# Thinking Translation

# Thinking Translation: Perspectives from Within and Without

Conference Proceedings
Third UEA Postgraduate Translation Symposium

Rebecca Hyde Parker
and
Karla Guadarrama García,
editors

***BrownWalker Press***
Boca Raton

*Thinking Translation: Perspectives from Within and Without*

Copyright © 2008
School of Literature and Creative Writing, University of East Anglia
All rights reserved.
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher.

BrownWalker Press
Boca Raton, Florida • USA
2008

ISBN-10: 1-159942-461-4 *(paperback)*
ISBN-13: 978-159942-461-3 *(paperback)*

ISBN-10: 1-59942-463-0 *(Adobe ebook)*
ISBN-13: 978-1-59942-463-7 *(Adobe ebook)*

ISBN-10: 1-159942-462-2 *(Mobipocket)*
ISBN-13: 978-159942-462-0 *(Mobipocket)*

www.brownwalker.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Thinking translation : perspectives from within and without : conference proceedings, third UEA postgraduate translation symposium / Rebecca Hyde Parker and Karla Guadarrama, editors.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 978-1-59942-461-3 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Translating and interpreting--Congresses. I. Parker, Rebecca Hyde, 1971- II. Guadarrama, Karla, 1981-
P306T457 2008
418'.02--dc22

2008026474

# Table of Contents

Preface, *Rebecca Hyde Parker and Karla Guadarrama García*.......................... vii

Notes on Contributors......................................................................... ix

Modern Rendering of Rhapsodic Texts, *Eli Ben-Joseph*............................ 15

Translation in Autobiography/Autobiography in Translation:
Sarah Winnemucca's Self-Translated 'I', *Lorena Carbonara*........................ 25

Theory and Practice of Translation:
The Case of Children's Literature, *Giorgia Carta*....................................... 35

'Montalbano Here': Problems in Translating Multilingual Novels,
*Maria Cristina Consiglio*............................................................................ 47

Where Translation Studies Meets Critical Social Theory,
*Reyhan Funda Isbuga Erel* ......................................................................... 69

When Domestication is an Estranging Effect: Adriana Hunter's
Translation of Beigbeder's 99 Francs, *Jonathan Evans*................................ 87

The Author is Dead – Or is She? Questions of Authority
in the Relationship between Author and Translator, *Henriette Heise*........ 95

The Investigation of Bourdieu's Sociological Theory
in Translation Studies, *Wayne Wen-chun Liang*...........................................101

Audio Description as Language Development and Language Learning
for Blind and Visual Impaired Children, *Alicia Palomo López*.................113

Domesticating or Foreignizing Texts? Case Study: Niccolò Ammaniti's
*Ti prendo e ti porto via* translated into English, *Ilaria Parini*........................135

Bridging the Sensorial Gaps: Theory and Practice
in Translating the Voice of the Adult Aloud Reader in
Pre-School Picturebooks, *Annalisa Sezzi* ..................................................157

The Role of Theory in Translating the "Moiroloi," or Ritual Lament,
of Inner Mani, *Panayotis Sfalagakos*.............................................................175

Translation and Ideology: From Theory to Practice. Analysis of Two
Italian Translations of Alice in Wonderland, *Caterina Sinibaldi*..............185

Haroldo De Campos: Poet and Theorist of a Unified Field
in Literary Translation, *Stefan Tobler*..........................................................195

A Functionalist Approach to Syllabus Design
in Translator Training, *Volga Yılmaz Gümüş* ............................................207

# Preface

This book is a collection of selected articles based on talks given by established academics and translators, as well as younger researchers, at the third postgraduate symposium organized by the School of Literature and Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, UK. The objective of the third postgraduate translation symposium at the University of East Anglia was to explore the current relevance of theory to the practice of translation. There are theorists who maintain that a thorough grounding in translation theory provides translators with the means to select appropriate strategies and methods in their translation work. A number of the papers presented at the symposium explored which of these theoretical pronouncements on translation were considered most relevant to translation practice in today's society. In some cases the talks given also demonstrated the ways in which, since the integration of cultural and gender theories in the 20th Century and of cognitive theories in this century, that research in translation studies has changed.

This volume builds on the key ideas and discussion that arose from the symposium, bringing together, amongst others, the current debates concerning the complex relationship between theory and practice in the field of translation studies, taking into consideration a wide range of perspectives, both modern and traditional. A broad cross-section of research exploring the present relevance of translation theory to practice is presented by many of the individual contributors to this volume. These papers provide both current theoretical insights into the relevance of theory to translation and also, in some examples, offer first-hand experiences of applying appropriate strategies and methods to the practice and description of translation. A number of the articles demonstrate for example how theory can describe practice, but some also show how learning translation theory can develop a translator's cognitive capacities. The authors in this collection explore theoretical pronouncements and practical observations in different topic areas that include: approaches to descriptive translation studies such as social, political and ideological factors; domestication and foreignization; theory and creativity; translation and its relation with linguistics; cultural studies and the functional approach to translation. Examples are shown from theoretical and practical, as well as, pedagogical angles, which ensure appeal for a wide readership. Offering the reader a modern view of the relevance of theory to translation practice

and also how practice informs theory, the collection is presented from both descriptive and practical perspectives and provides thought-provoking material for readers involved in advanced translation studies research and also those who are engaged in the practice of translation. Although the theory-practice relationship is one very central to translation studies, the individuality of this collection lies in the centrality of the topic to researchers, practitioners and teachers.

It is hoped that this volume can make a contribution to the discussion concerning what kind of theoretical knowledge is necessary for translators to have in the modern day translation industry. The growing connections between theory and practice that are revealed by these articles may also show the ways in which theory can be a tool for more effective translator training. Although translation programmes have to balance carefully the theoretical and practical components in their translator training curricula, some of the ideas presented in this publication may show how translation trainers can use theory as a tool in teaching translation as well as teaching practical translation skills such as text interpretation, composition, researching and editing. Although many professional translators are still widely dismissive of theory and its application to real-life assignments, it is also evident from the points made in many of the articles in this collection that the dichotomy between theory and practice is ever-decreasing.

The editors would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Jean Boase-Beier at the University of East Anglia for her invaluable guidance and advice, and also the contributors to this volume, whose cooperation and prompt response to deadlines has made the putting together of this volume an altogether easier task.

Rebecca Hyde Parker and Karla Guadarrama García
The School of Literature and Creative Writing
University of East Anglia, UK, May 2008.

## Notes on Contributors

**Rebecca Hyde Parker** is a part-time PhD researcher in Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia (UEA) in the field of corpus stylistics, and is also an Associate Tutor at UEA teaching Danish language at undergraduate level. She has previously held a lectureship at the University of Hull, teaching Scandinavian language, literature and translation courses on the BA in Scandinavian Studies programme, and also holds an MA from the University of Hull in Applied Languages and New Technologies. She has had a number of articles published, and is currently co-editing a book (with Karla Guadarrama) that explores the relationship between translation theory and practice.

**Karla Leticia Guadarrama García** is a PhD researcher in Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia. She is now conducting a research on the translation of poetic metaphor from a cognitive linguistics and cognitive stylistics approach. She is a Tutor at Adult Education teaching Spanish language for adults and a freelance translator from English into Spanish. She also holds a BA in English from the University of the State of Mexico, Mexico. She is currently co-editing a book (with Rebecca Hyde Parker) that explores the relationship between translation theory and practice.

**Eli Ben-Joseph** Taking up residence in Israel in 1974, he completed graduate studies at Haifa University with a master's thesis on W. B. Yeats and an interdisciplinary doctoral dissertation which later became the basis for his book *Aesthetic Persuasion: Henry James*, *the Jews and Race* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1996). He has worked on Hebrew-to-English technical and commercial translations and, maintaining an interest in ancient Greek, has recently completed an idiomatic version of Homer's *Odyssey* in English hexameters. Presently the Head of English Studies at the Western Galilee College in Acre, Israel, he has published papers on Holocaust narratives and cultural studies. He lives with his wife, Marcelle, in Naharia, a small city on the Mediterranean coast near the Israel-Lebanon border.

**Lorena Carbonara** graduated in English and Portuguese Literature and Language at Università degli Studi di Bari, Italy, in 2004. She holds a Masters in "Cultural Studies, Communication and Visual Culture", which concluded with a dissertation entitled "Manifest Destiny e il po-

tere della parola". She began her doctoral research in the "Theory and Practice of Translation" at S.A.G.E.O. Department, Università degli studi di Bari in 2005. As part of her research she is currently focusing on Native American female writers, through the medium of 'autobiography'. She is examining how autobiography can be interpreted as an act of self-translation, through the work of Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, an influential and controversial nineteenth century Paiute's spokesperson, who was the first woman to write and publish a book in English.

**Giorgia Carta** is a PhD researcher at the Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Warwick. Her broad research interests include Translation Studies and Comparative Literature. Specifically, she focused on children's literature in translation. Within the context of Italian children's literature, she has been researching aspects such as the influence that translations exert on the original production, the extent to which the status of children's literature affects academic research, the role played by mediators (publishers, parents, teachers) in the reception of translations and its economic dimension. As an undergraduate she wrote a dissertation on the English translations of Pinocchio. She also holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Translation Studies from Warwick.

**Maria Cristina Consiglio** holds a PhD in Translation Studies from the University of Bari. Her doctoral dissertation was about Neoclassical adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, with a particular focus on Tate's *King Lear*. Her present post-doctoral research is about the translation of multilingual novels. She has published on the relationship between translation and adaptation; on the value of language and imagery in Tate's *King Lear*; on the political value of Tate's *Richard II*; on the possibility of applying corpus linguistics tools to literary analysis; and an essay on the Italian translation of *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess. She also collaborates with the online review *Apertamente*. At present she teaches English language at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Bari.

**Reyhan Funda Isbuga-Erel** is a lecturer at the University of Hacettepe, Turkey. She completed her PhD in January 2008 at the University of East Anglia, England. She earned her MA in Translation Studies from Hacettepe University in Turkey where she taught translation the-

ory and translation practice. In her PhD dissertation she explored the possibility of juxtaposing Translation Studies with Critical Discourse Analysis with an emphasis on translation of taboos in literary texts within the framework of ideology. Her research interests include ideology and translation, translational norms, and translation of political, religious and sexual taboos.

**Jonathan Evans** studied English and Comparative Literature at the University of East Anglia before going on to take an MA in Literary Translation. He is currently writing a PhD about Lydia Davis and translation at the University of Portsmouth. He has translated poems by Andrea Zanzotto, as well as other writers. His research interests include writers who translate, pop music and translation, and translation and postmodernity.

**Henriette Heise** graduated with distinction from the MA in Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia. The essay published here was developed out of her dissertation on the relationship between author, translator and reader. In October 2008 she will start a PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Oxford, in which she will study the use of food for representations of identity (sexual, cultural, geographical among others) in German and English literature with a possible side-glance at Spanish and Latin-American literature. Her main area of study is Comparative Literature and its close relation with literary translation. Born and raised in Berlin, Henriette Heise now translates English-language poetry (Pascale Petit, Stephen Watts) and novels (Bernice Eisenstein, Celia Rees) into her mother tongue German.

**Wayne Wen-chun Liang** is currently a PhD researcher in Translation Studies at the University of Newcastle, U.K. He completed a MA in Chinese/English Translating at the same institution in 2004. He is especially interested in the sociological and cultural approaches in translation studies. He is now conducting a research on the fantasy translation phenomenon in Taiwan with the help of Bourdieu's sociological theories. His publications include A Discussion of Translation Strategies for Culture-Specific Items in Children's Fantasy Literature: A Case Study of the Harry Potter Books (2005) and A Descriptive Study of Translating Children's Fantasy Fiction (forthcoming).

**Alicia Palomo López** holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting from the University of Malaga (Spain) and an MA in Audiovisual Translation from Roehampton University (England). Her MA dissertation was about audio description under the title of *Audio Description for Children: The Art of Reading Images as Storytelling* where she provided a contrastive analysis of the British and Spanish practices of audio describing for children films. She is currently writing her PhD thesis on audio description from a semiotic and functionalist approach (Jaume I University, Spain). Alicia has written several papers and taken part in various conferences where she has delivered papers on audio description. She is also involved in a research project on audio description called 'The Pear Stories Project'.

**Ilaria Parini** graduated in Translation in 1996 from the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Bologna at Forlí (Italy), with a thesis on the Italian dubbing of Quentin Tarantino's films. Since 2003 she has been working as a Lecturer in English at the University of Milan. She is currently enrolled in a doctoral programme at the University of Milan, where she is investigating the variety spoken by Italian-American gangsters in American films and in the Italian dubbing. Having worked as a translator of cartoons and romance novels, she has also published articles on the Italian dubbing of Quentin Tarantino's films, on the transposition of the Italian-American variety in Italian dubbing, and a book on medical English for Healthcare Professionals.

**Annalisa Sezzi** has a Master's Degree in Literary Translation from the Catholic University of Milan, (Italy), and she is a literary translator. She is currently working toward a PhD at the University of Reggio Emilia and Modena, Dipartimento di Scienze del Linguaggio e della Cultura - Department of Language and Cultural Sciences (Italy). Her field of research is the translation of Children's Literature and she is focusing her work in particular on the translation of pre-school picture books.

**Panayotis Sfalagakos** holds a BA in Political Science from Dalhousie University, Canada, and an MA in Government (Political Science) from Brunel University in the UK. He also holds the UK Chartered Institute of Linguists' Diploma in Translation (Greek-English) and a Diploma in English from the University of London (Goldsmiths College – External Programme). He works as a freelance translator on both literary

and non-literary projects, has taught EFL / ESOL, and has worked as a sub-editor / copy editor / journalist at a national newspaper. In September 2007, he started an MA in Translation Studies at the University of Warwick. He is particularly interested in the area of Literary Translation. He is presently employed as a sessional EFL / ESOL lecturer at a further education college in the UK.

**Caterina Sinibaldi** studied Foreign Languages and Cultures at the University of Roma Tre (Rome) where, in 2006, she was awarded her B.A. with distinction. She is currently completing a Masters in Translation, Writing and Cultural Difference at the University of Warwick. She has worked extensively on the relation between translation and ideology and on the ideological issues involved in translating for children. In October 2008, she will start a Ph.D. in the Italian Department of the University of Warwick, where she will investigate the controversial activity of translating for children under the Fascist regime in Italy. She has worked for several Italian publishers and she translates into Italian from both English and French.

**Stefan Tobler** is currently working on a creative/critical PhD at UEA, Norwich, UK, in the translation of two Brazilian Amazonian poets into English, the children's poet Paulo Nunes and the poet Antonio Moura. He is also a freelance translator from Portuguese and German into English. The PhD project includes workshops for children and drawing up detailed concepts for literary exhibitions. Related research interests include typography and contemporary lusophone literature. Recent publications include "5 Lyriker aus England", Ostragehege, No. 48, December 2007; "A Forgotten Gem. Emil and the Detectives", New Books in German, No. 21 Spring 2007; and the translation Afghan Journey (London: Haus Publishing), 2007.

**Volga Yılmaz Gümüş** is a PhD researcher in Translation and Intercultural Studies at Rovira i Virgili University, Tarragona, Spain, and is a research assistant in the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey. She received her B.A. and M.A. degrees in Translation and Interpreting from Bilkent University and Hacettepe University in Turkey. Among her fields of academic interest are translator training, legal translation, and translation of children's literature.

## Modern Rendering of Rhapsodic Texts

Eli Ben-Joseph

In order to make an ancient text such as the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* popularly presentable to a modern audience, a process of rewriting is essential. This process may involve the creation of two masks for the translator-interpreter. First, s/he must take the pose of an oral epic poet who alters the ancient poem to suit today's English-speaking audience. This pose, however, is not for the audience's direct sight. The second pose is created for external consumption. That is, a seemingly 'authentic' poet, who has written the altered form of the poem, is the face that the modern audience has before them. In this respect, I have written a fictional introduction which maintains that the texts at hand — so far I have completed an entire version of the *Odyssey* but only parts of the *Iliad* — are Alexandrian versions, purportedly reworked from the Homeric texts by Jason of Cyrene (author of the source for *The Second Book of the Maccabees*) and recently discovered on papyri taken from a mummy uncovered in a dig of ancient Elephantine in lower Egypt. Unfortunately, according to this introductory fiction, the papyri have been lost in a change of premises though, of course, the translations have survived the move.

### Process

The work in shaping the poems comes of creating versions supposedly suited for an urbane Alexandrian audience during the second century BCE. By ostensible coincidence, the modern version offers a plot more amenable to a readership in today's citified world. The method of work is first to translate the entire poem more or less literally. Next, decide which sections will be kept whole, which abridged and which given addenda. The abridgement of segments is done for the comfort of a contemporary audience that might feel the full sections too much retard the action of the epic whereas the creation of short, additional passages serves to smooth a hiatus or culturally opaque part.[1] The next step is to rewrite the whole in normal English prose, which is molded into hexameter lines in a creative process that yields a 'standard,' i.e. easily and rapidly grasped, poetic language, which Milman Parry sees as characteristic of the traditional Homeric dialect.[2] Finally, the version that is the product of the cut-and-addend process is recorded, re-heard and recomposed for naturalness and ease of comprehension in English. It is also helpful to have a number of

others listen to recordings or recitations, especially those who are willing to take notes and comment.

One of the distinctive characteristics of the Homeric epic is its formulaic presentation, whether simple epithets or entire scenes.[3] The present-day rhapsodist may rely on a positive reception to formulae by an audience used to the refrains of popular songs. S/he also has the advantage of putting the entire poem in a single computer file. Not only can the poet easily cut and paste a formula, s/he can also create a lexis of epithets and nouns that fit metrical requirements. Thus, the modern interpreter can imitate through a combination of writing/storing and recording/listening the process of combination used by the oral poet(s) of the Homeric tradition.

However, the modern rhapsodist has to take his 'folk' audience into consideration by using epithets and other semantic items that do not disturb the flow of the poem. If, as Milman Parry maintains, epithets are often used interchangeably or not at all in order to meet metrical requirements rather than the context in which its noun is set,[4] the translator/interpreter is also free to delete an epithet or use another that fits the modern version's meter. In this regard, today's rhapsodist may select only epithets that are natural, poetic or contextually apt, avoiding such literalisms as 'winged' (*pter**o**enta*) for words, 'great-hearted' (*meg**a**thumos*) for a person and 'flashing-eyed' (*glauk**o**pis*) for a goddess. On the other hand, where the Greek uses 'excellent' (*am**u**mon*) for a murderer, English does well with the more natural-sounding and neutral term 'blue-blooded,' which is idiomatic in English and agrees with the frequent Homeric use of compound epithets. Also, 'sparkling' (***oi**nopos*) fits the shimmering sea and connects it to wine more naturally than 'dark-red.' An epithet that seems silly in English is 'hollow' (*glaphur**o**s*) for ships and caves, which are more aptly described as 'sleek' and 'chambered' respectively.

Metaphor, often expressed in the form of a simile, in the Homeric tradition may or may not need to be altered. In this regard, a short metaphor may be easily maintained for poetic emphasis, e.g. Eurycleia's silence or Priam's heart being like iron (*Od.*, XIX, 494; *Il.*, XXIV, 521). One lengthy simile that may well be kept in full is the one which likens Odysseus' revenge on the suitors to a lion destroying mere fawns (*Od.*, XV, 172-8). This simile is central to arousing expectation for the final outcome. However, long similes taken from bucolic or wild nature, may need abridgement for an urban audience. Also, metaphors that involve cultural differences may also be shortened in

order not to slow the pace for a modern readership. For instance, when Priam surprises Achilles at his hut, Achilles' amazement is compared to that of a lord who suddenly discovers at his door a suppliant who has escaped from a foreign land after killing someone (*Il.*, XXIV, 480-3). Within the world described in the Homeric texts, it was acceptable for such an escapee to appeal to the holder of an estate for protection. The rhapsodist-translator does well to rework such a metaphor by turning the suppliant into a homeless beggar asking for alms rather than disturb the flow of reading with the description of a behavior generally unknown and certainly unacceptable in the English-speaking world.

Any digression that strengthens the plot should be maintained and any digression that is told as a kind of side story with only a tenuous connection to the action should be much abridged or dropped. In this vein, much that takes place in the world of the gods, on the seas in encounters with the supernatural, and on the battlefield between combatants whose stories are not much intertwined with those of Achilles and Odysseus may be deleted or given brief mention. In contrast, however, the story of Eumaeus, Odysseus' faithful goatherd, is important because it tells the reader the goatherd's background and motivation for helping to restore his master to his rightful position. Also, the telling of the injuring of combatants upon whom the Achaeans depend in the *Iliad* is important to the plot inasmuch as the Achaeans are left in more of a precarious position because Achilles stays aloof from the fighting.

A striking characteristic of Homeric verse is that it is clear and straightforward, that is, easy to understand on an immediate level, a reflection no doubt of its oral origin. It tends to use concrete images rather than abstractions, though of course there is the use of 'fate' (*aisa*) and 'sorrow' (*algos*). Still, Homeric verse prefers 'heart' to 'feeling.' However, for the modern reader, directness may be blocked when Homeric verse refers to an ancient technology, e.g. the bolt (*kleis*) and thong (*himas*) used to close a door. In such a case, the translator-interpreter may well choose a more general term like 'latch' in order to avoid a detailed explanation that would disrupt the flow of the verse. In like vein, the translator poet does well to domesticate Homeric phrases by rendering them as English idioms, e.g. turn 'grasp knees' (*labein gouvata*) in supplication into 'get on one's knees' or 'on one's knees.' Each review of the text gives the translator an opportunity to detect language that does not seem smooth or natural and that

can be replaced with an idiomatic alternative. Of course, the translator should avoid any word or phrase that is clearly anachronistic, e.g. 'combination lock' instead of 'bolt' would deprive the tale of its historicity. In any case, a modern verse version of the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* does well to integrate standard colloquial semantic items into the fabric of the poem, for the Homeric dialect borrowed words and forms from various dialects to build a traditional language easily understood by all Greeks.[5] In the English version, the constraints of versification unavoidably create a poetic dialect; and the use of standard colloquial language makes it readily understood in mimesis of the Homeric dialect.

**Imitating**

The modern Homeric poet must also consider syntax in his/her attempt at mimetic[6] translation. Whereas Greek lends itself more easily to periodic structure due to cohesion by inflection, English does well to shy away from very long sentences, especially in oral verse. Here, though, the Homeric lines point the way, since they are often paratactic and, even when hypotactic, they are not complicated.[7] Thus, an English translation can avoid the boring repetition of 'and' by using common subordinate clauses while still reflecting Homeric rhetoric. In regard to word order, lack of inflection in English makes it less flexible than Greek. However, English can sometimes switch word order for emphasis without making the reader pause except to note the hit-home emphasis, e.g. 'I had fifty strong sons when Achaeans came' reshuffled to 'Fifty strong sons I had when Achaeans came,' highlighting the number of sons lost (*Il.*, XXIV, 495).

English translation of Homeric verse can also be mimetic in adapting hexameter, albeit hexameter based on accented and unaccented syllables rather than the long and short elements in Greek feet. Although there is a need to avoid — though not completely — the use of two trimeters to make up one hexameter line — for then the audience would just get the effect of trimeter —, it is easy enough to break hexameters into two feet, a pause, then four feet or the reverse. Also, one foot, a pause, and five feet or the reverse are easily used, but not nearly as common in Homeric fabric. In any case, these varied line partitions lead to varied rhythmic patterns that are reminiscent of prose and spoken language. Additionally, in agreement with Homeric lines, enjambment should be resisted, but where it does occur, there should be some pause at the end of a line so it does not end in an adjective

that modifies a noun at the beginning of the next line. In all of this, the translator-interpreter may feel some confidence that s/he is in agreement with the rhapsodic tradition.[8]

However, there are two difficulties to overcome. First is the matter of the basic foot. I don't think that dactyls or anapests work well here because they are too reminiscent of comic limericks which enjoy broad popularity in the English-speaking world. It is more suited to the generally solemn atmosphere of Homeric texts to stay with iambs and trochees in English and only inject an occasional dactyl or spondee as needed to support the particular mood.

The second difficulty is line accordance. Homeric verse apparently achieves this by keeping a dactyl in the fifth foot, almost never a spondee, followed by two syllables. In this way, the audience was no doubt conditioned to feel one line had ended and another could begin. The English-speaking versifier who depends on varying the rhythm is too hampered in his selection of word patterns if he tries to follow this Homeric prescription. However, another way of strengthening six-foot resolution can be mimetically accomplished through quantifying the total number of phonemes per line.

Assuming that standard descriptions of ancient Greek sounds are correct, the median number of phonemes, not including the rough breathing, per line in a number of samples that I have checked (*Od.*, I-V, 1-10; *Il.*, I-V, 1-10) is 33 with some lines going as high as 40 and others as low as 26. I have limited the range of phonemes in my hexameter line to between 28 and 35, which are within the Homeric range. I only allow 35 phonemes if the line contains more than any two of the sounds h, w or y, which don't have the feel of a full consonantal stop. The median number of phonemes in my translation below is 31. Generally, I prefer a smaller number of phonemes than there are in the Homeric median since the slight pauses between words in English must lengthen the line somewhat in time. In keeping to this range, I have often shortened a line to 11 syllables. Though I do not have the means to make exact measurements of the effect of this scheme upon listeners and/or readers, I am not much troubled because there is no way of knowing *precisely* how ancient Greek meter affected its audience. (Note, however, that Robert Frost's pentameter in 'Mending Wall' has a median of 27 phonemes in a line that has a range of 21 to 32 phonemes. Therefore, the modern English-speaking poetry audience is no stranger to a line of 31 phonemes.) In sum, then, I achieve line accordance in my hexameters through a combination of six feet, six stresses,

a range of 28 to 35 phonemes, and at least a slight pause at the end of each line. Of course, the reader can see the end of each line on the page. Hopefully, the sound rings in the mind.

My approach to versification can be summarized by analogy to optimality theory's linguistic constraints and priorities.[9] For one, the phonological component in a line, as stated above, has a constraint on the number of phonemes and a priority on six stress-dominated largely iambic feet. My verse puts a constraint on double trimeter line phrasing while it puts a priority on lines with phrases of varied stress that support contextual mood.Also, the diction constrains syntax to parataxis or common subordination while it prioritizes semantics that reflect colloquial idiom. For ease of grasp, the syntax has a further constraint on unusual word order but enjoys hyperbaton when it is confined to short phrases for emphasis that hardly causes the reader to pause.

**Focus**

In his 19th-century assessment, Matthew Arnold maintains that a winning trait of Homeric style is its nobility.[10] However, I would say that today's English-speaking audience is more interested in Homeric humanism than an aristocratic or high-minded attitude. To us, the nurturing matron, the anxious father and the maturing son are far more important than a hierarchy of class or morality. In this vein, I have Odysseus recall an abridged form of what today must seem strange and surreal travels, *not* to an audience of Phaeacian hosts toward the end of his travels, though I have him later mention that he has told them his tale. Rather, I have him, after he gets home, recount his journeys to his son, who wants to know where Odysseus has been while he has been so needed. In addition to a familial interest, we may also take a social-studies interest in the world that shaped Homeric literature. We may note that in the *Odyssey* the leading family is beset by would-be usurpers who pay such a heavy price for their effrontery that the threat to society can only be put off by greater powers, that is, Zeus and Athena calling an end to the anger and bloodshed. A modern may be reminded of the too harsh terms of the Versailles Treaty at the end of World War I and the wiser Allied attitude leading to the rehabilitation of Germany and Japan after World War II. In this spirit, the modern rhapsodist can take Teiresias' prophecy not merely as a formulaic refrain for Odysseus to repeat to Penelope after they are re-united but also as something that can be joined to Athena's social resolution at the end. For Teiresias foretells not only Odysseus' restoration but also his

journey and removal to another land. The translator can see that this will leave Ithaca in Telemachus' hands. In Athena's final speech, the rhapsodist interpreter can have the goddess put an end to social disruption and also approve a son's maturity, a wife-and-mother's faithfulness and a father's accomplishments. The general point is that in shortening Odysseus' travels and adding to Athena's summation, today's singer of the tale focuses on aspects that have greater appeal to his own audience.

Likewise, in the final book of the *Iliad*, the tale can be somewhat altered to put the focus more on Priam and Achilles and less on their divine puppet-masters, whose machinations among mortals may well be abridged. Here I offer the climactic section (*Il.*, XXIV) that I would make the center-piece — one that also offers an illustration of my approach to Homeric versification in English:

No one saw peerless Priam enter the hut
and then walk toward Achilles. On his knees,
he kissed the grim hands that'd slain all his sons.
    Just as when a great lord's surprised at his gate    480
to see a worn-out beggar, dust on a ragged cloak,
come some way from foreign lands, seeking shelter,
Achilles was amazed to behold weary Priam,
as were the company. They looked at one another.
    Then Priam made his appeal. This is what he said:    485
"Peleus' son, Achilles, consider your own father,
who just like me is on the verge of old age.
It may well be that those who live near him ever
make demands, and no one can keep him from harm.
Still, as long as he hears you are alive and well    490
he takes comfort in the hope that one fine day
he'll behold his dear son come home from Troy.
    "Yet I am at a loss, for my sons were the best
in all the land, but not a single one remains.
Fifty strong sons I had when Achaeans came.    495
Nineteen of them one good woman gave birth;
palace ladies bore the rest of my dear sons.
My boys were many, but wild Ares laid all low.
Only Hector still guarded his home and folks,
but you slew him too — while he stood defending    500
his own land. Now I have come to Achaean ships
to get him back by offering a ransom untold.

"Only revere the gods, Achilles, and pity me
as you would your father. I'm far more pitiful.
I suffer what no one's ever felt in the whole world 505
as I reach out to someone who has slain my boys."
These words made Achilles weep for his own father.
He took the old man's hand, gently moving him off.
So the two men each thought of their fallen and wept.
One at Achilles' feet mourned the warrior Hector, 510
while the other grieved for a father and lamented
Patroclus: their loud moans went up through the roof.
But when superb Achilles had cried enough,
and thus body and soul no longer felt such need,
he straightway arose and got the old man up, 515
feeling sorry for Priam's gray beard and head.
Achilles spoke to him by blurting out these words:
"Your soul, poor man, has come to know many horrors.
How did you have the heart to come to Achaean ships
and stand face to face with me — though I have slain 520
all your stalwart sons? Your heart is like iron!
"Yet come and take a chair. Quietly we'll think
about our troubles — despite the great pain we feel.
Mourning without feeling is but meaningless.
Here's a fate the immortals have bestowed on us: 525
unlike gods, we humans fall prey to our sorrow…."

**Conclusion**

In retrospect, a descriptive analysis of my work reveals several products. First, my translating and adapting the source poem in the above passage constitute a line-by-line *metapoem*.[11] However, metapoem sections go with other portions which I abridge from the source and then render into the same poetic style as the line-by-line translation. Also, additional sections are created in the same poetic style, in order to smooth disturbing inconsistencies or to bridge the text with explanations lacking in the source. For convenient appellation, an abridgement or addition may be termed an *epipoem* insofar as 'epi' may mean 'among' or 'in addition.' To give an air of authenticity to the text, a fictional introduction or *paratext*[12] is created to vouch for this final *metaversion*.

Yet beyond the metaversion, the translator benefits as a writer who may winnow what s/he has learned from the production. The experience offers the creation of *parastylistics* that can contribute to a poet's facility with language and add confidence to self-expression. For

even a style developed for an ancient text can support modern existential concerns. In this regard, I offer the following poem I have rendered in hexameters on today's human dilemma:[13]

> Assume our world is neither a dream within dreams
> nor, more resistant to bare fact, divine making.
> What investigation says of the cosmos hardly
> reassures us that our existence is secure.
> The saber tooth could fell behemoths that grazed 5
> and fled in herds; the giant sloth could reach leaves.
> Yet when grasses wilted, and leaf and tree died,
> tooth fell, sloth miniaturized. We too evolve:
> when we were apes, we dined on fruit, rarely meat,
> but was it to our good we found stick and stone? 10
> We seem to own the land: we do well and flourish,
> but what we do can undo us. Our multitudes
> become pandemic prone. Yet even if we make
> shields against disease, we can kill humankind
> with atom or fume. No cause to pat one another 15
> on the back! For the planet, eruption ripe,
> can incinerate us all. Should some of us remain,
> a comet could just hit the earth. What if some
> escape to a space station or else a far planet,
> is human life assured? All we have is acceptance 20
> of precarious today and transient tomorrow.
> The great enigma remains our hate for each other.
> It's a puzzle whose pieces we need to fit together
> because we are the other to the other that we hate.
> We slaughter one another while the universe 25
> prowls and crouches over us all, set to pounce.
> — January 26, 2008

Although the parastylistics here do not include dialogue, they share my general prescription for Homeric verse in English. The prosody includes a six-foot stress-syllabic line within the range of 28 to 35 phonemes. The syntax is largely parataxis with some easily grasped subordination. The phrasing is idiomatic and comprehensible on a surface level. There are some embedded clauses, but none that are lengthy. The word order is usual, avoiding hyperbaton altogether. With few incidences of doubled trimeter, the majority of lines exhibit variety in stress patterns and pause positioning. Most meaningful, my poem shares with my metapoem above a concern for the human posi-

tion in the cosmos, a recurrent epic theme.

The ability to compose in this manner is, then, a result of the translation process. Creating a poetic dialect from standard prose and abridging or adding sections in the same style can imbue the translator with poetic skills for original poetic endeavors. Also, writing about the metaversion as a text offers creative possibilities, especially if the effort is made from a fictional standpoint. Thus, the process of literary translation can offer the translator — and the reader — a variety of imaginative experiences.

**Notes**

**Abbreviations:** *Il. = Iliad; Od. = Odyssey*

**Bibliography**

Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Philadephia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995), pp. 147-80.

Milman Parry, *The Making of Homeric Verse*, Ed. Adam Milman (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 241, 251, 428.

Milman Parry, pp. 1, 8, 275; John Miles Foley, *The Theory of Oral Composition: History and Methodology* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1988), pp. 25, 28; Terence Mornet, *Oral Tradition and Literary Dependency* (Tubingen: Mohr-Siebect, 2005), p. 68

Milman Parry, pp. 153, 172.

Adam Parry, 'Introduction' in Milman Parry, *The Making of Homer Verse*, pp. xxxiii-iv.

James S. Holmes, *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*, 2nd Edition (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988), p. 26.

Foley, p. 58.

Foley, p. 27.

Paul Smolensky and Geraldine Legendre, *The Harmonic Mind* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2006 pp. 125-7.

Matthew Arnold, *On Translating Homer* (London: Smith, Elder & Son, 1861 reprinted 1896), p. 10.

Holmes, pp. 9, 24-6, 29-30.

Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, Trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987 trans. 1997), pp. 1-2, 277-93.

Cf. Steven Pinker, 'Introduction' in *What is Your Dangerous Idea? Today's Leading Thinkers on the Unthinkable*, Ed. John Brockman (New York: Harper, 2007), pp. xxiii- xxxiii.

## **Translation in Autobiography/Autobiography in Translation: Sarah Winnemucca's Self-Translated 'I'**

Lorena Carbonara

> Should I be sitting here … if I did not know that I was speaking for thousands? Should you be sitting there, while the world's work waits, if you did not know that I spoke also for you? I might say 'you' or 'he' instead of 'I.' Or I might be silent, while you spoke for me and the rest, but for the accident that I was born with a pen in my hand, and you without. We love to read the lives of the great, yet what a broken history of mankind they give, unless supplemented by the lives of the humble. … It is well now and then that one is born among the simple with a taste for self-revelation. The man and woman thus endowed must speak, will speak, though there are only grasses in the field to hear, and none but the wind to convey the tale. (Antin, *The Promised Land* quoted in Dearborn 40)[1]

The opening quotation helps me to introduce the topic of this paper, as it suggests the idea of "relationality", which provides a *trait d'union* between Translation and Native American autobiography. The aim is to juxtapose the two areas in order to establish what Susan Friedman calls "creative connections" between apparently dissimilar things (*Networking Women*). The terms relationality, responsibility, contamination and transformation will be used to create a sort of grid, in which I will move to show the "positionality" of Sarah Winnemucca, the first Native American woman to write and publish an autobiography in English, namely *Life among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims* (1883).

Starting from the assumption that selfhood exists in a network of other selves and events, and that "identity writing" is, basically, the writing of relationships, as Mary Dearborn maintains in *Gender and Ethnicity in American Culture* (181), it will be argued that:

- translation is a relational activity, connecting authors and readers all over the world, as suggested by Sherry Simon (83);

---

[1] Mary Antin, best known for her autobiography *The Promised Land* (1912), belonged to a Jewish family emigrated from Russia to America. She was an immigration rights activist and widely lectured in the States on her personal experience of assimilation into America culture.