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text works. His witty interpretation of the parallel yet dissimilar tasks of writer and translator can also be helpfully applied to the tasks of writer and reader, inextricably joined and mutually dependent, coexisting in an ever-enlarging web of words.

SUSAN BASSNETT

Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL
United Kingdom

NOTES

This paper is a written version of the keynote lecture delivered at the University of St Andrews in March 2005, at a conference entitled *Bridging the Gap: Teaching Foreign Language Literary and Cultural Studies*.

[1] M. Arnold, *On the Modern Element in Literature* (Inaugural Lecture delivered in the University of Oxford, 14 November, 1857).
[2] R. Wellek, "The Name and Nature of Comparative Literature", in *Discriminations* (New Haven & London, 1970) p. 35.
[3] L. Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London & New York, 1989), p. 89.
[4] R. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, trans. S. Heath (London, 1977).
[5] S. Heaney, "The Strand at Lough Beg", in *Field Work* (London, 1979), ll. 9–16 (p. 17).
[6] S. Heaney, *Station Island* (London, 1984), viii, ll.74–6 (p. 83).
[7] P. Pullman, *The Amber Spyglass* (London, 2000), p. 382.
[8] Virgil, *The Aeneid* (London & Cambridge MA, 1959).
[9] J. Keats, "On first looking into Chapman's Homer", in *Poems* (London, 1967), p. 291.
[10] D. Damrosch, *What is World Literature?* (Princeton & Oxford, 2003) p. 288.
[11] E. Pound, "A Retrospect", in: *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (London, 1954), pp. 3–14 (p. 5).
[12] E. Pound, *Gaudier Brzeska* (London, 1970), cited in G. Kearns, *Pound: The Cantos* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 34.
[13] C. Tomlinson, *Poetry and Metamorphosis* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 96.
[14] Cited in Tomlinson, *Poetry and Metamorphosis*, p. 91.
[15] H. Kenner, *The Pound Era* (London 1971), p. 202.
[16] E. Pound, "The Lament of the Frontier Guard", in *Translations* (New York, 1963), pp. 194–5 (ll. 8–19).
[17] O. Paz, "Translation: Literature and Letters", in: *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, ed. R. Schulte & J. Biguenet (Chicago & London, 1992), pp. 152–62.

THE TRANSLATOR'S INTERTEXTUAL BAGGAGE

ABSTRACT

Starting from the notion of a wide texture of intertextual references between translations outlined in recent theories, the aim of this article is to underline critically the role of the translator as a mediator/interpreter between different linguistic and cultural worlds. The title highlights how the translator possesses his/her own intertextual literary, linguistic and cultural "baggage" due to his/her "location" and identity politics, a "baggage" that permeates his/her act of translation and "rewriting" of the source text into the target text.

Referring to the many metaphors utilised through centuries in describing the translator and the act of translation from one culture to another, my essay takes as a "metaphorical" starting point the representation of the translator as a traveller in a new and unknown literary world; a curious traveller who follows many hints and finds new routes in an unexplored map which he/she necessarily reads through his/her own cultural lens. This reading, if carried on as a dialogue, as a bridge-building, inevitably enriches the translator's perspective on his/her own culture. Following the author's steps, the translator unveils the many linguistic, social, historical and cultural traces of his/her cultural world to be revealed to new readers embedded in different linguistic and cultural webs.

The translator between two worlds faces not only the question of displacement and untranslatability, but once again that of intertextuality. Dealing with a translation of a postcolonial text/context, the translating subject has to read between the lines the many and varied intertextual practices, the recognition of the author's intertextual references, the many traces from previous texts and former translations, the various signs of cultural and socio-political markers and possible linguistic adaptations. The text must be revealed as a complex web of intertextual references not always easy to reproduce in the target text/culture, but nonetheless a central element for the author's image in the target culture and the reception of the translated text. The translator becomes a cultural mediator who, dialoguing between cultures, carries on a transcultural interaction. In the passages between linguistic and cultural systems, the notion of intertextuality must be questioned and discussed in its many perspectives and complexities.

Keywords: translator; mediator; metaphor; intertextuality; intercultural communication

THE TRANSLATOR is first of all a traveller, a curious wanderer into a new and unknown world, who follows many hints and finds new routes in an unexplored textual map. Sometimes he retraces lost tracks, occasionally he discovers a new path; in any case, he travels with a consistent literary and cultural baggage. The term "translator", which in English maintains the meanings of its Latin origins, conjugates two ideas: transferring meaning from one language to another, and

crossing a border, a physical movement from one place to another. "Translator" is the noun connected to the Latin verb *transferre*, meaning the action of translation but also of carrying something from one point to another. Starting from this etymological connection, the translator/traveller between two cultural worlds takes a further step: his itinerary starts in one literary panorama and ends in a totally different cultural, social and historical landscape.

Travel and discovery are but two metaphors in the whole range that have been mentioned by translation studies scholars. Susan Bassnett, for example, has chosen the metaphor of translation as an exciting journey, emphasising the necessity for translators to "cross boundaries and enter into new territory".[1] Similarly, Michael Cronin has envisioned the metaphor of the return ticket where "the voyage is complemented by the journey home"[2] and has outlined how translators are:

nomads-by-obligation. [. . .] multiculturalists *ante verbum* [. . .]. In the crossing-over, the risk-taking that genuine travel involves, the openness of *métissage* is a promise of creativity.[3]

Surely, the notion of travelling and crossing borders while accomplishing a task can be deduced from the etymology of the term itself, "translator", which defines the agent of a precise action, the "translatio", which is primarily an act undertaken in a specific historical, geographical, social and cultural context and from a personal position defined as "location".[4] This contextualised positionality shapes the translating process, defines the translator's itinerary in his journey for knowledge. However, before examining closely the translator's agency, it is helpful to consider other definitions of the term "translation". The *OED* offers various meanings connected to actions of movement and change: firstly translation is considered a transference, a removal or conveyance from one person, place, or condition to another; secondly, in physics, the term is related to motion or movement; thirdly, it refers to transformation, alteration and change; fourthly, it can be applied for change or adaptation of goods to another use, that is to say, to refer to a renovated object. Another figurative meaning is to interpret, for example, to expound the significance of gestures.

Evidently, the term translation is polysemous, and many have been the metaphors for the activity of the agent, the translator. From John Dryden's comparison between the translator and the slave labouring in another man's plantation to the eighteenth-century image of translation as a mirror of reality, a suggestion perpetuated also by Percy Bysse Shelley and his idea of translation as transplantation, or Dante Gabriel Rossetti's notion of the translator as a character from a fairy-tale, many are the metaphors which have been highlighted and analysed by translation studies scholars.[5] Nonetheless, from the Medieval exegete to the contemporary concept of the translator as a rewriter, the notion of his work as a commentator remains central; in fact it is the translator's personal reading of the text that emerges in between the lines and is made evident in paratextual elements such as prefaces, footnotes or glossaries.[6] Exploiting the

metaphor of travel, we can consider these paratextual elements as the translator's footprints in the textual map. All these "traces" reveal the translator's interpretation of the text; his decoding and recoding clearly envision a particular path the reader is invited to follow in order to decipher the text.

It is the action of "translatio" that creates a dialogue between the two languages and cultures. The reader can understand the text through the translator's work of "reproduction" and rewriting in another language. This focus on the translator's linguistic expertise and cultural knowledge but, above all, creativity is at the centre of the recent study intertwining translation and writing by Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush, who dedicate a whole section to the interaction between these two artistic activities. Certainly, it is thanks to the translator's agency that the text can be read once again in another country in the translated version and which allows the author/text to be re-discovered by readers. As Mary Orr outlines,

[W]ithout persons, languages and texts remain dead. "Dead" or living languages can ever be resuscitated and rearticulated through retranslation, for rewording instils new life.[7]

Therefore, referring to another metaphorical expression, translations keep authors alive, they enrich the life of a culture; "far from traducing the pure original, the translation injects new life blood into a text by bringing it to the attention of a new world of readers in a different language".[8] Not only, as the Polysystem theorists affirmed, are translations leading factors in the formation of new models for the target culture, bringing in techniques, literary themes or poetics, but also the continuity of the source text is guaranteed through an enriching negotiation with the target language/culture.[9] Furthermore, translated texts are cultural archives. In fact, as Michael Cronin points out, translation remains a way "to remember what has been done and thought in other languages and in our own. Without it we are condemned to the most disabling form of cultural amnesia."[10] If we refer to translation as an archive of linguistic/cultural memories, we return once more to the widely problematised debate on translation, ideology and the literary canon.[11] Interestingly, in his most recent study, Cronin analyses the primary issue of translation and identity recurring to metaphors of motionlessness and movement/fluidity. On the one hand, "the 'classics' of national literatures were the immutable mobiles that travelled through the space of the imagined community of the nation to remind present-day national audiences of the aesthetic pre-eminence of their forebears";[12] on the other hand, the notion of the "mutable mobile" exemplifies the challenge implicit in translation, that is, to convey difference and similarity of meaning through a complex process of translation considered as a "transformative practice".

According to Jeoffrey M. Green, by contrast, the work of the translator resembles that of an editor, who offers the reader further information in order to fully decipher the text. He also adds a subtle metaphor for translation – business. Actually, translators are professionals, adapters, writers for readers who must be attracted by a story they can easily understand.[13]

While the translator's aim is to maintain the original text, reproducing it in another language/culture, the cultural turn in translation studies has made clear that the original is there, transferred, in the translated text but in a rewritten form; it is moulded and reshaped for the target reader.[14] If an equivalent or transparent translation is impossible, the translator's rewriting is constrained within various limits given by both the conventions of translation and the context where it is published. The translator has become a rewriter, a mediator and an interpreter between different linguistic and cultural worlds.

Recently, the translator has been defined as a manipulator, because:

the idea of "manipulation" is connected to an act of translation. Both *manipulare* and *translatare* share a common lexical ground: an (artful) adaptation, change, transformation, transmission – to suit one's purpose or advantage. In some sense, the two terms are quasi synonyms, which are also associated with transgression, perversion or subversion. [...] [A] translator *creates* but *copies* (or *rewrites*), reproduces *faithfully* but has scope for *intervention*, aims at *equivalence* but ends up producing *difference*.[15]

In this study, José Santaemilia highlights the agency of the translatress already stressed by feminist theorists, who have outlined the pivotal importance of gender in the process of translation.[16] Focusing on issues of identity and gender as a retraceable social construction in language, feminist scholars have recovered hidden voices of women writers and translators, and have outlined the specificity not only of female authoriality but also of a feminine approach to translation. In so doing they have demonstrated how important translation is for the construction of a literary tradition and the concept of a national canon. The transmission of literary and cultural values as an ideological practice together with the notion of translation as a mode of engagement with literature are shared also by postcolonial debates intersecting with translation studies. As a matter of fact, the translator's agency has been widely discussed analysing postcolonial texts and contexts where the translating process has been outlined as an ongoing process of intercultural transfer.[17] In particular, Tejaswini Niranjana has stressed the role of translation as one of the coloniser's ideological discourses. Translation is considered as a practice which, taking shape within the asymmetrical relation of power that operates under colonialism, represents the colonised, domesticated "otherness". Referring to Gideon Toury's theoretical position, Niranjana goes back to the notion of the intertextuality of translations, to the discussion about the canonical nature of some translations and their participation in the practice of subjectification, for example, borrowing from European languages of the period in which the text has been translated. Translations thus form an intertextual web of cultural practices of subjugation which construct images of otherness and counter-discourse that deconstruct them. These constructions are achieved also through the coloniser's techniques and use of language. Therefore, the will to deconstruct them must be based on the translator's attempt to decode the complicity with the master narratives of imperialism and question the colonial situation. The translated text should

represent difference, re-translate and re-write history through an active critical reading. In fact, reading existing translations against the grain from a postcolonial perspective becomes the necessary tool for cultural resistance. As the scholar affirms, "translation, from being a 'containing' force, is transformed into a disruptive, disseminating one. The deconstruction initiated by re-translation opens up a post-colonial space as it brings 'history' to legibility".[18]

The analysis of intertextuality in postcolonial texts is undoubtedly a very interesting example of the utilisation of literary and cultural archives and their transposition in another context. In postcolonial texts, intertextuality is connected to interculturality and unveils a project of historical and social re-reading and rewriting, interpreting the rupture and the continuity with the coloniser's language and culture. The intertextual and intercultural references visualise "the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between".[19] The translation of these elements outlines the transformation of cultures through their intertextual recontextualisation.[20] For postcolonial writers, intertextuality remains a powerful tool of revision and rewriting of political and literary issues; it enlarges and transforms the same meaning of intertextuality, charging it with other connotations.

Taking into account the essential work of rewriting and mediation between languages and cultures, yet another metaphor for the translator's activity seems today to be that of a "mediator". The translator must be very skilled to handle the discrepancy between languages and cultures, and should be able to render them as essential elements of the source culture.[21] The metaphor of translation as a bridge between two linguistic and cultural contexts is useful in order to envision translation as an act of mediation. Metaphors of hybridity and territorial crossing have depicted the complex work of the translator as "someone who occupies the liminal space in between cultures",[22] or works in a "contact zone".[23] The translator thus occupies a central role in connecting two literary worlds, in trying to build a dialogue between texts, to create an equal interchange between cultures. Similarly, the ethnographical definition of "transculturation" has been utilised to define the space of colonial encounters and interactions,[24] and to problematise the translation of intercultural elements. The intercultural mediator who is directly involved in an interchange between two cultures seems a positive representation of a practice which certainly presents many complex issues but, nonetheless, opens up new interpretative perspectives.

However, going back to our initial metaphor, in order to fully understand translation as a journey it is relevant to take into account the person who translates, what is translated, and where, when and how the work is transferred into another language. Notwithstanding the fact that travellers are urged by the same desires and engage in similar enterprises, they do not experience travelling in the same way; the perception of the journey is different. Moreover, any travel has its own itinerary; it is possible for many travellers to visit the same place but they will probably arrive from different directions, each one choosing a particular route, which takes more or less time. The translator, like the traveller,

necessarily mediates with the new cultural context: he needs to communicate with people belonging to that culture, and in order to achieve his goal, puts new strategies into effect, exchanges information, tries to learn more about the place; he mediates between his own culture and the one he is going to discover. As a traveller needs to recover some information about his destination in order to fully discover its innermost secrets, so the translator is, first of all, a curious reader engaging with an unexplored text which he unveils line after line. However, as a reader he will necessarily interpret the textual map through his own historical, social and cultural lens. It is paramount to recognise that this lens is part of his own personal baggage, a rich and acquired linguistic and cultural archive through which he conveys meanings to the text. In the process of decoding the source text and recoding the target text, the translator makes many crucial choices, chooses a direction to follow. The chosen itinerary is the result of a long process made of losses, gains and obstacles to be removed. Moreover, the translator's baggage of literary, linguistic and cultural archives has been filled in a precise place and time, and is connected to the translator's location. It is a baggage filled with his encyclopaedic knowledge and cultural background, a baggage of tools that permeates his "rewriting" of the original.

Translation is certainly a highly skilled activity, a first-class art based on a high level of competence not only in the two languages but in both cultures, as contemporary approaches to translation have emphasised.[25] The translator should be familiar with the author's work and possess a good knowledge of the cultural, historical and social context where the text was originally published. While rethinking literariness in regard to the unity of the text, he knows that he has to face conflicting linguistic codes together with multifaceted cultural references. No perfect translation is possible; some elements are untranslatable in the target language. Therefore, the translating process implies an unavoidable act of betrayal and substitution inherent in the passage from the original text to the translated version.[26] Beyond linguistic diversity and the necessary adjustments inherent in the passage from SL to TL, the difficulty of translating from one culture to another is evident. The translator interprets the text in his own way; he grasps some references and loses others. In the first case, when he recognises them, he may be aware that some are not easily translatable in the target language/culture. If, as we have underlined, some intertextual references will be lost because of their untranslatability while others will be gained, the act of translation increases the network of intertextuality.

A literary translation is full of intertextual references of many kinds and their survival depends on the ability to maintain the linguistic/cultural features of the ST in the TT. However, it is a great challenge to be able to maintain the same web of connotations. Translating intertextual references is not an easy task: the translator should be able to decode the many and varied intertextual layers, from the author's intertextual references, to more or less direct references to canonical or lesser-known works, sometimes even direct references from former translations of the same text or the insertion of allusions to cultural and

socio-political elements in the context where the original work was published. The translator/mediator, therefore, has to negotiate a "transcultural interaction",[27] being well aware – as also authors and readers are – of the multiple codes which form a literary work and that cannot be easily maintained in the translated version.

If "texts are part of a great intertextual tapestry",[28] a tapestry woven with old and new threads by many authors, generally speaking, the direct appeal, the clear and specific allusion to a previous text within a novel, can be taken as one of the various examples of "markers" of intertextuality that we can identify when reading a literary and cultural text. Intertextuality as a postmodern concept, however, involves "self-consciously foregrounded intertextuality, an intertextuality theoretically conceptualized within the works themselves".[29] In contemporary novels, intertextuality is not only a rhetorical device but the kernel of the plot; it implies a redefinition of literary elements, a continuous renewal of meaning in the utilisation of themes, motifs and linguistic modalities. The author, who is always referring to a tradition and to some *topoi* or historical models determined from a cultural, historical and aesthetic point of view, produces in his renewal of these elements a sort of recodification of them. He creates a continuous dialogue between his text and other literary and non-literary texts that exist outside of it. Intertextuality can operate by reproducing some literary codes belonging to a specific tradition; it can involve a recodification of social and political contents, or it can determine the global ideological perspective of the work. As I have underlined elsewhere, postmodern intertextuality is a parodic intertextuality that plays with political and social subversion. In the postmodern aesthetics, the mingling of literary genres is accompanied by quotations and allusions to other forms of art and also to popular expressions such as comics or television programmes, so intertextuality has become intermediality.[30]

The many subtle intertextual networks left on the pages by the author must be recognised by the translator and transmitted to the target readers embedded in a different culture and context. In his role as a decoder of the complex and challenging intertextual web that the writer has interwoven for the reader, the translator's ability consists in reproducing the multiple layers of implied meanings and connotations in the target language for the receiving literary and cultural context. Not always all the intertextual references embedded in the source text can be translated for the target text; there are many levels of interpretation that interact in the source text, and eventually only some of them can be kept in the target language. In the case of culture-bound terms, idiomatic expressions and references to lesser-known social, historical and geographical facts, the translator can decide to add a glossary or to insert footnotes in order to highlight those intertextual references which are not so clear for the target reader.

In *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré*, Gérard Genette affirms that all literary texts are intimately linked to intertextuality; "the actual presence of one

text in another"[31] is evident in any text. This affirmation can be used for any literary translation – indeed all the more so since the translation of a literary text presupposes the relation between the original text and its translation, the two texts being linked in the same way as a hypotext (or previous text) is linked to its hypertext (or derived text). This shows the doubleness of the translation: it comes after the original and must restore the various different intertextual layers; and it breaks new ground in the translating language in that it integrates the text translated into the body of another literature, into a new intertextuality. Not content with representing the work, the translation makes it possible to increase the network of its intertextuality; it does not just reflect the original, it refracts it, to borrow André Lefevere's term.[32] It is through this refraction that the original survives, and it is in the process of rewriting/re-translating that the linguistic and cultural features of the ST can be transferred to the TT. It is this "refraction" that envisions the possibility of an intercultural communication enriched and challenged by all these possible intertextual references. Consequently, the dialogue between the two cultures is enhanced by the challenging and complex intertextual web to be recovered and transposed. If through the act of translation texts are linguistically and culturally recontextualised,[33] interpretation and communication can be considered as pragmatic necessities of the translating process, where the target reader receives a text full of multiple codes which are not always the same as in the ST, or if they are, they nevertheless undergo a different interpretation. If translation of intertextual references clearly transmits a baggage of cultural-bound knowledge, in the passage from one language/culture to another the same quotation can acquire a very different value in its new context. Therefore, what is at stake here is not only the untranslatability of cultural elements but also the different interpretation of translatable elements in a new context.

The translator's skill as a rewriter/mediator brings us back once again to the historical question of fidelity, equivalence and the discussion on decision-making.[34] From this perspective, the "translation/tradition" dichotomy reappears at the centre of the debate: on the one hand, the translator tries to reproduce the intertextual layers of the source text; on the other hand, in the passage from one language/culture to another he integrates them into a new web of intertextual references, enriched by allusions to the new cultural context. Moreover, translations of the same text embedded in the precise historical and social context where they are published can greatly differ from the original one. The translator knows that the translating process is determined by the categories of place and time and that his translation will be influenced by many factors of the historical period when it is republished, such as, for example, readers' tastes and the politics of publishing. The complicated web of intertexts is thus reproduced for readers belonging to different cultures and periods which influence also the translator's choices.

The translator's path is paved by the author's steps, but the translator carries his own linguistic/literary and cultural baggage. The writer's intertextual

tapestry is rewoven but with the necessary adjustment for the new reader; the intertextual references in the text, which are part of its structure, remain traces to be discovered by the target reader, but they are traces unveiled by the translator, who reproduces or omits some of them. From this perspective, the process of translating becomes equivalent to a discursive act where the translator communicates the author's world, but through his own linguistic and cultural encyclopaedia, and, above all, by orienting for the target reader his own context and knowledge of the subject. Many intertextual references are understood with difficulty by the reader if not accompanied by further explanation, perhaps, as already indicated, through the use of paratextual elements.

The receiving context affects in some way the translator's choices and strategies, primarily because the reader interprets the intertextual references according to his own literary, historical and cultural archive, his own baggage. At the same time, the translator's choices influence the reader's reception of the text in the target context. His insertion of new elements or omissions inevitably characterise the text, and the paratextual elements he can include assure a communicative act between the agent of the translation and the reader.

What is most challenging in a discussion on translation and intertextual references is that these elements open a window onto another culture; they arouse the reader's interest in the author's cultural world. Therefore, it is through intertextuality that a reader can discover a writer's culture, even if in the passage some elements are lost. Intertextual references are traces to be followed to visit an author's literary and cultural world, a journey the reader undertakes hand-in-hand with the translator.

The question of translation as intercultural communication has been questioned in some contemporary novels where the character of the translator represents a figure of mediation in cultural comparison. Interpreters and translators are the main characters of novels which focus on the enterprise of cross-cultural interaction in conflicting cultural encounters.[35] The *mise-en-abîme* of translators and translations in *meta-translation novels*, novels concerned with this theme, visualise both the difficulties of the translator's role in multicultural societies and the complexity of the act of translation from one language/culture to another. Interpreters and translators are protagonists of stories of in-betweenness, epitomising at the same time the sense of belonging to more than one culture and the complex task they accomplish as mediators. At the centre of the plot the reader finds characters who struggle to define their own identity and, at the same time, try to understand the point of view of the "other" in order to negotiate between linguistic and cultural differences. This effort of bridge-building is based on the one hand on the deconstruction of stereotypes, and on the other in the resetting of inevitable boundaries. The untranslatable elements are accepted through a critical perspective of the ineluctability of a cultural difference envisioned not through a hierarchical juxtaposition but as an enriching interweaving. Interpreters and translators expose the limits of translations, the "space of the untranslatable",[36] that unavoidably

remains in between the two cultures. The embodied difference of the translators, who are in between cultures, symbolises their ability as jugglers between languages and cultures; the protagonists, living in two or more linguistic and cultural worlds, act as translators/mediators between them, underlining the difficulties of such a task and the limits implicit in this negotiation.

My example is taken from Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*, the collection of short stories which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2000.[37] The author, born of Bengali parents in London and educated in the United States, offers stories of isolated, alienated migrant characters who pine over loss and nostalgia.[38] As she stated in an interview with Elizabeth Farnsworth, Jhumpa Lahiri has translated onto the page feelings of displacement she herself experienced: "I always say that I feel that I've inherited a sense of that loss from my parents because it was so palpable all the time while I was growing up".[39] This sense of displacement and of non-total belonging to a unique place is reiterated in another interview where the author says, "it's hard to have parents who consider another place 'home' – even after living abroad for thirty years, India is home for them. We were always looking back so I never felt fully at home here".[40] Affirming that her own knowledge about her mother-country, India, is a "translation" and not an everyday experience, she also states that her representation of India in the stories is in fact her "translation of India". Metaphors of belonging, memory and translation are thus interwoven not only in her texts but also in her statements. Like other contemporary novelists, Lahiri uses metaphors of writing and translation in order to define her own identity and work. The act of translation is linked to a practice of writing and greatly influences her notion of self-representation; it is a process where something is lost and something is gained.[41] Linguistic and cultural legacies remain and emerge in between the lines of Lahiri's stories, because as the author states, "tradition is like ink that does not dry". Emblematic is the character of Mr Kapasi, the protagonist of the short story which gives the title to the collection, "Interpreter of Maladies", a title in itself quite revealing. Mr Kapasi is a tourist guide and works as an interpreter for a doctor whose patients speak Gujarati. The ability to communicate with people and to transfer meaning from one language to another is for Mr Kapasi a way of putting order in his life and decoding reality through translation:

after months of translating with the aid of a dictionary, he would finally read a passage from a French novel, or an Italian sonnet, and understand the words, one after another, unencumbered by his own efforts. In those moments Mr Kapasi used to believe that all was right with the world, that all struggles were rewarded, that all of life's mistakes made sense in the end.[42]

While Lahiri's assertion that translation is not only a finite linguistic act but an ongoing cultural one reinforces the idea of a bi-cultural approach to translation considered as a cross-cultural transfer, the author's Aristotelian assertion "I translate, therefore I am"[43] is epitomised by her character. The translator

decodes reality through translating and, as Harish Trivedi has emphasised, he belongs to a specific typology of characters/translators.[44] The author herself recognises that almost all her characters are translators, "insofar as they must make sense of the foreign in order to survive".[45] However, in this short story the author "evokes the act of translation in terms of a failed act of speech, a fantasy of fulfilment and desire that ends however in anxiety and defeat".[46] On the one hand, Mr Kapasi receives the confession of Mrs Das's secret, her adultery, because she believes his job as an interpreter will enable him to understand her situation and help her to feel better; on the other, he realises that he can neither translate her own malady, which he refers to as a sense of guilt, nor "translate" Indian history and culture for the Indian-American family. In an interview, the author has affirmed that: "the predicament at the heart of the book, the dilemma, [is] the difficulty and often the impossibility of communicating emotional pain and affliction to others, as well as expressing it to ourselves".[47]

The difficulties of mediating between cultures, the complex task of revealing his own cultural world to people coming from a different cultural context, is at the centre of the short story. Even if, as Mr Kapasi affirms, there is not "a language barrier"[48] between himself and "them", there certainly is a cultural one: "'Neat'. Mr Kapasi was not certain exactly what the word suggested, but he had the feeling it was a favourable response."[49] Lahiri's choice of the subject in this short story and her insertion of cultural references to India highlight her own cultural translation, "the continuous struggle [...] to preserve what it means to them [her parents] to be first and forever Indian [...]. Unlike my parents I translate not so much to survive in the world around me as to create and illuminate a nonexistent one".[50]

If the character of the translator intriguingly emphasises the complex implications of translating from one culture to another, the text is also full of culture-bound terms and idioms which surface in between the lines together with intertextual references to Indian culture, thus offering an example of a complex intertextual web to be translated. Through the insertion of words which refer to colonial Indian history and culture together with allusions deeply embedded in the Indian context, the author reclaims and recentres a multiple linguistic and cultural identity and offers an example of a challenging text to convey in another language. The potential translator of this text should deal with the dilemma of faithfulness to Lahiri's source text and the decision on how to translate the many intertextual and intercultural traces by the author. If the description of Kornak Sun Temple and the many references to the monkey deity are easily translatable, the many intertextual layers of Indian religion, literature and culture are not. Intertextual references are a reflection of social, historical and cultural practices and meanings which are a core element of the text; if left untranslated or partly translated, they must be explained and decoded for the target reader. The translation or the untranslatability of intertextual references visualises the act of mediation of the translator, his own journey through a cross-fertilised text which can maintain the linguistic and

cultural specificities of the original text, or can totally erase them. Moreover, through the *mise-en-abime* of translation and of the figure of the interpreter, the translator faces another challenge – of translating his own role, which has been fictionalised in the story.

As we have seen, the many metaphors for translation created by both scholars and writers underpin the ongoing debate on translating a text from one language/culture to another. While they are all incisive and effective, the translator as mediator seems to symbolise best the act of negotiation between languages and cultures. Similarly, "meta-translation novels" are another kind of represention for the translator's difficulties in carrying on his journey and mediating between cultures. All these representations are clearly part of the intertextual baggage of the writer and of the translator, a baggage that remains an enriching and challenging archive from whence to start new cultural encounters. On the one hand, writers define themselves as "translated beings", and present figures of translators and interpreters who represent the strict interconnection between the role of writer and that of translator; on the other hand, theorists outline the creativity of the translator and question the connection between translating and writing.

ELEONORA FEDERICI

*Dipartimento di studi letterari
    linguistici e filologici
University of Trento
Via S. Croce 65
38100 Trento
Italy
Eleonora.Federici@lett.unitn.it*

NOTES

[1] S. Bassnett, "Introduction. Intricate Pathways: Observations on Translation and Literature", in: *Translating Literature*, ed. S. Bassnett (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 11–13.

[2] M. Cronin, *Translation and Globalization* (London, 2003), p. 126.

[3] Ibid. An interesting connection between translation and travel writing has been given by L. Polezzi, *Translating Travel: Contemporary Italian Travel Writing in English Translation* (Aldershot, 2001).

[4] The term recalls the feminist debate on the "politics of location" carried on by feminist postcolonial scholars such as C. Talpade Mohanty, A. Russo & L. Torres (eds.), *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington, 1991), T. T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing, Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington, 1990), and G. Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco, 1987), who have shown how important is the social, geographical and political standpoint from which any scholar speaks. Positionality also refers to a foregrounding issue in postcolonial studies; see: H. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 1994); G. C. Spivak, *In Other Worlds. Essays in Cultural Politics* (London, 1989); A. Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London, 1998).

[5] G. Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (Oxford, 1975); S. Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (London, 2002) and "Metaphorically Translating", *Texti Quaderni di studi semiotici* 82 (1999), 35–45; M. Hanne, "Metaphors for the Translator", in: *The Translator as Writer*, ed. S. Bassnett & P. Bush (London, 2006), pp. 208–24.

[6] This issue has been analysed by feminist scholars who have approached translation from a gender studies angle: S. Simon, *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (London, 1996); L. von Flutow, *Translation and Gender* (Manchester, 1997). It has also been analysed by postcolonial theorists who have explored the intersection of translation and power: G. C. Spivak, "The Politics of Translation", in: *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, ed. M. Barrett & A. Phillips (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 397–416; T. Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism and the Colonial Context* (Berkeley, 1992); *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, ed. S. Bassnett & H. Trivedi (London, 1999).

[7] M. Orr, *Intertextuality: Debates and Contexts* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 156.

[8] S. Bassnett, "The Meek or the Mighty: Reappraising the Role of the Translator", in: *Translation Power Subversion*, ed. R. Alvarez & C. Africa Vidal (Clevedon, 1996), p. 12.

[9] I. Evan-Zohar, "The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem", in: *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. L. Venuti (London, 2000), pp. 192–7; G. Toury, "The Nature and the Role of Norms in Literary Translation", in: ibid., pp. 198–211.

[10] M. Cronin, *Translation and Globalization*, p. 74. See also W. Iser, "Coda to the Discussion", in: *The Translatability of Cultures: Figurations of the Space Between*, ed. W. Iser & S. Budick (Stanford, 1996), pp. 294–302.

[11] A. Bassnett & A. Lefevere (eds.), *Translation, History, Culture* (London, 1990); M. Cronin, *Translating Ireland: Translation, Languages, Cultures* (Cork, 1996); M. Tymoczko, *Translation in a Postcolonial Context* (Manchester, 1999).

[12] M. Cronin, *Translation and Identity* (London, 2006), p. 31.

[13] J. M. Green, *Thinking through Translation* (Athens GA, 2001).

[14] A. Lefevere (ed.), *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London, 1992); O. Carbonell, *Traducir el otro: Traducción, exotismo, poscolonialismo* (Cuenca, 1997).

[15] J. Santaemilia (ed.), *Gender, Sex and Translation: The Manipulation of Identities* (Manchester, 2005), p. 1.

[16] See B. Godard, "Traduzione: soggetto/il in transito", in: *Questioni di teoria femminista*, ed. P. Bono (Rome, 1993), pp. 163–83, and "Translating (as) Woman", *Essays in Canadian Writing* 55 (1995), 71–82; M. Minier, " '[...] the translatress in her own person speaks': A few Marginal Notes on Feminist Translation in Practice, in Creative Writing and in Criticism", in: *Identity and Cultural Translation: Writing across the Borders of Englishness*, ed. A. G. Macedo & M. Esteves Pereira (Oxford, 2006), pp. 39–54.

[17] E. Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from "The Tempest" to "Tarzan* (Oxford, 1991); D. Robinson, *Translation and Empire: Postcolonial Theories Explained* (Manchester, 1997); Bassnett & Trivedi (eds.), *Post-Colonial Translation*; Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

[18] Niranjana, *Siting Translation*, p. 186.

[19] H. Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences" in: *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, ed. B. Aschcroft, G. Griffiths & H. Tiffin (London, 1995), pp. 206–9. See J. A. Gimenez Mico, "Intertexte, interculture, interidentité: Essayer de comprendre le néo/post-colonial à travers l'intertexte pré-colonial", *Textus Quaderni di studi semiotici* 77/78 (1997), 97–118.

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[21] E. Federici, *The Translator as Intercultural Mediator* (Trento, 2006).

[22] S. Bassnett, "Translation 2000 – Difference and Diversità", *Textus* 12 (1999), p. 213.

[23] See Simon, *Gender in Translation*.

[24] See A. Dingwaney & C. Maier (eds.), *Between Languages and Cultures: Translation and Cross-Cultural Texts* (Pittsburgh, 1995); M. Snell Hornby, *The Turns of Translation Studies* (Amsterdam, 2006).

[25] G. Toury (ed.), *Translation across Cultures* (New Delhi, 1998); R. Alvarez & C. Africa Vidal (eds.), *Translation Power Subversion* (Clevedon, 1996); K. Mueller Vollmer & M. Irmscher (eds.), *Translating Literatures, Translating Culture: New Vistas and Approaches in Literary Studies* (Berlin, 1998).

[26] See N. Armstrong, *Translation, Linguistics, Culture: A French–English Handbook* (Clevedon, 2005); M. Tymockzo, "Post-colonial Writing and Literary Translation", in: *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, ed. S. Bassnett & H. Trivedi (London, 1999), pp. 19–40.

[27] C. Schaffner, "Translation and Intercultural Communication: Similarities and Differences", *Studies in Communication Studies* 3:2 (2003), pp. 79–107.

[28] S. Bassnett, *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford, 1993), p. 42.

[29] M. Pfister, "How Postmodern is Intertextuality?", in: *Intertextuality*, ed. H. F. Plett (Berlin, 1991), p. 217.

[30] For a discussion on "intertextuality", see: A. Bernardelli (ed.), *The Concept of Intertextuality Thirty Years On: 1967–1997*, special issue, *Versus Quaderni di studi semiotici* 77/78 (1997); A. Bernardelli, *Intertestualità* (Florence, 2000); G. Allen, *Intertextuality* (London, 2000); E. Federici, "Destabilising the Canon: A Survey and a Bibliography of Intertextual Critical Theory", in: *European Intertexts: Women's Writing in English in a European Context*, ed. P. Stoneman, A. Sanchez Arce & A. Leighton (Oxford, 2005), pp. 85–126. For a discussion on intersemiotic translation, see: N. Dusi & S. Nergaard, *Sulla traduzione intersemiotica*, special issue, *Versus Quaderni di studi semiotici* 85/86/87 (2000); N. Dusi, *Il cinema come traduzione. Da un medium all'altro: letteratura, cinema, pittura* (Turin, 2003).

[31] G. Genette, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris, 1982).

[32] A. Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London, 1992).

[33] See B. Hatim & I. Mason, *The Translator as Communicator* (London, 1985); S. Yifeng, "Translating Cultural Difference", *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 11:1 (2003), 25–36.

[34] T. Hermans, "Norms and Determination of Translation: A Theoretical Framework", in: Alvarez & Africa Vidal (eds.), *Translation, Power, Subversion*, pp. 25–51.

[35] Some interesting examples are C. Brooke Rose's *Between* (Manchester, 1968); E. Hoffman's *Lost in Translation* (1989); L. Aboulela's *The Translator* (London, 1999) and J. Crowley's *The Translator* (New York, 2002).

[36] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 219.

[37] J. Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (London, 2000).

[38] For biographical details on the author, see P. Brian, *Modern Asian Literature in English* (Westport, 2003), ch. 14. For an analysis of Lahiri's short stories, see N. Brada Williams, "Reading Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies* as a Short Story Cycle", *Melus* 29:3–4 (2004), 451–64.

[39] E. Farnsworth, "Pulitzer Prize Winner Fiction", online at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/gergen/jan-june00/lahiri4-12.html> (accessed 30 May 2005).

[40] V. Patel, "Maladies of Belonging: An Interview with Jhumpa Lahiri", *Newsweek International*, online at <http://www.sawnet.org/books/writing/patel_lahiri.html> (accessed 20 May 2005).

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[42] Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*, pp. 55–6.

[43] J. Lahiri, "Intimate Alienation: Immigrant Fiction and Translation", in: *Translation, Text and Theory: The Paradigm of India*, ed. R. Bhaya Nair (New Dehli, 2002), p. 120.

[44] H. Trivedi, *Translating Culture vs. Cultural Translation*, online at <http://www.91stmeridian.org> (accessed 20 June 2005).

[45] Lahiri, "Intimate Alienation", p. 119.

[46] A. Monti, "Acts of Migration and the Despondency of the Lonely Traveller: Reading across *Interpreter of Maladies*", in: *Jhumpa Lahiri the Master Storyteller: A Critical Response to "Interpreter of Maladies"*, ed. S. Bala (New Dehli, 2002), p. 86.

[47] Lahiri, quoted in O. P. Mathur, "Meaningful Whispers: The Short Stories of Jhumpa Lahiri", in: Bala (ed.), *Jhumpa Lahiri: The Master Storyteller*, p. 258.

[48] Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*, p. 65.

[49] Ibid., p. 59.

[50] Lahiri, "Intimate Alienation", p. 120.

HOLOCAUST WRITING AND THE LIMITS OF INFLUENCE

ABSTRACT

This article raises questions about the role and function of influence in Holocaust fiction. Particular attention is paid to the works of fiction in which authors are consciously using documentary materials. Three case studies are presented: *Once* by Morris Gleitzman, *Call the Swallow* by Fergus O'Connel, and *Polsk Krigsommar* by Mogels Kjelgaard. In each case, the links with the documentary sources are analysed in detail.

Keywords: Holocaust; fiction; documentary; influence; memory; Gleitzman, Morris; O'Connel, Fergus; Kjelgaard, Mogels

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THE QUESTION OF INFLUENCE has not been much debated in relation to Holocaust literature. There is no doubt that Theodore Adorno's statement about the impossibility of writing after Auschwitz initiated a discussion about Holocaust literature, but it would be difficult to prove that it has had much influence on the literature itself.[1] Today, Adorno's words are seen rather as a metaphor, a statement about the predicament of European culture after the Holocaust, and not as an ethical imperative with a practical application.

It should not be surprising that the concept of influence, as used in comparative literature, has not been consciously used in the context of the Holocaust. The history of this writing is relatively short, perhaps too short to create a definitive hierarchy and a canon that could have an impact on successive generations of writers. But it is also the nature of this writing itself that makes it difficult to apply the concept of influence. What we collectively define as "Holocaust literature" consists mainly of memoirs and autobiographical writing. Only a small proportion of its authors consider themselves to be professional writers and venture into areas other than the Holocaust. The most recognised among them, such as Jean Amery, Aharon Appelfeld, Tadeusz Borowski, Ida Fink, Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel, have managed to blend their autobiographical writing with what we might term elements of fiction; or, perhaps better, they have succeeded in giving their personal accounts of the Holocaust a more complex artistic shape.

It is only recently and with a certain reluctance that we have begun to use the term Holocaust fiction for writing that departs from the traditional form of a memoir written by an eyewitness.[2] The term Holocaust fiction has been controversial for both artistic and ethical reasons. The ethical problem concerns the validity of writing fiction about such horrific events, and at a time when the memory of these events is still fresh and being recorded in countless memoirs.