

***Ici et Ailleurs dans la littérature traduite*. Ed. Corinne Wecksteen-Quinio,  
Xiaoshan Dantille. Artois Presses Université 2016. 252 pp.**

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This book assembles thirteen edited papers that were previously presented at Artois Université's international conference "Ici et Ailleurs dans la littérature traduite" (Here and Elsewhere in Translated Literature) in 2015. Though varied in their approaches, the authors address the same problematics in literary translation: "How does translation play the role of transferring the images of literature?" More specifically, "how does translation help or hinder transcultural exchanges?", and "how does translation establish the links between the writer and the reading public?"

The above questions are not new. However, if one contextualizes the case studies in the book within the paradigm change since the "Cultural Turn" of translation studies, the book's contribution is obvious. The French terms "ici et ailleurs" correspond or are related to many English concepts in currency: "home and foreign", "self and other", "sameness and difference (or alterity)". Basically, these terms are relevant to the following translational acts: Friedrich Schleimacher's "bringing translation to the reader, or the reader to translation"; Antoine Berman's éthique/ethnocentrique (ethic/ethnocentric) approach; Henri Meschonnic's dépaysement/annexion (foreignizing/annexation); Lawrence Venuti's foreignization/domestication. Despite certain nuances of these approaches, they all refer to the following binary questions: should the translator welcome the other by letting the reader feel its "foreignness"? Or should one eliminate "foreignness" of the other. Obviously, these translation scholars highly valorize a translational culture of opening to the foreign. But one haunting question remains: can translation really be generalized by these "either/or" approaches? While these theoretical approaches are visionary for translation studies and applicable for certain purposes, do they reflect the reality of translation practice? The authors of the book touch upon the topic from different angles based on their case studies. Each of the thirteen papers in the book offers its own perspective by highlighting the complexities of translational practices in transferring literary images.

As the editors note in the "Preface", the articles in the book are regrouped in several categories: the first three deal with classic literature and young children's literature, which are followed by relay-translation, heterolingual and metaphor translation. The book ends with two articles on poetic translation as creation. However, one can find close connections between these articles from different angles.

In “*Ici et ailleurs dans la traduction littéraire*,” Cristina Adrada Rafael argues that while the translator plays the role of a linguistic and cultural mediator between home and the foreign, s/he should take not only linguistic matters into consideration, but also mind social and cultural elements involved. In particular, the role of the publishing houses should not be ignored, as they determine the target readership, the purpose of translation and the ways of a translator’s linguistic choice. To support her arguments, Rafael cites many examples of literary translation between French and Spanish to illustrate her schema of the degrees of manipulation and how it affects the construction of literary images. She insists that since a translator is responsible for an author’s work, s/he should find a proper solution to translation problems by reproducing the identity of the source text in the receiving milieu.

Mirella Piacentini poses a set of questions: as the cognitive barriers to the foreign in translations are greater for young children than adults, should translators minimize the foreignness in literature so as to increase its readability to children? Or treat young children as adult readers and let them be fully exposed to foreign cultures? Or help young children face the challenges by using various strategies? The author maintains that children should be cultivated for their ability to accept the foreign so that their horizon will be broadened. This means that guidance is necessary. Consequently, a provisional conclusion can be drawn: between “domestication” and “foreignization”, a balanced approach is needed for children, so that they can have access to the foreign in translated literature in a way that is appropriate to their linguistic and cognitive levels.

Xiaoshan Dantille examines the issues on indirect translation. With careful analysis and comparison, Dantille showcases the cooperation between an English translator, William Butcher, and Chinese translator, Wang Rencai, on rendering Jules Verne’s *Les Tribulations d’un Chinois en Chine* (The Tribulations of a Chinese in China). As Butcher does not know any Chinese and Wang does not know French, their cooperation is based on the former’s English translation. Dantille uses extensively the examples drawn from Verne’s original work and compellingly shows the mistranslations between the Chinese and French versions. She mainly attributes these mistakes to the translators’ insensibility about the linguistic and cultural differences between France and China: though Verne’s novel is about the 19 century China, yet any attempt to assimilate Verne’s literary traits will kill its “foreignness”-- The French version seems to resist Chinese translation as it was targeted only at the French readers in the 19 Century. Despite Dantille’s efforts, a question must be answered: since the Chinese translator rendered the French novel into Chinese from Butcher’s English version, how could Dantille make a comparison between the French and the Chinese versions? For us, her approach is seriously flawed in that she treats Verne’s original as universal. The real question is: does Wang translate the English version well? This question also problematizes “who is the foreign?”

Huang Chunliu’s shows us an example of how a successful co-translation was achieved when she translated a Chinese novel by Yan Geling into French. For her, co-translation is a productive process during which she did the initial draft and helped the French translator understand the linguistic and cultural problems in the source text while her French colleague revised and tailored the French

version to meet the French reader's expectations. Meanwhile, in order to achieve an ideal result for their cooperation, some flexibility was also needed. Huang's case study shows that in practice, translation choices do not necessarily fall within a straight-forward domestication/ foreignization binary, but rather need negotiation of both. Though well argued, the essay does not provide any clues of its either successful or unsuccessful reception in France.

Yuan Li seems not to be troubled by the question of whether a source text is well translated with its full specificities presented in another language. By historically examining three Chinese versions of *La Dame aux Camélias*, Li identifies the features of the Chinese versions with a Bermanian vision, which is concerned with the fusion of horizon of the source text objectivities and translator's subjectivities. Her aim of translation criticism does not stick to linguistic matters only, but also focuses on social context and translators' agency in the translation process. Though her analyses of the versions by Lin Shu and Xia Kangnong are insightful, her study of Zheng Kelu's version is not well grounded in that she does not answer the question of what linguistic and social factors shaped Zheng's translational approach. Obviously, merely mentioning some brief critical views in the preface of Zheng's Chinese version is not sufficient to support Li's arguments.

Johanna Steyn's paper addresses the issues of how to avoid the problems of "relay-translation". Steyn points out that in South Africa, when one translates African novels into other languages, English versions have to be used as source texts. Steyn argues that while English translation normally erases specific traits chosen by the author, European countries tend to encourage translators to render the specificities of the source text. For Steyn, a second or third language translation is preferable to avoid the problem of "erasure". It seems that both Dantille's and Steyn's case studies highlight the limits of indirect translation. But the latter calls for an alternative approach for translating indigenous literature. However, regarding Steyn's case studies, one will be tempted to ask one additional question: is English so instrumental in erasing foreignness in a translation while French, or other languages are necessarily open to the others?

Rosana Orithuela poses the question of heterolingual translatability. Using Arguedas' novel *El Zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* to examine the confrontation of colonial Spanish and Quechua, Orithuela problematizes the translation of linguistic confrontation in the specific context of Latin America: if the novel is translated into other languages, will the tensions between the colonized Indigenous people and the colonizers be reactivated? How do translators render the "foreignness" of the Quechua into an understandable form? The author briefly analyzes the English and Italian versions and states that, if translated into another language, the confrontation will be shifted to the target languages, but some measures could be taken to show the mimicking nature of translation. This indicates that neither foreignizing, nor domesticating is attainable for translating the others when the self is already part of alterity.

Tatiana Musinova deals with the Russian translation of Celine's French novel *Voyage au bout de la nuit*. She points out that the Russian translation of the French novel was only possible by the translator Yuri Korneyev's creative use of the new popular language when the Soviet Union collapsed and a new vocabulary was fashioned, including slang, obscene expressions, and coded criminal language in the 1990s. She argues that, while disregarding the linguistic features of Celine's novel, Korneyev invents an image of France's working class in the 1930s that is relevant to Russia's new cultural context. From Musinova's case study, one can also identify the partial failure of the source text-based translation approach.

Both Nguyen Phuong Ngoc and Corine Wecksteen-Ouino address the problems of translating metaphors in different cultural contexts. For Ngoc, the problems of translating metaphors are concerned primarily with the interpretation of specific metaphors. By comparing different approaches of translating metaphors in the classic Vietnamese epic poem *Kiêu*, she maintains that, as most problems lie in figurative expressions, an attempt to translate them literally will block the reception of metaphors; on the other hand, a target language-based translation will dilute the metaphors' rich content. Thus, semantic restitution combined with metaphoric restitution is needed. For Ouino, translating metaphors inevitably brings the images of two cultures into confrontation. The challenges in translation are related to their linguistic, cultural, and conceptual aspects. Is there any definitive solution? The author seems to suggest that translation not only reproduces the original text, but is also a process of the continuation of recreation, which leads to all possibilities.

Anda Rădulescu's article deals with the self-translation of two bilingual writers, Lelei Trocan and Paul Miclău, whose works are concerned with deportations from Romania during the 1980s. Both of them translated their own works into French from Romanian. The focus of Rădulescu's article is on metaphor translation. He insists that even if Romanian and French belong to the same Latin language family and the expressions and structures of metaphors are quite similar, the two bilingual writers still have to think of the linguistic and cultural specificities of the receiving milieu in France. Though they enjoy the freedom to translate or transliterate historical and cultural specific words into the target language, in order to achieve a good artistic effect, both of them still have to add, expand, or replace some metaphors so that the French readers can accept their versions. Rădulescu does not view their translations in terms of fidelity, or betrayal, but as a process of recreation, because the translator is also the author.

In the last two articles, Sandrine Marchand and Martin Mees discuss other aspects of translation, which challenge what constitute foreignness or alterity. In her analysis of Taiwanese experimental poetry by Hsia Yu, Marchand problematizes the relationship between creation, writing, and translation. By using computer software to generate Chinese and English verse lines side by side

in her anthology *Pink Noise*, Yu tests the boundary between writing and translation because both Chinese and English lines appear strange in the poetry as if they were each other's translations.

Translating one into the other will lead to the disappearance of the strangeness in the corresponding text. Thus, the real questions are: how do we translate them? From which language? For Yu, these verse lines are just the linguistic traces for the reader to explore infinite possibilities. In Martin Mees' essay, he discusses the French poet Gérard de Nerval's translation of poems by German Romantic poet Friedrich von Schiller by raising the following question: should a poet translator be a second author? As Mees argues that, since Schiller's Romantic poetry is a reflection of his imagination of the other, it is actually more about self than the other. Similarly, much influenced by Schiller's poetic vision, de Nerval's translation of Schiller's essential poetics is based on the latter's aesthetic ideal through such terms as "Phantasie," "illusion" or "imagination", and "chimère"(dream). Thus, translation for de Nerval is another form of creation, or a process of *translatio*—he does not translate the foreignness of Schiller's poems, but only mirrors himself.

In general, the book is well organized, addressing current problematics in translation studies. The questions raised by the scholars from their case studies deserve our attention: does foreignizing a source text necessarily mean welcoming the other to here (home)? Or, does domesticating a source text from somewhere else mean the denial of its otherness? The answers to these questions are nuanced and based on translation practices *per se*. If one welcomes a foreign "source" as it is, the result will likely be the incomprehension of the source, as seen from the case studies on children's literature and metaphor translation. It blocks transferring the image of a cultural other. In addition, "here" and "elsewhere" are also highly problematic, as shown by the case studies on heterolingual translation, automatic poetry writing, and translation.

Despite some lapses as I pointed out earlier, the book provokes us to think further about a boundary beyond the current paradigm of translation studies based on different case studies across languages and cultures. A conclusion can be drawn: one cannot definitely take an "either/or" approach to do or read translation, or think accordingly. The case studies invite us to imagine this field from different perspectives. This is exactly where the book's value lies.