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“Am I Still There?”: On the Author’s Sense of Becoming in a New Language

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Abstract

What is the author’s experience of a constructed “self” in translation? This question offers us a brief incursion into the problem and the opportunity of *being translated*, which I plot on a cline from anxiety, uncertainty and loss of self, to renewal. Two arcs on the metaphoric axes are ethereal and carnal, respectively: soul, manifested in such comparisons as translation as metempsychosis, and body, which appears in translation tropes such as war, on the aggressive end, and erotics, on the cooperative. We also see variations such as enslavement and reproduction. These figures form ways of coming to terms with the double authorship of all translation – even self-translation – and of the author’s sense of survival as “self” or “other” in the process of inscription in a new language, as well as the author’s perception of the translator with respect to his or her identity formation. The primary dichotomy of the translator as collaborator or competitor – that is, the dynamics of coexistence or the tensions of domination – underlies these conceptualizations.

Keywords: identity, body, estrangement, metaphors of translation

Then, seek a poet who your way does bend,
And choose an author as you choose a friend.
United by this sympathetic bond,
You grow familiar, intimate, and fond

(Lord Roscommon, “An Essay on Translated Verse”, 262)

...and we judge and are sensible of [the great writers’] perfections, if by no other way, than by not being able to imitate them

(Quintilian, *Institutes of the Orator*, X, v, 241)

...Thou art translated

(Peter Quince, in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, III, i. 112-13)

While the phenomenologies of translators’ experiences of translating – their perceptions, responses and embodied readerly encounters with texts – have all been explored in recent years (e.g. Scott 2012), authors’ varied understandings of being translated, particularly as they relate to writerly identity, have not yet received their due attention. In this paper, I wish to broadly map the ways in which writers tend to understand the experience of undergoing translation; conceptions ranging from survival to transformation, from expansiveness to disintegration. The attendant perception of translators, then, can be shown to occupy the same range, from antagonistic to erotic to salvational. How do writers reconcile the sense of both alienation and recognition inherent in seeing themselves in a new language? What sense of “self” is involved? I will specifically consider the metaphors of their own self-reception, rather than either the abstract theories of translation they propose or their critiques of specific translations of their work (à la Vladimir Nabokov or Milan Kundera). In this sense, I take up the author as “translated subject”, a role less extensively traced than that of the author as translation critic.

A working hypothesis guiding these explorations is that writers are never so conscious of their own selves – to the point of reifying them – as they are when translated.

Rita Wilson usefully reminds us of the “self that is not pre-existent but is constituted in the act of translation” (196). The “double articulation: knowing and not knowing the other” that she defines can apply equally to the author and the translator. When she writes that “to translate is to install oneself in the space of divergence and to accept the divergence of the two subjects” (Wilson 196), Wilson is also characterising what happens, ideally, when the author embraces liminality. *To be translated* is to accept divergence. The reality of authorial reception, however, is more nuanced, as I will now examine; translation is not a psychologically simple process. I will focus on the following, broadly sketched phenomena: the author and the writing process; the author and self-translation; the author in relation to his or her work in translation; and the translator in relation to the author. I will articulate links wherever possible, although the emphasis will be on showing “horizontal” variations in authorial reception, rather than distinguishing the features of each case. My review of the many disparate cases is organized around metaphors as expressions of translated subjectivity or subjectivity in translation.¹

Translation as uncertainty

The nature of the diverging subjectivities between authorial selves in the original and in translation, and between authorial and translatorial voices, presents a problem. Meintjes identifies how deconstruction “has pointed to [the] fundamental *crisis of identity* in the act of translation – translation’s fatal flaw is to be, at one and the same time, *Other* and *not Other*” (67).² Basalamah describes the legal characterization of a text as one debated in opposing terms: paternity and filiation on the one hand, and “dialogue and interaction” on the other (123). He notes Derrida’s (1996) positing of “the specter of the father (the author)” as “always there, although *undecidedly present or absent*” (122, emphasis mine). Identity in translation may involve the doubling of texts, authors, voices, and even readers (both real and implied) (Penas Ibañez 51).

For at least one author, being translated produces what might be termed the *anxiety of uniqueness*. Writers and translators alike have troped writing as embodiment, yoking textual presence to bodily incarnation. The cognitive semantics in which textual-bodily form and meaning align make the writer’s self-knowledge in translation a matter of self-recognition: will the new text be sufficiently “me”, despite a newly embodied form? Will I viscerally, corporeally, recognise the marked traits, characteristic textures and imperfections? And, will that “me” suffer an excess, a misshapeness, an alienation? Consider the following quotation from Ellie Epp:

¹ I am borrowing an anonymous reviewer’s phrasing here in an attempt to bridge the text’s many references to incommensurate contexts and practices.

² Cf. Eugene Chen Eoyang, who writes of the *myth of identity* as demonstrated by the naïveté of one writer (Andy Rooney) who, in a critique of a friend’s translation of his work into Japanese, “assumes it is possible to convey his individual American style” in the language, little realizing that the “challenge is to sound American to Japanese the way Americans sound to Americans” (13). The writer, Rooney, strays into an ontological error, believing “there is an Andy Rooney in Japanese and that all it takes is diligent translation to discover it” (15).

Translation interposes a third body. A lot depends on whether the intervening body – the translator – is structurally fluid and precise: can it (in some way) re-form the body of the author within itself so that its utterance will structure a reader in similar ways. When I'm being translated – or edited, too – what I look for is whether I can feel myself in the new text. Am I at home in its cognitive dynamics – its flights and perchings? Am I awkward in its rhythms? Has my idiosyncrasy been smoothed out? Am I still there?

(Borrero and Epp 65-6)

The metaphor of feeling oneself in the new text resonates with Douglas Robinson's use of the concept of *proprioception* to stand for the translation perceived as both strange and familiar (116) – the “ownness”, as he calls it, or one's sense of physical self, one's bodily sensation. MacKendrick notes that bodily translation harks back to practices in which wholeness was even attributed to fragments, showing that fragmentariness was no obstacle to the integrity of spiritual power:

We don't so often think of bodies being translated, but [notice that the] translation of relics (that is, of pieces or close possessions of saints) is their movement from one location – specifically, from one church congregation – to another.

[...T]hroughout the Middle Ages the relics were sometimes said to have translated themselves, moved of their own volition. This was held to demonstrate the desire of the relevant saints for the newly privileged location [...] In the translation of relics, an original – a whole, unified original in the form of an intact body – is the very source of meaning. The relic matters because it belonged to the body of a saint, and each fragment is held to contain, somehow, the wholeness of saintly power and sanctity [...] But as a rule, that original is impossible to find; the meaningful pieces are only ever fragments. (In fact, studies of older relics often show that they are not even fragments of humans.)

(MacKendrick 37)

Submerged or problematic pieces of a self may become available to the perceiving self who is translated. For Brossard, translation exposes what one wants hidden *from* oneself *of* oneself; not only thoughts, but also whom it is who thinks, and how, and how that new thinking relates back to the familiar body:

Exhausting work it is to read a text of one's own in translation. Tiring, because to the mental operations one performs in writing the text is added the process I shall call unveiling. Because what one chooses to hide in a text must now be exposed. Where criticism, for example, can only presume, dream or imagine a meaning, translation seeks to ascertain. In this process of corroboration, I must confront what I have consciously and scrupulously hidden from myself. To be translated is to be interrogated not only in what one believes oneself to be but in one's way of thinking in a language, and of being thought by the same language. It means I have to question myself about the other I might be if I thought in English, Italian, or some other language. What law, what ethics, what landscape, what picture would then come to mind? And who would I be in each of these languages? What would femininity have reserved for me in Italian? What relation would I have had to my body if I had had to think it in English?

(Brossard 37-8)

Maier has written about how the translator, too, is imprinted with emotions that “pass to and become the translator who rewrites them” (147), a transformation that repositions the body as a “site of translation or translator in its own right” (138).³ Translators and commentators have used metaphors of transcorporeality to illustrate the effect of translation since they first practiced the art. In the preface to *Kekavali*, the masterwork of the Marathi poet Moropanta (1729-1794), to take an almost random example, we are told that the translator must enter “the heart and mind of the author” (Ranade vii). The Earl of Roscommon’s well-known lines (see the epigraph above) are followed by these, in which harmonization between two implies a replacement of the first by the second: “Your thoughts, your words, your styles, your souls agree, / No longer his interpreter, but he” (262). This is the total identity invoked by some theorists with respect to the empathetic leap of the translator. Jean Starr Untermyer expresses this pithily as: “[T]he translator should himself be translated” (Hipkins 74). Many cases have been documented about translators who, as a result of their translations, have also been profoundly affected in their role identities as writers (see for example Bassnett and Pizarnik 2002, or Nouss 2007, both of whom recount episodes of translation *exchanges*).

Epp’s translator figures the translator in a metonymy of bodies, or their trace, as a territory whose exploration is a recovery of language’s incarnate – bodied – origins:

Yo, su traductora, fui su lazarillo en la oscuridad de una lengua nueva. Ella, la vidente inspirada. El poema, un espacio de activación de la memoria de un cuerpo, que a su vez toca otro cuerpo, y otro. Traducir es tantear... en el territorio (des)conocido de un cuerpo. Re-conocer (recordar) – a través del cuerpo – el origen encarnado del lenguaje.

[I, her translator, was her guide for the blind in the darkness of a new language. She, the inspired seer. The poem, a space where the memory of a body is activated, a body that in turn touches another body, and another. Translating is feeling one’s way... in the (un)known territory of a body. Re-cognizing (recalling) – through the body – the incarnate origins of language.]

(Borrero 67-9, my translation)

It is the author’s subjective presence that the author may fear is imperilled by the act of translation. In a psychoanalytic approach to the translated author, Maria Carneiro and Arthur Brakel speculate that being translated might trigger a sense of being persecuted, lost, taken over, or eliminated (774). Languages themselves require different bodies or a different physicality than the same body, which presents another kind of destabilising transformation of form:

Linguists, by using electrodes on the vocal cords, have been able to demonstrate that English has tenser vowels than, for example, Spanish. The body itself speaks a language differently, so that moving from one language to another is more than translating words. It’s getting the body ready as well. It’s getting the heart ready along with the mind.

(Rios 104)

³ See also Scott (2012), particularly 20-21, in footnote 1.

Different embodiments – that of translator, author, and reader – may even be gendered.⁴ A “feminizing” translation of a female writer’s work produces a thought-provoking case in this connection: Lise Gauvin’s *Lettres d’une autre* (1987) was translated by Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood without the original author’s generic masculine pronouns. Instead, these were replaced by more visibly feminine ones. In “Gender in Translation” Sherry Simon writes that the translator’s signature is accorded equal authority to that of the writer, denoting a translatorial self that threatens to rival the authorial “I” (32). More remarkable than the political stance taken by the translator is the author’s invisibility with respect to the translator’s position, even though “we know, in this particular case, that *the author seems to have been willing to abdicate textual authority* in favour of the translator’s more radical stance toward language” (Simon 32, emphasis mine). We rarely see authors’ formal assessments of their translators’ work; we take it on faith that they understand and approve them in those cases where they are aware of having been translated and can access the target texts. In other cases, where translation eludes or excludes authors due to language, textual piracy, geography, death, or even authors’ own indifference to their work’s fate in translation, the translated text can assume a ‘life’ of its own, autonomous and uncontested. Thus both the abdication of authority and the incapacity or unwillingness to claim authority may supplant or threaten to supplant the writer; to use a metaphor suggesting boundary conflict, they threaten to *occupy* the writer.

Translation, then, is often conceived as a contentious encounter out of which one voice prevails, with languages standing implicitly as proxies for human combatants:

Two languages contend for dominance in translation. It is a struggle that occurs all along the disputed text, and each language must yield points to the more forceful configurations of the other.... [...] a field of warring identities and the erotics of power [...].

(Raffel 36-37)

Cases exist in which author-translator partnerships are strained, not because of language, but because of incompatible translation philosophies or literary sensibilities. Alice Kaplan’s true fable (2003) of the “wrong” translator being assigned to her text *French Lessons* reminds us that alienation may be fated before a single word is translated. Her “Mr. X”, whom she describes as an “ethically bad translator” because he denied her strangeness in the new tongue, teaches us that power struggles in the author-translator relationship can simply be the result of a poor fit, a mismatch of two individuals’ aesthetic goals that no amount of editorial therapy could remedy. Kaplan’s misadventure becomes even more complicated during the working process as she realizes (being a translator herself) that the translator’s impulse to become the writer can indeed take hold, particularly when flaws are found in the source text. She describes Mr. X’s renderings as boundary violations, a “creepy” kind of invasive claim-jumping of her space. Arguments about the differing fundamentals of style between translator and writer often seem to signal an *irreconcilable difference*; the bedrock social contract between them rests on harmonic goals. In cases such as Kaplan’s, the shared meaning of the dialogic process of collaboration can give way to hermeneutic departures and appropriative translation choices, made in defiance of the author and the text; that is, to a rivalry that exists outside the text as well as within it.

The motif of translator as rival can be traced back to the period of antiquity. In Epistle VII.ix, in Pliny the Younger, the translator is portrayed as an upstart attempting to emulate the author:

⁴ See Hipkins 72-4 for a discussion of the “close but stifling relationship” of translator Paola Capriolo and Thomas Mann and the “female ‘anxiety of authorship’” that emerged from the translation process.

[T]hings which you might have overlooked in reading cannot escape you in translating: and this method will open your understanding and improve your judgement. It may not be amiss when you have read only so much of an author at once, as to carry in your head his subject and argument, to turn, as it were, his rival, and write something on the same topic; then compare your performance and his, and minutely examine in what points either you or he most happily succeeded.

(Pliny the Younger 23)

The rival may even name the threat – translation – in terms that posit translation not as creation but as *uncreation*, an un-writing or defacing of body and even reputation. We can see this theme in Bengali poet Jagannath Chakravorty's "Translate Me", which addresses the would-be translator defiantly in terms suggesting the translator would efface the name and very body of the writer: "Rub out, if you can, my name, [...] / As though I were someone else, something else" (Chakravorty, Tr. Chaudhuri 126).⁵

The language of conflict used within the discipline of psychology has been used to describe translational authorities, drives, prohibitions, and challenges. Barnstone, for instance, suggests that cooperation between translator and author is intended, but argues that the relationship devolves into a parent-child power struggle due to the author's precedence (8). Cynan Jones, a Welsh author, jokes that literary translators act "in loco parentis" (Vezzano), while Carneiro and Brakel theorise that collaboration requires an abandoning of the writer's narcissistic impulse and a surrendering to the mutual respect necessary in any joint undertaking (774). Carneiro and Brakel stake out the territory of the text as being akin to the realm of the psychoanalyst, who interprets in light of what patients present, similar to the way in which the translator extends the reach of alien ideas (Carneiro and Brakel 774). It is telling that, via this connection, and although Oedipal theories of translation have been in circulation for some time, Lawrence Venuti frames his translation norms in Lacanian terms, suggesting finally that to assume status and authority "the translating process may [...] reveal the translator's repressed desire to challenge the source author by releasing an unconscious remainder" (50-1). Kevin West, echoing Raffel's "erotics of power", imagines the "plenitude of an other's words as a surrogate of the elusive other" (2). The desire for knowledge of an other, not of texts in West's conception but of engagement with a mind, leads to the effort "to dissolve the customary separation of minds and attain oneness of understanding" (Raffel 3), a physical union he calls an "erotics of translation". This image attenuates what he sees in Steiner's *After Babel* as bodied but ultimately "phallogocentric" aggression (Raffel 15).

The erotic partakes vaguely of the figurations with which translation has long been associated, "many of which," according to Bistué, "portray [the author-translator] relation as a paradoxical form of union or condensation," often in terms of "engendering and reproduction, of ingestion and assimilation, and of conquest, abduction, and enslavement" (30). In the seventeenth century, Marie de Gournay used stark cannibalistic imagery to declare that the translator must "engender a work anew [...] because [the ancient writers] have to be decomposed by profound and penetrating reflection, in order to be reconstituted by a similar process; just as meat must be decomposed in our stomachs in order to form our bodies" (Zuber 292). Bistué describes the problem of translational authorship as that of two selves vying for space, as there is room for only one in the translation itself (30).

One writer who has combined closeness and antagonism into a claustrophobic paradox of "intimate enemies" to describe the author-translator relationship is Maryse Condé, a

⁵ It may undermine the poet's rhetoric somewhat to realize that, akin to reading in a book Socrates' arguments against books, we are reading his excoriation of translation *in translation*.

Guadeloupean writer. She confesses that to be translated is to be dispossessed (25). The process of writing, for Condé, consists of harmonising painstakingly chosen words, written neither in French nor Creole but in, as she calls it, “Maryse Condé” (32). But then:

[...] the translator turns the musicality of the text upside down and in the end destroys the lovingly elaborated score. In the course of this annihilation, the author’s voice disappears and he is excluded from the text he so patiently produced. What voice then prevails and replaces the author’s? It can only be that of the translator! [...] Appropriation. Treason. Exclusion.⁶

(Condé 26)

For Condé, understanding the language of the translation means “assess[ing] the extent of the transformation compared to the original text” (27). She does not use the concept of “transformation” in the way it is commonly used in translation studies – as an inevitability – but instead employs it as a criticism: the voice is not hers. She concedes that the importance of translation and her paradoxical position of being read in English is a “necessary evil”, admitting that “[m]y reservations toward it are merely a product of my narcissism and the jealousy of an author who dreads being dispossessed and who thus sees enemies everywhere” (Condé 29). The translator is an “intimate” and “indispensable” enemy, she concludes. Jean Anderson, in a recent interview (“Art or Echo” 2011), makes the point that writers reading themselves in translation may experience conflict due to their tendency to want total control over the page. For some authors, perhaps, performing their own translated work out loud to a listening public constitutes even more of a personal displacement than reading a translation on the printed page; it is a more literal kind of ‘score’, to use Condé’s image, since they are giving voice to their own re-voicing, a re-embodiment of disembodiment.

Clearly, many of the writers cited here work or worked in contexts that cannot be fairly compared, and this tour through them is admittedly brisk. Yet it is still possible to find common thematic threads: for example, the author’s search for a sense of what is rightful or one’s own in an aggressively intimate situation. Similarly, an ‘erotics’ of power unites the cited cases in their attempt to restore or defend against an effacement or overpowering. Being translated is seen in such cases as the showdown of distinct selfhoods in which re-creation renders uncertain, and even threatens to *destroy*, its object.

Translation as loss of self or estrangement

I wish I could give up trying to see the words, my own sentences, English, shine through. It’s melancholy as well as enthralling work. [...] I am translated – in the modern sense and in the obsolete sense deployed by Wycliffe [described elsewhere (339) as “to be rescued, from death or extinction”]. In supervising my translations, I am supervising the death as well as the transposition of my words.

(Sontag 347)

Susan Sontag’s words, cited above, describe a paradoxical valediction and resurrection of one’s words as one’s words; that is, the release into both death and life of the ego’s personal production. Meintjes prompts us to reflect on the different kinds of authorial responses as aesthetic, psychological, and inescapably *relational*: perhaps the greater paradox is that the translation cannot present the author as being free of the translator. She writes:

⁶ The reader may be interested to learn that these words in “Intimate Enemies” (and, indeed, most of Condé’s work in English) were translated by the poet’s husband.

Writing (experienced) as an expression of self has the potential to engender competitiveness around originality and ownership, and protectiveness and resistance from the writer, at least in an initial moment, because translating opens up the space for tensions around the inevitable difference and loss in conveying the foreign, which is also the self of an other.

(Sontag 68)

The phrase “writing (experienced) as an expression of self” suggests that writing may be experienced in other ways, namely, impersonally or, at least, not as an accurate record of a single consciousness. The phrase, “at least in an initial moment”, furthermore, suggests the malleability of an author’s growth toward acknowledging oneself as an image, as the author of an “Ur-text” and the potential images that can be made from it. The so-called “death of the author”, perhaps, is not only the reader’s to negotiate, but also that of the author who “dies” to overcome the writerly identity they constrain to a single language and a personal inscription of that language. The estrangement of a writer’s words can be compounded through relay or indirect translation, such as *Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne* (*Smilla’s Sense of Snow*), the English version of which became a new original for onward translation, though the work is attributed to Danish writer Peter Høeg (Park 113).

Self-translation: reflexive being

Self-translators, while having an apparent interpretive advantage, are not immune to the uncertainties and anxieties noted by other authors. Wilson plots self-translation within Anthony Pym’s concept of the translator as a “minimal intercultural”, where not only the third space or “gap” is operative, but also a space of imbrications and cross-currents, revealing the potentialities of the text and perhaps even of the self-translator as the “archetypal embodiment of such linguistic and cultural overlap, both in person and in his/her writing/textual production” (196; Pym 181). Moreover, self-translation is perhaps most dramatically evidenced by Wilson’s contention that “translation and writing are allied phenomena of re-inscription of the self” (189). Benigno Trigo (77) notes how, in Rosario Ferré’s work, the “second skin” of the text that constitutes the self-translation in the Puerto Rican writer’s case sometimes contains “ironic reversals” and even liberates the source from its “self-censuring impulse” (Trigo 77; cf. Brossard above). This suggestion hints at an authorial identity not fully established in the source, but which is fragmentary and only completed or revealed in (self-)translation. Ferré herself describes self-translation as “complex”, “disturbing”, “diabolic”, “obsessive”, “anguishing”, an act of “self-exile” requiring “a constant recreation of divergent worlds” (39). To the author, self-translation perhaps presents more of a sense of a self-overcoming than of self-preservation, “a second chance at redressing one’s fatal mistakes”, and of “submerging oneself in sin, without having to pay the consequences” of the betrayal (Ferré 39). Steiner himself, it is worth noting, “describes the rewriting of one’s own original as a narcissistic trial or authentication’ that has to do with ‘retracing the self’, looking to enhance or clarify aspects of an author’s own inspiration through reproduction” (Steiner 336). Perez Firmat writes categorically of the doomed prospects for this enterprise, perhaps not without some reason. He maintains that a self-translator “cannot translate into one language his relation with the other”, the “associations, burdens, predispositions” of the other tongue (14). Finally, Elin-Maria Evangelista, echoing many commentators, notes the freedoms that an adopted tongue affords on the one hand, yet offers evidence, on the other, that self-translation, a translation of language and selfhood both, is more complex and more problematic than mere addition (178; see also Besemeres 2002).

Translation as renewal

J.W. Goethe places the experience of translation in the words of a poetic self, who likens the pleasure of being translated to plucking a wild flower and keeping it alive, as in K.A. Browning's translation below:

A Parable

I pick'ed a rustic nosegay lately,
And bore it homewards, musing greatly;
When, heated by my hand, I found
The heads all drooping tow'rd the ground
I plac'd them in a well-cool'd glass,
And what a wonder came to pass!
The heads soon rais'd themselves once more,
The stalks were blooming as before,
And all were in as good a case
As when they left their native place.

* * * *

So felt I, when I wond'ring heard
My song to foreign tongues transferr'd.

(*The Poems of Goethe*, Tr. Browning 234)

Significantly, the flower-poem is imperilled by physical conveyance from its origins, but is saved. The narrator's own hand does not suffice in order to revive the flower; it must be given simulated natural conditions that support life. The conditions of the artificial environment for the transplant (lines 9-10) are deemed to be as good as those of nature⁷; that is, in the algebra of the poem, translations stand for 'the genuine'. Goethe's letters relate the pleasure he took in reading and admiring his work in Gérard de Nerval's French translation of Faust when he tired of reading it in German (*Goethe's Letters* 317n). Sabine Prokhoris offers the insight that Goethe confronted "the most radical form of dispossession that provides access to the poetic essence of language; that shows it to be an endless effort at translation, with, for its starting point, the violent encounter with the untranslatable" (168). Through this struggle, according to Goethe's conception, emerges "the most beautiful metempsychosis: that in which we see ourselves reappear in another" (Prokhoris 168). More than the substance of the other itself, Goethe prized "the encounter" – to borrow Antoine Berman's words – with "that which is opposed to us, as the cultivation of what is antagonistic to our own nature" (Berman 62).

⁷ This natural/unnatural contrast is seen more clearly in another translation, found in Goethe's letters to Carl Friedrich Zelter: "And all as healthy, sweet and good, / As though on Mother Earth they stood" (317). The unnumbered footnote indicates that the inspiration for the poem was the 1825 translation into French of *Poésies de Goethe* by Madame Panckoucke. Another translation resonates with Freudian undertones: "All as healthy as if they'd been / On maternal ground" (Prokhoris 169). M. Gray's version of the parabolic poem is emphatically titled "The Song Translated", and ends: "They seemed as fair and full of mirth / As where they grew in mother earth. / I thought of this when I heard sung / My old song new in a foreign tongue" (Gray and Goethe 16). The rendition heightens the dying/reviving motif by counterpoising 'old' and 'new'.

Berman describes Goethe's sense of the effect of translation on a work in terms that highlight the act's organic and symbolic force: "something that refers to the mysteries of the lives of languages", "regeneration", "metamorphosis", "return to the origin", "rejuvenated in the mirror of a foreign language in order to be able to offer its face of wonder to the readers of its mother tongue" (Berman 67). What is striking about Berman's consideration of Goethe is the way in which translation is framed to include the author in its audience. While theorists have considered translation to be a reader's way of making "mental turns that are [foreign]", while also being "amused at being another" (Ortega y Gasset 112), a translation is rarely conceived of as a way for *the author* to renew his or her perspective of the original work from a position that lies (somewhat) outside it. Referencing translations of her own work, Véronique Tadjo argues that translation gives

[...] another chance to the original by allowing it to spread its wings [...]. Sometimes it makes me discover the original in a different way [...]. I can surprise myself because the translated text reveals any artifice and brings out the hidden narrative. In a sense the process of translation is a deconstruction of the original [...] [A] time always comes when I have to withdraw in order to let the text find its coherence and the translator his or her own empathy.

(Tadjo and Batchelor 105-6)

Berman (54) characterises Goethe's perception of himself as a translated author in terms of "an *experience* and never, it would seem, as the narcissistic satisfaction of a writer", and although Goethe presented no comprehensive theory of translation, he had a "view of natural, human, social, and cultural reality [...] based on an interpretation of *Nature* as a process of interaction, participation, reflection, exchange, and metamorphosis" (Berman 54).

Conclusion

Identity in translation undergoes "new emphases, shifts in the textual dominance of textual components of every kind, formal, semantic, generic, intertextual, and/or pragmatic" (Penas Ibañez 51). Yet authors often seek to find themselves in translation, perhaps by employing the same reading approach that naive readers use, namely, expecting to find an essence independent of the quiddities of a given language. The fear that the translation will replace or usurp the identity of the original, or expand and propagate it, derives from a philosophy of translation that posits translation as both outside (a threat or a difference) and inside (a thing bearing one's name and characteristics), a "not-I" that is also an "I", a shared self. Paul Ricoeur complicates this binary in *On Translation*, arguing that we are constituted not by a unitary self but by appropriated otherness. Furthermore, serving as a kind of truce to the tensions of competing selfhoods, he theorises a "linguistic hospitality" that does not exercise any violence upon the "guest"-writer. Ricoeur thereby models an ethics of translation that acknowledges imperfect interaction rather than perfect access and communication.

Much has been written about literature and estrangement with respect to a given work's effect on readers, but far less has been said about the writer's own sense of estrangement – or fulfilment – vis-à-vis the self in the act of rewriting that all translation involves. The writer may view translation as a threat to the original and to his or her identity, or, on the opposite pole, as a transformative, life-extending experience. Here, I have considered some of the forms *being translated* may take, focusing on the psychology of the author as the reader of his or her translated self. Many of the metaphorical vehicles presented here have centred on the individual body and soul, and the aggressions they are subjected to or the alliances to which they are a party. Survival may be the main tenor underlying these metaphors, with flesh and reputation

standing as fragile, malleable correlates of the authorial problem of being in time and space and, through cooperation and competition, being *throughout* it. The importance of translation in the development of the writer points to translation's growing prominence in the writerly consciousness, as authors become increasingly aware of themselves as writing and existing in a globalized world. Indeed, increased critical recognition of the 'translator as writer' construct suggests that translation's secondary status may become more tenuous as time goes by. The writer's voice in the contested or expanded space of literary selfhood attests to translation's ubiquity, complexity, and power.

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