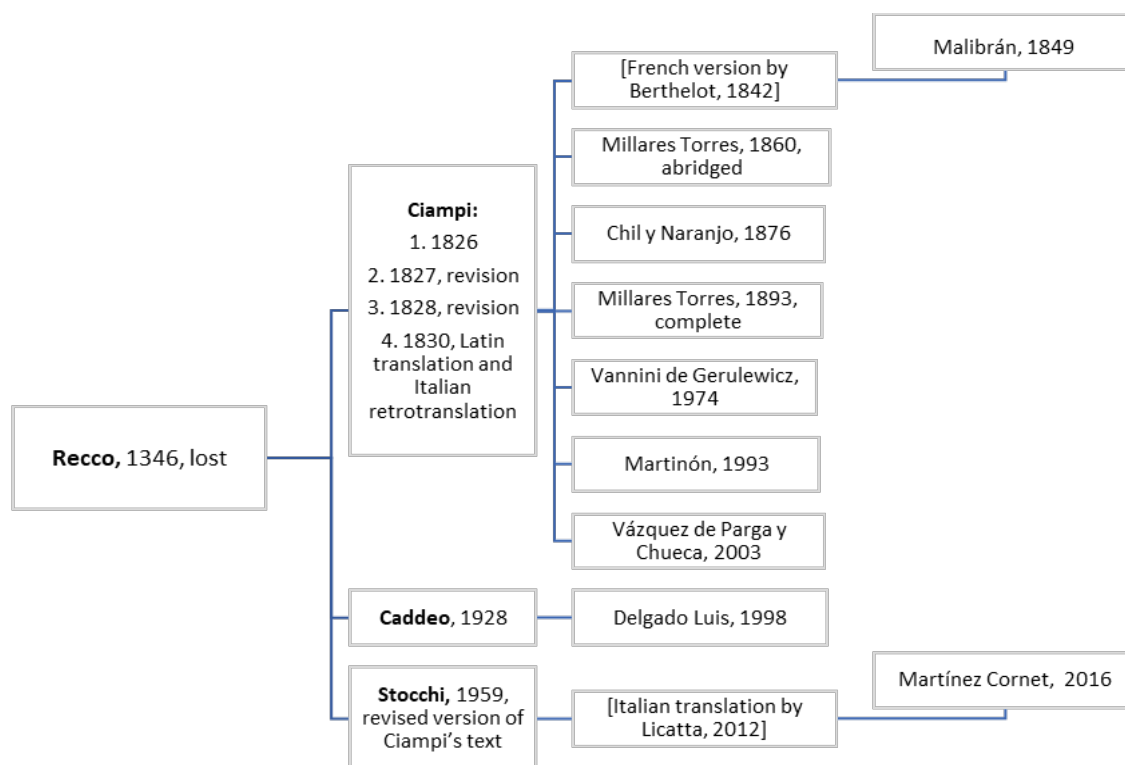


Figure 1. Different versions of the Recco chronicle

3.2. Alvise Cadamosto: *Navigatio ad terras ignotas*

Prince Henry of Portugal (1394-1460) put Venetian nobleman Alvise Cadamosto (also known as Aloisio Ca' da Mosto) (1432-1482) in charge of a mission along the African coast to acquire knowledge about this continent (Berthelot, 1849, p. 56). In 1463, Cadamosto drafted a chronicle in Italian describing the discoveries of the expedition. The second part of the four-part narrative, limited to a few pages, includes compelling details about the indigenous Canarian language, gastronomy, geography, religion, political organisation, etc.

Four versions exist of the Cadamosto chronicle (Aznar *et al.*, 2017, pp. 16-18). The first was published in Venice in 1507 by Francanzio da Montalboddo in his compilation of travels entitled *Paesi novamente ritrovati et novo mondo da Alberico Vesputio Florentino intitulato*. The second (1550) was included by Giovanni Battista Ramusio in the compilation about his voyage entitled *Primo volume delle navigationi et viaggi nnei qual si contiene la descrizione dell'Africa...*, a narrative that benefited from consecutive editions (Aznar *et al.*, 2017, p. 18). A third, dated to the second half of the 15th century and known as manuscript 'A', was released in 1928 by the Milanese poet and writer Rinaldo Caddeo (Aznar *et al.*, 2017, p. 16). The fourth, labelled 'B', was written about 1520 and is preserved in the Marciana Library of Venice. Cadamosto's account was ultimately translated on several occasions into Spanish:

1. The Canarian historian Joseph Viera y Clavijo advanced a short translation of the Cadamosto narrative in his *Noticias de la Historia General de las Islas de Canaria* (1772, pp. 446-448) based on the Montalboddo version of 1507.
2. Sabin Berthelot included a complete French version (apart from minor deletions) of the chronicle based on Ramusio's Italian text of 1550 in his *L'Ethnographie et les Annales de la Conquête* (1842, pp. 61-63). This French version was then translated in 1849 into Spanish by Juan Arturo Malibrán.
3. Agustín Millares Torres included a translation of the section regarding the Canary Islands

in his *Historia General de las Islas Canarias* (1893, v. III, pp. 175-180). Millares occasionally cited Ramusio and did not identify himself as the translator of the retranslation. He probably consulted Berthelot's Spanish translation, as certain phrases are shared by both texts (Marcelo, 2022). It is most likely that Millares translated the text himself as he did not cite the Malibrán version.

4. In 1998, José Antonio Delgado Luis translated Caddeo's version of the section on the Canary Islands into Spanish and incorporated it into his compilation *Relación de los viajes a la costa occidental de África (1455-1457). De las siete islas de Canaria y de las costumbres de sus habitantes*. He also included Caddeo's notes and certain others of his own alluding to the Portuguese edition (1998, pp. 68-69).

5. María José Vázquez de Parga y Chueca (2003, pp. 92-93) translated a short, commented section of Cadamosto's text in her volume *Redescubrimiento y conquista de Las Afortunadas*, theoretically stemming from the Ramusio version. There is evidence that suggests she resorted to Berthelot's French and/or Spanish versions as she reproduced certain differences present in these versions. Furthermore, the translator offers no explanation as to why she retranslated the chronicle.

6. In 2015, Alberto Quartapelle, lecturer at the University of Bologna, published a new retranslation into Spanish based on Montalboddo's version in his volume *Cuatrocientos años de Crónicas de las Islas Canarias* (pp. 105-108), a compilation of different texts and chronicles about the archipelago spanning the 13th-17th centuries.

7. In 2017, Eduardo Aznar, Dolores Corbella and Antonio Tejera of the University of La Laguna produced a Spanish retranslation of Cadamosto's complete journeys based on the Ramusio version. In their volume they included an extensive introductory study relative to Cadamosto's historical and geographical framework, translator notes, as well as the itinerary and vicissitudes described in the chronicle.

This is a rare case of a translation deriving from retranslations produced very shortly before. Its relevance as well as its brevity favoured it forming part of historiographical research. It is evident that the existence of different pseudo-originals of Cadamosto's brief chronicle can explain in part the great number of Spanish translations. There are several reasons for retranslating this chronicle into Spanish. In certain cases, the retranslators only produced their new versions (possibly only revisions) to underpin their historical research, without citing the author of the translation, invoking the argument they were obliged to retranslate it because of its historical relevance. It is not possible to prove if they really were unaware of the previous retranslations despite the brief lapse of time between them. In other cases, translators such as Delgado clearly explained that their intention was to translate directly from a specific pseudo-original, in order to challenge previous renderings and to offer greater accuracy. The same argument applies to the cases of Vázquez de Parga, Quartapelle and Aznar *et al.*: what explains their retranslations is the desire to offer a complete translation and contextualisation of Cadamosto's chronicle. Of course, a translation can also have simply resulted, as in the case of Malibrán, from a commission.

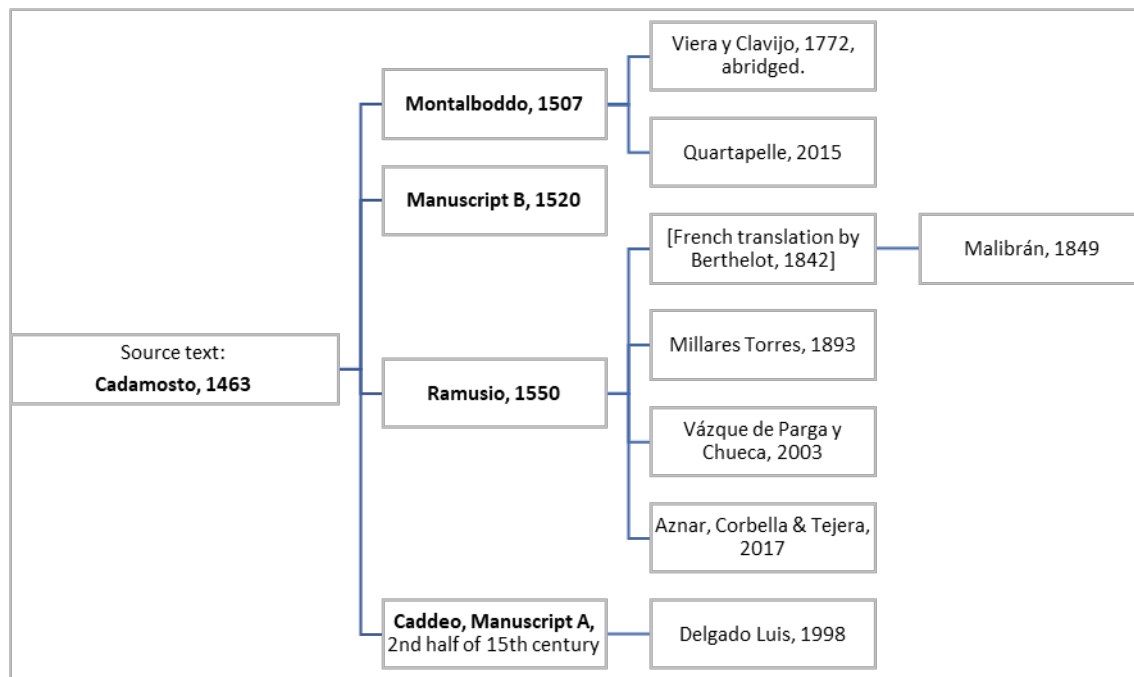


Figure 2. Different versions of the Cadamosto chronicle

3.3. Jean de Béthencourt and Gadifer de La Salle: *Le Canarien*

At the outset of May 1402, the explorer Jean de Béthencourt and the nobleman Gadifer de La Salle initiated a French-Norman mission under the auspices of the Crown of Castile to conquer the Canary Islands, which had previously been discovered by Italian explorers. They first set foot on the small island of La Graciosa before disembarking on Lanzarote and Fuerteventura. Soon thereafter, due to a lack of provisions, Béthencourt sailed back to Castile to gather what the conquerors and their men required to pursue the conquest. His return to Lanzarote only came about a year and a half later, in April 1404. During the interval, La Salle, who stayed behind and became the real conqueror (Wölfel, 1940, p. 29), continued the harsh seizure of Fuerteventura. Furthermore, Béthencourt, during his stay in Castile, gained rights to the dominion of the Islands and other privileges from the King which he did not share with La Salle. Both conquerors ultimately set out to Castile in an attempt to solve the dispute. La Salle, lacking the support of the King, returned to Normandy where he completed a manuscript of his own version of the conquest. Béthencourt pursued his desire of conquest of the other Islands, an action limited to El Hierro from where he eventually also returned to France (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, pp. 12-16).

The events of the conquest were recorded in different copies of manuscripts by two chaplains, Pierre Boutier and Jean Le Verrier, who each took part in the Béthencourt and La Salle explorations. One of the manuscripts preserved in the Canaries by Béthencourt's nephew Maciot de Béthencourt disappeared after a Turkish pirate assault. The other copies were returned to France by the conquerors themselves (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 17). The narration of the enterprise comprises different versions which, at times, reveal the opposing interests of the two conquerors and, when occasionally coinciding, also reveal sharp discrepancies. The version supporting the viewpoint of Béthencourt is labelled 'B', while the version that shows Gadifer de La Salle's account of the conquest is known as 'G'. The joint publication of the two viewpoints entitled *Le Canarien* is the first record in a Romance language of the events of the French transatlantic expansion and the Franco-Castilian seizure of the Canary Islands in the early 15th century.

'B', also known as 'Mont-Ruffet' (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I; the manuscript is housed in the Rouen Municipal Library [Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 19]), was drafted by Jean V de Béthencourt, a nephew of the conqueror, in either 1490 (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I) or 1500 (Wölfel, 1952, p. 501). The motive behind the work is the desire of recognition of nobility by the Béthencourt family at a moment when aristocracy was on the rise in Tenerife (Corbella, 2006, p. 373). This version considerably distorted the facts of the conquest, in particular those from 1404 to 1406, that is, subsequent to the discovery and seizure of the islands and the departure of La Salle. The manuscript also comprises Béthencourt's genealogical data and unrelated events following the conquest. Scholars agree that it is a forgery falsifying the actual episode described in the original and that Béthencourt's descendants manipulated the events in an attempt to provide evidence of their ancestry (Wölfel, 1940, 1996; Cioranescu, 1982; Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I).

The manuscript was preserved in the hands of the family in France until another descendant, Galien de Béthencourt, embarked on a project to print it by preparing a preliminary manuscript known as the *Galien* Manuscript. Nevertheless, the editor Pierre Bergeron, who published it in 1630 under the title *Le Canarien*, did not take into account all the ideas advanced by Galien and printed a more sober version known as the *Bergeron* manuscript. Later editions were carried out by Édouard Charton in 1855, the curator of the British Museum Richard Henry Major in 1872 and the scholar Gabriel Gravier in 1874. This last version is considered the most scientific. Manuscript 'G' was discovered in 1888. It had been written with care in Gothic characters at the end of 1420s, probably by Gadifer de La Salle himself in his later years. This version narrates the events of 1402, when the conquerors set foot in Lanzarote, until 1404 when La Salle abandoned the enterprise and withdrew from the Islands (Aznar, *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 17). This copy was part of the personal items of Baroness Angéline de Hensch whose heir, Madame E. Mans from Brussels-Ixelles, eventually sold it to the British Museum. The museum curator, G. F. Warner, recognised the similarities with the other versions of *Le Canarien* and published its discovery. Finally, Pierre Margry prepared an edition of manuscript 'G' known as *Canarien-Hensch* which was published posthumously in 1896 (Aznar, *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 18).

Chronicle 'B' was translated into Spanish on multiple occasions, listed below in chronological order and then presented in the form of a diagram to better illustrate the sequence of (re) translations:

1. Soon after publication of the *Bergeron* manuscript, Berthelot's descendants commissioned a first translation into Spanish (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 24). There are three handwritten copies of that translation. The oldest, dated 1639 and conserved in the Library of the University of Oviedo (Spain), is bound with a chronicle known as *Crónica Ovetense*. The second, included in the '*Fondo antiguo*' of the University of La Laguna, is the so-called *Crónica Lacunense* (17th century), which includes a translation of the section linked to the Canary Islands, that is, Bergeron's *Traicté de la navigation et des voyages de decouverte*. A third, housed in the Library of Santa Cruz (Tenerife), belonged to the historian Francisco María de León y Xuárez de la Guardia. It reveals for the first time the name of the translator, namely 'Captain Serban Graue' (Servan Grave), a resident of the Island of La Palma. The first printing by Pedro Mariano Ramírez Atenza dates 1847.
2. An abridged translation of only 20 pages of the *Bergeron* manuscript, ascribed to the historian Marín y Cubas (Código Marín, fs. 23-42v), was discovered by Agustín Millares Carlo. It is dated between 1682-1687 and conserved at the Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia de Madrid (sign. RAH A/102) (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 28-29; Corbella, 2006, p. 379).
3. Viera y Clavijo included a partial translation of the catechism of chronicle 'B' (chapters XLVII-LII) in his *Noticias de la historia general de las Islas Canarias* (1772-1783) (Corbella, 2006, p. 387).

4. The editor Pedro M. Ramírez undertook an edition of the chronicle in 1847 upon reception of a copy of Servan Grave's translation in the version by León y Xuárez de la Guardia. Although his original intention was to simply correct the spelling errors and other defects, he ultimately revised and updated the text, also adding missing sections such as the summary and the indexes, as well as Viera's chapters corresponding to the catechism (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, pp. 27-28).

5. In 1860, Mariano Urrabieta published in Paris a Spanish translation of Édouard Charton's version of 1855. It was incorporated into a volume containing other descriptions of expeditions under the title *Los viajeros modernos ó Relaciones de los viajes más interesantes e instructivos que se hicieron en los siglos XV y XVI* (Marcelo, 2017).

6. Manuel María Flamant and Francisco Madina-Veitia carried out another translation of the *Bergeron* version sponsored by *Correo de Ultramar* based on the Charton's volume. It was published in Madrid in 1861 by the publishing house J. Sierra Ponzano (Aznar *et al.*, 2006, v. I, p. 29).

A striking turn of events subsequent to the discovery of manuscript 'G' in 1888 is reflected in the later translations of *Le Canarien*, as they now compare and include each of the two versions of the conquest of the Canary Islands.

7. In 1959, Elías Serra Ràfols and Alejandro Cioranescu published a complete Spanish translation (*Volume I*) of manuscripts 'B' and 'G', in addition to all the illustrations of 'B', different reports of Béthencourt's family, biographies of both conquerors and a wide range of other records.

8. In 1960, Serra Ràfols and Cioranescu printed a critical and bilingual edition (French and Spanish) of 'B' (*Volume II*) including excerpts of 'G', explanatory notes with amendments and interpretations.

9. In 1965, Serra Ràfols and Cioranescu published an amended translation of 'G', including a study by Ràfols and complementary information relative to the Canarian conquest (*Volume III*). The translation was reedited and expanded in 1984 and 1986 by adding the *Epítome de 1501*, a letter initially written in Latin, summing up the events in which Béthencourt took part.

10. In 1980, Cioranescu, according to his own words, published a clearer, more accessible translation 'for the general public' of the 1960 version, dispensing with the critical notes of the French text that related inconsistencies introduced in the previous version by Ràfols.

11. In 2003, Berta Pico, Eduardo Aznar and Dolores Corbella of the University of La Laguna published a new translation of both manuscripts, together with a facsimile reproduction and the first palaeographic transcription and codex analysis.

12. A posthumous translation by Alejandro Cioranescu appeared in 2004. Its aim was to offer once again a more comprehensible and loyal rendering of the two texts by means of comments and correcting minor errors and misspellings.

13. In 2006, Berta Pico, Eduardo Aznar, Dolores Corbella and Antonio Tejera published a new edition in two volumes. This edition includes a detailed introduction describing the conditions of the conquest from a historical, linguistic, iconographic, etc. perspective, as well as each of the manuscripts and their previous translation with updated spelling and punctuation (2006, v. I).

Le Canarien evidently has unique historical value because it is the first chronicle to count the archipelago's conquest. It is likewise unique to Translation Studies because the irruption of manuscript 'G' represents a stunning turning point as it invalidated the narrative established up to then, and altered the view of the conquest. In fact, the appearance of a second source text justified the need for new translations and retranslations of each of the two pseudo-originals.

These cases of retranslations also challenge the traditional retranslation model. The characteristics and circumstances surrounding the original manuscript (handwritten, lost, diverging, and manipulated copies), the pseudo-originals (revealing different viewpoints and serving opposing interests) and the (re)translations are unique as they initially stem from the only source text known at that moment and then from two largely diverging source texts. They were then ultimately subjected to multiple revisions and partial and/or complete (re) translations.

The motives behind the different translations varied from a yearning of recognition of nobility of the Béthencourt family to the desire to offer brief translations or to amend, improve, complete and contextualise previous versions. This case likewise challenges the theory of retranslation as multiple translations were undertaken by the same translators who initially desired to publish the two versions of *Le Canarien* together and contextualise the conquest. Their printing was equally based on the historical relevance of *Le Canarien* and the desire to offer 'more accessible' revisions, such as those by Serra Ràfols and Cioranescu or, in turn, to disseminate scientific work. The following charts depict the different paths followed by *Le Canarien* before and after the irruption of 'G':

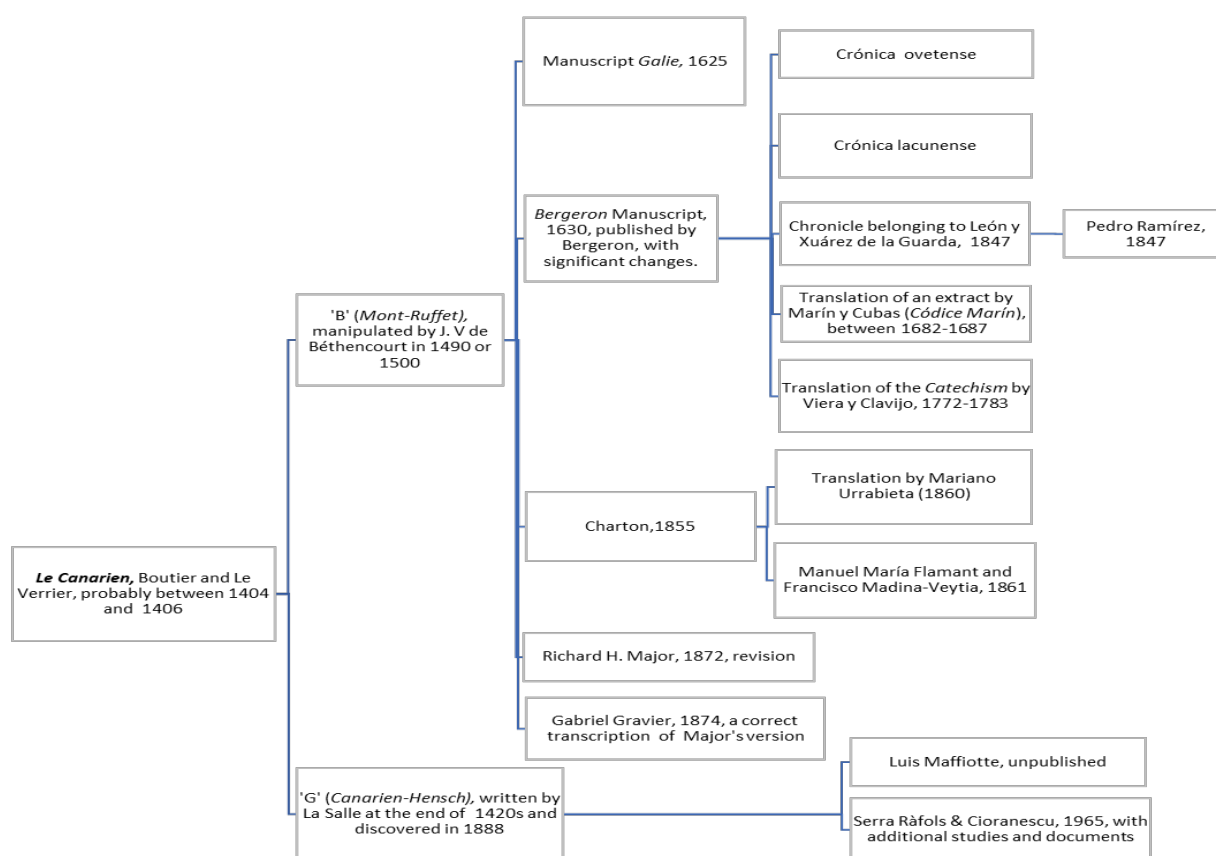


Figure 3. Different versions of *Le Canarien*, 'B'

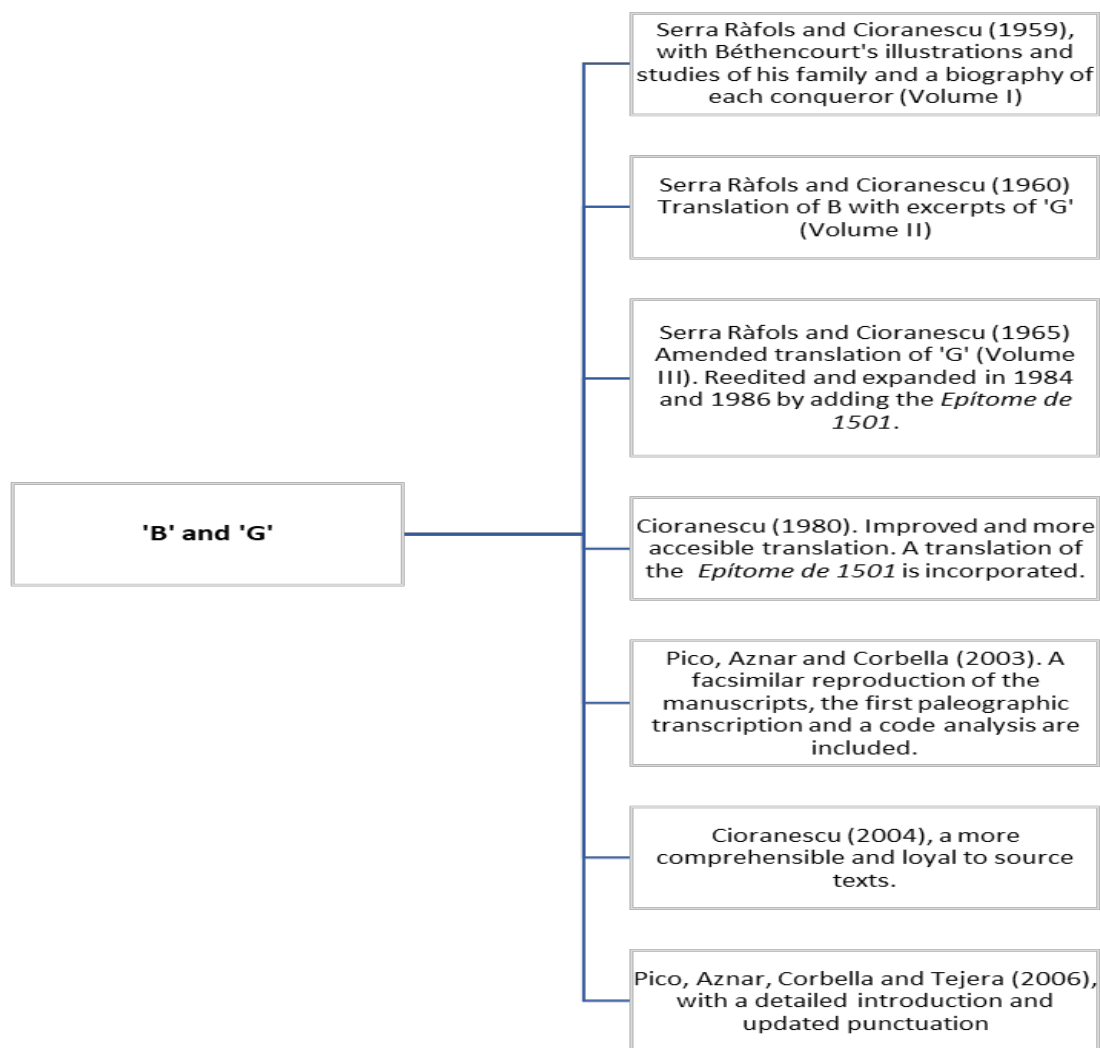


Figure 4. Different versions of *Le Canarien*, 'B' and 'G'

4. Concluding remarks

The current study on the (re)translations of the Recco, Cadamosto and *Le Canarien* chronicles challenges the model of retranslation currently accepted, as it shows a complexity of relationships between different source and target texts beyond what is commonly observed, as well as a variety of different motives behind the retranslations of the three chronicles.

The great number of translations and retranslations, either complete or partial, of these accounts or parts thereof, in different versions, is noteworthy. Moreover, the variety of versions most likely does not correspond to the motives usually mentioned for the retranslation of literary texts. The multiple retranslations of the three chronicles presented in this study can be explained both by their relevance to European and Spanish history and by the extended timeframe between when they were originally written and the appearance of subsequent translations.¹

To grasp the causality of the retranslations of these chronicles requires recalling the factors that make them deviate from the normal precepts of retranslation theory. A first peculiarity is the

¹ The chronological range between the chronicles and many of their (re)translations requires exploring the concepts of 'hot' and 'cold' translations defined respectively as either shortly after or following an extended period of time. The second offers the author the benefit of obtaining more data about the work and audience response hence yielding a more 'accurate' rendering (Demanuelli, 1994, in Vanderschelden, 2000, p. 9).

unreliability of the original texts resulting from the disappearance of the primary manuscripts, which have survived only due to the existence of different versions which have, in turn, yielded a tangled web of revisions, pseudo-originals and (re)translations. This instability has triggered an eagerness, among other aspirations, to undertake translations from the *original* sources, or from untranslated versions so as to offer more accurate renderings.

Moreover, while the main focus of retranslation research has centred on text's literary or aesthetic value, the utility of these chronicles resides in their historiographic value. The retranslations examined in this study were the direct result of historiographic research as several of the translators incorporated their translations into historiographical treatises (Viera y Clavijo, Berthelot, Millares Torres, Chil y Naranjo) and expressed the desire to offer versions of greater scientific value, subjected to scrutiny, comments, and contextualisation (Serra Ràfols and Cioranescu, Vannini de Gerulewicz, Delgado Luis or Aznar *et al.*). The translations likewise benefit from other factors, notably the brevity of the Recco and Cadamosto texts, which probably favoured their incorporation into larger works or, as in the case of *Le Canarien*, the existence of diverging versions which gave rise to the necessity of reinterpreting the texts.

Many shadows still hang over the translations of these chronicles. An example is the fact that some of the retranslators avoided citing earlier or contemporary translations while pointing out the need to translate them because of their historical relevance. This leads to question whether they undertook their versions aided or not by prior renderings, and if all the texts are really retranslations. It is possible that a lack of awareness of the previous versions (Venuti, 2012, p. 25) may have led to certain undertakings. Yet this can hardly be the case for all contemporary renderings. In this respect, Zaro (2007, p. 32) assumes the view that a retranslator is deceptive when not acknowledging the merits of previous translations. Moreover, he also notes that certain retranslators may have suffered from a sort of *arrogance* and avoided resorting to or resembling previous versions, or even recognising their existence or merit. Based on the existence of numerous contemporary retranslations of the chronicles, these are considered 'active retranslations', that is, translations competing for the same audience (Pym, 1998, p. 82). Another aspect stressed in the discipline of retranslation is the search for 'otherness' by translators of new versions who desire to distinguish their translations from previous versions (Venuti, 2012, p. 35). The current study has also led to the notion that translators felt the desire to assume a sort of personal challenge to produce a superior translation or even to reveal their erudition in dead languages.

The study of these cases evidences, in sum, that these chronicles experienced a variety of translational circumstances:

1. Translations of lost texts such as the case of the Recco chronicle.
2. Translations from different versions of an original account or pseudo-originals such as the cases of Cadamosto and *Le Canarien*.
3. Back-translation, as in the case of Recco, back to Italian.
4. Indirect translations from modern translations (stemming in turn from other translations), as the case of the translations of Recco by Malibrán and Martínez.
5. Translations from a forgery such as the case of the Spanish renderings of the 'B' manuscript of *Le Canarien*.
6. Contemporary retranslations of the same text.
7. Updated versions by correcting spelling and punctuation or, presumably, adapting a translated chronicle to the style of a broader history treatise, as is potentially the case of Chil y Naranjo's rendering of the Recco chronicle.

8. Abridged translations such as those undertaken by Viera y Clavijo and Vázquez de Parga y Chueca.
9. Retranslations and revisions of earlier translations by the same translators.

It is evident that the conditions undergone by the (re)translations of the chronicles linked to the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands are not applicable to all types of retranslations. Nonetheless, the curious case of these chronicles challenges some of the theoretical presuppositions of retranslation. It is very likely that future historiographical research, especially when it is concerned with the translation and retranslation of materials dating from pre- or early-modern times, will offer new findings, as well as new texts that can, at the same time, bring new insights into the compelling episode of the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands, and yield new readings and new interpretations of how the multi-faceted phenomenon of (re)translation has, over the centuries, contributed to that story being told.

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 Gisela Marcelo Wirnitzer

University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
c/ Pérez del Toro, 1
35003 Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Spain

Gisela.marcelo@ulpgc.es

Biography: Gisela Marcelo Wirnitzer is a full professor at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, where she lectures in the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting. Her current research topics are: a) Translation of literature for children and young adults, particularly the translation of cultural references; b) Translation of films for children and young adults, from the cultural and the addressee's perspectives; c) History of translating and translation of historiographic texts in the Canary Islands.



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