Translation and the Pedagogy of Literature

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The reflections that follow derive fundamentally from the current predicament of English-language translation in the global cultural economy. English remains the most translated language worldwide, but one of the least translated into. The translations issued by British and American publishers comprise about 2 percent of their total output each year, approximately 1200 to 1400 books, whereas in many foreign countries, large and small, west and east, the percentage tends to be significantly higher: 6 percent in Japan (approximately 2500 books), 10 percent in France (4000), 14 percent in Hungary (1200), 15 percent in Germany (8000), 25 percent in Italy (3000) (Grannis 1993). This asymmetry in translation patterns ensures that the United States and the United Kingdom enjoy a hegemony over foreign countries that is not simply political and economic, as the particular case may be, but cultural as well.

The international sway of English, furthermore, coincides with the marginality of translation in contemporary Anglo-American culture. Although British and American literature circulates in many foreign languages, commanding the capital of many foreign publishers, the translating of foreign literatures into English attracts relatively little investment and notice. Translation is underpaid, critically unrecognized, and largely invisible to English-language readers. The power of Anglo-American culture abroad has limited the circulation of foreign cultures at home, decreasing the domestic opportunities for thinking about the nature of linguistic and cultural difference. Of course, no language can entirely exclude the possibility of different dialects and discourses, different cultural codes and constituencies. And this fact is borne out by the current variety of Englishes, not just the differences between British and American usage, but the diverse linguistic and cultural forms that exist within English-

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speaking nations. Nonetheless, the risk posed by the marginal position of translation is a cultural narcissism and complacency, an unconcern with the foreign that can only impoverish Anglo-American culture and foster values and policies grounded in inequality and exploitation.

The marginality of translation reaches even to educational institutions, where it is manifested in a troubling contradiction: on the one hand, an utter dependence on translated texts in curricula and research; on the other hand, a general tendency, in both teaching and publications, to elide the status of translated texts as translated, to treat them as texts originally written in the translating language. Although since the 1970s translation has emerged more decisively as a field of academic study and as an area of investment in academic publishing, institutionalized as the creative writing workshop, the certificate program, the curriculum in translation theory and criticism, and the book series dedicated to literary translations or translation studies—despite this increasing recognition, the fact of translation continues to be repressed in the teaching of translated literature. My aim is to explore two questions raised by this repression: What are its cultural and political costs, that is, what knowledges and practices does it make possible or eliminate? And what pedagogy can be developed to address the issue of translation, that is, the "remainder" of domestic values inscribed in the foreign text during the translating process?

I

Given the unavoidable use of translations in colleges and universities, the repression is remarkably widespread. On the undergraduate level, the syllabi in "humanities" or "Great Books" courses devoted to the canonical texts of western culture consist primarily of English translations from archaic and modern languages. Beyond such first- and second-year courses, translations are indispensable to undergraduate and graduate curricula in numerous disciplines, including comparative literature, philosophy, history, political science, anthropology, and sociology. Some foreign-language departments have responded to fluctuating enrollments during the post-World War II period by instituting courses in which specific foreign literatures are read solely in English translation. And over the past twenty years translation made possible the developments in cultural theory that have radically transformed Anglo-American literary criticism, introducing new methodologies, linking culture to social and political issues, and spawning such interdisciplinary tendencies as cultural studies. These concepts, debates, and curriculum revisions are in many cases concerned with the question of linguistic and cultural difference that lies at the heart of translation: the issue of ethnic and racial ideologies in cultural representations; the elaboration of postcolonial theory to study colonialism and colonized cultures throughout world history; and the emergence of multiculturalism to challenge European cultural canons, especially as embodied in Great Books courses. Yet

teaching and research have tended not to address their dependence on translation. Little attention is given to the fact that the interpretations taught and published in academic institutions are often at some remove from the foreign-language text, mediated by the translation discourse of the English-language translator.

The extent of this repression can be gauged from *Approaches to Teaching World Literature*, a series published by the Modern Language Association of America. Begun in 1980 and now totaling more than fifty volumes, the series assembles bibliographical data and pedagogical techniques for canonical literary texts, archaic and modern, including texts written in foreign languages. It also constitutes a broad sampling of current teaching practices in the United States and Canada. As the series editor points out in a general preface, "the preparation of each volume begins with a wide-ranging survey of instructors, thus enabling us to include in the volume the philosophies and approaches, thoughts and methods of scores of experienced teachers." Among the foreign-language texts selected for treatment are Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1982), Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1984), Camus's *The Plague* (1985), Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1984), Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (1987), Goethe's *Faust* (1987), Voltaire's *Candide* (1987), the Hebrew Bible (1989), Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1990), and Montaigne's *Essays* (1994). In the volumes devoted to foreign-language texts, the bibliographical section, entitled "Materials," routinely contains a discussion of translations which evaluates them mainly according to utilitarian criteria: accuracy, accessibility to contemporary students, market availability, popularity among the survey respondents. Yet in the pedagogical section, entitled "Approaches," translation is rarely made a topic of discussion, even though many of the essays refer explicitly to the use of English-language versions in the classroom.

An essay in the volume on Dante, for instance, "Teaching Dante's *Divine Comedy* in Translation," describes an undergraduate course on medieval Italian literature offered at the University of Toronto. Despite the title, only one paragraph in this seven-page essay is reserved for comments on translation. After indicating that the main "problem" confronting late twentieth-century readers of Dante is cultural "distance," the instructor adds:

> There is another barrier between the students and Dante in this course: language. We read the *Divine Comedy* in translation, and no matter how good the translation is, it can never be Dante. No translator can hope to capture the flow and rhythm of Dante's verse, simply because of the intrinsic differences between English and Italian. There is another hazard in translation. In the original text there are always ambiguities that the translator cannot reproduce. Before a difficult passage, he or she is obliged to adopt a critical stance. Thus, any translation of the *Divine Comedy* is heavily colored by the translator's interpretation of it. Interpretive options that exist in Dante's Italian are eliminated, and ambiguities, perhaps unknown to the original, are created. Not even prose translations can escape this kind of distortion: in their effort to secure the letter, they completely destroy the spirit. That is why I prefer a verse

> translation. In my opinion, it is worth sacrificing a little accuracy for a sense of Dante's poetry. Although it is not without shortcomings, I use Dorothy Sayers' translation of the *Divine Comedy*. (Iannucci 155)

Here the paragraph ends. It shows the instructor's fairly sophisticated understanding of how translation both loses linguistic and cultural features of the foreign text and adds others specific to the target-language culture. But the elliptical reference to Dorothy Sayers's version makes clear that this understanding is not brought into the classroom in any systematic or otherwise illuminating way. The instructor asserts that "the objective of this course is twofold: first, to help the students comprehend Dante's poetic world in the context of medieval culture and, second, to make them aware of the critical process itself" (155). Yet what seems to be missing is any consequential awareness that at least *two* different critical processes are at work: the translator's, the "interpretation" represented by Sayers's version, and the instructor's, his reconstruction of "Dante's poetic world" in the form of "ten introductory lectures designed to bridge the historical and cultural gaps between us and Dante and to establish a critical framework within which to interpret the poem" (155).

The problem is that neither translation nor lecture can "bridge" these "gaps" entirely. Thus, although the instructor aims to remove every "barrier" between the student and the Italian text, he believes, somewhat contradictorily, that "the *Divine Comedy* needs mediation, now more than ever, if we are to avoid a simplistic, anachronistic reading" (155). This mediation inevitably erects another barrier: it reflects contemporary scholarship on Dante's poem and medieval Italian culture, "the latest literature on the subject," "modern critical opinion, at least in North America" (156). The reading in this course can't avoid anachronism and the "distortion" of "ambiguities, perhaps unknown to the original," because it is based on a British translation published in the 1940s in a mass-market paperback series, the Penguin Classics, and taught in a Canadian university in the late 1970s.

In failing to teach the translated status of the text, the instructor bears out Jacques Derrida's suggestive remark that translation is a "political-institutional problem of the University: it, like all teaching in its traditional form, and perhaps all teaching whatever, has as its ideal, with exhaustive translatability, the effacement of language" (Derrida 93–94). Current pedagogy implicitly conceives of translation as communication unaffected by the language that makes it possible, or in Derrida's words, "governed by the classical model of transportable vocality or of formalizable polysemia" (93). To think of translation as "dissemination," however, as the release of different meanings owing to the substitution of a different language, raises a political problem: it questions the distribution of power in the classroom by exposing the linguistic and cultural conditions that complicate the instructor's interpretation. Studying the meanings that Sayers's English version inscribes in Dante's Italian text would weaken the interpretive authority of the instructor who teaches

that his reading is true or adequate to the Italian, despite his assimilation of modern scholarship and the students' use of the translation. Although the instructor's essay reveals his awareness that translation involves an unpredictable dissemination of meaning, that a ratio of loss and gain occurs between source- and target-language texts, his teaching assumes that this ratio has been overcome, that his interpretation is a transparent English-language translation.

What is preserved here is the authority not merely of the instructor's interpretation, but of the language in which it is communicated—English. For, as Derrida observes, the ideal of translatability that currently informs the university also "neutralizes [a] national language" (94), that is, the fact that the language of instruction is not impartial in its representation of foreign texts, but *national*, specific to English-speaking countries. The repression of translation in the classroom conceals the inevitable inscription of British and American cultural values in the foreign text, yet simultaneously treats English as the transparent vehicle of universal truth, thus encouraging a linguistic chauvinism, even a cultural nationalism. This is more likely to occur in humanities courses, where a translation of a canonical foreign text may be enlisted in domestic agendas. The reactionary defense of the Great Books, for example, has often assumed a continuity between them and a national British or American culture while ignoring important cultural and historical differences, including those introduced by translation. William Bennett's controversial report on humanities education in the United States is typical: the canonical texts of European literature and philosophy must be "the core of the American college curriculum," he argues, because "we are a part and a product of Western civilization" —even though the students in "core" courses cannot read the western languages in which most of those texts were written (Bennett 21). As John Guillory points out, "the translation of the 'classics' into one's own vernacular is a powerful institutional buttress of imaginary cultural continuities; it confirms the nationalist agenda by permitting the easy appropriation of texts in foreign languages" (Guillory 43). When the issue of translation is repressed in the teaching of translated texts, the translating language and culture are valorized, seen as expressing the truth of the foreign, whereas in fact they are constructing an image bent to domestic intelligibilities and interests.

A pedagogy of translated literature can help students learn to be both self-critical and critical of exclusionary cultural ideologies by drawing attention to the situatedness of texts and interpretations. Translations are always intelligible to, if not intentionally made for, specific cultural constituencies at specific historical moments. The repression of translation makes ideas and forms appear to be free-floating, unmoored from history, transcending the linguistic and cultural differences that required not merely their translation in the first place, but also their interpretation in a classroom. The effort to reconstruct the period in which the foreign text was produced, to create a historical context for interpretation, does not so

much compensate for the loss of historicity as complicate and exacerbate it: students are encouraged to regard their historical interpretations as immanent in the texts, not determined by translation discourses and critical methodologies that answer to the cultural values of different, later moments. As a result, students develop a concept of interpretive truth as simple adequacy to the text, ignoring the fact that they are actively constituting it by selecting and synthesizing textual evidence and historical research, and that therefore their interpretation is shaped by linguistic and cultural constraints—which include their reliance on a translation. Recognizing a text as translated and figuring this recognition into classroom interpretations can teach students that their critical operations are limited and provisional, situated in a changing history of reception, in a specific cultural situation, in a curriculum, in a particular language. And with the knowledge of limitations comes the awareness of possibilities, different ways of understanding the foreign text, different ways of understanding their own cultural moments.

Such a pedagogy would obviously force a rethinking of courses, curricula, canons, and disciplines. After all, translations are usually assigned as required readings because the foreign texts they translate are valued highly, not because of their own value—even if particular translations are undoubtedly selected over others according to various criteria. Addressing the issue of translation in the classroom makes these valuations problematic because it requires a double focus, encompassing not just the foreign text and culture, but the text and culture of the translation. Hence, the instructor must displace canonical texts and confront the concept of a canonical translation; revise syllabi and reapportion classroom time; develop course materials that cross disciplinary divisions between languages and periods. Not only Dante, but Dorothy Sayers must be taught, not only medieval Florentine culture, but Oxford literary culture before the Second World War (for a first step in reconstructing the context of Sayers's translation, see Reynolds). A detailed and informed juxtaposition of selected Italian and English passages would illuminate the unique features of the two texts as well as their different cultural and historical moments. Yet students would also learn that the Great Books are only as Great as their translations permit them to be, that canonicity depends not simply on textual features, but also on forms of reception which reflect the values of specific cultural constituencies to the exclusion of others.

Because a pedagogy of translated literature aims to understand linguistic and cultural difference, it would exemplify Henry Giroux's concept of a "border pedagogy," in which "culture is not viewed as monolithic or unchanging, but as a shifting sphere of multiple and heterogeneous borders where different histories, languages, experiences, and voices intermingle amid diverse relations of power and privilege" (Giroux 32). Teaching the issue of translation reveals how different forms of reception construct the significance of the foreign text, but also which of these forms are dominant or marginalized in the domestic culture at any historical

moment. Such a pedagogy can intervene in the current debates concerning multiculturalism, although in an unexpected way. It does not insist that European literary canons be abandoned: this would not be a strategic move, anyway, when contemporary culture continues to be at once deeply rooted in European cultural traditions and utterly dependent on translations of their canonical texts. A pedagogy that addresses translation would likewise question any simple integration of these texts with those of excluded cultures, or in other words the notion of a multicultural canon: this would equalize by removing the historical specificity that distinguishes texts, creating what Giroux calls "the horizon of a false equality and a depoliticized notion of consensus," ignoring the exclusions that enter into any canon formation and any educational institution (32; see also Guillory 53). Studying translation rather suggests that respect for cultural difference—a pedagogical goal of multiculturalism—can be learned by historicizing various forms of receiving the foreign, including the discursive forms applied in the translation of foreign texts, canonical and marginal.

A pedagogy of translated literature can thus serve the political agenda that Giroux conceives for border pedagogy. "If," he observes, "the concept of border pedagogy is to be linked to the imperatives of a critical democracy, as it must be, educators must possess a theoretical grasp of the ways in which difference is constructed through various representations and practices that name, legitimate, marginalize, and exclude the voices of subordinate groups in American society" (32). The mention of "American" suggests that Giroux is thinking only about varieties of English, not foreign languages, and not the question of translation; like other champions of multiculturalism, the only borders he conceives are those between American cultural constituencies. Yet current translation rates indicate that foreign cultures are certainly "subordinate" in such English-speaking countries as the United Kingdom and the United States. More fundamentally, translation effectively enacts a degree of subordination in any target language by constructing a representation of the foreign text that is inscribed with domestic cultural values. By bringing to light the domestication at work in every translated text and assessing its cultural and political significance, a pedagogy of translated literature, like Giroux's border pedagogy, can function as "part of a broader politics of difference [which] makes primary the language of the political and ethical" (28). When students see that translation is not simple communication, but an appropriation of the foreign text to serve domestic purposes, they can come to question the appropriative movements in their own encounters with foreign cultures.

Still, in the classroom this agenda can be served only by scrutinizing the aesthetic qualities of the translated text, locating difference at the level of language and style, dialect and discourse. Teaching the issue of translation requires close attention to the formal properties of literature, while demonstrating that these properties are always historically situated, laden with the values of the cultural constituencies by

and for which the translation was produced. Here, learning respect for cultural difference involves a double operation: on the one hand, recognizing the distinctively domestic nuances added to foreign themes, what in the translation is not foreign and unavoidably alters the possible meanings of the foreign text; and, on the other hand, allowing those themes and meanings to defamiliarize domestic cultural values, revealing their hierarchical arrangements, their canons and margins.

II

A pedagogy of translated literature, then, will examine differences not only between the foreign text and the translation, but within the translation itself. This can be done by focusing on what Jean-Jacques Lecercle describes as the "remainder," textual effects that exceed transparent uses of language geared to communication and reference and may in fact impede them, with varying degrees of violence. The remainder is constituted by the diversity of linguistic forms, past and present, which the language user employs selectively to communicate, but which, because of their previous uses, inevitably outstrip such control and play havoc with intended meanings. In the case of translation, the remainder consists of textual effects that work only in the target language, domestic linguistic forms that are added to the foreign text in the translating process and run athwart the translator's effort to communicate that text. As Lecercle observes,

> A text in English will in all probability use various dialects, registers, and styles; it will, consciously or not, refer to various moments in the history of the language and its people, embodied in the lexicon or in syntax—multiplicity and polychrony reign in the simplest text. Yet it is written *in English*, in a temporarily unified language. (205)

An English-language translation will release a range of effects that are peculiar to English, but repressed whenever the translation is read as a transparent communication, or indeed as indistinguishable from the foreign text. Teaching the issue of translation means teaching the remainder in the translated text, calling attention to the multiple, polychronic forms that destabilize its unity and cloud over its seeming transparency.

To exemplify this pedagogy, let us take Trevor Saunders's recent translation of Plato's *Ion*, a text that might appear on course syllabi at various levels, undergraduate and graduate, and in various academic departments and programs—English, comparative literature, philosophy, humanities. In this brief dialogue, Socrates argues that the rhapsode Ion performs and interprets Homer's poetry, just as Homer wrote that poetry, by virtue of divine inspiration, not knowledge. As the argument unfolds through Socrates's typical questioning, there is much irony at Ion's expense: he is portrayed as conceited and unthinking, occasionally unable to follow Socrates's reasoning. If we approach the English version reading for the remainder, what

quickly becomes noticeable is that the ironic effects are linked to a strain of colloquialism, notably British, in a translation discourse that tends for the most part to adhere to the standard dialect. The colloquialism does not simply support the irony; it also attaches a class significance to the argument of the dialogue.

Ion is given several colloquial idioms. One occurs near the end, at a point where he is speaking in a most conceited and unthinking fashion:

> *Socrates:* Now then, are you, as a rhapsode, the best among the Greeks?
>
> *Ion:* By a long chalk, Socrates.
>
> (Saunders 64)

"By a long chalk," a distinctively British idiom meaning "to a great degree" (*OED*), renders *polou ge*, a Greek phrase which, in a version that sticks closer to standard usage, could be rendered as "very much so" (Burnet 541b). The colloquialisms appear not only in Ion's lexicon, but in his syntax too. At the beginning, Socrates points to the similarities among the Greek poets in an effort to show that Ion's enthusiasm for Homer alone is not based on any knowledge of poetry:

> *Socrates: What of the other poets? Don't they talk about these same topics?*
>
> *Ion*: Yes—but Socrates, they haven't composed like Homer has. (51)

A comparison with the Greek—*onch homoios pepoiekasi kai Omeros*—reveals the translator's hand, since it contains nothing that resembles Ion's use of "like" for "as" (Burnet 531d). The translator deliberately chose the colloquial syntax instead of a rendering in standard English, such as "not in the way that Homer has written poetry," or Benjamin Jowett's freer version, "not in the same way as Homer" (Jowett 499). The conjunctival use of "like" is conversational, of course, so that as a translation it can be viewed as appropriate to the genre of the Greek text, a dialogue. Yet the effect is nonetheless to brand Ion as a speaker of substandard English, perhaps implying a limited education, if not simply inferior social standing. In the words of the *OED,* which are later quoted by prescriptive stylistic manuals like Fowler's, this usage is "now generally condemned as vulgar or slovenly" (Fowler 334–35).

In the translation, the colloquial becomes a signal of Ion's dimwittedness. And Socrates often adopts such usages when he waxes ironic, in effect talking down to Ion, puffing up the rhapsode's pride while using language that suggests his pride is unwarranted. Usually, a brief phrase is enough to signify the irony. The translator has Socrates say "in a nutshell" for *en kephalaioi,* "to conclude," and "my dear chap" for *ophile kephale,* a salutation that means "dear friend" but refers to the friend metonymically by indicating the head (*kephale*)—clearly a wink at Ion's bafflement in the Greek text (Burnet 531e, d). Aside from these barbs, there is an extended passage at the opening of the dialogue in which the strain of British colloquialism is pronounced:

> I must confess, Ion, I've often envied you rhapsodes your art, which makes it *right and proper* for you to dress up and look as *grand* as you can. And how enviable also to have to immerse yourself in a great many good poets, especially Homer, the best and most inspired of them, and to have to *get up* his thought and not just his lines!
>
> (Saunders 49; emphasis added)

None of the italicized words is so free as to be judged a mistranslation, even if none of their Greek counterparts can be called colloquial: the phrase "to get up," for example, renders *ekmanthanein*, "to know thoroughly, to learn by rote" (Burnet 530c). Still, the combined effect of the translator's choices is to give a peculiarly British informality to the language. The idea that Socrates is talking down to Ion in such passages becomes evident in the course of the dialogue, since Socrates speaks in other dialects: in the translation as in the Greek text, only his lexicon includes philosophical abstractions, and these repeatedly baffle Ion:

> *Socrates*: It's obvious to everyone that you are unable to speak about Homer with skill and knowledge [*techne kai episteme*]—because if you were about to do it by virtue of a skill, you would be able to speak about all the other poets too. You see, I suppose, there exists an art of poetry as a whole [*olon*], doesn't there?
>
> *Ion*: Yes, there does.
>
> *Socrates*: So whatever other skill you take as a whole, the same method of inquiry [*tropos tes skepseos*] will apply to every one of them? Do you want to hear me explain the point I'm making, Ion?
>
> *Ion*: Yes, by Zeus, Socrates, I do.
>
> (Saunders 52–53; Burnet 532c, d)

In effect, the colloquialism in the translation inscribes a class code into the thematic hierarchies that inform the Greek text. The most conspicuous of these hierarchies is epistemological: Socrates aims to show that Ion neither possesses the skill or knowledge of performance and interpretation, nor understands the philosophical concept at issue, the notion that knowledge is systematic and specialized and enables the performance and evaluation of all practices within a particular field or discipline. Hence, Socrates argues, Ion should be able to perform and interpret all poets with equal success, not just Homer, whom he judges to be the best while failing to explain the grounds of his judgment. In setting Socrates above Ion as the position from which this argument becomes intelligible or obvious, the Greek text privileges philosophy over performance, theoretical over practical knowledges.

This epistemological hierarchy also carries political implications. In two passages, Ion's native city is identified as Ephesus, which he describes as "ruled [*archetai*] by you Athenians," and several topical allusions date his conversation with Socrates to a period before Ephesus revolted from Athenian domination (Moore; Meiggs). As a result, the dialogue seems to be offering a nationalistic representation

of Athenians (in the person of Socrates) as intellectually superior to their colonial subjects, and Ion's ignorance legitimizes Athenian imperialism: dimwitted Ephesians require the guidance of the Platonic philosopher kings in Athens. In the translation, this ideological burden is brought into English and further complicated by the different dialects: the speaker of the standard dialect, educated in philosophical abstraction, is valued over the speaker of colloquialisms, who lacks an education in philosophy even if he is a very successful performer.

Teaching the remainder can thus illuminate both the Greek text and the English version. The dialectal difference, especially insofar as it is the vehicle of irony, is useful in drawing attention to the cultural and political hierarchies constructed in the Platonic argument and so to its historical specificity. But insofar as the dialects constitute a peculiarly English-language remainder, they also establish a contemporary, domestic relevance that exposes the hierarchical values in Anglo-American culture, in English. Teaching the remainder can make students realize that the translation enacts an interpretation, but also that this interpretation may be summoned to support or interrogate the representations of Socrates and Ion in the Greek text. Ion's dialect, for example, can seem right, revealing of his slow intellect and limited education; or it can seem stigmatized, expressive of cultural elitism and determined by class domination. In thinking through such possibilities, students can learn about the limits of their own interpretations: whether they read the colloquialism as a verification or a demystification of the Platonic argument, their reading will depend not merely on textual evidence and historical research (for instance, an informed answer to the question of whether Ion does in fact possess a form of knowledge), but also on the cultural and political values which they bring to the translation.

Scrutinizing the remainder offers a productive method of teaching the issue of translation. In the classroom it can be done on the basis of brief, pointedly selected passages, and it need not involve an extended comparison between the foreign and translated texts, even if such a comparison is extremely informative. The remainder is pedagogically useful because it can be perceived in the translation itself, in the various textual effects released in the target language. It enables a close reading of translations *as translations*, as texts that simultaneously communicate and inscribe the foreign text with domestic values. Hence, this reading is also historical: the remainder becomes intelligible in a translation only when its diverse discourses, registers, and styles are situated in specific moments of the domestic culture. As Lecercle observes, the remainder is the persistence of earlier linguistic forms in current usage, "the locus for diachrony-within-synchrony, the place of inscription for past and present linguistic conjunctures" (215).

The temporal aspect of the remainder is perhaps most dramatically revealed when several translations of a single foreign text are juxtaposed. Multiple versions bring to light the different translation effects possible at different cultural moments,

allowing these effects to be studied as forms of reception affiliated with different cultural constituencies. An historical sampling can be especially helpful in demystifying a translation that has achieved canonical status in the domestic culture: when a translation comes to represent a foreign text for a broad audience, when in effect it comes to replace or be that text for readers, teaching the remainder can show that its cultural authority depends not simply on its superior accuracy or stylistic felicity, but also on its appeal to certain domestic values.

Take Richmond Lattimore's 1951 *Iliad*, by far the most widely used English version since its publication, "the preferred text of more than three-fourths of the respondents" to an MLA survey of instructors in departments of English, classics, comparative literature, history, philosophy, and anthropology (Myrsiades x, 4). Lattimore's version is quite close to the Greek, adhering even to the Homeric line, yet not so close as to eliminate the remainder that links the English text to a specific cultural moment—despite the apparent transcendence of its accuracy and its sheer readability for contemporary English-language readers.

Consider these lines from a key scene in the first book: Achilles's surrender of his captive Trojan mistress, Briseis, to the leader of the Greek force, Agamemnon:

> hos phato, Patroklos de philoi epepeitheth'h etairoi,
> ek d'agage klisies Briseida kallipareion,
> doke d'agein. to d'autis iten para neas Achaion.
> he d'aekous'h ama toisi gune kien. autar Achilleus
> dakrusas hetaron aphar ezeto nosphi liastheis,
> thin'eph'alos polies, horoon ep'apeirona ponton.
> polla de metri philei eresato chieras oregnus.
>
> (transcribed from Monro and Allen 13)

> So he spoke, and Patroklos obeyed his beloved companion.
> He led forth from the hut Briseis of the fair cheeks and gave her
> to be taken away; and they walked back beside the ships of the Achaians,
> and the woman all unwilling went with them still. But Achilleus
> weeping went and sat in sorrow apart from his companions
> beside the beach of the grey sea looking out on the infinite water.
> Many times stretching forth he called on his mother:
>
> (Lattimore 68)

Lattimore's translation discourse is grounded in a very simple register of the standard dialect, what he called "the plain English of today" (55). As he himself pointed out, he followed Matthew Arnold's prescriptions in *On Translating Homer* (1860): "the translator of Homer must bear in mind four qualities of his author: that he is rapid, plain and direct in thought and expression, plain and direct in substance, and noble" (55). This is a scholarly reading of the Greek text, performed, in Arnold's words, by "those who both know Greek and can appreciate poetry," and although he had in mind such Victorian classicists as Jowett, this reading has clearly prevailed into the present, informing Robert Fagles's version of *The Iliad* as well as

Lattimore's (Arnold 99; Fagles ix; Venuti 139–45). Although Lattimore wrote a scholarly translation, he felt a need to revise Arnold's call for a "poetical dialect of English" because "in 1951, we do not have a poetic dialect," and any poetical use of archaism, "the language of Spenser or the King James Version," seemed inappropriate to Homer's plainness (55).

Yet, as the above passage illustrates, a strain of archaism can in fact be detected in Lattimore's discourse, partly lexical ("beloved," "led forth"), partly syntactic (inversions like "weeping went"), partly prosodic ("a free six-beat line" that imitates the Homeric hexameter—as Arnold had also recommended) (for a similar reading of Lattimore's *Odyssey*, see Davenport). It is the archaism that gives the translation its poetic qualities, joining with the Greek and Latinate names and the close renderings of the epithets ("of the fair cheeks") to elevate the tone to a slight formality and make the verse seem "noble" or lofty. Where Lattimore departs from Arnold most tellingly is in keeping these qualities unobtrusive for a mid-to-late twentieth-century reader of English, restraining the remainder by minimizing the archaism. Although divided into poetic lines, Lattimore's version is cast in "the language of contemporary prose," which is to say the language of communication and reference, of realism, immediately intelligible and apparently transparent, a window onto meaning, reality, the foreign text. In a most successful way, Lattimore's *Iliad* updated the scholarly, Arnoldian reading, establishing this reading as natural or true by drawing on the broadest register of English usage since the 1940s.

Thus, Lattimore was not so much bridging the linguistic and cultural differences that separated his readers from the Greek text as rewriting it according to dominant domestic values. We can defamiliarize his translation by juxtaposing it with two others that also acquired significant cultural authority, although at earlier moments in literary history: the versions of George Chapman (1608) and Alexander Pope (1715). The historical distance will highlight the remainder in their translations, the English cultural values they inscribe in the Greek text, but it will also call attention to their remarkable differences from Lattimore.

> This speech usd, Patroclus did the rite
> His friend commanded and brought forth Briseis from her tent,
> Gave her the heralds, and away to th'Achive ships they went.
> She, sad, and scarce for griefe could go. Her love all friends forsooke
> And wept for anger. To the shore of th'old sea he betooke
> Himselfe alone and, casting forth upon the purple sea
> His wet eyes and his hands to heaven advancing, this sad plea
> Made to his mother:
>
> (Chapman 33–34)

> *Patroclus* now th'unwilling Beauty brought;
> She, in soft Sorrows, and in pensive Thought,
> Past silent, as the Heralds held her Hand,
> And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the Strand.

> Not so his Loss the fierce *Achilles* bore;
> But sad retiring to the sounding Shore,
> O'er the wild Margin of the Deep he hung,
> That kindred Deep, from whence his Mother sprung.
> There, bath'd in Tears of Anger and Disdain,
> Thus loud lamented to the stormy Main.
>
> (Pope 109–10)

If our reading focuses merely on the lexical differences (excluding the other features of these rich passages), the versions by Chapman and Pope reveal a marked anxiety about the gender representations in Homer's poem. For both translators, the fact of Achilles's weeping was so difficult to assimilate to early modern concepts of masculinity that they needed not only to revise the Greek text, but to supplement their translations with explanatory notes. Chapman reduced the weeping to "wet eyes," to which he lent an air of normalcy by introducing "friends" who also "wept for anger" at Briseis's departure; Pope redefined the "Tears" by associating them with "Anger and Disdain." Chapman's comment on the passage typifies the pervasive syncretism in Renaissance culture, comparing the pagan hero to "our All-perfect and Almightie Saviour, who wept for Lazarus," but it also puts the gender issue in a distinctively masculinist form: "Who can denie that there are teares of manlinesse and magnanimitie as well as womanish and pusillanimous?" (Chapman 44). Pope's note rationalized his revision with the equally masculinist argument that "it is no Weakness in Heroes to weep" because "a great and fiery Temper is more susceptible" to "Tears of Anger and Disdain" (Pope 109 n458). Both translators regarded extreme emotion as feminine, so both altered the Greek text to portray Briseis as emotionally weak ("scarce for griefe could go"; "soft Sorrows") in contrast to the manly strength of Achilles's anger; Pope went so far as to increase her passivity and submissiveness by introducing the idea that she is "past silent." By the same token, both translators deleted the Greek *philo*, "beloved," in treating the relationship between Achilles and Patroklos, thus omitting the traditional theories of their homosexuality which emerged in Athenian literature during the fifth century B.C. (Williams 102–4).

These previous versions can challenge the cultural authority of Lattimore's by worrying his choices, showing that they too are laden with gender representations despite the seeming transparency of his English. Interestingly, the slight deviations from the standard dialect are the textual sites where Achilles deviates from the patriarchal concepts of masculinity that prevailed in Lattimore's cultural moment, as in Chapman's and Pope's. The archaisms—"beloved," "weeping went"—may produce an estranging effect upon the contemporary reader, fogging the transparent surface of Lattimore's translation: they allow for the possibility of a homosexual relationship between Achilles and Patroklos as well as an intense emotionalism on the part of the militaristic hero, and as archaisms they situate these cultural values in the past. Yet such effects remain merely potential in the translated text:

they can only be released through a juxtaposition with other versions that teases out the remainder in Lattimore's, since the plainness of his discourse is designed to gloss over subtle nuances, to propel the narrative, and to envelop every scene in an elevated tone. The archaisms tend to be absorbed in the uniformity of the current standard dialect, shifting attention away from the remainder in English to the themes of the Greek text, concealing how the translation is shaping Achilles or Briseis and therefore any interpretation of them.

If the remainder can be useful in teaching the issue of translation, it will also establish new grounds for choosing one translation over another. In the overwhelming majority of cases—we know—translated texts appear on syllabi because the foreign text, in form or theme, is considered pertinent to a course topic or curriculum. The general practice, judging from the instructor surveys that accompany the MLA volumes on teaching world literature, is to choose a translation on the basis of a comparison to the foreign text, apart from extrinsic considerations like cost and availability. Accuracy is the most consistently applied criterion, even if canons of accuracy are subject to variation. Yet when the instructor plans to teach the issue of translation, accuracy is joined by other criteria that take into account the cultural significance and social functioning of a particular translation, both in its own historical moment and now. If a translated text, no matter how accurate, constitutes an interpretation of the foreign text, then the choice of a suitable translation is a question of picking a particular interpretation, one that offers an efficient articulation of the issues raised by translation, but also one that works productively with the critical methodologies applied to other texts in the course. Choosing a translation means choosing a text with a rich remainder, an especially suggestive translation discourse, for example, or a discourse that gained the translation a canonical or marginal position in the domestic culture. An instructor may also wish to include a contemporary version (or an excerpt from one) to engage students in a scrutiny of contemporary cultural values, which is to say a self-criticism.

In the end, teaching the remainder enables students to see the role played by translation in the formation of cultural identities. Of course all teaching is designed to form subjectivity, to equip students with knowledge and to qualify them for social positions. This is especially true of courses that teach cultural forms and values and often rely to an enormous extent on translations. Because the creation of subjects in the classroom is the creation of social agents, a course in literature comes to carry considerable cultural capital, not accessible to everyone, capable of endowing agents with social power. "The literary syllabus," as Guillory argues,

> constitutes capital in two senses: First, it is *linguistic* capital, the means by which one attains to a socially credentialled and therefore valued speech, otherwise known as "Standard English." And second, it is *symbolic* capital, a kind of knowledge-capital whose possession can be displayed upon request and which thereby entitles its possessor to the cultural and material rewards of the well-educated person. (ix)

Insofar as language and literature are necessary media for the transmission of cultural capital, translation becomes a strategic means by which the process of identity formation can be studied, particularly in relation to other cultures.

For at least two such processes operate simultaneously in translation. The cultural difference of the foreign text, when translated, is always represented in accordance with target-language values that construct cultural identities for both foreign countries and domestic readers. Pope, for instance, fashioned an elegant Enlightenment Homer for a male elite, both aristocratic and bourgeois, "who have at once a Taste of Poetry, and competent Learning" (Pope 23; Williams). Intended for college-level students in the post-World War II period, Lattimore's Homer joined the scholarly reading of the Greek text to the standard dialect of English, reinforcing cultural divisions and class distinctions while inculcating the nobility of an archaic aristocratic culture distinguished by its masculinist militarism. Studying translation can make students more aware of the domestic interests to which any translation submits the reader as well as the foreign text. In a pedagogy of translated literature, therefore, learning respect for cultural difference goes hand in hand with learning the differences that comprise the cultural identity of the domestic reader. At a time when the global hegemony of English invites a cultural narcissism and complacency on the part of British and American readers, translation can illuminate the heterogeneity that characterizes any culture.

If translation is to function in this way, however, graduate education in English must be rethought so as to break down the insularity (some would say, the xenophobia) that currently prevails in advanced literary study. Gone are the days when the foreign-language requirement for the doctorate supported research in British and American literature, whether at the dissertation stage or beyond. In many English graduate programs, foreign-language requirements have been curtailed, and foreign-language study rarely goes beyond the rudiments necessary to render a brief excerpt into passably idiomatic English. New doctorates are therefore not equipped to think about the cultural and political issues raised by their dependence on translations in their research and teaching.

Yet the remedy, I suggest, is not to return to traditional requirements that demand reading proficiency in two (or more) foreign languages. The knowledge gained through such onerous requirements would be of limited use in graduate curricula that are so firmly rooted in English-language literatures—not to mention the delay in progress toward the degree and the continued search for shortcuts to pass language examinations. A much more productive alternative would be to require superior knowledge of one foreign language (certified by an examination that tests reading comprehension) along with an English course that considers the problem of negotiating linguistic and cultural differences. This is precisely the problem that can be addressed in a historical survey of translation theory and practice where the focus is on translating into English, on learning how to read English-language

translations as translations. The twofold requirement I am proposing will enable doctoral candidates to conduct research in a foreign language, to enter into contemporary critical debates on the formation of cultural identities, and, perhaps most importantly, to confront the question of translation when teaching translated texts. Students at every level surely have much to gain from putting translation on the pedagogical agenda.

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