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TRANSLATION'S OTHER

A

If it is true that in the beginning was the word, then almost from the beginning there was a problem of translation. Or rather: there is in that beginning a problem of translation; it is still here, in this beginning, in the very word which was there when I began.

I am of course referring to the Biblical word, the notorious crux in the opening sentence of the Gospel according to Saint John, 'In the beginning was the Word', - although in fact the word that was there in the beginning was 'logos', as the text was in Greek. A facile remark, I know, but useful as a reminder. We are only too ready to overlook translation, even when it is staring us in the face. We easily forget just how much translation has gone into the making of our culture.

Perhaps, though, 'logos' was not at first such a problem, at least not for the early Bible translators. Saint Jerome, after all, gave us the straight 'verbum' in the Latin version that became known as the Vulgate; and in the Latin-speaking Western church Jerome's Vulgate remained unchallenged for a thousand years. Until Erasmus, that is. Erasmus - probably the most famous Dutchman ever, perhaps because he never wrote a word of Dutch - pulled the rug from under Jerome's feet by arguing, at great and persuasive length, that the Latin 'sermo', 'speech', translated the Greek 'logos' more adequately than Jerome's 'verbum'. And because Erasmus's 'castigatio', as he called it, faulted Jerome on a substantial number of such translational choices, his edition and profusely annotated trans-lation of the New Testament in 1516 decisively undermined the authority of the Vulgate in the Western Church. Luther, as we know, would be the first to make use of Erasmus's New Testament for his own version.

But there is another beginning that draws on 'logos' and is thereby drawn into the problem of translation. This takes us back to Aristotle, but let me make my approach with the help of Hans-Georg Gadamer.

Being a hermeneuticist, Gadamer is very much alive to questions of meaning and inter-pretation. In an essay from 1966, 'Man and Language' - an essay which, appropriately, in view of its title, begins and ends with issues of translation - Gadamer takes up Aristotle's classic definition of man as a being that has 'logos'. [Note 1]

Rather than the usual rendering which defines man as a 'rational being', translating 'logos' as 'reason' or 'thought', Gadamer prefers to understand - and therefore to translate - 'logos' as 'language'. Man is not only a rational being but also, perhaps even primarily, a language animal. Gadamer's point is that man's dis-tinguishing feature consists in the capacity to communicate beyond the sphere of the immediately given, for example by referring to general or abstract concepts, or to the future.

Through language man can make manifest that which is not immediately present to the senses. This allows complex social organisation and culture, so that 'logos' extends into notions like 'concept' and 'law'. Hermeneutics and, with it, translation, are now just around the corner. To the extent that language facilitates human interaction and fixes forms of cultural expression more or less permanently, it requires interpretation, time and again. And as Gadamer reminds us in a couple of other essays from the 1960s, '[h]ermeneutics operates wherever what is said is not immediately intelligible'. [Note 2]

This operation takes place in the first instance within the same tradition, when the accidents of time and change have erected obstacles to the transmission of linguistic meaning in written texts that have come to look distant, alien. Crucially, the process involves a form of trans-lation. Hence, as Gadamer put it, '[f]rom the structure of translation was indicated the general problem of making what is alien our own'. [Note 3]

How this process works in practice within one and the same linguistic and cultural tradition is illustrated in the opening chapter of George Steiner's After Babel. The chapter, which deals with the kind of deciphering required in making sense of the language of English writers from Shakespeare to Noel Coward, is suitably entitled 'Understanding as Translation'. [Note 4]

Once we have reached this point, the point where we understand 'understanding' as 'translation', we can broaden our scope. In fact we can broaden it so much that it is hard to see where the end might be. Translation then very nearly becomes the human condition. Every act of understanding involves an act of translation of one kind or another. It is tempting to call here on modern philosophers, Jacques Derrida, for example, speaking about 'the redoubtable, irreducible difficulty of translation': 'With the

problem of translation we will be dealing with nothing less than the problem of the passage into philosophy'; or Donald Davidson: 'Studying the criteria of translation is therefore a way of focusing on criteria of identity for conceptual schemes'. *Note 5*

This is not the road I want to take, if only because I am not a philosopher, not even much of a hermeneuticist, come to that. Yet I want to stay with Gadamer for just one moment. Hermeneutics may initially have envisaged its endeavours as taking place within one and the same cultural and linguistic tradition, but to the extent that its general thrust, its 'problem of making what is alien our own' resembles the structure of translation, it is certainly not confined to monolingual operations. The alien is alien because it is, for all practical purposes, part of an alien world, a foreign language.

Let me quote Gadamer again, speaking about hermeneutics as the trans-mission, the trans-lation, of lost or inaccessible meaning: As the art of conveying what is said in a foreign language to the understanding of another person, hermeneutics is not without reason named after Hermes, the interpreter of the divine message to mankind. If we recall the origin of the name hermeneutics, it becomes clear that we are dealing here with a language event, with a translation from one language to another, and therefore with the relation of two languages. *Note 6*

What becomes clear from this is that the model of hermeneutics is translation in its conventional sense, i.e. translation between languages. The gods speak a different language from ours, therefore Hermes has to mediate and interpret between them and us. Human communities too speak in mutually unintelligible tongues. In the end it does not really matter whether we think of this unintelligibility as extending diachronically within one linguistic and cultural tradition, with language change erecting the barrier over time, or as being spread, synchronically, over a certain geographical space, with different languages being spoken side by side.

Man may be a language animal, but he is never a language animal in a general or abstract sense. We always inhabit a specific language. More than that: unless we find ways of overcoming the limits of our particular language, we remain imprisoned in it. The shadow that falls over a statement like this is, of course, that of Babel, of the multiplicity and confusion of tongues. And it is entirely appropriate, as indeed Derrida has exquisitely reminded us, that 'Babel' itself, like 'logos', is a word that defies translation. If Babel spread linguistic confusion and thereby necessitated translation, it also rendered translation profoundly problematical, beginning with the word 'Babel' itself, which is both a proper name and a common noun meaning precisely 'confusion' - even though there appears to be some confusion as to whether, or to what extent, it really does mean 'confusion'. *Note 7*

And if understanding is translation, surely Babel confounds not only the translator but the hermeneuticist as well. Be that as it may, and before leaving hermeneutics to sort out its own problems with Babel, let me retrieve from the hermeneutic endeavour two aspects that are of particular relevance to translation, or at least to translation as we commonly perceive it. The first is that of cultural transmission and retrieval, the second that of interpretation as making intelligible to others by means of verbal explanation and gloss. The first, transmission and retrieval, points to the translator as enabler, as one who provides access by removing barriers, by leading across the chasms that prevent understanding.

The second, making intelligible, points to how the enabling and the provision of access is achieved: by offering a mirror image of that which itself remains beyond reach, by presenting a reproduction, a replica, a representation. The first generates the metaphor of translation as building bridges, or as ferrying or carrying across, as 'trans-latio', as 'meta-phor'. The second appeals to translation as resemblance, as likeness, as imitation, as mimesis, not of the world of extra-linguistic phenomena but of another text, another entity of a linguistic order.

The two metaphors are connected, because the trust that we, on this side of the language barrier, place in the translator as mediator and enabler depends on the quality, or the presumed quality, of the translation as likeness, as resemblance, as a truthful portrait. A translation, being a derived product, may be secondary and therefore second-best, but because we trust the mediator's integrity and good faith we assume that the replica is 'as good as' the real thing. The last thing we want to do is to bank on a forger or a counterfeiter. Yet this is exactly what we are doing. It is in the nature of translation. It is also what makes translation worth studying.

The rather smooth, unruffled picture of translation that I have just painted has an 'other' to it, a more unsettling but also a much more interesting and intriguing side. The smooth, unruffled picture may be part of the conventional perception and self-presentation of translation, but it papers over the cracks. I want to try and poke my finger into at least some of these cracks. And the reason for doing so lies in the recognition that translation, for all its presumed secondariness, derives its force from the fact that it is still our only answer to, and our only escape from, Babel.

'Translation's Other', then, comprises, among other things, the ambivalences and paradoxes, the hybridity and plurality of translation, its 'otherness' as 'awkwardness' if you like, in contrast to the

perception of translation as replica or reproduction, as referring, simply and unproblematically (if always from an inferior position), to an original. But it also means the significance of translation as a cultural force, which belies the common view of it as mechanical and merely derivative, secondary, second-hand, second-best, second-rate.

B

Let me return for a moment to what I called the self-presentation of translation. This is the kind of self-promotional - and widely accepted - image that resides in telling metaphors of the type 'Speaking through an interpreter, President Yeltsin declared that...'. What does it mean to say: 'speaking through an interpreter'? Or take a variant: we all blithely claim that we have read Dostoyevsky and Dante and Douwes Dekker, and Kazantzakis and Kafka and Kundera. Hardly anyone, I trust, has read all of these in the original language. We have read some or most of them in translation, in the standard sense of 'interlingual' translation.

To the extent that translation successfully manages to produce, or to project, a sense of equivalence, a sense of transparency and trustworthiness entitling the translation to function as a full-scale representation and hence as a reliable substitute for a source text, statements like 'I have read Dostoyevsky' etc. are a legitimate shorthand for saying 'I have actually read a translation of Dostoyevsky' - which then amounts to saying 'and this is practically as good as reading the original'. But note: only to the extent that a 'sense' of equivalence, of equality in practical use value, has been produced. And we tend to believe that this 'sense' of equivalence results from the very trans-parency of the translation as resemblance.

A translation, we say, is at its most successful when its being a translation goes unnoticed, i.e. when it manages not to remind us that it is a translation. A translation most coincides with its original when it is most transparent, when it approximates pure resemblance. This requires that the translator's labour be, as it were, negated, or sublimated, that all traces of the translator's intervention in the text be erased. The irony is that those traces, those words, are all we have, they are all we have access to on this side of the language barrier. Yeltsin may well speak rightt 'through' an interpreter, but all we have to make sense of are the interpreter's words.

Nevertheless we say that Yeltsin stated so-and-so, that we have read Dostoyevsky. Even though it is precisely this presumed authoritative originary voice that is absent, we casually state it is the only one that presents itself to us. We feel entitled to be casual about this because we construe trans-lation as a form of delegated speech, a kind of speaking by proxy. This implies not only a con-sonance of voices, but also a hierarchical relationship between them, as well as a clear moral - often even a legal - imperative, that of the translator's non-interference.

The imperative has been formulated as the 'honest spokesperson' or the 'true interpreter' norm, [note 8] which calls on the translator simply and accurately to re-state the original, the whole original and nothing but the original. In this view the model of translation is direct quotation: nothing omitted, nothing added, nothing changed - except, of course, the language. The moment we stop to think about it, we realize we are entertaining an illusion.

Even without invoking the problematics of a separation of signifier and signified or of a metaphysics of presence, we can appreciate that a translation will never coincide with its source. Languages and cultures are not symmetrical or even isomorphic systems. For every instance of consonance, however measured, there is also dissonance. Not only the language changes with translation; so does the context, the intent, the function, the entire communicative situation. Since the translator's intervention in this process cannot simply be neutralized or erased without trace, a more appropriate model of translated discourse might be indirect speech rather than direct quotation, if only because indirect speech increases distance and difference, acknowledges the likelihood of manipulation and misuse, and is generally messier in the way it superimposes and intermingles the various voices that make up its re-enunciation. [Note 9]

It is difference and therefore opaqueness and untidiness that are inscribed in the operations of translation, not coincidence or transparency or equivalence in any formal sense. Speaking of translation in terms of equivalence means engaging in an elaborate - if socially necessary - act of make-believe.

C

Various more or less philosophical and poststructuralist avenues open up here, but let me focus on a more immediately obvious aspect: the question of the translator's supposed non-interference, which translates as the translator's invisibility in the translated text. My point is that translated texts - like other texts, only more so - are always, inherently, plural, unstable, de-centred, hybrid. The 'other' voice,

the translator's voice, is always there.

But because of the way we have conventionally construed translation, we prefer, we even require this voice to remain totally discreet. In practice many translations try hard to comply with this requirement. Sometimes, however, translations run into what we might call 'performative self-contradiction.' The resulting incongruities that open up in the text are due to the fact that, while we generally accept that translated texts are reoriented towards a different type of reader in a different linguistic and cultural environment, we expect the agent, and hence the voice, that effected this reorientation to remain so discreet as to vanish altogether. That is not always possible, and then the translation may be caught blatantly contradicting its own performance. And if we can demonstrate the translator's discursive presence in those cases, we can postulate a translator's voice, however indistinct, in all translations.

Let me illustrate the point with a couple of instances where we can clearly discern other voices intruding into a discourse where they were not meant to be heard. [Note 10]

The first, utterly obvious example bears on what Roman Jakobson would call the metalinguistic function of language; Derrida speaks of language 're-marking' itself in a text which declares that it is in a certain language. In translation this causes problems, as indeed Derrida has shown in his discussion of the final chapter of Descartes' Discours de la méthode. There Descartes says, in French, that he has written his book not in Latin but in French. The Latin translation of the Discours omits this embarrassing sentence, to avoid the self-contradiction of a statement declaring, in Latin, it is not in Latin but in French. Derrida regards this as an instance of institutional untranslatability, which is a perfectly valid observation, as indeed in the Latin version the sentence was not translated. [Note 11]

For the reader of the Latin version, however, the omission is not immediately detectable because the statement is simply not there. In translations into languages other than Latin, where the sentence is translated, the self-contradiction may be less glaring, but it is still obvious enough. The Penguin version, for example, has: 'And if I write in French ... rather than in Latin ... it is because ...'. [Note 12]

The anomaly of reading an English text which declares, in English, that it is actually in French creates a credibility gap which readers can overcome only be reminding themselves that this is, of course, a translation. But in so doing the reader also realizes that the voice producing the statement cannot possibly belong to Descartes, or to Descartes only.

There is, clearly, another voice at work, a voice we are not meant to hear, which echoes and mimes the first voice, but never fully coincides with it. And that other voice is there in the text itself, in every word of it. Derrida himself has exploited this paradox of translation more than once in his own writings, on occasion even openly challenging his translators to find solutions to his insistent wordplay. Clearly, such solutions as are found are so charged with irony that they cannot be read without the awareness that the text contains another, intermittently audible voice that cannot conceivably be reduced to Derrida's. And when no solution is found, the translated text's manifest helpless-ness is no less revealing. In all these cases we can ask: whose words are we in fact reading? Exactly who is speaking? And if we are dealing with more voices than one, where do we locate them?

My other example concerns an instance of structural overdetermination in literary fiction. It comes from the Dutch novel Max Havelaar (1860) by Multatuli. This is an extraordinary novel in more than one respect. I want to pick out just a single short sentence from it, but it does involve the book's entire structure. In its barest narrative essence Max Havelaar tells the story of a character called Max Havelaar and his wife Tine. Havelaar is a Dutch civil servant in the colonial administration of the Dutch East Indies in the 1850s.

Witnessing the exploitation of the local population by the native élite, he protests in vain to his immediate superior. When he ignores the administrative hierarchy and brings a charge against the corrupt local ruler, he is relieved of his post and resigns in disgust. This story is told as a novel within a novel. If we call the Havelaar story Novel B, we can call the framing story Novel A. This Novel A is set in Amsterdam, and concerns a penny-pinching, narrow-minded, self-righteous bourgeois Dutch coffee broker. He has in his firm a young German trainee, who eventually becomes the main narrator of Novel B, the Havelaar story.

In the book's final pages both Novel A and Novel B are suddenly swept aside when a third narrator, Multatuli himself, intervenes with an openly political message in the form of a direct appeal to the Dutch king to stop the exploitation of the natives in the Dutch East Indies. With this appeal Multatuli effectively transforms what had up to this point presented itself to us as a novel into a pamphlet. However, when he first introduces himself to the reader, Multatuli also translates his own name, 'multa tuli', 'I who have borne much', leaving us in no doubt that the name on the title page is a pseudonym. To com-plicate matters further, the book's dedication (in the manuscript and the first three editions) is to 'E.H.v.W.', later (in the fourth edition) expanded to 'Everdine Huberte Baronness van Wynbergen, loyal wife etc.' [Note 13]

Taking into account nine-teenth-century literary conventions, this leaves little doubt that the dedicatee is the wife of - well, not of a pseudonym, but presumably of the real-life author behind the pseudonym. We know from other sources that this indeed the case: the real-life writer of Max Havelaar is Eduard Douwes Dekker, who went through an experience in the Dutch East Indies not unlike that of the fictional character Max Havelaar.

Now, in the Havelaar story, i.e. in Novel B which is embedded in Novel A which amounts to a fictionalized front for the political pamphlet, there is at one point a conversation between the character Havelaar and his wife Tine. During this conversation Tine asks her husband if he remembers how he once translated her initials. In the English version, in which everything obviously happens in English, Havelaar replies: 'E.H.V.W.: eigen haard veel waard'. To the English reader these words evidently make no sense at all. More importantly, the incongruity of suddenly reverting to Dutch in the middle of a book that is meant to be in English, jolts us out of any willing suspension of disbelief, reminding us not only that we are reading a translation but also that there is another voice speaking here, a voice that cannot possibly be identical with any one of the various narrators deployed in the book. The reason for the desperate lapse into Dutch in the English translation is a matter of overdetermination.

The initials of Havelaar's wife, E.H.V.W., happen to be identical to those of the book's dedicatee, who, beyond the pseudonym, is the real author's real wife. Havelaar is Multatuli is Eduard Douwes Dekker. Havelaar's wife is the wife of Douwes Dekker. Just as, in trans-forming itself from novel into pamphlet, the book as a whole 'leaps out of literature into reality', [note 14] so the initials of a fictional character in the novel are tied to those of a real-life person. That is why they cannot be changed.

And since in translating those initials Havelaar makes them into a pre-formed, fixed phrase - a common proverb - in which the first letters of each word repeat the initials (E.H.V.W.: 'eigen haard veel waard', something like 'there's no place like home'), the translation short-circuits and reverts back to Dutch. In doing so it also explodes its own make-believe, and exposes this 'other' voice that has been superimposed on the voices of the various fictional narrators - and that we, as readers, were supposed to ignore.

D

What is at stake in texts like these, however, is more than a matter of plural, unstable, de-centred narrative voices.

The question of voice points to a much broader issue, that of translation as a cultural and therefore also as an ideological construct. This takes us back to the standard perception of translation as trans-parency and as duplication, as not only consonant but as coinciding with its original. It requires that translators too become transparent, that they spirit themselves away in the interests of the source text's integrity and status. Only the translator who operates with self-effacing discretion and deference can be trusted not to violate the original. The loyal self-abnegation of the one guarantees the undisputed primacy of the other.

Historically the hierarchical positioning of originals versus translations has been expressed in terms of stereotyped oppositions such as those between creative versus derivative work, primary versus secondary, art versus craft, authority versus obedience, freedom versus constraint, speaking in one's own name versus speaking for someone else. In each instance, of course, it is translation which is circum-scribed, subordinated, contained, controlled.

And in case we should imagine that these are after all natural and necessary hierarchies, it will be useful to remember that our culture has often construed gender distinctions in terms of strikingly similar oppositions of creative versus reproductive, original versus derivative, active versus passive, dominant versus subservient. The point here is not just that the historical discourse about translation is sexist in casting translation in the role of maidservant or faithful and subservient wife, but that translation has been hedged in by means of ideological hierarchies reminiscent of those employed to maintain sexual power relations. There is more.

Ever since literary theory began to emphasize the role of the reader in investing texts with meaning, and the role of convention and the play of intertextuality in the production of texts that are but variations on existing patterns and texts, we have come to appreciate, on the one hand, the inexhaustibility and irrepressibility of meaning and, on the other, the various mechanisms by which our culture nevertheless attempts to control meaning. In Michel Foucault's notion of the 'author function', as he explains it in the essay 'What is an Author?', these two come together: the 'author function' is the ideological figure that we devise to keep the free circulation of meaning within bounds. Note 15

We do this primarily by positing a single unifying subject, with a single voice, behind the text. We thus suppress the more uncontrollable aspects of texts, their loose ends, their gaps, their unintended or unattributable features, their plurality and hetero-geneity. Translation further compounds and intensifies this refractory growth. Note 16

Translations temporarily fix interpretations which, as verbal constructs, are themselves open to interpretation. They transform 'originals' which are themselves transformations of texts which are themselves transformations - etc. They increase the plurivocality of already plural texts. If, therefore, our culture needs an 'author function' to circumscribe the semantic potential and plurality of texts, it is not hard to see why it has also, emphatically, created a 'translator function' to contain the exponential increase in signification and plurivocality which translation brings about. As an ideological and historical construct, the 'translator function' serves to keep translation in a safe place, firmly locked in a hierarchical order.

The meta-phors and oppositions through which we traditionally define translation, the expectations and attitudes we bring to translated texts, the legal constraints under which translation operates, all accord with this function. And so we say we read Dostoyevsky, or Multatuli. Just as we commonly accept that the safest translation is an 'authorized' translation, formally and legally approved by the author.

The term itself confirms the singularity of intent, the coincidence of voice, the illusion of equivalence and, of course, the unmistakable relation of power and authority. This line of thought has radical and far-reaching consequences, which current approaches to translation are only beginning to explore. Let me therefore take a step back, and return to the notion of translation as transmission and mediation. Here too it is a matter of discerning other aspects of translation than those highlighted by translation's traditional self-image.

What I want to focus on is the element of disjunction and difference, not just in actual translations but also in ideas about translation and the use made of translation in a social and historical context. As we know, all texts require some frame of reference shared between source and receiver to be able to function as vehicles for communication. The various forms of linguistic, temporal and geo-graphical displacement that translation brings about, also dislocate this shared environment. Of course, we all recognize that in translating, in recasting and re-packaging a source text for a new recipient in a different cultural circuit, a form of alteration and adjustment, and hence a degree of manipulation, invariably takes place.

It is not only the fact itself of this dislocation that is of interest. At least as interesting is its social and historical conditioning, the particular ways in which translation, as different communities have construed it at different times, transforms its primary material. In the study of translation the interesting question is not whether a text has been transmitted more or less intact. What is of interest is the nature of the changes that have been wrought, and why certain changes were wrought and not others. What I mean is this. In translating, i.e. in rewriting, transforming, appropriating and relocating a given source text, the translator attunes the resulting entity to a new communicative situation.

Just how much and what kind of attuning and adaptation is permitted or acceptable, will depend on prevailing concepts of translation in the host culture and on who has the power to impose them. To the extent that translation, or the 'translator function', is construed as a re-enunciation of an existing text, the practice of translation inevitably results in all manner of tensions within the translated text, quite apart from the fact that it makes translations into very hybrid things which 'signify' much in the way other texts signify but in addition entertain an emphatic relation to another text in another language.

At the same time, translations cannot help being enmeshed in the discursive forms of the recipient culture, including the whole array of modes which a culture may have developed to represent anterior and differently coded discourses. Translation - like adaptation, pastiche, commentary, remake, parody, plagiarism, etc. - is one mode of textual recycling among others. The specific, and always historically determinate way in which a cultural community construes translation therefore also determines the way in which translation, as a cultural product, refers to its donor text, the kind of image of the original which the translation projects or holds up. In other words, the 'other' to which a translated text refers is never simply the source text, even though that is, of course, the claim which translations commonly make.

It is at best an image of it - a mirror image perhaps, provided we think of it as an image reflected in a kaleidoscopic, distorting mirror. Because the image is always distorted, never innocent, we can say that translation constructs or produces or, one step further, 'invents' its original. [Note 17](#)

It is reasonable to assume, moreover, that translations are also made in response to or in anti-cipation of real or perceived demands and needs of the recipient culture. If this is the case, then the selection of texts to be translated, the mode that is chosen to (re)present or project or invent the source text, the manner in which translation generally is circumscribed and regulated at a particular historical moment, and the way in which individual translations are received, all this tells us a great deal about that cultural community that engages in translation.

What exactly does it tell us? To my mind, translation provides a privileged index of cultural self-reference, or, if you prefer, self-definition. In reflecting about itself, a culture, or a section of it, tends to define its own identity in terms of 'self' and 'other', i.e. in relation to that which it perceives as different

from itself, that which lies outside the boundary of its own sphere of operations, outside its own 'system'.

Translation offers a window on cultural self-definition in that it involves not only the selection and importation of cultural goods from the outside world, but at the same time, in the same breath as it were, their transformation into terms which the recipient culture recognizes, to some extent at least, as its own.

And because the history of translation leaves in its wake a large number of dual texts as well as countless re-translations and reworkings of existing translations, it provides us with a uniquely accessible series of cultural constructions of the 'other', and therefore with privileged, first-hand evidence of the workings of cultural self-definition. In this perspective, clearly, resistance or indifference to translation, even the absence of translation, can be as informative as the enthusiastic pursuit of this or that particular type of translation - and it is important to remember that when translation occurs it is always a particular type of translation. Translators never 'just translate'. They translate in the context of certain conceptions of and expectations about translation. Within this context they make choices and take up positions because they have goals to reach, interests to pursue, material and symbolic stakes to defend. Both the context and the actions of individuals and groups are socially determined.

Translators too are social agents.

E

In short, where a culture feels the need or sees an opportunity to import texts from beyond a language barrier, and to do so by means of translation, we can learn a great deal from looking closely at such things as: what is selected for translation from the range of potentially available texts, and who makes the relevant decisions; who produces the translations, under what conditions, for whom, with what effect or impact; what form the translations take, i.e. what choices have been made in relation to existing expectations and practices in the same discursive field and in comparable fields; who speaks about translation, in what terms and with what authority or legitimacy.

This obviously involves much more than can be illustrated adequately here. Let me nevertheless pick up a couple of points bearing on translation in a particular historical configuration, the Low Countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is, of course, the period which sees not only the breakthrough of the Reformation and Renais-sance, but also, in the seventeenth century, the rise, greatness and impending fall of the Dutch Republic. The manner in which translation is viewed, the character of the translations themselves, and the uses made of them, take us right into the cultural self-perception of the period. [Note 18](#)

A few historical moments will have to suffice here. We may begin in Antwerp, which was the economic and cultural heart of the Low Countries around the mid-sixteenth century. Here the rhetorician Cornelis van Ghistele, who gave Dutch renaissance writing its first substantial boost with a series of renderings from the Classics, translated for a specific audience and with a specific aim, and therefore in a specific mode. His readership consisted of those wealthy merchants and patricians who had limited school Latin at best, but an active interest in the new prestige culture and money to buy well-designed, expensive books.

For them Van Ghistele translated the canonical names known from the Latin schools: Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Terence. In his prefaces and in his practice as a translator he did everything he could to bring the foreign authors to his audience, employing a common verse form, using the prestige of the Ancients to enhance the status of modern dramatic forms, writing his own sequels to demonstrate the potential of the classical genres, etc.

The one translation in which he did not steer this course proved to be a commercial failure. Van Ghistele appealed to his readers' self-esteem by writing contemptuously about popular chapbooks that contained mere entertainment, trivialized Ovid as no more than a fantastic story-teller or still presented Virgil in the medieval manner as some kind of sorcerer, while also, at the other end of the cultural spectrum, voicing disapproval of the élitism of those intellectually highbrow Humanist circles who made exclusive use of Latin.

Van Ghistele's vernacular translations consistently carried cross-references to the Latin texts, and he produced literary work in both Dutch and Latin himself. Whereas Van Ghistele provided his readers with the means to increase what Pierre Bourdieu would call their 'cultural capital' by supplying them with fashionable prestige goods, the other major translator of the period, D.V. Coornhert, who lived mostly in Holland, took up writers like Boethius, Cicero and Seneca in the context of a conception of poetry as moral instruction, with the help of classical rhetoric and a keen regard for the quality of the vernacular.

When he was in his thirties, and before he knew any Latin, Coornhert rewrote an existing Flemish

version of Boethius' De consolatione philosophiae, adapting it to Northern Dutch usage. Clearly, the exactness of the translation as translation was not his main concern, although he was to translate Boethius 'properly' thirty years later. When Coornhert picked up Seneca, he characteristically chose De beneficiis for translation; from Cicero's works he selected De officiis.

Coornhert, an intellectual streetfighter to whom Calvin once referred as a 'raving dog' because of his relent-less advocacy of religious tolerance at a time when this was not a universally popular line to take, also emerged in the 1580s as the author of the first book on ethics written in Dutch, and he was closely associated with the first Dutch hand-books on the trivium (i.e. covering grammar, dialectic and rhetoric).

Since these subjects, and for that matter subjects like mathematics, law, medicine, etc. had until then only been dealt with in Latin, vernacular writing covering these domains employed a systematic policy of translating technical terms from the Latin. Coornhert's translations play a formative part in this wide-ranging and self-conscious cultural-political project too.

Just how central a part was assigned to translation in the formation of a Dutch national culture around the turn of the century may be gleaned from some poems by the well-known painter, poet and art historian Karel van Mander. Among other things, Van Mander translated Virgil's Bucolics and Georgics 'in the French manner', i.e. into metrical verse. The book appeared in Haarlem in 1597.

There is a unique copy of this edition (now in the University Library in Ghent) which has an extra quire at the back, containing nine poems by Van Mander in which he calls on a range of prominent literary and public figures to follow his example and translate the Classics as a service to the nation and as proof of cultural proficiency, in the firm belief that painters as well as poets need to be familiar with the Ancients (he went on to write an extensive interpretation of Ovid's Metamorphoses, with the relevant iconography attached, and to translate the Iliad into alexandrines, via a French version) - and in a language, incidentally, which Van Mander, being a Flemish refugee himself, strongly preferred should continue to be called 'Flemish'; but that, as we know, was a lost cause.

Van Mander's programme would actually be carried out in the following decades, most notably by Joost van den Vondel, the 'prince of poets' and the major tragic playwright of the Dutch Golden Age. Vondel translated prodigiously from a range of languages in a lifelong search for literary examples and models. Here 'translatio' starts as personal 'exercitatio', matures into 'imitatio' and 'aemulatio', and at every stage informs a type of 'inventio' that seeks to extend and enrich both a national and a supra-national tradition in the vernacular. That is also why trans-lation occurs in so many different forms, and is so closely and consistently allied with imitation.

That this is true not just of Vondel's own production but of the increasingly self-confident literary culture of the mid-seventeenth-century Dutch Republic generally, may be illustrated ex negativo with reference to the West Flemish catholic priest Adrianus de Buck, a now totally forgotten figure whose trans-lation of Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy appeared in Bruges, i.e. in the Southern Nether-lands then still under Spanish rule, in 1653.

The book has come down to us in a mere two copies. De Buck's preface leaves the reader in no doubt that he is green with envy at the miracle of Dutch culture in the Northern Netherlands, not least because, he observes, they have appropriated the learning of every other language in the world, including Hebrew, Turkish and Arabic. De Buck is acutely aware of living in what, by comparison with the Northern republic, is rapidly becoming a cultural backwater, and one which has already felt the effects of France's expansionism (the town of Veurne, where De Buck was living, had been overrun by French troops a few years earlier).

And so he translates Boethius, partly to offer consolation to his compatriots who have suffered at the hands of the French, partly because he thinks (mistakenly, as it happens) that the Protestant heretics in the North had left Boethius untranslated on account of the references to free will and to purgatory in the Consolation, and partly because he wants to prove that, as he puts it, 'the sun also shines on our West Flemish land and that there is fire in our souls too'.

This is presumably the reason why in his translation he renders every one of the poems in Boethius twice, in two different metres. Through his decision to translate, through his selection of a particular text to translate, and through opting for a particular mode of translating, De Buck offers us a cultural self-definition, a positioning which is religious and political as well as cultural and, more narrowly, literary. The cultural self-confidence of the Dutch Republic, meanwhile, was such that the beneficial role of translation was no longer entirely taken for granted. In the 1650s and '60s dissonant views regarding the need for and the value of translation began to be voiced. But the denigration of translation typically came from writers or circles not directly associated with the more canonical, classicizing genres.

They asserted emphatically the primacy of 'inventio' over all manner of 'imitatio'. But they could not capture the centre ground of cultural politics. It may well be symptomatic that for all its apparent self-confidence the Republic did not simultaneously develop an equivalent to the so-called 'belles infidèles'

translations which were appearing in France from the 1630s onwards, and which were marked by the kind of sovereign appropriation of the 'other' which invites comparison with the expansionist policies France would adopt in other domains in the seventeenth century. We know that some Dutch writers at least were aware of how high-prestige cultural translation was developing in France.

The very first occurrence of the term 'belles infidèles' in writing, anywhere, is in a letter of 12 March1666 by Con-stantijn Huygens - a Latin letter, so the term, appropriate-ly, is first attested in translation. *Note 19*

For all his polyglot virtuosity, however, Huygens himself subscribed to a much stricter view of translation, as did Vondel. The views and example of these two prominent men of letters served as a point of reference for most other translators, as by now a local translational tradition had established itself.

As French cultural hegemony began to assert itself all over Europe, the calls for originality in Dutch letters were drowned, roughly around the time when the Republic's international power and prestige also began to wane. At the end of the 1660s we encounter sharply opposing views on translation. On one side were playwrights like Jan Vos, Joan Blasius and Thomas Asselijn, who wrote non-Classicizing, action-filled, often politically motivated cloak-and-dagger plays, and who loudly declared that no amount of translating or imitating can bestow lasting fame. They were vigorously opposed by the newly formed French-Classicist society 'Nil Volentibus Arduum', whose members were busily importing French models, fine-tuning these, whenever necessary, to the immutable rules of reason and art, subjecting existing translations to ruthless criticism and revision, and even deliberately producing rival translations to prevent other people's versions being staged.

One of the leading lights of this society, Andries Pels, criticized Rembrandt for following nature and his own inclination rather than the rules of art and reason. In their translations too the 'Nil' members put into practice the idea that 'there is greater achievement in improving a poorly written play while translating it than in writing a completely new one.' *Note 20*

There was, in other words, a fierce struggle for cultural power and legitimacy going on here, and translation - a certain kind of translation, of certain kinds of source texts - was one of the main stakes as well as the principal weapon. The Neo-Classicists won decisively, and went on to control the Amsterdam theatre for decades to come. Of the ten new plays staged in Amsterdam during the 1678 season, six issued from the 'Nil' circle; four of these were translations produced at some speed by 'Nil' with the express aim of combating rival versions.

Translated plays continued to outnumber 'original' Dutch works in the Amsterdam theatre until the 1770s. In the eighteenth century a similar situation prevailed with respect to prose fiction, and especially popular prose. This helps us to understand how it came about that when in 1782 there appeared the epistolary novel Sara Burgerhart by Betje Wolff and Aagje Deken, now generally regarded as the first modern novel in Dutch, its title page bore the proud inscription 'Not Translated' - an extraordinary statement, the significance of which has hardly been appreciated in Dutch literary historiography. *Note 21*

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Different but not fundamentally dissimilar pictures could be painted for other periods and for cultures other than Dutch, in fact for all periods and all cultures. Even when contemporary Anglo-American culture translates notoriously little from foreign languages, historically it owes as much to translation as any other. More-over, as I indicated earlier, resistance or hostility or indifference to translation in particular periods has its own significance for cultural self-definition.

If we reckon, then, that translation, together with the various practices lying in its immediate vicinity, are worth serious and sustained attention, both on account of the complexity of the phenomenon itself and in view of its cultural interest, it is also worth assessing the precise weight and import of the concepts that govern this practice, and exploring its modalities and parameters.

This involves delving into the question of what exactly, in different periods and contexts, is covered by the various terms and concepts, the images and metaphors used to conceptualize and locate translation. It means, more broadly, investigating not only the practice of translation and the various factors that govern it, but also the discourse about translation, i.e. its historical, and historically unstable, self-description. A single, brief illustration will have to do here.

The characterization of translation in pictorial terms is one instance which involves reading the historical metaphors. Comparing translation to the activity of apprentice painters copying the works of the masters, for example, has been a means of highlighting any one of a range of aspects of translation, including its role as an exercise for the aspiring poet; its social usefulness as the provision of a readily accessible if imperfect copy of an inaccessible original (and a poor copy is better than none); its

qualitative inferior-ity vis-à-vis the model, since, as Quintilian says, the copy is necessarily inferior to that which it copies; its affinity with imitation, both being forms of homage to an acknowledged master; its nature as a form of secondary mimesis, an imitation of a work which is itself thought of as an imitation of nature; its difficulty, since the translator's palette of words is necessarily different from that of his or her model; its double referentiality, as a statement in its own right and as a re-statement of an existing utterance. *Note 22*

Which of these senses is activated or exploited, when, by whom, in preference to which other available metaphors, for what purpose? The patient tracing and detailing of these self-descriptions is often our only way of assessing how translation was conceptualized in the past. It also provides an insight into our current discourse about translation, which after all translates 'trans-lation' by means of comparable concepts and metaphors.

Are not all our theories of an essentially metaphorical nature? There is much to be unearthed, pieced together and interpreted here, partly at least because traditionally the material - actual translations as well as the poetics of translation - has received scant attention in literary and cultural histories written mostly along monolingual lines, inspired by a post-Romantic concept of originality, and centred on canonical works and authors. But the climate has clearly begun to change.

The renewed emphasis in literary historiography on the social context and the institutional structures in which literature operates, has created room for the study of hitherto marginalized but socially as well as intellectually relevant phenomena such as translation. At least as important has been the ceaseless question-ing of just about all the traditional key concepts of literary study by one branch or another of recent literary theory. As such seemingly homogenous notions as the 'author' or the 'original' were dismantled, the interest in hybrid, self-referential, ironic, inter-textual forms grew.

And finally there is the fact that in recent decades the study of translation itself has significantly broadened its scope by breaking out of its applied, prescriptive, ancillary mould to engage in various kinds of theoretical, empirical and historical research. Instead of contributing to the containment of translation in the straitjacket of identity and reproduction, these bolder experiments have brought to the fore the irrepressible plurality of translation in all its weird and wonderful historical manifestations. For my own approach over the years, both the theoretical speculation and the descriptive and historicizing work of researchers like Gideon Toury, José Lambert and André Lefevere, to name only these, proved particularly inspiring.

The kind of work I do, then, is intended to contribute to a renewed understanding of translation, both as an historical phenomenon and a cultural construct. That, even on those occasions when the focus is on Dutch-language texts, it is done from an essentially comparative perspective is not only inevitable, given the nature of the material, but also entirely appropriate in view of what George Steiner, speaking in Oxford just eighteen months or so ago, called the 'primacy of the matter of translation' in comparative literary studies. *Note 23*

Recognizing the primacy of the matter of translation is one thing, the methodology of studying translation is something else. Considering the complexity and the hybrid, plural, untidy nature of translation it is not surprising that a wide range of methodologies are currently being applied.

My own attempts to under-stand translation as a communicative act and hence as a form of social behaviour, as an historical and culture-specific construct, as a cross-border activity involving different cultural communities, have prompted reckless but nevertheless personally rewarding forays into sociology and cultural anthropology as well as literary theory and modern systems theory - the distinctions between these various disciplines are often, mercifully, blurred.

Translation, as an intellectual category and a socially active force, is not the kind of subject that can be reduced to or captured by a single disciplinary approach. But I should not end this lecture with a methodological disquisition that can be of interest to devotees only. Something more paradoxical, another untidy 'other', this time at the meta-level of translation, will be more appropriate by way of conclusion. To appreciate it, we need to go back for a moment to Roman Jakobson's short but influential essay 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' of 1959. *Note 24*

Here Jakobson famously distinguished between three kinds of translation. They were, firstly, 'intralingual translation, or rewording', defined as the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language; secondly, 'interlingual translation, or translation proper', i.e. the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language; and thirdly, 'intersemiotic translation, or transmutation', the interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal sign systems.

Derrida has astutely commented on this tripartite division, *note 25*, pointing out that if for Jakobson intralingual translation is a form of translation, then in the essay itself the term 'rewording' is a translation of the term 'intralingual translation'. In this way the first and the third term in the list are both translated intralingually: 'intralingual translation' is rendered as 'rewording', and 'intersemiotic

translation' is reworded as 'transmutation'. But in the middle term, 'interlingual translation, or translation proper', the word 'translation' is not reworded or intralingually translated. It is merely repeated, tautologically restated. This form of translation is trans-lation: 'interlingual translation' is 'translation proper'.

The addition of the qualifier 'proper' suggests moreover that the other two are somehow not 'properly' trans-lation. This, it will be appreciated, undermines the whole exercise of ranging them all three together as so many kinds of translation. From there Derrida went on to question the apparent transparency and homogeneity of notions like translation, language, etc. I am interested in the more pedestrian question why the paradox is there in the first place.

The answer, it seems to me, lies in the recognition that Jakobson's essay is anchored in at least two different fields. As a linguistic or, more properly, a semiotic state-ment, the claim that 'rewording' and 'transmutation' constitute forms of translation, is perfectly acceptable. From the point of view of someone professionally engaged in the study of sign systems there is no good reason to restrict the study of trans-lational phenomena to interlingual translation, to the exclusion of intralingual, intersemiotic or for that matter intrasemiotic forms.

But seen from the vantage point of translation as it is commonly understood, or better, as it is socially construed, legitimated and institutionalized, the move is not permissible because there translation is translation proper, and only that. The unease in Jakobson's formulation stems from ambivalence and transgression in declaring both that translation properly understood means interlingual translation only and that translation encompasses other, comparable operations not conventionally, or normally, covered by the term 'translation'.

Looking at the essay from today's vantage point, we can also appreciate it both as being part of the self-description and self-reflexiveness of translation, in questioning precisely the boundaries of the field and thus engaging in the discussion about what is and what is not translation, what falls inside or outside, and as being part of an emerging academic discipline of translation studies.

What the example shows above all is that, like other branches of the human sciences which cannot escape entanglement in the object they describe, so the discourse about translation, too, - including the academic discourse, including the present discourse - translates concepts and practices of 'translation' into its own terms. And it necessarily does so on the basis of a certain concept of translation. *Note 26*

In thus performing the very operations it attempts to describe, it is implicated in the self-description of translation as a cultural construct, a social institution. In that sense the historical reflection on translation by practitioners and critics in the field, from Saint Jerome to the present day, cannot be separated from the modern metalanguage employed in the research on translation.

However much translation studies today may want, self-consciously, to mark the distance between object-level and meta-level and to stress the orientation of its scholarly discourse to other discursive series, the complicity is always there, and it contributes in its turn to the social and cultural construction of translation as well as to the elaboration of an academic discipline. In a way, though, this is merely to confirm that our knowledge about translation is itself culture-bound.

This, of course, we knew all along. The issue becomes acute as soon as we move beyond our immediate horizon, a move hard to avoid when dealing with translation. The problem surfaces whenever we wish to speak about 'translation' generally, as a transcultural or immanent or possibly even a universal given, or when we attempt to grasp what another culture, whether distant from us in time or place, means by whatever terms they use to denote an activity or a product that appears to translate as our 'translation' - which implies that we translate according to our concept of translation, and into our concept of translation.

If this is the case, then the 'other' which our terms, as translations of the 'other', hold up to our view, will definitely not constitute a transparent image or a faithful representation. As we saw, translation is never diaphanous, it is never innocent or pure, never without its own distinct or indistinct voices and discursive resonances. On the contrary, it transforms and dislocates everything within its grasp.

To the extent, then, that our understanding of another culture's concept of translation amounts to a translation of that concept, it is subject to all the distortions and all the untidy pluralization that goes with translation. Moreover, as we also saw, the nature and the particular slant of the distortion is itself socially conditioned and hence significant for what it tells us about the individuals and the communities performing the translative operation, i.e. about ourselves as students of translation.

The study of translation rebounds on our own categories and assumptions, our own modes of translating translation. For those of us who take the study of translation seriously, there is no easy way out of these predicaments.

But we can learn from them. The awareness of the pitfalls and the self-reflexiveness of 'cultural translation', as some ethnographers and cultural anthropologists call it, [note 27] will not make the problems go away, but it can guard against a form of rashness that ignores its own ethnocentricity and blindly, reductively, translates all translation into 'our' translation, instead of patiently, deliberately, laboriously negotiating the other's terrain while simultaneously trying to reconceptualize our own modes of representation through translation.

Translation's other, therefore, is not only the hybridity and awkwardness of translation as a discursive and representational form. It is not only the significance of translation as a force in cultural history and as an index of cultural self-definition. It is also the untidiness of our disciplinary translation of translation. But provided we approach these various transgressions cautiously, critically, and self-critically, we may still, with luck, gain some insight into the perplexing otherness of translation itself as well as of the attempts, historical and contemporary, to account for it.

NOTES

1. Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'Man and Language' [1966], in his Philosophical Hermeneutics, transl. David Linge. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977 (pp. 59-68).

2. Gadamer, 'Aesthetics and Hermeneutics' [1964], in his Philosophical Hermeneutics, p. 98. See also 'On the Scope and Function of Hermeneutical Reflection' [1967], ibid., pp. 18ff.

3. Gadamer, 'On the Scope and Function of Hermeneutical Reflection', Philosophical Hermeneutics, p. 19.

4. George Steiner, After Babel. Aspects of Language and Translation. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1975, revised ed. 1992.

5. Jacques Derrida, Dissemination, transl. Barbara Johnson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 72. Donald Davidson, 'On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme' [1974], in his Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984, p. 184.

6. Gadamer, 'Aesthetics and Hermeneutics', Philosophical Hermeneutics, pp. 98-99.

7. Jacques Derrida, 'Des tours de Babel', in Joseph Graham ed., Difference in Translation. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985 (pp. 165-248). 'Roundtable on Translation', in Christie McDonald ed., The Ear of the Other. Otobiography, Transference, Translation. Texts and Discussions with Jacques Derrida, transl. Peggy Kamuf. New York: Schocken, 1985 (pp. 93-161).

8. Brian Harris, 'Norms in Interpretation', Target 2 (1990), 1, pp. 115-119. .

9. Barbara Folkart, Le conflit des énonciations. Traduction et discours rapporté. Candiac, Québec: Editions Balzac, 1991.

10. A fuller exposition is to appear in 'The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative', forthcoming in Target, together with Giuliana Schiavi's 'There's Always a Teller in a Tale', which addresses similar issues. Narratological models routinely ignore the translator's discursive presence.

11. Jacques Derrida, 'Ulysses Gramophone' [1987], transl. Tina Kendall and Shari Benstock, in Derek Attridge ed., Jacques Derrida. Acts of Literature. London & New York: Routledge, 1992, p. 257.

12. René Descartes, Discourse on Method and the Meditations, transl. F.E. Sutcliffe. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968, p. 91.

13. Multatuli, Max Havelaar of de koffiveilingen der Nederlandsche Handelmaatschappy. Historical-critical edition. Ed. A. Kets-Vree. Assen & Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992. 2 vols. From the fifth edition (1881) onwards the dedication is 'To the revered memory of Everdine Huberte' etc.

14. J.J. Oversteegen, 'De organisatie van Max Havelaar' [1962-63], in his De Novembristen van Merlyn. Een literatuuropvatting in theorie en praktijk. Utrecht: HES, 1983, p. 103. See also A.L. Sötemann, De structuur van de 'Max Havelaar'. Gro-ningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1973.

15. Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author', transl. Josué Harari, in Textual Strategies. Perspectives in Post-structuralist Criticism, ed. Josué Harari. London: Methuen, 1980 (pp. 141-160).

16. See also Karin Littau, 'Intertextuality and Translation: The Waste Land in French and German', in Translation: the Vital Link, ed. Catriona Picken. London: Chameleon Press, 1993 (pp. 63-69); and her 'Translation in the Age of Postmodern Production: from Text to Intertext to Hypertext', Forum for Modern Language Studies (forthcoming)

17. Tejaswini Niranjana, Siting Translation. History, Post-structuralism and the Colonial Context. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, p. 81.

18. Most of the texts referred to in the following paragraphs are in my Door eenen engen hals. Neder-landse beschouwingen over vertalen, 1550-1670. The Hague: Stichting Bibliographia Neer-landi-ca, 1996.

19. 'Neque enim vitio mihi verti amem, quod Ablancurtio, celeberrimo inter Gallos Taciti et aliorum veterum traductori, lepide objectum fuit ab amico, in hunc sensum: versio, inquit, tua, domine, meae perquam similis est, pulcherrima nimirum, sed infida.' De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608-1687), ed. J.A. Worp. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1911-17, vol. 6, p. 183.

20. Marijke Meijer Drees, De treurspelen van Thomas Asselijn (ca.1620-1701). Diss. Univeristy of Utrecht, 1989, p. 129.

21. A notable exception is P.J. Buijnsters, e.g. in the essays in his Nederlandse literatuur van de acht-tiende eeuw. Veertien verkenningen. Utrecht: HES, 1984.

22. Some eighteenth-century Dutch examples are discussed in Luc Korpel, 'De schilders-metafoor in de vertaalreflectie en de verande-ringen in het denken over de relatie tussen dichten, schil-deren en vertalen in Nederland (1770-1820)', in Dans der muzen. De relatie tussen de kunsten gethematiseerd, ed. A.C.G. Fleurkens, L.G. Korpel & K. Meerhoff. Hilversum: Verloren, 1995 (pp. 141-156). Seventeenth-century instances (Vondel, Johan de Vries) in Door eenen engen hals (see note 18).

23. George Steiner, What is Comparative Literature?. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 11.

24. Roman Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', in On Translation, ed. Reuben Brower. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959 (pp. 232-239).

25. See note 7.

26. See Matthijs Bakker, 'Metasprong en wetenschap: een kwestie van discipline', in Vertalen his-to-risch bezien. Tekst, metatekst, theorie, ed. Dirk Delabastita & Theo Hermans. The Hague: Stichting Bibliographia Neerlandica, 1995 (pp. 141-162) for a discussion from a Deconstructionist angle. The more general problem in historical semiotics of 'translating the language of the source into the language of the researcher', which means that 'the instrument of semiotic research is trans-lation' and involves the researcher's own historicity, is also dealt with in Yuri Lotman's Universe of the Mind, transl. Ann Shukman. London: I.B. Tauris, 1990, pp. 269ff.

27. See James Clifford & George Marcus eds., Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986. George Marcus & Michael Fischer, Anthropology as Cultural Critique. The Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1986. S.J. Tambiah, Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.