

Introduction

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One translates with books.*

*And not only with dictionaries

(Berman 2009, 52)

Who authors translations and who authorizes them? These seemingly simple but bedeviling questions still motivate research in Literary Translation Studies (LTS), which, after the descriptive and then the “cultural turn” of the 1990s moved beyond a text-to-text comparison and began reading translation as a material act as well as a textual and literary one. The cultural turn in Translation Studies coincided and overlapped with the rise of postcolonial studies in literature departments and the (very slow) “worlding” of syllabi in English as well as Comparative Literature departments: the material considerations of translation reflected the political core and impact of asymmetrical cultural transfer being studied more generally in literature departments. Two highly influential Comparative Literature scholars in the US, Gayatri Spivak and Emily Apter, have, in turn, authorized Translation Studies as a kind of afterlife to the dying discipline of Comparative Literature, but it is, in Apter’s words, a “new translation studies” that puts “postcolonial comparatism . . . and media theory into combustive alignment” as opposed to old school “humanistic *translatio studii*” (Apter 2005, 204). “The new Comparative Literature,” Spivak writes, “makes visible the import of the translator’s choice”; thinking about these translation choices can open up the discourses of power, “the disappeared history of distinctions in another space,” as she notes, “full of the movement of languages and peoples still in historical sedimentation at the bottom, waiting for the real virtuality of our imagination” (Spivak 2005, 18).

Comparative and World Literature scholars such as Spivak have influenced Translation Studies especially in terms of postcolonial and subaltern theories (Robinson 2004), but have not since engaged at any length with LTS as a field. Indeed, when they do, they are critical: Apter in particular criticized Translation Studies for emphasizing translatability in literature, partly because of the presence of “professional” translators in the field (she singles out David Bellos) who try to defend the notion of translatability because they want to be published (Apter 2013, 19). Apter’s championing of “untranslatability” allows for a critical and

resistant approach to thinking about literatures of other languages, but to do so she mischaracterizes LTS of the last twenty years as being more interested in pursuing Walter Benjamin's notion of "*reine Sprache* (pure or transparent language)" rather than "translation failure" and untranslatability (Apter 2013, 9). She cites her reading, in a footnote, of critics such as Venuti, Bassnett, Baker, and so on (Apter 2013, 4), all of whom have expanded, contrary to her arguments, on cultural readings in which the question of untranslatability is integral. The problem is the translator who has to translate the untranslatable and who assumes, in Apter's words, that translation is "a good thing, *en soi*—under the assumption that it is a critical praxis enabling communication across languages, cultures, time periods and disciplines—the right to the Untranslatable was blindsided" (Apter 2013, 8). Although contemporary LTS has documented and analyzed translation as a critical praxis across time and cultures, its situation of textual studies within political and historical contexts, its recovering of alternative literary histories through translation histories, and its interest in translators' choices and the power structures that influenced the choices or how they were read have given a much more complex and nuanced picture than Apter acknowledges.

Even Spivak has deliberately elided translation as a hermeneutic experience; in her famous, long, introduction to her translation of Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, Spivak only arrives at the subject of translation after eighty pages and dismisses translation in a brief deconstructive maneuver, writing that she does not want "to launch [her] philosophy of translation here. Instead I give you a glimpse of Derrida's" ("Translator's Preface" Derrida 1976, lxxxvii), and then she quotes him briefly on the notion that all writing is translation. Spivak's deconstruction of the notion of a preface and perhaps—though I don't think it's intentional—of a translator's preface might have been more pertinent in the late 1970s but now seems uninformative. She does write briefly about some translation choices related to Mahasweta Devi's work in her essay "Translating into English," but there is no sustained interest in opening up the text hermeneutically via these choices. Her obliqueness about the translation process comes through in an article in *Public Culture*: "Do I have 'experiences' as a translator," she asks in answer to the question, "Describe some of your own experiences as a translator." "How can these questions be answered as they are posed[?]" she asks, as she "provid[es] philosophically unassailable answers" but realizes that "I never reflect theoretically" on translation (Spivak 2001, 13).

David Damrosch, a champion of *worlding* literature, is also surprisingly dismissive at times of the knowledge and skills of translators. He exhorts students to learn other languages because it is "liberating, freeing us from complete dependency on translations and allowing us entry into the many pleasures of a writer's style that can only be glimpsed in translation" (Damrosch 2009, 128). The anxiety about the inability to read style through translation can also be seen in Apter's criticism of Bellos once more for suggesting that "style does survive translation" (Apter 2013, 19, quoting Bellos), arguing that his notion of "maximal translation" (Apter 2013, 20) speaks of a selling-out, a submission to domestic and market economy norms. What LTS has consistently analyzed, however, is how and when

translators have engaged with aesthetics in complex, nuanced ways displaying again and again their role as exegetical readers, often dealing with external pressures to normalize texts but not necessarily bowing to them. What happens in that encounter opens up the texts themselves, and perhaps it is here, that hermeneutic locus, that the anxiety about the figure of the translator in Comparative Literature is embedded: an anxiety about critical authority. So what can LTS contribute and why is it being sidelined in Comparative and World Literature theory? The two questions are linked in the figure of the translator.

All of the chapters in this volume are interested in the authority of the translator whether disguised, elided, or decidedly present. I have admired conference papers and articles by all the contributors to this volume and what links them is an academic generosity as literary scholars, open to what translators and translation history can teach them (and us) about reading and hermeneutics. The chapters represent the interest in LTS in the translator as an author, a figure who creates and recreates the translated text, but they also point to the more visibly emergent idea of the translator as an exegetical (and not just linguistic) authority.

As Antoine Berman points out, the idea that “the translator acts like a critic at all levels” (Berman 2009, 28) is not new (he quotes George Steiner’s assertion that some translations “are supreme acts of critical exegesis”), but that the fertile relationship between literary criticism and an acknowledgment of the translator-as-critic has not been fully realized even though “criticism and translation are structurally related” (Berman 2009, 28). By this he means that criticism and translation are both “ontologically bound to the [original] work” (Berman 2009, 26) and “living in and through the works” (Berman 2009, 27). Berman emphasizes that criticism “is *necessary*” to literary works “that call for and authorize something like criticism because they *need* it. They need criticism to communicate *themselves*, to manifest *themselves*, to accomplish *themselves* and perpetuate *themselves*” (Berman 2009, 26, Berman’s italics); for Berman, the modality of criticism is innately tied to the act of translation. Yet, until only recently, he argues, translation criticism has been a “morose discourse” of critical judgment that upholds the secondariness of translations and thus the inevitable “defectivity” in the translation results (Berman 2009, 29). Berman proposes a reading and rereading of the translation as an autonomous work and a reading of the translation project and translation horizons of the translator’s work—not in order to judge the quality of the translation but as a means by which we can interpret the work and what it has become.

Technology helps, certainly in terms of thinking about the translator’s project: Translation Studies has been a step ahead of Literary Studies in embracing data-driven and corpora-based readings, thinking as Anthony Pym puts it of “*what gets translated*” beyond close comparative readings of the translation and the original (Pym 2013, 89), but technology has also enabled a genuine paratextual visibility for literary translators and their projects, including blogs, interviews, and web-based sites devoted to translated literature. Old media, however, tend to act as if these resources were unavailable. As Brian Baer incisively shows in Chapter 1, in which he analyzes the data from three years of translation reviews in *The New York Times*, 1900, 1950, and 2000, acknowledgment of the translator is a slowly

incremental, and still troubled, act. Focusing on the “complex cultural site” of translation reviews, Baer considers how these reviews might show how translators and translations are “imagined in a given society at a certain moment in history” and how they might reflect sociopolitical interests; for instance, in the increase in the reviews of German literature in 2000 that, Baer suggests, reflects anxiety about post-Cold War transition, or in the more various reviews of different genres in 1950, including reviews of translated history and philosophy volumes (greater than in 2000) that might reflect a wider rethinking of the world, post World War II. Baer considers whether globalization “marked by digital connectivity and mass migration” has impacted interest in translations in the mainstream press, but the data from 2000 does not suggest any wholesale shift (from 1950) in how translations are reviewed. Should we question, he asks, the progressivist narrative in Translation Studies, which argues toward the greater visibility of the translator (and translation in general)?

The New York Times, a paper of record, is one of the very few print venues for serious book reviews left in the US. It serves a city in which one third of the denizens are foreign born and where almost half (49 percent) of residents speak a language other than English at home (20 percent of all Americans—over 60 million people—speak a language other than English at home).¹ Interest in Americans’ other homes and other tongues is barely shown in traditional book reviews, but is sometimes used to defend insular American tastes in literature; for instance, *The New York Times*’s influential reviewer Liesl Schillinger (a translator herself), protested against the Nobel Committee’s attack on American insularism by suggesting that American literature contained its own hyphenated identities that might point to a greater worldiness than that of the prize winner, Herta Müller, whose “works most people haven’t read” (Schillinger 2009).² She rightly points to the kind of hyphenated identities nominated for the US National Book Award: Colum McCann, Daniyal Mueenuddin, and Marcel Theroux, but of course all of these men are global expatriate writers from a certain class writing in a realist and commercial style. The Romanian-German Müller’s devastating, difficult, beautiful novels fall into what Schillinger describes as “German and Northern European contemporary novels [that] zestfully catalogue bleak, pessimistic realities that strike an American audience as profoundly depressing” (Schillinger 2009). Likewise, she adds, “Middle Eastern fiction at the current moment lacks a Jane Austen who could win over an American female readership . . . Not every taste travels” (Schillinger 2009). Taste, as Bourdieu argued, is a form of social and class control and is, as such, constructed: Schillinger’s assumptions about both non-US fiction and what a domestic readership is (and what a gendered readership wants) reflect an assertion of power from the pages of one of the organs that has defined cultural taste in American life.

The meeting of old and new media, however, opens up new possibilities for translators and readers alike. The international bestselling Karl Ove Knausgaard and Elena Ferrante had books included in *The New York Times*’s “100 Notable Books of 2015” list. Online, the list helpfully gives hyperlinks to the newspaper’s review of each book. Neither of the reviewers—two well-known novelists,

Jeffrey Eugenides and Rachel Cusk—mentions the translator and their translation. Yet, a curious reader can find interviews with the translators only a click away: there are interviews with Knausgaard’s translator, Don Bartlett, online at *The Paris Review* or at *World Literature Today*, and after reading Elena Ferrante (a notoriously reclusive and invisible author), you can read interviews with Ann Goldstein at *The Atlantic Monthly* online or on a literary blog.³ Both translators speak about the aesthetic style of the novels, *My Struggle: Book 4/Min Kamp* and *The Story of the Lost Child/Storia della bambina perduta*, which seem to appeal, on the face of it, to the dominant realist and confessional style in the English-speaking publishing industry. Yet, the translators complicate that notion: whereas Eugenides suggests that there is something suspicious about Knausgaard’s “photorealism, with its emphasis on hyper-clarity and detail” (Eugenides 2015) that obfuscates Knausgaard’s artfulness in choosing what he represents (including his own fraught meeting with Eugenides), Bartlett writes about the deliberate artfulness of Knausgaard’s language that creates, in itself, a tension with realism (Esposito 2015). Martin Aitkin, who translated Knausgaard’s review of another of the “Notable Books,” Michel Houellebecq’s *Submission/Soumission*, noted in an online interview that Knausgaard’s artfulness fits into a cross-Scandinavian current that is interested in “the interface between fact and fiction” (Semmel 2015).

On the bright side of *The New York Times*’s “100 Notable Books”: nine of the fifty fiction books on the list were translations (18 percent!) and almost half were written, and translated, by women. They were mainly published by smaller presses, who have gained a reputation for producing translated work: New Directions, Archipelago, NYRB Classics, Other Press, Europa, and Coffee House Press, indicating a dynamic publishing shift. *The New York Times* had well-known US-based writers review the work, such as Claire Messud and Laila Lalami (although it should be noted that only three of the nine reviewers were women), suggesting a certain prestige accorded to the books being reviewed. Yet even Messud and Lalami in their reviews of Magda Szabo and Kamal Daoud resort to the generic adjectival dictums: “beautifully retranslated” by Len Dix; “ably translated” by John Cullen. In a third review, the film critic Terrence Rattigan notes that Clarice Lispector is “sensitively translated” by Katrina Dodson. Another two of the nine reviews do not mention the translator or translation (so four of the nine elide the translator); and only two of the nine reviews spend some time on the question of translation. Jim Krusoe (an American novelist) expresses his delight at the literal presence of Valeria Luiselli’s translator, Christine MacSweeney, in Luiselli’s novel *The Story of My Teeth/Historia de mis dientes*: MacSweeney “created” one of the sections of the novel, “a completely wonderful chronology . . . There is something thrilling about finding a writer generous enough to invite another to participate in her creation” Krusoe notes (Krusoe 2015).

The other writer who mentions translation is Knausgaard, reviewing Houellebecq’s *Submission/Soumission*; he too connects the act of translation with thinking about the aesthetics of the novel. He remarks on the difference between the Norwegian and English translations of the first sentence of *Submission*, which is “slightly disharmonious and irregular in rhythm, untidy even”; for Knausgaard

the syntax renders a sense of character, “a human presence, a particular individual, a rather faltering and yet sincere character” (Knausgaard 2015). However, for Knausgaard, he *intuits* this rhythm from the Norwegian translation, “which I sense is closer to Houellebecq’s original than Lorin Stein’s graceful English translation” (2015). A month earlier, Lorin Stein (who is also the editor of *The Paris Review*) was interviewed online about his Houellebecq translation in which he spoke about finding an appropriate tone for the style of the novel, something that only occurred as he got to the end of translating the book and unearthed the right rhythm and tone “that’s a bit Buster Keaton-ish. It’s a little slow, a little narcotized” (Epstein 2015). The insight into style complicates the mostly literal readings of the novel as being a misogynistic and racist statement by Houellebecq, with both Stein and Knausgaard suggesting that the underlying irony (whether it ultimately works or not) presents a France that, at its most cultivated (in the body of a university professor), *is* misogynistic and racist, and caught in a stultified notion of French culture (the protagonist is a bored expert on Huysmans, a fact that is itself a commentary on the pose of Decadence and Huysman’s retreat into conservatism).

Spivak’s notion that translation can create “another space” for historically under-represented languages and peoples that is “waiting for the real virtuality of our imagination” (Spivak 2005, 18) may have some hopeful signs in the virtual world, which allows another space for translators to speak and to speak back for themselves and the worlds they represent. You can read individual blogs and blogs about translating Haruki Murakami on the eponymous blog, moderated by Murakami’s Polish and Norwegian translators, Anna Zielinska-Elliott and Ika Kaminka; look at VIDA counts for women in translation on the “Women in Translation” tumblr; find databases of Japanese literature in English translation or read about Czech literature in translation on the CzechLit website; or hear Alex Zucker, a translator of Czech literature, speak about the economic and legal practicalities of translation in a podcast on the Three Percent blog.⁴ What emerges from this online presence is a lively, complex version of often difficult and aesthetically ambitious literatures far from the more mainstream portrayal of a blandly global and commercial literature.

The virtuality of the imagination starts, at some level, with the imagination of the translator, their reading from the space of one culture to another. What that might open up, as David Gramling and İlkerHepkaner suggest in Chapter 2, is more complex than a culture-to-culture, language-to-language transfer that speaks of asymmetry only at the borders of that transfer. Gramling and Hepkaner translated a Turkish modernist classic, Sabahattin Ali’s *Kürk Mantolu Madonna/The Madonna in the Fur Coat* (1943), a novel written in two Turkishes: a translingual Ottoman Turkish and a “purified” Turkish implemented in the Kemalist era. The protagonist, Raif, is a translator negotiating the nationalization of the language and hiding (making “untranslatable”) his own translingual past, both in the Ottoman era and during time spent in Weimar Germany. Gramling and Hepkaner’s nuanced reading of *Madonna* focuses on translingualism and the difficulties it places on ideological notions of national literature both in the domestic sphere (what nations choose to represent as national literature, written in a national

language) and in the target culture (what is chosen to represent another national language and literature). Their translation project is linked to their exegetical interests (both scholars are focused on migration and transnational identities in Europe and the Middle East), and they represent a new generation of translators who are also Translation Studies scholars, challenging mononational and monolingual area studies and earlier divides between academic and literary translation. In terms of LTS, their work shows the innate connection of the philological with the ideological; translating the novel reveals the central theme *and mode* of language and identity construction.

Sabahattin Ali, a translator himself, chose a fictionalized translator to explore translanguing identity. Likewise, the English playwright and translator Martin Crimp explores performative identity and, as Geraldine Brodie argues insightfully, “the boundaries of invention within translational narratives” through a translator-figure, Clair, in his 2008 play *The City*, which was premiered almost simultaneously in German and in English. Brodie focuses on Crimp’s interest in translation as a creative and reflexive act as, through his character Clair, he plays with the “authorization and destabilization of the creating voice”; the audience is never sure whether the translation—a book in a paper bag, one of the few physical props in the script—is Clair’s invention or not, though she claims to be translating a diary written by an offstage character, a writer, Mohamed, who has been tortured. The anxiety of place and reality (embodied in some way by the physical, if covered, diary—the equivalent of Raif’s German journal buried in his desk drawer in *Madonna*) is temporarily mitigated by the need for and performative materiality of interpretation and reinterpretation by the characters, the author(s), and the audience.

If we have fictional translators connected to their author-translator’s hermeneutic and existential questions, we also have the translator disguise as a palatable strategy (the paper bag, the desk drawer) of what Pym calls “inculturation” (2013). Alexandra Lopes considers the work of Mário Domingues, the African-born son of an Angolan slave and a Portuguese clerk who survived as a hugely prolific translator and pseudotranslator even under the Salazar dictatorship. Lopes provides a perspicacious and revealing rereading of Venuti’s notions of fluency and domestication via Domingues who actively provided domesticated versions of the Western classics and pseudotranslations of genre novels for a wide Portuguese readership yet did so, Lopes argues, whilst also destabilizing notions of Portuguese identity. He provided an ending to Charles Dickens’s unfinished final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, which, like many English nineteenth-century novels, is hemmed through with colonial thread, and presented it as the quintessential Englishman’s novel: Lopes asks whether in engaging with Domingues’s subaltern identity, we can reread his apparently domesticating work as subversive and, in some ways, an activist appropriation, a “pseudoauthorship.” In other words, how do we read the *Drood* of Dickens-Domingues, and how might it change how we read Dickens?

For Tom Toremans, thinking about translators and pseudotranslation is a way of reading and getting to the heart of the Romantic era’s interest in the relationship between imposture and authenticity, as well as in transnational transfer. Initially focusing on *Blackwood’s Magazine*’s purportedly translated reviews (and then on

Thomas Carlyle's pseudotranslation *Sartor Resartus*), Toremans argues that the guise of translation "effects a gesture that is at once ironic and incisively critical, establish[ing] authority in its very construction of inauthenticity." Toremans's analysis paves an interesting path into analyzing translation reviews, as he considers reviews of fake German books to be "a *performative* gesture rather than mere play or mystification" that questions the very authority of the reviewing process and its epigonism, its reliance on an "original" text about which it speaks; reviews can be seen "as exemplary vehicles of imposture to the extent that they are dependent on an original literary text in order to claim critical authority." Thinking about translation and pseudotranslation in the Romantic era brings us back to the modern flowering of individual legal intellectual rights alongside the valediction of the author (in spiritual and commercial terms) as the unique and original progenitor of textual authority. What Toremans uncovers are the playful and subversive engagements with this authority.

The *auctoriality* of the translator is investigated in John Kearns's analysis of Krzysztof Bartnicki's work; Bartnicki undertook the herculean effort of translating James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* into Polish (published in 2012 as *Finneganów tren*; it is only one of seven full translations of the *Wake* since its publication in 1939). He then produced two works, *Da Capo al Finne* (2012) and *Finnegans_ake* (2014): the first is "the full text of *Finnegans Wake* minus all the letters of the alphabet except the first eight" and without any spacing, symbols, and so on, and it is a rendition of the *Wake* that can be read as a musical score (excerpts of which can be heard online on Bartnicki's Soundcloud page); the second is focused around "a core set of character types" in the *Wake*, indicated in Joyce's text by sigla, one of the set of keys to the work—Bartnicki's rendering reveals these in his auctorial work as both musical keys and semiotic keys. For Kearns, Bartnicki's reading-writings of the *Wake* reveal the active agency of the translator not only as a reader but as an intimate of the author's text. Engaging with Anthony Pym's 2011 figuration of the translator as a non-author, Kearns argues that Pym does not take into account "the uniqueness of the auctorial involvement of the translator"; that is, the translator is certainly not the author of the translated text but is an "active agent in the continuation of the text, an agent that problematizes notions of authorship" with "the reader ultimately complementing the auctorial gesture." The translator is not just a reader (in the Barthesian sense; a reader complementing the auctorial gesture), but rather inhabits a place of intimacy with the work, an "intimacy shared by author and translator through immersion in the world of a novel" that positions the translator in a much closer relationship to the author than the reader. Bartnicki's audacious and innovative renditions of the *Wake* engage with Joyce's "radical approach" to writing and translation, a dialogue that thinks about and foregrounds the "keys" to reading and interpretation.

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"The criticism of a translation," Berman writes, is "that of a text that itself results from a work of a critical nature" (Berman 2009, 28). As such, "criticism and translation are structurally related. Whether he feeds on critical works or not in

order to translate such-and-such a foreign book, the translator acts like a critic on all levels” (Berman 2009, 28). Berman argues that the recognition by the critic of the translator-critic can result in a certain tension; if “*criticism is ontologically bound to the work*” (Berman 2009, 26), then the critic realizes her own work might be subject to the same questions of secondariness and “defectivity” (Berman 2009, 29) that the translation she considers is. “The translated text,” Berman notes, “*calls for judgment because it gives rise to the question of its own truthfulness and because it is always (which brings into question this truthfulness) defective somewhere*” (Berman 2009, 29). Her focus on the “morose discourse” of finding that “defectivity” (Berman 2009, 29) may be connected to a perceived challenge to hermeneutic authority (who has read the original work correctly).

The recognition between the critic and the translator, though, that reading a text destabilizes it, questions it, potentially gives a positive value to the very fear of “defectivity”: mistakes are made but what is the quiddity of these mistakes? The temptation has been to judge the linguistic capabilities of the translator (long-judged the single heart of their talent) for simply getting it wrong (what the translator Mark Harman calls the “gotcha mentality” (Woods 2013, 85) of translation reviews and criticism). On closer examination, though, these mistakes are often an entry into a reading of the text. For instance, Franz Kafka’s first translator, Milena Jesenská, translated the title of his short story, “Das Urteil”/“The Judgment” into Czech as “Soud”/“The Court.” Czech critics used this mis-translation (as they saw it) to suggest that Jesenská’s German was defective, and yet, analyzing her translation closely, it becomes clear that her choice of title is deliberate and connected to her reading of the story as a spatial judgment (Woods 2013, 28–9). One might or might not agree with that reading, but the choice challenges the reader to interpret the story herself.

Sometimes these “mistakes” seem like reasonable judgment, but are challenged by the author and reveal fascinating micro and macro issues surrounding the text. For instance, Milan Kundera criticized interpolated “unaccustomed punctuation” (Kundera 1988, 130), a seemingly pedantic gripe, but then he wrote at length to his translators, Peter Kussi and Michael Henry Heim, about the necessity of retaining punctuation to preserve syntactical flow and rhythm. A quick example: in *Nesnesitelná lehkost byti/The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, two lovers, Sabina and Franz, are given a “Malý slovník nepochopených slov”/“A Dictionary of Misunderstood Words” (2006, 103; 1985, 89), one of which is “síla”/“strength” (2006, 123; 1985, 111). In bed Franz shows off his muscles: in Heim’s translation, “Sabina said, “The muscles you have! They’re unbelievable!” (Kundera 1985, 111). In Czech, Sabina says, “To je neuvěřitelné, jaké ty máš svaly” (Kundera 2006, 123): there is no breathiness, no exclamation points, and only one sentence; in Czech, her comment is utterly melancholic as she knows Franz is metaphysically weak, disguised in a male idea of physical strength. The two exclamation points seem radically alien to Sabina’s character, and, as it turns out, were likely added to the translation by the editor, reflecting a wish to make the text more acceptable to American syntactical norms, which indicates a dominantly political (and therefore, commercial, in terms of the Cold War)

reading of the text (Woods 2006). This became more evident because of archival work in the editor's, and in both translators' archives; yet, even if it had been the translator's choice, it would still reveal a rereading of the presentation of Sabina's character at a point in the novel where Kundera deliberately underlines the instability of signification.

Seeing—and training—the literary translator as an expert reader and according a critical respect to her/him potentially enriches critical practice, allowing a self-reflexivity in reading and a certain humility in being open to our own mistakes and too ready judgments. As literary scholars, the real advantage of being in LTS is that we are constantly forced to think philologically: language and meaning are inevitably destabilized and the question of aesthetics is almost always profoundly tied into macrotextual and material concerns (the exclamation point leads both to a consideration of Kundera's authorial style, what he does with syntax, and to the question of cultural asymmetry, both between the West and its internal "East," and between the editor and the translator). Primarily, though, the encounter with the translator-exegete (in and beyond the text) allows an encounter with the pulse of the text—what language *does* in the text—that makes works of literature noteworthy. Feeling that pulse, following the translator's doubts, battles, and moments of grace, should challenge us to read and reread these entries, these little earthquakes, into particular textual universes. Great works of literature offer, of course, a kind of disruption of this world: understanding the rules—aesthetic and epistemological—of these incipient universes changes how we think and how we see, what Kundera (writing about Kafka) called "une marche sous le ciel de l'étrangeté" (1988, 63). It makes the process of reading and translating—and reading translations—somewhat organic and moveable, constantly indefinable, a practice full of doubts—and possibilities.

Notes

- 1 http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/nny2013/nny_2013.pdf
<http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acs-22.pdf>
- 2 <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/18/weekinreview/18schillinger.html>
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/26/books/review/jeffrey-eugenides-reviews-my-struggle-by-karl-ove-knausgaard.html>
<http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2015/04/28/translating-knausgaard-an-interview-with-don-bartlett/>
<http://sfwp.com/translators-cut-martin-aitken-denmark/>
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/13/books/review/the-story-of-my-teeth-by-valeria-luiselli.html>
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/08/books/review/michel-houellebecqs-submission.html>
<http://www.vulture.com/2015/10/lorin-stein-translating-submission.html>
- 3 <http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2015/04/28/translating-knausgaard-an-interview-with-don-bartlett/>
<http://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/translating-norways-love-literature>
<http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/09/the-story-of-a-new-language-elena-ferrantes-american-translator/403459/>
<https://lizzysiddal.wordpress.com/2014/10/06/meet-the-translator-ann-goldstein/>

- 4 <http://tazakitsukuru.blogspot.com>
<http://womenintranslation.tumblr.com>
<http://www.japaneseliteratureinenglish.com>
<http://www.czechlit.cz>
<https://rochester.edu/College/translation/threepersent/index.php?id=13512>

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