

Deane-Cox, Sharon (2014). *Retranslation: Translation, literature and reinterpretation*. London: Bloomsbury. ISBN 978-1-441-14734-9. SFR 118.

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Despite being an age-old translation practice, retranslation has never really received the theoretical attention that it deserves. Sharon Deane-Cox's full-length study of the subject thus comes at an apposite time, particularly as she sets out to demonstrate that the so-called retranslation hypothesis – which states that later translations tend to be closer to the source text – does not stand up to close academic scrutiny. The hypothesis is usually associated with the writings of Antoine Berman (e.g. 1985, 1990), who drew inspiration from Goethe's three modes of translation, described in the *West-östlicher Divan*. There is, however, a partial misfit between what Berman actually wrote and the retranslation hypothesis such as we understand it today. Berman's main concern was to explain the phenomenon of the "great" translation, which, he pointed out, is virtually always a retranslation. Using the translation-as-deficiency model to which he ascribed, he saw the first (and perhaps subsequent) translation(s) as paving the way for the "great" translation, which can only emerge when the time is favourable. But it is hard to believe that Berman would have unhesitatingly subscribed to a general statement suggesting that *all* retranslations are necessarily closer to the source. While the "great" translation will, for Berman, undoubtedly be source-text oriented, there can be no guarantee about all the intermediate versions.

Much of the interest of the current book lies in the innovative methodology that is put forward, which the author uses to explore two series of retranslations – of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Sand's *La Mare au diable*. The sociocultural approach outlined in the first chapter provides an illuminating account of "the specific contextual dynamics that have acted on the decisions to (re)translate, the physical appearances of the (re)translations, the relative values accorded to those (re)translations and the nature and extent of any interactions between these multiples of one" (p. 23). Bourdieu's (1996) work is usefully drawn upon, in particular his notions of "literary field" and "trajectories". Both paratextual and extratextual material is used for examining interactions between the retranslations, the economic and sociocultural circumstances framing those retranslations, how publishers and other agents benefit from such work, and of course how the work is received. Chapters 2 and 3, dealing respectively with Flaubert and Sand, are both examples of original and thorough research, and both provide the reader with many insights into the all-important background that gave rise to the initial translations (Marx-Aveling's much discussed *Bovary*, and an anonymous translation of Sand) and the subsequent retranslations.

Deane-Cox's fourth chapter deals with the methodology used to "investigate Berman's progressive trajectory of increased closeness to the ST" (p. 79). Three sources are drawn on here. To appreciate the importance of social settings, Mona Baker's *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* (2006) is pressed into service. Baker's book examines how to understand the role of narrative in the social construction of political violence, and Deane-Cox's unexpected choice of this particular framework is only briefly justified. Baker's presentation of four types of narrative is clearly outlined, with each of the four being specifically fine-tuned for the two texts under discussion. Two further theoretical frameworks are also called upon:

narratology and Halliday's systemic functional grammar (SFG). Deane-Cox specifically rejects using the category of point of view in favour of Bal's (1985/2009) reworking of Genette's (1980) conception of focalization, in particular with Bal's extradiegetically positioned External Focalizer and intradiegetically positioned Character Focalizer. By using the concepts of voice and focalization, the author aims to introduce a new systemic functional approach to explore Free Indirect Style (FIS), with the metafunctions used to "untangle [Flaubert's] ambitious merger of focalization and voice" (p. 96) – the ideational metafunction is associated with the former and the interpersonal function with the latter. The combination of the three frameworks certainly makes for a complex and perhaps unwieldy methodology, which is nonetheless successfully put to the test in the two following chapters.

Chapter 5 applies the methodology to a short passage taken from Part II of *Madame Bovary*. The chapter is divided into two major sections, the first entitled "Free Indirect Style: Reframing causal emplotment and relationality", and the second "Organizing the narrative world: Temporality". The first has major sections on voice and focalization, and latter is divided up into taxis and logico-semantics on the one hand, and cohesion on the other. There is a wealth of close analysis here that cannot be looked at in detail. I shall simply point to areas where I believe that the analyses are particularly successful, and those that evince methodological or interpretational weaknesses. But first, several initial points need to be made. To conduct a full-scale investigation into the *Madame Bovary* retractions on the basis of one single passage is a risky enterprise, as it presupposes that translators are fully coherent and consistent in their translational choices, which they are not. The reader is not presented with the whole passage and its translations, but has to rely on short extracts from the original – and even shorter extracts from the translations. Deane-Cox's literal "back" translations are somewhat misleading, as they give the mistaken impression that they are an objective rendering of what the original says. The weakest part of the analysis concerns the treatment of Flaubert's use of the French imperfect – which in the "back" translations is systematically rendered with BE + Verb-ing constructions. When, for example, Marx-Aveling chooses a preterit to translate the *imparfait*, this is criticised as "it renders the action completed and located with the definite parameters of the past" (p. 108) – but the values of the preterit, derived from the immediate context (incidentally not given, and which the reader has to follow up on his own), also allow for an iterative reading. The author also points to "an apparent mismatch of temporal frameworks" (p. 109) when several translators choose the modal *would* in one clause and the preterit in the following one, only to admit that iteration is in fact successfully conveyed here. She also maintains that Wall's choice of the modal *would* together with a BE + Verb-ing construction "approximates the equivocalness of the ST to the closest degree" (p. 108) – and yet omits to point out that it flags the activity described and gives it an importance that is not in the original. Her conclusion to this section is pessimistic – that "none of the (re)translations succeed in fully conveying the ambiguity of voice and the iterative force of Emma's reverie that can be heard and felt in the source text" (p. 110). Marx-Aveling is taxed with "the greatest tearing apart of FIS" (p. 110), but I would maintain that this is not the case when other passages are examined. That said, the subsections on "absence" and "addition" call for no such reserves. The other part of this opening section, looking at focalization, provides an insightful demonstration of how some of the translations undermine the dual focalization of the original. The second section of the chapter, again brimming with detailed analyses, refers to Flaubert's already well-documented organisation of his narrative world – the treatment of the translation of the conjunction "et", for example, clearly illustrates the forces and weaknesses of the translational choices under observation. The section on

demonstrative reference, however, seems to presuppose isomorphism of the two grammatical systems, whereas the French *ce/cette/ces* and the English “equivalents” (*this*, etc.) cannot simply be mechanically compared without bringing in wider considerations of how the two languages construct anaphoric reference and cohesion. The final remarks on lexical cohesion point to interesting and indeed surprising translational choices, which “misshap[e] one of the author’s predominant stylistic features” (p. 142). The conclusion to the chapter successfully brings together the various strands under investigation – yet the detailed, micro-level analysis naturally leaves the reader somewhat frustrated, as nothing is said about the remain 99% of the work.

The sixth chapter of the book looks at “the various ways in which the uniqueness of Berrichon cultural identity has been remediated by those TL versions of *la Mare au diable* which actually preserve the ethnographic Appendix to the pastoral tale” (p. 149). In the opening section (“Temporality”), the complex dynamics of retranslation are stressed: in three of the seven English texts, the Appendix has not been translated, and thus the fourth translation is in part retranslation and in part translation. The following section (“Relationality”) examines deixis. The part on social deixis looks at how the social identity of participants is encoded, together with the narrator’s simultaneous belonging to Paris and the Berry region. There is a detailed analysis of the translations of “*on*”, where it is noted, perhaps unnecessarily, that “a wide-scale use of the indefinite pronoun in the TL would be much more marked than is the case in the SL, and is therefore likely to meet with more resistance” (p. 157), and which concludes that “an asymmetry between language preferences has resulted in the distortion of a particular ritualistic facet of Berrichon cultural identity across all the (re)translations” (p. 159). In the spatial deixis section, it is noted how the Appendix evinces a particular concentration of demonstratives, which are diversely dealt with by the various translators. The analysis of temporal deixis points to all that contributes to foregrounding the specificities of the Berrichon calendar and the ravages of progress on tradition. The remaining parts of the chapter look at how the ST cultural identity fares in the various English versions, with sections on patois, the sounds of the Berry and the material world. The translations fare rather differently here, with the most recent one proving to be the closest for patois and sounds, but less reliable for the material world, but with none of the translations appearing consistent in their translational choices. As in the previous chapter, the retranslation hypothesis proves to be perfectly incapable of accounting for the reality of the translated texts.

The concluding chapter, entitled “Conclusion: Retranslation, Doxa and Genetic Criticism”, is disproportionately short when compared with the preceding chapters. Deane-Cox reiterates the arguments that lead her to reject the retranslation hypothesis, stating “the prevalent variability demonstrated in this particular corpus is compelling, and if any retranslation pattern is to be hypothesized, it is an intricate and intractable one” (p. 190). She goes on to suggest that retranslations should be viewed as “instantiations of the interpretive potential of the source text” (p. 191), noting that “it is the impermanence of the original, and not the deficiency of translation, which gives impulse to the reiterative act of translation” (pp. 191-192). She ends by suggesting that for future research on retranslation, a paradigm shift is needed, and makes a brief but cogent case for turning to genetic criticism.

Despite the weaknesses pointed out above, this is an important book that should be read by literary translation specialists. It would be interesting to further test the methodology by applying it to other series of retranslations, perhaps bringing in other criteria to try to understand why the translations have “turned out” the way they have. It would be interesting,

for example, to compare translators' intentions with results, and, more generally, to try to understand the general orientations that translators have adopted. And now that Sharon Deane-Cox has successfully demonstrated that the so-called retranslation hypothesis is of little intrinsic value, her work can help translation specialists to try to shed more light on the rationale(s) that underpin (re)translational choices.

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