Introduction

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This issue, the second during the pandemic, was rather a long time in coming for several reasons, including medical and ecological ones, but we are very pleased to offer the readers an important dossier of Indigenous stories from the James Bay Cree and their translations, all done by Indigenous translators, in addition to four articles and one essay. The first article by Hui Meng examines the self-translation work of the renowned Chinese writer, Eileen Chang, and its paradoxical relationship with her writing. Next is a study by Michelle Gil-Montero of her own translation into English of a novel by the Argentinian writer, Maria Negroni, *The Annunciation,* which is set during The Dirty War. While Negroni revealed through her writing how the dysfunctional language used by a dictatorship prohibits grief, the translator strives to make the target text perform the recuperative work of mourning. The third article by Bentolhoda Nakhei analyzes a corpus of Samuel Beckett's correspondence—translated by Gallimard—and the French version of *Waiting for Godot* (*En attendant Godot*) from the perspective of register to determine whether the letters and the play share certain stylistic characteristics and what register changes might appear between French and English. An essay by Maria Isabel Alonso-Breto follows, commenting on her own Spanish translation of Bharati Mukherjee's short story "The Management of Grief". The piece is a painful account of the aftermath of the Air India flight 182 attack in 1985, and the translator meditates on the enormous grief experienced by the victims' families and on her own concern about the emotions, affects, and ethical compromises that surround the activity of translation.

In 2013 the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, or CBHSSJB, hired Edmonton writer Ruth DyckFehderau to write stories of people in Eeyou Istchee who live with diabetes. The author recounts in the dossier's opening essay her experience of listening to the stories told by 28 individuals from several communities in Northern Québec, of drafting them, and returning to the region to undertake the editing with the storytellers themselves who have retained the rights. The result was the publication in 2017 of *The Sweet Bloods of Eeyou Istchee: Stories of Diabetes and the James Bay Cree*. The last issue of *TranscUlturAl* published a Chinese translation by Leilei Chen of one of these stories, and when Ruth proposed a follow-up with translations of other stories, I accepted with great enthusiasm. In the dossier are included three original stories and their respective translations into French, Ojibwe, and Cree, as well as short commentaries by the translators. Our warmest thanks to the storytellers, the translators, Ruth and CBHSSJB for making this project possible.

In closing I must also acknowledge the invaluable help that my Assistant journal editor, Dominika Tabor, gave me. Despite the necessary distance imposed on our collaboration by COVID-19 she was always very present, resourceful, and accomplishing tasks over and beyond what was required. We hope that you will enjoy this new issue of *TranscUlturAl: A Journal of Translation and Cultural Studies.*

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Awkward Betweenness and Reluctant Metamorphosis: Eileen Chang's Self-Translation

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Known as "the Garbo of Chinese letters"[1] for her celebrated style and the aura of mystery that surrounded her, Chang is now regarded as one of the most influential modern Chinese novelists and cultural critics of the twentieth century. Her novels on domestic life earned her a nickname as the Jane Austin of China. Though studies on her literary works have been empirically well-grounded and painstakingly detailed, her self-translation endeavours are not yet fully studied. Song Qi's article "Eileen Chang's Self-translation of 'Stale Mates' as a Prelude: A Critical Study on Eileen Chang's Translation" (1981) pioneered these studies, followed three decades later by Luo Xuanmin and Wang Jing's "Cultural Mediation: On Eileen Chang's English Translation of *Jinsuo Ji*" (2012) and Sun Yifeng's "Transition and Transformation: with Special Reference to the Translation Practice of Eileen Chang in the 1950s Hong Kong" (2013), all of which focus on a single work of Chang's.[2] The first full-length study of Chang's translations is Chen Jirong's *Self-Translation Approaches to Translation Studies: Illustrated with Eileen Chang* (2009), followed by Bu Xiaoji's *Studies on Eileen Chang's Rewritten/Retranslated Works* (2013), and Ruan Guanghong's *A Study of Eileen Chang's Self-Translation Style* (2016).[3] All were written in Chinese and are not generally included in the studies of Chang's self-translation in English. Tsui-Yan Li's *Rewriting the Female Body in Eileen Chang's Fiction and Self-Translation* (2007) and Lili Hsieh's *The Politics of Affect: Anger, Melancholy, and Transnational Feminism in Virginia Woolf and Eileen Chang* (2005), are so far the most important works of English studies of Chang's self-translation.[4] Different from the previous studies which either focus mainly on a single work or interpret from the perspectives of corpus-based studies, narrative stylistics, and aesthetics in Sinophone studies, this article presents an inclusive view of Chang's self-translation by contrasting her practices in the 1940s with that of the

[1] Greta Garbo (1905-1990), the Swedish-born American film actress famous for her glamorous roles during the silent era and golden age of Hollywood cinema, was hugely popular in China of the 1930s.
[2] There are also studies on Eileen Chang's translation from the perspective of Feminist translation, such as Wang Xiaoying's "On Eileen Chang's Feminist Translation Poetics in Translating 'The Sing-song Girls of Shanghai,'" and Chen Jirong and Zhang Xiaopeng's "On Eileen Chang's Native Strategies in Her Feminist Translation Poetics."
[3] 陈吉荣，《基于自译语料的翻译理论研究：以张爱玲自译为个案》（北京：中国社会科学出版社，2009）；布小继，《张爱玲改写改译作品研究》（中国社会科学出版社，2013）；阮广红，《张爱玲自译风格研究》（北京：中国书籍出版社，2016）
[4] Though Xing Liu's《英语世界的张爱玲研究》is written in Chinese, it gives a thorough survey of criticism on Eileen Chang in the English-speaking world. Refer to Xing Liu,《英语世界的张爱玲研究》(*Eileen Chang Studies in the English World*) (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan P., 2016).

post-1950s, examining the changing skopos that dictates how she conducted and metamorphosized her self-translations.

Eileen Chang's translation career began with a bilingual essay period of 1943-1944 and blossomed in the 1950s when she translated Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1952, Marjorie K. Rawings' *The Yearling* in 1953, and Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in 1954, after which Chang shifted her attention more on self-translation,[5] and her translation career ended with a translation of Han Bangqing's 海上花列传 to *The Singsong Girls of Shanghai* in 1982.

In her early writings, Chang explored both the Sinophone and Anglophone worlds and wrote bilingually between different communities, in which she adopted an omniscient knowing voice that explained the behavior and perspective of one community of readers to the other. In her later writings, particularly after her relocation to the United States, she attempted a similar authorial persona to act as a cultural broker, introducing China to the United States, while conducting extensive translations and rewritings of her old works. Different from Lin Yutang (1895-1976), a renown Chinese linguist and novelist, who reconciles Chinese and American cultures through his self-translations, Chang presents a somewhat awkward betweeness and reluctant metamorphosis in her self-translation and reveals her disinclination in bringing forth the conciliations between her Sinophone and Anglophone writings.

Chang's Opinion on Translation

Although Lin Yutang was her major influence, Chang's approach to translation was significantly different from him. Chang focused more on the social, cultural, and ideological impact of translation rather than the linguistic. In her speech "Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence" (1966-1969), Chang discusses the complex intersections between translation and society, especially China's fraught relationship with the outside world.[6] Her speech traces these intersections through the late-Qing period, the early years of the republic, the May Fourth Movement, the Japanese invasion and occupation, the founding of People's Republic of China (1949), and the decades of the 60s and 70s. Situated in literary historiography, a new scholarly subject in China at the beginning of the twentieth

[5] *Naked Earth: A Novel About China* (1954) into 《赤地之恋》(Chidi Zhilian, 1954); *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955) into 《秧歌》(Yang Ge, 1955);"Stale Mates (1957)" into "五四遗事 (1957)";"等 (1961)" into "Little Finger Up (1962)";"桂花蒸•阿小悲秋 (1961)" into "Shame, Amah! (1962)";《金锁记》into *The Rouge of the North* (1967) and *The Golden Cangue* (1971); *The Spy Ring* (1955) into 色戒(1974);"A Return to the Frontier (1963)" into 重访边城.

[6] Christopher Lee edited and republished the speech that Chang gave in English on several occasions between 1966 and 1969. According to Lee, in a letter dated Mar. 6, 1969, Chang tells Stephen Soong that she gave a talk on translation and East-West relations at the State University of New York, Albany. In a subsequent letter to Soong, written on Apr 1, 1969, she reports that she delivered a revised version that day at the Radcliffe Institute. Refer to Eileen Chang, "Chinese Translation: A Vehicle of Cultural Influence," ed. Christopher Lee, *PMLA* 130.2 (2015): 488-489.

century, Chang's discussion of translation includes numerous authors and works which recreate the literary milieu in which her writing emerged.

Chang mentions the importance of Lin Shu's translation and points out that the decade of the Lin Shu's translated fiction overlapped with the launching of vernacular literature (though Lin Shu himself strongly opposed the use of vernacular language as the language for translation). Chang situates translation in history, noting that translation has flourished alongside Westernization, as the fruition of the May Fourth Movement, with full references to "Shelley the golden- haired poet… the skylark, the nightingale—birds that China doesn't have… It's a catch-all—Greek myths, Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, Oscar Wilde's *Salome*" (496). Chang highlights the role translated literature has played in Chinese modernity: the impact of English Romanticism, realism, and aesthetics upon the May Fourth Movement (1917-1921), an intellectual revolution and sociopolitical reform movement. The effects of the movement were widespread: the authority of Confucianism and traditional ethics suffered a fundamental and devastating stroke and new Western ideas were exalted; a new vernacular literature was established and popular education was greatly facilitated thereby; the Chinese press and public opinion made great progress.[7] The translation of the 19th- and 20th-century English writers was published in *Fiction Monthly* (小说月报) where most of the best-known Chinese writers had their stories debuted. Translation of writers from Russia and East Europe was also published because the editors believed that China belonged with these countries ideologically and could learn from their experience as well.

Chang's view of translation echoes the current trends of translation studies, that is Susan Bassnett and Lefevere's culture translation which attaches great importance to the role of culture, the social background, and the subjectivity of translators in translation, the core of which is incorporated in her practice of self-translation. When the context and audience changes, Chang transmutes her rhetoric. Lefevere developed the idea of translation as a form of rewriting and argues that "rewriting can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another" (vii). Since Chang is her own translator, she may be classified as creating what Eugene Eoyang calls "co-eval" translations in which the "spirit and meaning of the original is present." Eoyang explains that such translations are like Vladmir Nabokov's self-translations of Russian into English: "in some cases it might be hard to discern which is artistically the more original; however easy it might be to determine originality in terms of chronological priority" (Paolini 134).

Likewise, Chang's habit of rewriting and translating back and forth between English and Chinese becomes her lifelong pursuit and presents an occasion to examine the author's bilingual and bicultural journey from the perspective of the performance of the self and analyze the various aims of her self-translation practice, through the prism of the Skopos theory (the Skopos rule, the Fidelity

[7] Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1960) 2.

Rule and the Coherence Rule). Whereas Chang's earlier self-translation in the 1940s can be viewed as a form of impersonation for the purpose of producing a defamiliarized perspective on "China" and "Chineseness," her practices after the 1950s present an extreme case of self-translation in the complex context of the diasporic subject in the Cold War era (1947-1991). She comes to realize and crystalize her self-imposed exile, and militates ferociously against her own time through unrelentingly rewriting.

Chang's Bilingual Writings in the 1940s

Chang's bilingual writings introduced Chinese culture and traditions to the Westerners in Shanghai. From January to December 1943, Chang published three cultural critiques in *The XXth Century*, respectively "Chinese Life and Fashions," "Still Alive," and "Demons and Fairies," which were later self-translated into Chinese as "更衣记" ("A Chronicle of Changing Clothes"), "洋人看京戏及其他" ("Westerners Watching Peking Operas and Other Issues") and "中国人的宗教" ("The Religion of the Chinese").[8]

Chang's writing at that time focused more on apolitical issues, such as fashion, leisure, style and movie reviews, but *The XXth Century* that published Chang's English essays in the 1940s had a clear pro-Axis (pro-Germany, Italy, or Japan) political agenda with funding from the German foreign ministry.[9] Its editor Klaus Mehnert was a Russian émigré to Germany and most of the articles he wrote for the magazine were either scholarly analyses of Soviet politics or defenses of Fascism from an intellectual perspective (Shen 99). The target audience of the journal were Westerners in Shanghai, especially those who lived in foreign concessions. Published in the politically charged context of Shanghai under Japanese colonialization and rendered for different audiences, Chang's self-translation of the 40s should not be perceived as purely linguistic exercises; they are the textual site of an identity performance, namely "impersonation," the intentional act of copying another person's characteristics (99). The metaphor of impersonation allows readers to consider linguistic, personal, and bodily performances together in trans-lingual and cross-border contexts, which are all under the umbrella of Skopos (Shen 97). Skopos theory is effective in guiding self-translation since both are purpose-oriented. In these pieces, Chang acts as a cultural broker, presenting and mediating between Western and Chinese cultures by defining and explaining cultural dissimilarities and variances. While she engages in making essentialized generalizations about each culture, she adds a dose of irony. Chang satirizes Western interpretation of Chinese culture with an orientalist twist searching for the mysterious East, while at the same time mocking Western behaviors misinterpreted by Shanghainese.

[8] Another article, "私语," ("Whispers") also published in《天地》(*Heaven and Earth*) was self-translated from "What a Life! What a Girl's Life," originally published in 《英美晚报》(British and American Evening Newspaper). Two of the movie reviews, "Wife, Vamp, Child" and "China: Educating the Family," were self-translated as "借银灯" and "银宫就学记" in *The XXth Century*.

[9] In June of 1941, Klaus Mehnert accepted a position in Shanghai as editor-in-chief of a new publication to be called *The XXth Century*, which became the leading English-language journal in Japanese-occupied Shanghai. The final issue was in June of 1945.

She adopts an authoritative and explanatory tone that is nevertheless accompanied by a sense of humor. Chang's writing on traditional Chinese culture reflects Shanghai's multicultural, polyglot nature, and she often addresses and speaks for a number of different subject positions simultaneously.

Case Study: "Chinese Life and Fashions"/ "更衣记" (1943/1943)

Appearing for the first time in the January 1943 issue of *The XXth Century*, Chang's "Chinese Life and Fashions," is a meticulous meditation on various changes in clothing styles from the Qing dynasty (1636-1912) to the Republic of China (1912-1949). To facilitate her arguments, Chang attaches to her article twelve sketches all drawn by herself to show the evolution of fashions. Less than a year later, Chang translated, revised, and expanded the piece for publication in a Chinese-language journal, 《古今》(*Past and Present*), retitling it "更衣记 (Gengyi Ji)" ("A Chronicle of Changing Clothes"). In the self-translation, those drawings were excluded since the Chinese audience was fairly familiar with the designs. While much of the writing remained the same, "this retooling of the essay involved a subtle reconfiguration of Chang's authorial voice and self-positioning vis-à-vis her Chinese readers, who are addressed less as psychiatric subjects than as collaborators in a troubled cultural history that extends through the largely unspoken (but ever present) privations of life during wartime" (428).

In war-time Shanghai where nothing was fixed and the present was scarcely more than a form of disappearance, the ever-changing moods of women's fashion ironically seemed relatively stable and reliable (Huang xxvi). In a time of severe censorship, fashion as an "apolitical" topic was easily publishable. Poshek Fu quotes a telling remark by Chang: "…political topics are rarely favored because our private lives are already packed full of politics" (Louie 134). Revealing layers of cultural sediment, Chang traces the changes in fashion in China (for both men and women) over three hundred years. In 1890, Chang's great-grandfather, Li Hongzhang established China's first cotton textile mill (Finnane 106-107). Being a fashionable woman with pioneering boldness, Chang liked to collect unusual and luxurious materials, and had them made into costumes according to her own designs—she once ran a short-lived fashion design firm. When conducting self-translation, Chang is conscious of and attentive to the Skopos of her bilingual essays and is careful in negotiating between different language communities. In Vermeer's skopos theory, the function approach to translation aims at producing a text which lives up to the cultural expectations of the target reader. Different from traditional translation, the functional approach to translation claims that the same text can be translated differently on the basis of the communicative function of the translated text. The following example presents such a difference through a shift in tone.

> "Chinese Life and Fashions" opens with an invitation to the western audience to enter the private sphere of the Chinese home and observe the Chinese ritual of clothes-sunning:
> **Come and see the Chinese family on the day when the clothes handed down for generations are given their annual sunning**! … If ever memory has a smell, it is the scent of

> camphor, sweet and cozy like remembered happiness, sweet and forlorn like forgotten sorrow (54).

The syntax of the imperative first sentence calls out to an addressee, foreign to the Chinese tradition. In a subsequent self-translation of this essay in Chinese, along with the change of audience, the tone of the first sentence changes to one that is less inviting and more matter-of-facts:

> 如果当初世代相传的衣服没有大批卖给收旧货的，一年一度六月里晒衣裳，该是一件辉煌热闹的事罢。(Chang, *Liu Yan* 14)

> [If all the clothing handed down for generations had never been sold to dealers in secondhand goods, their annual sunning in June would be a brilliant and lively affair.][10]

To the Western audience, clothes-sunning is unheard of and eye-opening and the excitement could be captured in the tone, while to Chinese people this ritual is routine and known to all, and thus the tone of the accounts is more documentary with a touch of remorse about the disruption of fashion.

In the second paragraph of "Chinese Life and Fashions" and the third paragraph of "更衣记" ("A Chronicle of Changing Clothes"), Chang writes,

> …such was the stability, the uniformity, the extreme conventionality of China under the Manchus that generation after generation of women clung to the same dress style (54).

> 这么迂缓，安静，齐整——在满清三百年的统治下，女人竟没有什么时装可言！一代又一代的人穿着同样的衣服而不觉得厌烦。 (54)

Here "stability, the uniformity, the extreme conventionality" is translated as "迂缓，安静，齐整 (slowness, tranquility, and uniformity)." Chang does not translate "extreme conventionality"; instead, she changes this derogative term to a neutral term, "tranquility." When it comes to expressing her feminist voice, however, Chang explicitly states her opinion:

> Under those layers of clothing, the ideal Chinese female, petite and slender, with sloping shoulders and a hollow chest, made herself pleasantly unobtrusive, **one of the most desirable qualities in a woman**. (54)

> 削肩，细腰，平胸，薄而小的标准美女在这一层层衣衫的重压下失踪了。(66)

[10] Andrew F. Jones's translation is a triangulated translation into English of Chang's translation of her original English article into Chinese. Jones' translation is comparatively more faithful than Chang's self-translation. Refer to Eileen Chang and Andrew F. Jones, "A Chronicle of Changing Clothes," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 11.2 (2003): 28.

Instead of rewriting, Chang faithfully translates this feminist remark into her Chinese article. She ironizes old-fashioned suppression of women through her vivid descriptions of the clothing style. Feminism in the 1920s and 1930s was gaining momentum in China. Contending groups of Chinese intellectuals used the "woman question" as a keyhole through which to address issues of modernity and the nation. The process of national invention and the struggle to create a new idea of womanhood reveals not only the anxieties associated with changing roles for women, but also the anxieties associated with modernity and the modern nation (Stevens 82). In this context, Chang voices her opinion with this account of changing clothes, an alternative history of constant redefinitions of female beauty, feminine propriety, and the place of women in a modern society. Chang adds in her self-translation: "男子的生活比女子自由的多 (men enjoy far more [sartorial] freedom than women)," and goes on to tease out the absurdity of gendered assumptions in cultural discourses:

> 衣服似乎是不足挂齿的小事。**刘备**说过这样的话："兄弟如手足，妻子如衣服。"…有个西方作家（是萧伯纳吗？）曾经抱怨过，多数女人选择丈夫远不及选择帽子一般聚精会神，慎重考虑。在没有心肝的女子说起她"去年那件织锦缎夹袍"的时候，也是一往情深的。(21)
>
> [Clothes seem to be quite inconsequential. **The ancient hero Liu Bei** had this to say on the matter of clothes: "Brothers are like one's hands and feet; wives and children are like clothes **that can be put on and taken off**." ... One western author (was it Bernard Shaw?) once complained: "Most women put more careful thought and consideration into the choice of their hats than their choice of husband." Even the most heartless of women will wax passionate when she starts to speak of "last year's quilted silk gown. (Chang and Jones 439-440)]

Chang has only to remind the Chinese audience that women have been insincerely treated and were considered no more than a piece of clothing and Bernard Shaw's jokingly comments adds a foreign flavor to the metaphorical description. But the essay does more than tease out the gendered categories embedded in discourses on fashion. Chang's account stages history as a "costume drama" (Huang xxv). Her representation of history presents "a museum of human fantasies" and "a gallery of artifacts that are constantly in motion" (Huang xxv). Clothes are personified and animated in both words and a series of drawings. Costumes seem to replace the characters; the stage is composed of shapes, colors, lines, and circles instead of people. Another example of tone shifting is found in Chang's account of fashion history:

> In **pre-Revolution costumes**, the individual was wholly submerged in the form—the form being a subjective representation of the human figure, conventionalized as always in **Oriental art**, dictated by a sense of line rather than faithfulness to the original. **Post-Revolution clothes** slowly worked towards the opposite direction—the subjugation of form by the figure. (61).

> 最近的发展是向传统的一方面走，细节虽不能恢复，轮廓却可尽量引用，用的活泛，一样能够适应现代环境的需要。**旗袍**的大襟采取围裙式，就是个很好的例子，很有点"**三日入厨下**"的风情，耐人寻味。(20)

Here, the sermonizing and formal tone is replaced by an intimate and informal tone. The indication of two distinct eras, "pre-Revolution" and "post-revolution", are removed in the translation to avoid generalization. "Oriental art" is also deleted for its somewhat foreign perspective. The translation adds the example of *Qipao* and a well-known verse "三日入厨下 (serve in the kitchen three days after the wedding)" from a famous Tang poet, Wang Jian's "Ode to Bride" (新嫁娘词), which instantly shortens the distance between the author and her readers, and adds familiarity and intimacy to the tone.

Shift of tone also occurs with the following example where the original English essay ends with a tone of seriousness:

> Once again, China is standing at the threshold of life, more grim and practical this time, surer of her own mind because of the lessons she has learnt. (61)

In the translation, Chang rewrites the conclusion by adding this last section and ends her article in a more light-hearted and positive tone:

> 有一次我在电车上看见一个年轻人，也许是学生，也许是店伙，用米色绿方格的兔子呢制了太紧的袍，脚上穿着女式红绿条纹短裤，嘴里衔着别致的描花假象牙烟斗，烟斗里并沒有烟。他吮了一会，拿下來把它一截截拆开了，又装上去，再送到嘴里吮，面上颇有得色。乍看觉得可笑，然而为什么不呢，如果他喜欢？…… 人生最可爱的当儿便在那一撒手吧？(21-22)
>
> [Once when I was on the streetcar, I saw a young man… who had tailored himself a rather tight mohair robe with green checks over a rice-colored background. He was wearing women's stockings, striped red and green, and an exquisitely carved fake ivory pipe hung from his mouth, although there was no tobacco inside the bowl... At first, I found him ridiculous, but then I thought to myself, Why not, if this was what gave him pleasure?... Might it be that in this life that moment of letting go is the very loveliest? (Chang and Jones 440-441)]

The reflective and sincere tone of the English ending gives way to a frivolous and anecdotal thought. Chang seems to be telling her Chinese audience that if the future is not dependable, then one must enjoy the present. This translation elucidates the metamorphosis of Chang's aesthetic style back to her "embellished writing style infiltrated with elaborate vocabularies and exquisite imageries, which

characterizes her early writings" (Wang 291). Chang is known for her aesthetic writing in Chinese, and in her translation, she is aware of the employment of knowledge in psychology and aesthetics as well as imagination, so as to revive her artistic originality through translation. According to Skopos theory, the purpose of translation determines the means of translation and the theory adopts a prospective attitude to translate, as opposed to the retrospective attitude adopted in theories which focus on prescriptions derived from the source text.

Besides the employment of shift, a rational use of addition, omission and deletion (AOD), could also help with achieving the skopos: addition will augment and deepen underdeveloped content, omission will partially drop undesired content, and deletion will completely remove superfluous or unwanted content in the source texts.

Omission means dropping words when they are culturally insignificant or syntactically unnecessary. As Chang recounts fashion history, she exclaims over the passing of history:

> We find it hard to realize that **less than fifty years ago it seemed a world without end**. **Imagine the reign of Queen Victoria prolonged to the length of three centuries** (54)!
> 我们不大能够想象过去的世界。 (14)

In the translation, Chang omits the analogy between Victorian England and Manchu China because most Chinese readers would not appreciate the connection with the Great Britain reminiscent of the strong colonial ties. Also, "less than fifteen years ago" is not rendered into Chinese in that Chinese writings can be general and vague when the focus is placed on the timelessness of a statement.

The technique of deletion in the self-translation can be found when Chang explains women's dress style:

> Young ladies brightened up the bleak winter months with the 'Chow Kwuen Hood,' named after the historical beauty **Wang Chow Kwuen, an imperial handmaid in the second century A. D. She is always pictured on horseback**, with a fur hood and despondent expression, **on her way north to marry the king of the Huns**, **whom it was China's policy to pacify**. Her celebrated hood had the grand simplicity of the modern Eskimo variety which Hollywood made popular. But the nineteenth-century Chinese version was gay and absurd (54)"
>
> 姑娘们的"昭君套"为阴森的冬月添上点色彩。根据历代的图画，昭君出塞所戴的风兜是爱斯基摩氏的，简单大方，好莱坞明星仿制者颇多。中国十九世记的"昭君套"卻是颠狂冶艳的。(16)
>
> [Young ladies lent a spot of brightness to the gloom of winter months with their 'Zhaojun' hoods. In historical illustrations, the hood Zhaojun is wearing as she is sent off on horseback

> to marry the king of the Huns is of the simple, generous Eskimo type made so popular by Hollywood starlets in recent years. (Chang and Jones 431)]

In the translation, Chang deletes the explanatory sentences about Chow Kwuen and China's pacifying policy since Chinese people are fairly familiar with the historical figure and the context of the pacifying policy and it would be redundant to add any explanation. The translation also exemplifies the change of tone in the description of the hood: the "absurdity" is euphemized into "gaiety". Another example of deletion is as follows:

> In periods of political unrest and social upheaval—the Renaissance in Europe, for instance—tight-fitting clothes which allow for quick movement always come into favor. Jerkins in fifteenth-century Italy were so tight that slits had to be made at the joints of the body. Chinese clothes just stopped short of bursting open in the turbulent days when the Revolution was in the making. The last emperor, **Pu-yi, reigned for only three years**, and by then the jacket clung like a sheath to the arms and body. And such were the wonders of Chinese corseting that even then we did not see the realistic picture of a feminine figure, but rather the disembodied conception, **one of Byzantine severity and Pre-Raphaelite spirituality**: slim, straight lines flaring a little at the knees, whence issued tiny trouser legs which dropped a timorous hint of **even tinier shoes** apologetically attached to the ground. (56-57)

> 在政治动乱与社会不靖的时期——譬如欧洲的文艺复兴时代——时髦的衣服永远是紧匝在身上，轻捷俐落，容许剧烈的活动，在十五世记的意大利，因为衣裤过于紧小，肘弯膝盖，筋骨接榫处非得开缝不可。中国衣服在革命酝酿期间差一点儿就胀裂开了。**"小皇帝"**登基的时候，袄子套在人身上象刀鞘。中国女人的紧身背心的功用实在奇妙——衣服再紧些，衣服底下的肉体也还不是写实派的作风，看上去不大像個女人而像一缕诗魂。长袄的直线延至膝盖为止，下面虚飘飘垂下两条窄窄的裤管，**似脚非脚**的**金莲**抱歉地轻轻踏在地上。(17)

Here, Pu-yi is translated as "little Emperor" and the phrase that he "reigned only three years" is deleted since it is a fact known to all Chinese. The expression of "Byzantine severity and Pre-Raphaelite spirituality" is simplified as "poetic soul" in that few Chinese audience would know much about the Renaissance artist, Raphael or the Byzantine art style. The expression of "Bound feet in shoes" is euphemized as "Tinier shoes" in the original, which translates as "Golden Lotus," a further beautified euphemism.

Similarly in the original English text, Chang elaborately explains the woman's hairstyle with various cultural analogies by quoting from Lin Shu's book *Sketches in the Hut of Fear*:

> When I was young, a women's hair-knot was usually in the shape of a **Sycee**. A little later it was prolonged to the shape of a spoon, called the 'Soochow Hair-knot.' Two knots right and left were called the Pipa Style. [**Pipa** is a form of **guitar**.] Wire-matting was tucked inside the '**Castanet** Hair-knot' to give it shape…Another style has the hair twirled over the forehead like **spirited serpents**; some call that the "**Republican** Hair-knot." (58)

Various metaphors and analogies, were employed to help its Western audience understand the Chinese hair styles, such as "Sycee," "Pipa/guitar," "Castanet," or "Republican." However, the Chinese audience take their hairstyles for granted and seldom associate them with those exotic terms, like "spirited serpents." Chang deletes this passage altogether in her self-translation.

Chang's composition of the original essay aims not only to introduce fashion to its English-speaking audience, but also Chinese society and history. Thus, Chang reveals:

> **Ching His Huang**, the first emperor of united China and the builder of **the Great Wall**, found pleasure in the 'Hair-knot which Rises, above the Clouds,' very becoming to petite maidens, if we are to believe the writers of modern beauty columns. Ladies at the **Han Court** designed coiffures entitled 'Welcome Spring,' (with an eager forward tilt) and 'Two Hearts in One,' "Smoky…" **The Han princesses** were the first to wear wigs…Aside from those **courts fashions**, the wife of an official dressed her hair in a style called 'Falling off the Horse,' with a towering puff tilted on one side and plenty of soft loops flying free." (58)

Chang does not include this part in her translation probably because she finds the common knowledge mundane, like the first emperor of China, the Great Wall, and the hairstyles women wore. Chang continues to describe the hairstyle of the latest:

> …that which ties a false knot at the end of loose-hanging hair, a likely name for it should be the '**Hair-knot of Disintegration and Homeless Wandering**.' What an omen! The times are indeed **out-of-joint**! I tremble to think of what is to come. (58)

The deletion of this part is justifiable in that Chang does not want to offend her Chinese audience by revealing her overt criticism.

Other than the minor changes to cultural terms or explanatory sentences, Chang drastically deletes two whole sections: "Profusion and Confusion" about women's hair-style and "Hats and Mental Equilibrium" about hat fashion. The two sections are suffused with explanatory comments about basic Chinese history and society.

With the change of audience, Chang would more often modify her use of cultural metaphors other than employing the drastic deletion. For example, as she describes the dress code of Chinese women and emphasizes the minute details in the design of dresses, she uses similes:

> The trouble with old Chinese dress designers was that they did not know the all-importance of brevity. After all, a **woman is not a Gothic cathedral**. And even with the latter, the diffusion of interest by the heaping up of distracting details has occasioned much criticism. The history of Chinese fashions consists almost exclusively of the steady elimination of those details. (56)

Its translation reads as:

> 古中国的时装设计家似乎不知道，一个女人到底不是大观园。太多的堆砌使兴趣不能集中。我们的时装的历史，一言以蔽之，就是这些点缀品的逐渐减去。(16)

> [Chinese fashion designers of old seemed not to have understood that a woman is not a Prospect Garden. The heaping together of details will inevitably diffuse interest and result in a loss of focus. The history of Chinese fashion consists almost exclusively of the steady elimination of those details. (Chang and Jones 432)]

The well-known Western architecture, "Gothic cathedral" is translated into 大观园 (Prospect Garden), the large, idyllic, and elaborately wrought fictional space that serves as the principal setting of Cao Xueqin's masterpiece of eighteenth-century fiction, *Dream of the Red Mansions*. The conversion of cultural symbols facilitates the audience's perception.

Another common practice employed by self-translators is addition. Chang adds a new section discussing men's clothing which is nowhere to be found in the original English essay:

> 直到十八世纪为止，中外的男子尚有穿红着绿的权利。男子服色的限制是现代文明的特征。不论这在心理上有没有不健康的影响，至少这是不必要的压抑 (21)。

> [Until the 18th century, men in China and abroad still had the right to wear red and green. The restriction of wearing colorful clothing only began in modern time. Whether such practice would have bad impact upon mental health, it was an unnecessary repression. (72)]

Chang points out that the modern history of men's clothing has been less eventful. Chang feels confident adding this remark of generalization in the Chinese essay, while for the English essay such generalization would require a stronger textual support.

Chang's self-translation of this article reveals that her English essay, written for foreign readers, seems to be informational and historical, while the translations for Chinese readers analytical and elaborate. Because of the introductory nature of the English articles, Chang adds some explanatory remarks concerning Chinese history, culture, and tradition but meanwhile deletes intricate historical allusions and labyrinthine literary references. In translation, she gets opportunities to compensate for the loss of the complexities. In general, the English-language versions adopt a more unequivocally anthropological standpoint in terms of introducing the "Chinese way," while the Chinese-language versions express a world-wise perspective in which she turns an observant eye toward traditional and historical Chinese behavior. Chang is an exemplary of a "translocal" writer: a writer whose worldliness is routed through the byway of cities and local dialects rather than the highway of nation-states and official languages (Jiang).

Chang's approach to self-translation works both in line with the commonly held notion of "fidelity" in translation and against its grain. Chang aims to show that her self-translations should be understood as different versions of the same text. Although we have a text—the English one—that chronologically comes first, translation makes it acquire a new existence in the native language. As each language actively produces different axiological systems, the two versions will be subject to different modes of reading and reception. By going against the idea of translation as a one-way movement of departure and arrival, Chang aims to open up her texts to a process of estrangement carried out through linguistic displacement and repeated readings. In the process of self-translation, both the writer and the reader are asked to recontextualize their frames of reference: the text thus takes on new meanings that exceed the biographical, national, linguistic positionality of the "original" text and of its author, and thus serving the diversified skopos.

Chang's Self-Translation in the 1950s and onward

Though Chang spent the first few years in Shanghai after the New China was founded in 1949 and wrote *Eighteen Springs* in 1951 and "Xiao'ai" in 1952, both of which carry the leftist message of the time, Chang soon realized that she did not belong to the new literary environment. Her "modernist style and emphasis on middle-class stories clashed with an increasingly… leftist proletarian aesthetics" (So 719). Anatomizing the heart during a time of war, Chang's stories transpose from the intimate sphere of romantic and conjugal relations to the public sphere of diplomatic and geopolitical ties (Jiang). In 1952, Chang left for Hong Kong and stayed till 1955, during which time she finished two novels, *The Rice-Sprout Song* (1955) and *Naked Earth* (1956) that were widely regarded as being critical in tone since they fictionalized failures of political campaigns like the land reform. Those works earned her a controversial title of being a propagandistic writer. Following that, her works were banned in China for decades until the early 1990s. One important reason why Chang got intensely involved in politics was that both novels were commissioned and sponsored by the United States Information Agency (USIS) and were the special fruits of the US Cold War political strategy. Chang's three-year stint (1952-1955) working for the US agency signaled a sharp break in her writing career, and this

break has long puzzled scholars of her work. After 1952, she switched to composing in English, began writing in a "thick realist style," drafting popular tales for American audiences (So 720). The US agency came to recruit diasporic authors to develop new modes of writing crucial to the cold war battle against the opposing ideology. Chang became the best candidate for this mission due to her outstanding bilingual capacity. For lack of better job opportunities in Hong Kong, Chang accepted the job and wrote the two novels with provided plots. Some critics accuse Chang's choice as opportunistic while Dai Qing argues that it is far-fetched to imagine that Chang's writing was distorted by USIS since she is too powerful a writer for that—"too immune from being tricked…If nothing else, the beauty of Chang's writing makes it hard to view as anyone's propaganda" (Perry, *New York Book Review*). David Der-wei Wang also explains that "Chang's movement from the leftist to the rightist camp in the short span of five years . . . bespeaks, however, not her opportunism but her predicament as a Chinese writer trapped in the drastic imperatives of an ideological age" (David Der-wei Wang, *Foreword* xiv). Chang later translated the two political novels into Chinese which, however, were received with checked enthusiasm.

Of the second period of Chang's self-translation, one work that deserves our special attention is 《金锁记》 (*Jinsuo Ji*), one of her most widely acclaimed works and arguably the darkest and most claustrophobic of her stories, originally published in Shanghai in 1943. It was later compiled into Chang's first collection of stories, *Chuanqi* (romance), which claimed in the preface that "its objective is to look for ordinary humanity in legends and look for the extraordinary in the quotidian."[11] Over a span of three decades, Chang translated and rewrote this particular story seven times. This is a rare phenomenon even in the field of self-translation worldwide. Such ongoing re-translating and rewriting clearly show Chang's strenuous attempts to get her work published outside of her home country and her determination to give her work new lives and new identities.

The novel was based on Chang's family anecdotes about her remote relative, Li Jingshu (1864–1902), the second son of her great grandfather, Li Hongzhang (1823–1901), a leading Chinese statesman of the 19th century, who made strenuous efforts to modernize China. Working from the characters and plot of *Jinsuo Ji*, Chang wrote *Pink Tears* during her stay at the MacDowell Colony from 1956 to 1958; it was not accepted for publication. Chang then rewrote it and renamed it *The Rouge of the North*, which was not published either. She subsequently translated *The Rouge of the North* into Chinese under the title 怨女(*Yuannü*), which was first serialized in 星岛晚报 (*Singdao Night Newspaper*) in Hong Kong and by 皇冠 (*Crown*) in Taiwan in 1966. She retranslated *Yuannü* into English under the same English title as her earlier novel, *The Rouge of the North*. The revised English version was eventually published by the Cassell Company of London in 1967.[12] She then revised *Yuannü* again after she thought its manuscript was lost in the mail when she sent it to Hong Kong in 1965;[13] it was

[11] The original Chinese text is "书名叫传奇，目的是在传奇里找普通人，在普通人里寻找传奇" (epigraph on the cover page of the first edition of Chuanqi).
[12] It was republished by the University of California (two decades later) in 1998.
[13] Mentioned in her letter to Hsia Chih-tsing dated March 31, 1966.

published by the Crown Publishing Company in 1968. Later on, Chang translated her Chinese novella *Ji Jinsuo* into English as *The Golden Cangue*, which was anthologized in *Twentieth Century Chinese Stories* published by Columbia University Press in 1971.

Different from the first period when Chang's self-translations were published in Shanghai for the readership in China, the self-translated works of the second period were targeted towards an American audience and sought publishers in the United States. Chang wrote in the mindset of an exile. Even if exile can be perceived as a positive experience in terms of a liberation and/or reinvention of the self, in the case of Chang, exile was a traumatic experience where one's emotional stability was lost in transit as the mother tongue became uprooted and was unable to provide meaning for the new reality. In order to find a breakthrough in the new literary world, she resorted to self-translation for a possible literary metamorphosis. According to Janine Altounian, writing in the language of the other is in fact a part of the healing process (Klimkiewicz 196). In the absence of unity, fusion and proximity, self-translation works as a way of repairing the broken tie, preventing the self from becoming dispersed, and finding an appropriate channel to produce an intelligible narration out of chaos. However, the healing process is not that simple for exiles. For Chang, her solution was to dwell obstinately and obsessively in her memory in order to save every detail from oblivion, which partially explains Chang's obsession with the retranslating/rewriting of the same work seven times over span of almost three decades.

By the time Chang entered the American literary stage in the 1950s, the reception of China in the West had very often been dominated by Chinese scholars/translators like Lin Yutang who once defined the Chinese people as "joyful beings" and Chinese civilization as a "civilization of joy." Even though Lin later expressed a more critical voice, dominating interpretation of the Western media still endorsed Lin's earlier portraiture. Chang's works featured the expression of sadness, "fragments," a "world of details," rather than a panoptic or coherent view of society, as is pointed out by Leo Ou-Fan Lee. Lee further points out that Chang's emphasis on fragment and fugitive presence as a resistance to grand historical narratives (Lee 271). She metamorphosed her work through repeated self-translations, but her works were met with an unenthusiastic response. In a letter to Hsia Chih-tsing, Chang expressed her confidence, stating that the difficulties in getting her works published were largely due to the Orientalism, which limited their view of China, and thus, her works (Xia 39). It seems that American audiences were not interested in tales of old Shanghai, preferring less morally ambiguous works.

Chang's role as self-translator is also reflected in her screenwriting. She wrote screenplays for MP&GI from 1957 to 1964 while trying to support herself and her husband, Ferdinand Reyher.[14]

[14] Once a prominent American leftist writer in the United States, he began to suffer from declining career and health. Their marriage was beset by financial difficulties and Chang's screenplays became the couple's primary source of income.

Eight of Chang's screenplays were made into motion pictures, mostly in the comedy genre.[15] As a creative agent, Chang mediated between differing cultural regions, media, and languages in the context of mass culture and commercial cinema. Chang not only reconciled artistic and commercial sensibilities within the confines of the film industry, but also crossed over different historical locations, cinematic traditions (Hollywood vs. Chinese films), and narrative forms and media (fiction/stage/film/comedy), recreating new meanings for different local film audiences. The study in this field is beyond the scope of the current work, but this will serve as a good research topic for a future study.

Chang's translation/rewriting of *JJ* into *RN* comes as a fascinating project. The two works beget each other's causes and effects, and as such they break open multiple entry points onto the real within the mimetic closure of representationism. Chang is culturally and linguistically well-equipped and prepared in earnest for a bilingual writing career in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Shanghai and post WWII America. When she moved to the United States, she did not become an American writer like Singer or Nabokov. Neither was she successful in the role of a Chinese writer explaining China to the West, like Nobel-prize nominee Lin Yutang, or authors of popular autobiographic novels like Jade Snow Wong with *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, or diasporic authors like Ha Jin with *Waiting*. However, Chang does enjoy an increasingly successful literary career in Taiwan and Hong Kong. David Der-wei Wang chronicles a long list of the "Chang School" (*Chang pai*) writers (303-306). Chang's self-translation and translation become an important way for her to recuperate her literary talent. Besides Chang's self-translated works, attached below is a list of her translation of some prominent western writers during the Cold War era:

> *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952. 1955, 1972, 1988) [16]
> *The Yearling* (1953, 1962, 1988).
> [Selected translations from] *The Portable Emerson* (1953, 1962, 1969, 1987, 1992).
> "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1954, 1962, 1967, 2004).
> "Hemingway" (1956, 2004).
> Emerson's poems (1953, 1961, 1962, 1969, 1987, 1988, 1992, 2004).
> Thoreau's poems (1961, 1988, 2004).
> *Seven Modern American Novelists* (1967)

The list shows that the range of Chang's translations covers almost every genre in the series—essay, fiction, poetry, and literary criticism—which is rare (Shan 109-110). Thus, there should be less doubt about her capacity in rendering her own works, though the translation of her Chinese works into English is indeed a formidable task. Her prose is both idiomatic and idiosyncratic, combining elements from divergent sources, most notably the traditional vernacular fiction of the Ming and Qing dynasties

[15] The plays included *Qingchang ru zhanchang* (*The Battle of Love,* 1957), *Rencai liangde* (*A Tale of Two Wives*, 1958), *Taohua yun* (The Wayward Husband, 1959), and *Liuyue xinniang* (*June Bride*, 1960).
[16] The years designate the publications of Chang's translations by different publishers.

and the nineteenth and early twentieth century European literature that nurtured her precocious literary imagination. Chang's prose belongs to the many "deliciously refreshing and always piquant metaphors and similes that enliven the descriptive passages between saucy and spirited dialogue," and it is fair to say that "no character or object appears in her fiction *as is*, without a double life, without being subverted by a mischievously fabulous mind—not even a maid who has less than half a page of fictional life" (Lee, *Eileen Chang*). In rendering Chang's full-bodied and many-flavored prose, her self-translation seems to be on the side of under-translation (in contrast to the method of over-translation adopted by Karen S. Kingsbury, one of the first American scholars to study and translate Chang's fiction). For example, of the 21 novels/novellas by Chang, one could find 255 different words describing colors (Ruan 95). In Chang's self-translation, the translation of minute differences in colors are mediated and minimalized.

Chang's English is moderate compared to the sensuous texture of her Chinese. It seems that a feeling of reverence prevails, which is also a feeling of inadequacy between a foreign language and the self. English for Chang is a formal language with its rituals and rules, a "ceremonial language" that can be seen as restrictive. For Chang's Chinese writing, there is a kind of transparency between everyday life experiences and her literary writings. Words flow easily, embracing life and the self, which Chang highly valued when she created her literary world. Unlike the natural yielding of a first language to the writer's manipulation, a second language blocks easy access to its resources, which perhaps enables Chang to overcome the erudite word-play and clever allusions that tempt her in Chinese, so that she could work with language from a position of inferiority and underdevelopment. Chang's English style is characterized by its stern lack of ornamentation and elaboration. Linguistic transfer and deterritorialization might also explain her awkward betweenness.

A devaluation of one's social status and image might have a strong impact on the reevaluation of the "self" and consequently on Chang's eagerness to go back to her previous work, to rewriting, retranslating and generally reevaluating it according to each new situation and her actual reading audience. Chang's self-translation and her inspiration, even after her move to the United States, does not move on and away from the Shanghai of her youth. Chang confines herself eventually to the role of the nostalgic writer-historian of former Shanghai. She retreats to a world of yesterday (Martin 373). Chang remains faithful to herself till the end, using her freedom and imagination to create and recreate her own intimate universe (Tadevosyan-Ordukhanyan 176).

Chang engages with a number of different audiences and literary markets, which are the key factors of Skopos. As the changes from *JJ* to *RN* demonstrate, Chang takes pains in recontextualizing the original, endeavoring to meet the cultural expectations of her target readers. She frequently breaks away from the narrative to address the stereotypes and foibles of the communities she describes. This role worked well in cosmopolitan Shanghai, but her authority as a cultural broker faltered when she arrived in the United States. While American readers did not question her authority on China, she did not provide them with the type of narratives they were seeking. In part, this may have to do with

Chang's uncompromisingly desolate tone. Lao She's initial success in the American market came in part from his translator and Evan King's unauthorized decision to create a happy ending to what was intended to be a tragedy.

Although Chang migrated from China only to find herself awkwardly trapped by McCarthyism on the other side of the Iron Curtain, Chang's translingual practices not only question the restraints of modern Chinese literary and political discourse but also bespeak the equally manipulative ideological and cultural control of the Cold War United States. Knowing all too well the political and cultural rationale that prevents her work from being accepted by major American publishers, she nevertheless maintains her literary and aesthetic stance. Her deep suspicion of ideological hegemony of any kind is brought to the foreground by her prolific repetitions, or to be more precise, her translingual and trans-generic fission of works. In this way, self-translation/rewriting, or a kind of "literary schizogenesis," became her strategy of deterritorialization, a way of avoiding any political dominion over literary creation by either side of the Cold War dichotomy (Wang, *Modernity* 129). In today's heterotopic world where cultures converge, intersect, and interact in a multitude of ways and places, Chang's self-translation and rewriting presents less as a study of the schizophrenically divided world but more as a study of metamorphosis, transition, and hybridity across borders. Chang's Anglophone work was marked by a unique use of the Chinese-styled English, a forerunner of that of the critically celebrated Anglophone Chinese writer Ha Jin (Iwasaki 115). Through self-translation, they transgress personal boundaries and cultural constraints to detect a world of newness. For Chang, her unnerving rhetoric constitutes the new idiom of her late style, which epitomizes her reluctant metamorphosis and emphatically renounces possible reconciliation with her own time.

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A Language of Grief, Body, and Translation: María Negroni's *The Annunciation*

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The responsibility of the living to the dead is not simple.
Anne Carson

Disembodied Language

Marguerite Feitlowitz, in her seminal book *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, has characterized Argentina's 1976–1983 military dictatorship as a war on language. The military junta exerted control over the population by means of their rhetoric, which crafted an illusion of reality that set the desired political stage. The language of the dictatorship was marked by features that are consistent with authoritarian rhetoric as defined in a variety of contexts, such as "declamation, and sacralisation of the political" (Gronskaya, Zusman, Batishcheva 288). On the most basic level, it was a "discourse of the structure," in contrast to a "discourse of the words," as language was made to "carry a powerful message that is not expressed by the words themselves" (Goldschläger 11). Rather than function referentially, key words "function as signals" (Gronskaya, Zusman, Batishcheva 288). These coded signals—inciting fear, doubt, and ultimately compliance—constitute the "lexicon of terror" that Feitlowitz describes in her exhaustive analysis of the texts and subtexts that laid the groundwork for the Dirty War (Feitlowitz).

Argentinian writer María Negroni's lyric novel *The Annunciation* (2006) is set in the "intensely verbal" period just before the 1976 coup d'état. The novel satirizes the military junta's war on the "state of the language" (Feitlowitz 22) and depicts, in turn, the failure of language among left-wing activists. On both fronts of the conflict, then, the political crisis is a linguistic one. On the left, the activists struggle to unify their political message, but their movement becomes fragmented as their communication breaks down. A motley band of *nommes de guerre*, they even personify this linguistic disarray:

> [There were…] Brains claiming he never bought a word of Socialist Peronism, Mousie hunched over like a little Duke of Orsini, and with him, Penguin, Bashful, Cripple, Filly, and Chester, a veritable Sacred Forest of Monsters…and Evita, who dropped her literature major…because the meetings always devolved into a debate about whether the universe is a finite series of concentric spheres or a totality of worlds in eternal exile, and with all that nonsense, how the hell can anyone do anything that might affect the masses…" (Negroni 11)

I translated these Spanish nicknames (e.g., el Bocho, el Tonra [a syllabic inversion of *ra-tón*], el Pingüi, el Mudo, el Rengo, la Potra, y Chester) into rough English equivalents to highlight the comic heterogeny of this unlikely, zoomorphic list of characters, which includes allusions to the novel *Bomarzo* and its statue garden of "monsters." The failure of their movement stems from their inability to perceive, and agree on, the reality at hand due to their entanglement in the disconnected, disputed language of their politics.

> [A] blind man entered the café selling stickers with the phrase *Smile, the Warlock loves you.*
>
> The Word House clutched her head.
>
> "This country is driving me up a wall. Our Old Man is never going to die, the Warlock is never going to die, the military are never going to die. (…)"
>
> "Excuse me," she said, "but as far as I know the labor class organization…"
>
> "*Working* class, *working*," Nobody corrected. (117)

The nicknames "The Warlock" (El Brujo) and "Our Old Man" (El Viejo) refer to General José López Rega and Juan Perón, respectively. This passage alludes to the dark side of Peronism, with an eerie slogan about the Rasputin-like López Rega printed on stickers sold, ironically, by a blind man. Even as the Peronist activists bemoan the fate of their movement, they dispute fine distinctions in nomenclature. The novel paints their movement as fallen tower of Babel, littered with slogans, flyers, and even non-linguistic signs (e.g., green armbands signify membership in the Peronist Trade Union Youth Association, or JSP), in which they struggle, and ultimately fail, to agree on a common language.

Far worse than the disagreement and fragmentation on the left, the authoritarian language of the military dictatorship is the target of the novel's sharpest critique. Admiral Emilio Massera (whom Feitlowitz deems the Dirty War's "grand orator") often cautioned his listeners about words, which are "unfaithful" and liable to "betray the unsuspecting, destroy the innocent" (Feitlowitz 21). "The only safe words are our words," Massera would conclude (22). Negroni responds to the literary implications of these totalitarian claims on language by satirizing this rhetoric and reclaiming its tropes for poetic play. Crafting the spectacle of language, she highlights the power of words to stupefy instead of signify. *The Annunciation* is stylistically dizzying and explores effects of disorientation and disembodiment with labyrinthine constructions, recalling the dictators' style of "extremely long, solemn, and dirge-like" sentences (Feitlowitz 23). Also, it deploys "emotionally laden, hyperbolic adjectives like "exhausted," "impossible," and "defeated" [along with]… nouns like "dissolution," "anarchy," and "frustration"; "corruption," "contradiction," and "loss" (Feitlowitz 23). The novel draws, moreover, one of its main verbal tropes from the junta's way of personifying abstractions (for example, Massera's proclamation that "We will not allow Death to roam unconstrained in Argentina"; 28), as it builds its excessively large cast of speaking characters from figures of speech and abstract nouns (e.g., "My Private Life," "Longing," "The Soul," "Nobody"). Language becomes a theatrical spectacle, and words are the actors.

> On the screen, live and direct, were the Navy, Army, and Air Force. And behind them, various representatives from the Legitimate Military Wing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, including the Moderate Wing, the generals, cavalry arms, cabinet ministers, multinational executives, members of the Episcopate, unionists, ambassadors, all the chiefs of the garrisons, brigades, units, tactical commands, torture facilities, and other defenders of national disgrace, all in uniform and advancing like locomotives.
>
> "Make no mistake," said Prince Videla of the Little Mustaches, "the guerilla attacks are not targeted at entrepreneurs, or at labor leaders, or at the military, but at the Country as a Whole."
>
> The Country as a Whole gave a quick bow and greeted the camera: "I am not a Liberated Vietnam, nor do I wish to be, God saves and protects me, there is nothing quite like my Grand Ol' Blue and White." (Negroni 129)

This satirical television scene literally performs language-as-spectacle; abstract nouns arrange themselves before, and direct themselves to, the camera. It stresses the emptiness of the language of the dictatorship, for all its pomp and circumstance. "Prince Videla," with his attendant crowd of powerful entities, summons a figure of speech ("The Country as a Whole") as speaking character. I translate language-as-spectacle by honoring the weighty words, run-on sentences, and inflated structures. Readers in English, who might not readily identify the historical context, will still feel the empty weight of the bureaucracy's presence in the list that opens this passage.

In my translation, I added the proper name "Videla" to the cartoonish "El Príncipe de los Bigotitos" (Prince of the Little Mustaches), a questionable choice. In my rationale, his mustache would have been an identifying characteristic to the original audience of the book in Spanish, and without that added surname, "The Prince of the Little Mustaches" might have mapped as an exclusive allusion to Hitler. This instance is one of the very few when my translation risks clarifying historical reference, as the novel's relationship to history is intentionally and provocatively allusive. Both the coded language of the dictatorship, and the code-language of the activists, bring the reader into a mode of reading that involves interpretation and translation—a key part of the linguistic atmosphere that Negroni recreates. As Mother of the Plaza de Mayo Renee Epelbaum, whom Feitlowitz interviews, remarked of speeches by the dictators: "It made you *psychotic*. We could barely 'read' let alone 'translate' the world around us. And that was exactly what they wanted" (Feitlowitz 22). Negroni's satire performs this illegibility and untranslatability to make it more intelligible, as the basis for critique. Addressing this text to a broader readership, I usually avoid such clarification in order to privilege the maddening readerly experience of interpreting and translating allusive, deceptive language.

Not to participate in the same author/itarian narrative strategies that claimed to possess "Objective Reality" and "Truth," Negroni redefines her position as storyteller. To reject the

pretensions of realism, she disrupts the conventions of narrative time and place. The action unfolds in "two cities at once" (Negroni 2): in the past, as the narrator revisits the events that led to the "disappearance" of her boyfriend, who goes by the *nom de guerre* "Humboldt," on March 11, 1976, and in a ghostly "Rome" of the present. The drama is not situated in the catastrophic events of the past but in the narrator's frustrated efforts to narrate that past. The novel finds the narrator "at a loss" to understand let alone articulate events that the dictatorship concealed. The loss of the narrator's lover entangles with semantic losses: lost threads, losses of words, and missing information. The metanarrative paints her grief as distinctly readerly and writerly, a fruitless search for words amid the "national swamp" of language after the conflict.

> … no one would be able to deny, under any circumstances, our linguistic contribution, our worthy donation to the national language, in the form of a national swamp.
>
> The list was unreal, The Wasp said. They'd left scores of toxic, literally unpalatable words. A real shit heap, he said. Then he started enumerating what his memory, in an unprecedented effort, had retained, and all of that, amid the stench of the military and a broken conscience. (Negroni 157)

Here, the language of the dictatorship has not merely made facts unavailable, it has polluted the "national language." More than omissions, concealments are an adulterating substance, making language murky, even poisonous. In his book *Cruel Modernity*, Jean Franco comments on the cover-ups concocted by Latin American regimes as primarily a way of closing off communication abroad: "Killings had to be concealed to avoid international attention, and elaborate deceptions were staged" (Franco 194). A stagnant waste site—what the Wasp later deems a "dead zone [*zona muerta*] in story"—this language can no longer function to tell stories, at least not by traditional means (Negroni 157).

The language of the dictatorship is one that, above all, enacts disappearance. The junta's program of perpetuating "disappearances"—their euphemism for the state-directed murders of left-wing activists—had its root in mystifying, deceptive, and—as critic Edelberto Torres Rivas points out—"imaginative" language. Torres Rivas writes, "disappearance is even more cruel than public assassination, since it elevates the perception of danger by placing it in an imaginary world, unsure but probable, created by the possibility that the disappeared person is alive" (Franco 193). "Disappearance" is a "ghostly art," an act that happens as if magically, with no apparent perpetrator. Even the dictators disappeared from behind their speech, by appealing to divine authority, shifting responsibility from themselves (Schaar 44). The true orator, to whom the message belonged, was the cloaked figure of "Absolute Truth."

Euphemisms—like the word "disappeared" itself—are mainstays of this language, and they perform a disappearing act. The euphemistic "Proceso de Reorganización Nacional," or "Process of National Reorganization," the dictatorship's name for its regime, is another prominent example. The

name shifts responsibility away from the dictators and toward the "process"—a word that itself erases agency by appealing to time itself as an actor, guiding events toward a historical happy ending (Feitlowitz). "Re-organization" is embedded with a sinister irony, as "organization" traces to the same etymological root as "organ." "National Reorganization"—which was a program of kidnapping, torture, and killing—posits nation as a unified *body* restored to proper health.

Out of this verbal and narrative dysfunction, *The Annunciation* constructs a story about grief. Addressing the novel to a disappeared person, "telling the story of a death" that is not impossible to research let alone confirm, it takes up the "ghostly arts" armed with a critical attention to its constructs. "In the absence of the testimony of the disappeared," Jean Franco notes, "their photographs, films, and art instillations are ghostly hauntings. The silence of the disappeared is absolute" (Franco 195). Translation choices that expose the disappearing (but not the disappeared?)

When Realism Isn't Real

The Annunciation is autobiographical by the admission of the author (Negroni), and from the first sentence, the narrator chronicles her writing of the book. Though rooted in Negroni's personal experience of a historical trauma, the book deviates from autobiography in that it is neither an attempt to testify to political catastrophe nor to reconstruct her personal past. On the contrary, it is distinctly a work of fiction; concerned with invention, it elaborates scenes and characters, even as it relentlessly exposes and critiques its own illusion-building. Both memoir and novel, while not quite contained by either category, the book persistently questions, and never quite resolves, its relationship to reality.

The Annunciation resembles what poet Laynie Browne terms "the poet's novel," a hybrid lyric form distinguished from the traditional novel (Browne). In defining this form, Browne identifies a heightened attention to language, at the expense of the pull of narrative time: "This density and unabashed celebration of prosody is a refuge from the whirlwind of novels in which one is propelled by story to come to the end of things" (Browne). Stacking language to impede a reader's absorption in the illusion of scene, this form refuses to participate in realism's representation of reality. For Negroni, writing where the conventions of realism have been weaponized and reality has been concealed, this form is a way to unveil the illusion and to pinpoint "that moment where reality asserts itself as inaccessible" (Negroni). Browne writes, "When realism isn't real, where is a writer to go?…When realism isn't enough, isn't authenticated…poets turn to the body of the sentence…A sentence may break, with the force of bodily gesture…" (Browne). Negroni turns to "the body of the sentence," a radical "bodily gesture" against disappearance. When Negroni's boyfriend (and later murdered, or "disappeared") Humboldt recounts his first interrogation, for example, a single sentence, run together with commas, exceeds a page (Negroni 74). The drama and anxiety of that narrative "reconstruction" (in the absence of facts and of Humboldt's body) are achieved by bending the language beyond the natural angle, highlighting its physicality and constructedness. The mirage of

realism has dissipated into the toxic "dead zone of story," so it is language-as-event, rather than the unfolding of events in an illusion of reality, that moves toward truth.

The narrator writes not from reality but *toward* a real that cannot be accessed—not only for lack of answers, but because of the dysfunction of language after the dictatorship. In the following reflexive passage, the character "The Word House" addresses the problem of signification that she herself embodies:

> Maybe I'm not *myself*, said The Word, who also answered to the name House. I mean, the fact that I go by House in no way implies that I actually *am* a house. Because, without venturing into too much detail, a plain old house is obviously not the same thing as a staged house, a house under siege, a house named by a prisoner under torture, a pink house, or even worse, a white house. Basically I'm a natural dissident, pure and proud. (Negroni 53)

Her identity crisis is a tongue-in-cheek riff on semiotics, but one that alludes metonymically ("a house named…a pink house...a white house") to the Dirty War's clandestine politics and to the complicity of the United States in the junta's brutal human rights abuses. The identity crisis of The Word House invokes the authoritarian language of the dictatorship as it wedged a distance between signifier and signified. In this context, The Word positions herself, alongside the narrator and her fellow activists, on the political left: she is a "natural dissident," a rebel who refuses to conform to the rules—an image perhaps free, in the words of Foucault, "to gravitate about its own madness" (Foucault 18). The crisis of signification, in which the "the figure no longer speaks for itself," gives way to the many hypernyms that take life in the book. At this breaking point, language is: "free for the dream" (19). Negroni reclaims this crisis as a site of poetic freedom.

Negroni is by no means the first writer to emerge from a linguistic (identity) crisis with poetic possibilities. Anne Carson's study of poetic economy in *Economy of the Unlost* addresses the prominent example of poet Paul Celan's experience of estrangement from the German language after World War II. Carson's analysis of Celan offers a useful point of comparison for Negroni, as her insights into how Celan's poetics responded to the Nazi assault on language present striking commonalities. Carson quotes this famous passage from Celan's Bremen address: "It, the language, remained, not lost, yes in spite of everything. But it had to pass through its own answerlessness, pass through frightful muting, pass through the thousand darknesses of deathbringing speech" (Celan 395). Carson argues for the interpretation of this "deathbringing speech" as a specific reference to the Nazi regime, versus a broader reference to the erosion of meaning in language over time (Carson 54). She cites Felstiner's (1995) description of Nazi violence to the German language, which aligns with Feitlowitz's analysis of the Dirty War's war/assault on language.

> [T]he Thousand-Year Reich organized its genocide of European Jewry by means of language: slogans, pseudo-scientific dogma, propaganda, euphemism, and the jargon that brought about

> every devastating "action" from the earliest racial "laws" through "special treatment" in the camps to the last "resettlement" of Jewish orphans. (Carson 53)

Like Celan's poetic economy, Negroni's novel holds the body of language "close and secure against loss" (Celan 395). Reclaiming language from violence—and like Celan, Negroni attends to language as to material relics that have "passed through loss"; Negroni's narrative resistance of realism resembles Celan's "language mesh" [Sprachgitter], as Carson describes it: "the action of the poem, as it pulls you deep in and then thrusts you out of the mesh…moves with the springy recoil of a bad conversation and cleanses us of the illusion that we could talk" (Carson 58). This poetics that amplifies the strangeness of speech by refusing fluency and transparency extends from both writers' estrangement from language (and position of exile). As Carson notes, "in order to write poetry at all, he had to develop an outside relationship with a language he had once been inside. He had to reinvent German on the screen of itself, by treating his native tongue as a foreign language to be translated…" (Carson 52). As such, Celan suggests further comparisons for Negroni's language as one of both grief and translation.

Writing Death

As Jean Franco observes of the Dirty War, there was "a triple deprivation—of a body, of mourning, and of a burial" (Franco 193). Faced with this triple lack, the narrator of *The Annunciation* struggles to come to terms with the indefinite death of the "disappeared" Humboldt, to whom her narrative is addressed. Her frustrated grief is the narrative's central, obsessive conflict. This conflict emerges repeatedly as her writing, an exercise in mourning, is haunted by the specters of its own dysfunction and futility.

In Freud's essay "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917), which remains a prevalent model for evaluating literary representations of grief despite Freud's later revisions to it, normal "mourning," which does the recuperative "work" of freeing our desire to cling to the fantasy of the lost object, is distinguished from pathological "melancholy," in which we engage in a "prolonged hallucinatory wishful psychosis" (Freud 244). In normal mourning, one externalizes the absence as an "imagined presence," a place to transfer one's attachment, until it eventually dissolves. By contrast, melancholy internalizes loss, and thus, the sufferer never manages to become free of attachment to the lost object. The imagined presence is key to normal mourning; melancholy occurs precisely because "one cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost" (Freud 246). Sacks (1985) adapted Freud's model to describe how elegy performs the work of mourning by supplying that imagined presence of the loss object. Elegy, in Sacks's adaptation, allows the mourner to displace, and ultimately dissolve, attachment to the dead. Sacks's model amounts to a compensatory economy of grief, in which the creative gain redeems the loss.

Scholars have questioned the relevance and adequacy of Sacks's model to modern art on grief, which tends to reject consolation to acknowledge the complex social politics and personal ethics entailed in loss (Clewell). *The Annunciation*, for one, defines a frustrated, if not adversarial, relationship with the happy ending of mourning's consolation. Instead, it corresponds to what Jahan Ramazani has described as the "anti-elegiac dimension" of modern writing on death, which is "anti-consolatory and anti-encomiastic…anti-conventional and sometimes even anti-Literary" (Ramazani 2). Writings of grief might insist that language is no substitute for losses that are too profound or hard to define and simply refuse to be comforted. In the spirit of this refusal, *The Annunciation* exhibits what Ramazani terms "melancholic mourning," a grief process marked by uncertainty, hopelessness, and ongoingness (4). In this process, the narrator clings to a loss that she cannot name or define, an absence that she has internalized for lack of concrete understanding of what she has lost, or even whether she has lost it. "Who were you, anyway, Humboldt?": the narrator asks, and: "Where are you?" and "Did you die somewhere along the way?" "What if the Humboldt I'm inventing never actually existed?" Not only does he have no body, no grave, no funeral—even his name is only a *nom de guerre*. "Your Humboldt has many facets missing," the character Emma reminds her. The novel's melancholic mourning—unresolved, violent, and ambivalent—repeats that triple deprivation of "body, mourning, and funeral" by acknowledging its inability to represent, substitute, and detach from the one lost. The narrator's stated mission to "write the story of a death" convulses with her recognition of Humboldt as, fundamentally, unknowable, inaccessible, and impossible to represent. From the novel's opening sentence, the narrator proclaims her impotence: "I don't know how to tell the story of a death, Humboldt" (1).

To persist in uncertainty, Negroni's narrator must redefine her purpose. Ramazani draws the contrast between elegy and anti-elegy with Elizabeth Bishop's famous villanelle "One Art" (a poem that, coincidentally, Negroni translated into Spanish; moreover, she once presented a public talk about her frustration with the message of this poem when translating it; Negroni). Ramazani writes: "If the traditional elegy was the art of saving, the modern elegy is…an 'art of losing'… the 'one art' of the modern elegy is not transcendence or redemption of loss but immersion in it" (Ramazani 4). Not "freeing the ego" or "purging sorrow," mourning becomes, precisely, a delicious exercise in futility. Just so, the creative "work" of *The Annunciation* is not to heal but, rather, to open—and deepen—the wound: "it is as if someone opened a wound in me, and then another inside it, and caged a swallow inside. Oh, I'm slandering you—there are no swallows [*golondrinas*] in Rome" (Negroni 4). The English translation of the bird "swallow" introduces the secondary denotation of an internalization: the sense of swallowing a wound, eating your grief (even as it loses the secondary Argentinean-Spanish denotation of "migrant"). In this anti-elegy, the wound of loss is this Chinese box, a deescalating depth that, in the end, contains no body—only a lie, which triggers ambivalence. The lack of a body relegates the narrator to immersive, hopeless mourning, a process that strives not to see the disappeared but rather, to do the impossible: to see disappearance.

The narrator makes this distinction between traditional elegy and her own writing explicitly: "It's one thing to write on behalf of the dead, Humboldt. It's another thing *to write death*. You risk keeping it alive forever in the folds of what you say. Now, for example, I have the sensation of postponing something in order to linger endlessly in this cemetery of words" (228). Argentine scholar Hector Depino, addressing problems of artistic representation in proposals for a memorial to those killed in the Dirty War, advocates for something like Negroni's "writing death": "[a] creative process of lack," one that is capable of "transforming that hole in reality into a lack" (Depino 194). (Here, again, the trope for the endless writing death is physical, spatial depth: "the *folds* of what you say.") Death fundamentally defies representation and, thus, demands new forms. Thus, anti-elegy, strives to represent precisely that which defies representation, for a poetics that, as an oddly hopeful gesture, embraces failure. Unable to understand, redeem, and thereby free herself from what she has lost, her attempt, even as if fails to compensate, creates in its very failure something other than representation, something unprecedented.

With apostrophe, the poetic call to the absent, the narrator addresses herself to lack. Apostrophe is a familiar rhetorical gesture in traditional elegies, where they are often reserved for crests of emotional intensity, but the narrator's call is a running epistolary thread, cultivating an atmosphere of pending, unlikely response: "That's enough for now, Humboldt. Who knows if we'll see each other again, or when. Goodbye. I'll leave you to that bright blank that is and was (and ever shall be) what we might have been together" (Negroni 5). Here again, it is useful to reference the poetics of Paul Celan, in whose poems apostrophe hazards toward an uncertain "encounter." In his Bremen speech, Celan defines the poem as "encounter" and emphasizes the risk of its failure by comparing the poem to a note in a bottle thrown out to sea. The apostrophic gesture toward the absent other, as it exposes the poem to unknown destiny, forms the basis for what scholar Kalliopi Nikolopoulu terms Celan's "poetics of disappearance," which like Negroni's poetics, is deeply rooted in non-consolatory, melancholic grief. Nikolopoulu illustrates how, in Celan's earliest known poem "Mother's Day 1938"—which begins by addressing a silver-haired aspen tree while noting, by contrast, "my mother's hair was never white" and concluding "my gentle mother cannot return"—apostrophe attempts the work of mourning by performing Freud's "Fort/Da" –Gone! There!—game of appearance and disappearance (and repetition), in which the child throws an object away (in this case the mother) and retrieves it in order to stage its loss and return. Celan's mother does not return. The work of mourning in the poem fails to compensate for the loss; instead, it repeats the loss—and so the work will go on and on. In that endless repetition, absence is exposed. Nikolopoulu concludes that Celan stages his mother's disappearance in order "to expose the risk of representation," because "only when the poem arrests the logic of representation, in which words that mean absence end up representing what they are supposed to mark as absent…can such difficult presence as the presence of absence come forth" (Nikolopoulu 82, 83). Summoning her then—as Negroni's narrator says—is to expose the "risk of keeping [the dead] alive forever in the folds of what you say" (Negroni 228).

As with Celan's apostrophe, Negroni's apostrophe is not a call to Humboldt, but "the endless repetition of a hope that could be but is not fulfilled"—what Nikolopoulu's terms "the gap between possibility and missing" (Nikolopoulu 88). This compulsive enactment necessitates an "endless" form such as Laynie Browne identifies in her discussion of the "poet's novel." Browne uses poet Andrea Baker's doubly adjectival "open endless" as a nexus for multiple definitions and anti-definitions of the genre: "This deliberate stumbling and stopping is an 'open endless.' It takes you back, in the opposite direction of 'finishing'" (Browne). Negroni adopts the lyric novel's "open endless" to stand between "possibility and missing," in that desperate repetition of the hope as it is, maybe never, fulfilled. Meanwhile, the novel's meta-fictional reflections highlight endlessness, and even hopelessness, as revelatory: "And yet, I'm nowhere even close to finding that image that expresses nothing, and whose empty forms, endlessly multiplying, let us see" (Negroni 90). The narrator's "endless search" for Humboldt reflects the artist character Emma's "endless search" for a particular shade of blue, both of which parallel the Montoneros' search for their political ideal, and all of which are hauntingly paralleled, in turn, by the military's search for "subversives" to apprehend, torture, and kill. And so, the novel moves in the modality of multidirectional, endless searching, through desperate repetition, never realizing its hope or arriving at closure. Writing death is a melancholic, ongoing act of grief.

Annunciation, Enunciation

The Annunciation as "open endless" is, in fact, a radically anachronistic treatment of time and space to produce conditions of possibility through narrative impossibility. Here, there is no "Process," or progress toward a happy ending. Time is obsessive, repeatedly looping from an unidentified present back to March 11, 1976, the date of Humboldt's disappearance, two weeks before the military takeover of Argentina, which occurred on March 24, 1976, on the eve of the Catholic feast of the Annunciation. Effectively, the novel takes place simultaneously in the past and present: in the "fort" as well as the "da" of its obsessive game. As for space, the narrator lives "in two cities at once," Rome and Buenos Aires, and moreover, she has "died and resurrected," simultaneously alive and dead, like Schrodinger's famous cat of the Uncertainty Principle. Anachronistic, too, is the character of Athanasius Kircher, the seventeenth century German scholar whose appearance before the narrator resembles both divine visitation and meta-poetic absurdism. Kircher, able to freely traverse space and time, is an artist of the impossible and the founder of a "museum that contains, or duplicates, the world." As such, he foregrounds anxieties of representation. His museum's ability to "contain" and "duplicate" the world invokes the very tenets of realism, even as he defies them and proposes radical alternatives.

> "You'll see," he said, noticing my lack of enthusiasm, "the Annunciation is an exchange of *caritas*. An orator, ambassador, *starry messenger* arrives and proclaims: 'Virgin, my lady, hurry and respond, proclaim the Word. And she rises, rushes forward, opens. It's as if she said: 'Give me what I need, not what I want.' At that moment, eternity enters time, immensity enters measure, the Creator enters the created, the unrepresentable enters representation, the unspeakable enters speech, the inexplicable enters words, glory enters confusion." (Negroni 231)

Here, Athanasius presents the biblical scene of The Annunciation as a parable of representation that proclaims "impossibility" an alternative to realism. In the biblical story, which spans only twelve verses in the book of Luke (Lk: 26-38), the Virgin Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel, who delivers the news that she is to become pregnant with the son of God. Mary briefly reflects upon this message before she declares her acceptance. As Athanasius highlights, this scene suggests the process of creative representation, as it points to the very mystery of the incarnation, or "word-made-flesh"—and moreover, as Emma reminds us throughout the novel, it has been a rich site of visual and narrative re-imaginings dating back to the fourth century (LaVerdiere 29). But in his version, Athanasius notably impregnates traditional representation with impossibility, uncertainty: "the unrepresentable enters representation, the unspeakable enters speech, the inexplicable enters words….". As the story represents an encounter, a call that awaits response, it is marked by that risk, that openness to unknown destiny, which we find in Celan's, and Negroni's, apostrophic poetics.

For centuries, theological interpretations of these verses have highlighted the "pregnant pause" before Mary's response, her famous hesitation which amplifies that risk: "[she] was troubled at his saying and thought with herself." Athanasius's emphasizes the angel Gabriel's haste, underpinned by uncertainty, by some momentary possibility that she will not answer his call: "Virgin, my lady, hurry and respond, proclaim the Word." Just so, the following passage by French Cistercian Bernard de Clairvaux, makes a plea for her to answer, as if her answer were in no way assured: "Answer quickly, O Virgin. Reply in haste to the angel, or rather through the angel to the Lord. Answer with a word, receive the Word of God…. Why do you delay, why are you afraid?" (Clairvaux). The "troubled" pause is that place where the narrative opens to its radical form, its "open endless," and abandons representation. Mary is to abandon her prudence, as the poetic narrative must do, to "embrace" the impossible, unspeakable, unrepresentable.

The host of characters that populate Negroni's anti-realist, anti-elegiac narrative are, like Athanasius, ghostly figures. Characters like "The Word House," "My Private Life," and "The Soul" are, as I discussed earlier, satirical responses to one of the dictatorship's tropes, and they are also one of the most playful and dynamic narratives strategies creating spontaneity and resisting time. Figures of speech and thought, when invoked, materialize suddenly, as if of their own accord as speaking characters, a play that emphasizes the nonsensical, unexplained nature of dis/appearances in this historical context. Abstractions walk the streets ("We will not allow Death to roam free…"), as real people disappear. In another defiance of linear time, historical figures materialize as characters. The following passage, riffing on lines from the poem *Altazor*, summons the poet Vicente Huidobro, who remains as a speaking character for the rest of the novel:

In her corner, The Soul had returned to normal and was chanting:

> "The swallow wallows, for miles of hills, violoncello and swallow, in the gloaming the moon, at full gallop, swallowing, the swilling, swirling, swelling, squalling, squealing."
>
> "There are writers here who are infiltrators," shrieked a skinny kid with a green armband. "And proud of it!" said Huidobro, making his first appearance. (Negroni 183)

As Negroni exposes characterization as this sort of dis/appearing act, she again engages narrative impossibility to highlight im/possibility: anyone could appear, or disappear, at any moment. This possibility lends the narrative an element of lyric surprise and an attendant anxiety. It insists on redrawing the line at the site of the disaster, not between presence and absence, or between real and imagined, but between—again in Nikopolou's words—between "possibility and missing…" (Nikopolou 88). Whereas realist narrative is fundamentally predictable, this one is uncertain, capable of failing, liable not to arrive, or likely to arrive garbled: "By then I was used to the monk's abrupt appearances, and to his disappearances which, at times, lasted for months. He came on and off, like a nonsense signal…He *is* appearance and disappearance" (Negroni 87). Again, this uncertainty writes death, rather than write presumptively *on behalf of* the dead: it *is* appearance and disappearance. By extension, translation could be described in these same terms; insofar as it displaces a text in time and space, expresses itself as a possibility in light of "impossibility," and most of all, as—given that a translation is never finished and never definitive, as re-translations of texts over time and place are the norm in world literature—it embraces the ongoing here/gone dynamics of writing death.

A Language of Translation

I have discussed the connection between the anti-elegiac poetics and mourning, now I will argue that Emma bridges this poetics to the realm of translation. Emma, the narrator's best friend, is a painter whose ruminations on the function of art and possibility of representation embed a key theoretical framework into the novel. As painter, she is a "copyist," adamantly concerned with achieving equivalency to another work of art, and not to reality. What is more, she is devoted copying a single work: Filippo Lippi's Annunciation, a religious scene that is itself the site of numerous artistic renderings. Propounding her theory of art, Emma invokes key points in translation studies, such as equivalence and loss.

Emma's goal as a copyist is not to play into capitalistic production but, more idealistically, to transcend representation by exhausting it. "She copied them in a fury, ravenously, as if by not having to invent her own forms, she could directly enter the unseen" (Negroni 12). It is hard not to connect her method to what Walter Benjamin discusses in his famous essay "The Task of the Translator," in which he reframes translation as a liberation from the confines of one's own language and its distinct mode of intention. In translation, one's language might be freed toward an attainment of "pure language," that ideal of language that can only emerge in the harmony of all languages vitally linked (Benjamin 74). As languages coincide in the moment of a word-by-word translation, as in Emma's meticulous copies of the Annunciation, they reconfigure what Babel shattered to bits: the "pure

language" that exceeds the communicative power of individual languages, which contain the incomplete residues of its enigmas. Like Benjamin, Emma's interest is not in the production of the copy for the sake of a "viewer." Emma's view of art as an idealistic search, via literalism, for an inexpressible color reflects this mystic vision, which is an end in itself; as Athanasius consoles the narrator, "You might say that the very moment she set out in search of the color blue, paradise was already inside her" (Negroni 234). Also like Benjamin, Emma fundamentally rejects the notion that a good translation is a faithful representation of an original text. For Emma, all representations, as representations, are doomed to fail; her copying is merely a means of brushing with another painter's sense of intention ("Her favorite painter was Filippo Lippi, because Lippi, she claimed, painted with desire"; Negroni 12) to approach the inexpressible. Benjamin quotes Rudolf Pannwitz on this point:

> Our translations, even the best ones, proceed from a wrong premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, English. […] The basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue. (Benjamin 80)

The mark of a successful translation for Benjamin is not a faithful transfer or adequate substitution of meaning, but creation: to have sparked the transformation of the translation language. Through her method of copying, Emma transcends representation and expands the expressive possibilities of her medium: "Then suddenly, as if that color infested her, she becomes a wild conflagration, an intensity that ignores the limits of the seen and the visible" (Negroni 12).

When modeled as transfer, on the other hand, translation entails, like elegy, a compensatory economy. As representation of the lost original text, the translation is tasked with substituting for, and redeeming its loss, parallel to "normal mourning" work of elegy. Translators' Notes often trouble over the ethics of substitution. To be truly "faithful," how accurate must the representation be? Accurate in what way (word, form, intent)? Does the gain redeem the loss? The narrator of *The Annunciation* herself expresses these anxieties: Is her novel a fair/true/faithful representation of Humboldt? Emma, however, proposes an alternative model.

> I've always thought that art is never contemporary to anyone. Like it's standing, by definition, on the curb across the street, disoriented, brushing off everything that tries to pin it down, because pinning down is always the foundation for domination. And that's how it works, whether or not it's trying to, against authoritarianism.…Do I even need to add that art is its own reality, and that the real measure of truth is depth, not accuracy? A work lays images over places that lack reason. (Negroni 86)

Emma's notion of art as something that "lays images over places that lack reason" recalls Negroni's remark in an interview that she has tried to situate her work where "reality asserts itself as

inaccessible" (Negroni)—a paratextual source that provided a key rubric for my choice-making in this translation. It is the impossibility of pinning down Lippi's blue that inspires Emma to copy them relentlessly, and despite her method of literalism, her commitment is to "depth" not "accuracy." Lack, or loss, incites the copy, which rather than pretend to represent the loss, must instead enter it; depth is a spatial conception that suggests a hole. Emma makes the language of the novel—writing not from reality but *toward* a real that cannot be accessed—a language of translation.

The narrator engages in copying as well. Her role as activist is to print flyers; as writer, she limits herself to "borrowed bits of prose" ("the main thing is never to add my own words, everything has already been said"; 24). As writer of the novel, she drafts multiple "what-if" versions of Humboldt's story. No version pretends to be correct; they accrue as imaginative possibilities, toward truth-as-depth rather than as accuracy. "If he had been an architect, Humboldt would have drawn the plans for an Edenic house, enclosed by a palisade" (93) Throughout the novel, Humboldt's story is not the story of his life, but the story of his stories. Working from text to text, at a remove from reality, the writer is limited to a translator's role.

As translator of this novel, itself so infused with anxieties about representation and translation, I met obstacles to the traditional task of crafting an illusion of the original. Beyond the density, materiality, and syntactical idiosyncrasy of its language—which demanded an attention to verbal music as when translating poetry—the language is in many ways bound to its original cultural context. Pervasive references to popular and material culture (for example, popular songs and brand names, with their attendant associations to social class and political orientation) would be lost on an audience outside of Argentina. The greatest challenge to translation is its intricate, satirical portrayal of the linguistic atmosphere of its setting: the authoritarian rhetoric of the military dictatorship and the political-jargon-peppered slang of the left-wing activists. For the latter, I opted for language that, with a mixture of idioms and inventions, produced a distinctly "un-locatable" atmosphere in English. In the sprit of the novel's refusal of realism, I embraced anachronism and intentionally mixed contexts (e.g., the quoted passage in which the Country as a Whole refers to the Argentine flag as his "Grand ol' blue and white"). I avoided explanation (with a few exceptions, such as the clarified Videla reference that I discuss earlier in the article). Weighing the need to build the context necessary for the satire to hit its mark against the important experience of allusion, loss, and distance, I tended toward the latter. hoping to situate my writing of the translation, like the writing of the novel, "between possibility and missing." The language of my translation is anachronistic, loss-infused, ghostly, and—I hope—lyrically evocative. It upholds Negroni's central impulse to hold language closer in the face of loss and spin, within its illusion, a melancholic sense of its own illusion-spinning.

The novel ends with the narrator's apology that the book has not compensated for Humboldt's loss: "Unforgivable failure of this book" (Negroni 239). By refusing forgiveness, this ending curtails the elegiac economy. Moreover, it boldly punctuates the novel by absorbing blame, as well as embracing failure: "You gave your life, and I cut a deal. There is no right word for that" (239).

Countless versions of this admission can be found in translator's notes: she has "betrayed" Humboldt, and her language has failed. With this admission of not having achieved its purpose, moreover, the novel resists ending; it merely has reached a stopping point in its "open endless," where time is not linear or chronological but repetitive, obsessive. The work of mourning fails to compensate for loss, it repeats the loss—and so this ending opens the possibility of more writing. In that possibility of endless repetition, absence is exposed, and translation takes place.

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> "Il suffit d'avoir lu Beckett pour que tout autre texte soit révélé par son éclairage comme trop peu exigeant et se contentant à trop bon compte".
>
> (Beckett 2006)

Register in Samuel Beckett's Writings in English and French: Vocabulary, Punctuation, and Grammar

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Samuel Beckett, his Letters, and his Tragicomedy of *Waiting for Godot*

Samuel Barclay Beckett was born on April 13, 1906 in Foxrock, county Dublin, Ireland and passed away on December 22, 1989 in Paris, France. He was known as author, critic, playwright, and above all winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1969. His writings are both published in English and French. Samuel Beckett is mostly known all over the world for his famous play of *Waiting for Godot* published in 1952. In 1929, he acquired the position of *lecteur* at the École Normale Supérieure of Paris. There, he joined the literary circle of James Joyce. In 1937, he decided to settle in Paris. From 1929 to 1940, Beckett's life is clearly represented via his letters written to his friends. In 2009, a selection of these letters were published for the first time. These letters depict Beckett's view and voice of "Western Europe in the 1930s". In fact, "detailed introductions, translations, explanatory notes, profiles of major correspondents, chronologies, and other contextual information accompany the letters" (Craig et al 109). During the World War II, he fought against the Gestapo and fed himself as a farm worker. In 1945, as an Irish citizen, Beckett volunteered for the *Red Cross* and went back to France to work as an interpreter in a military hospital of Normandy. In 1945, he was awarded by the *Croix de Guerre* for his efforts.

One of the most important aspects of the present study is that register in Beckett's writings in English and French has not been questioned yet in details by researchers and translators. That is why the present research aims to shed light on contrastive analysis which can compare stylistic units in order to examine the extent of change in Beckett's register from his letters to his play. As far as the relevant literature is concerned, there is not a wide range of research regarding the subject of register in Samuel Beckett's writings. However, some studies have been conducted on his general style of writing. One of these studies was done by Julien F. Carrier, in 2005, under the title of *Samuel Beckett and bilingualism: how the return to English influences the later writing style and gender roles of All that Fall and Happy Days*. Moreover, in 2011, Saeid Rahimipoor, Henrik Edoyan, and Masoud Hashemi talked about

the subject of self-revelation in Samuel Beckett's style in their article entitled *Self Revelation in Samuel Beckett's Language*. By drawing on certain theories of theoreticians in linguistics and translation studies such as Brian T. Fitch, Anthony Uhlmann, and Saeid Rahipour, this research seeks to present a linguistic and translation analysis of Beckett's register in his four volumes of letters and English, and French versions of his play *Waiting for Godot*. Hence, this study aims to investigate the extent to which the Irish writer's register has been differentiated in the corpus under study by the passage of time to suit the stylistic norms of 20th century in France and England.

Register in Samuel Beckett's Writings in English and French

According to Halliday, *register* is the reflection of "variation in the organizational structure of language according to differences in the field, tenor, and mode of communication" (Halliday 68). For Halliday, register holds a semantic value: "register is the clustering of semantic features according to situation type" (Halliday 68). He considers register as a configuration of the networks of significance. The British linguist believes that the register of the text has a close relationship with context in which the text is written (58):

> The patterns of determination that we find between the context of situation and the text are a general characteristic of the whole complex that is formed by a text and its environment. We shall not expect to be able to show that the options embodied in one or another particular sentence are determined by the field, tenor, and mode of the situation. The principle is that each of these elements in the semiotic structure of the situation activates the corresponding component in the semantic system, creating in the process a semantic configuration, a group of favored and foregrounded options from the total meaning potential that is typically associated with the situation type in question. This semantic configuration is what we understand by the register.

In addition, Halliday is convinced that the register could be influenced by linguistic situation (Halliday 31):

> Types of linguistic situation differ from one another, broadly speaking, in three respects: first, as regards what actually is taking place; secondly, as regards what part the language is playing; and thirdly, as regards who is taking part. These three variables, taken together, determine the range within which meanings are selected and the forms which are used for their expression. In other words, they determine the 'register'.

The variation of vocabulary is one of the aspects of register. For instance, the variation of words used by Samuel Beckett throughout his letters and his tragicomedy of *Waiting for Godot* reflects the variation of his register. One may wonder whether the variation of vocabulary that the Irish author has applied in the French version of his tragicomedy is the same as the variation of vocabulary used in the English version. By going through both versions, it could be noticed that the frequency of

variation of vocabulary in the French version is higher in comparison to the English version. It could also be seen that the texture of his version in French is richer in terms of vocabulary.

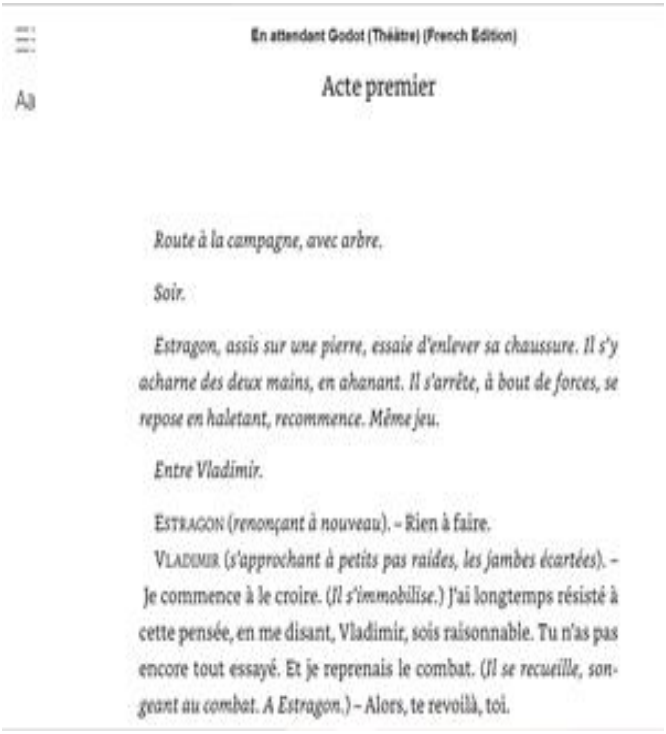

Figure I.

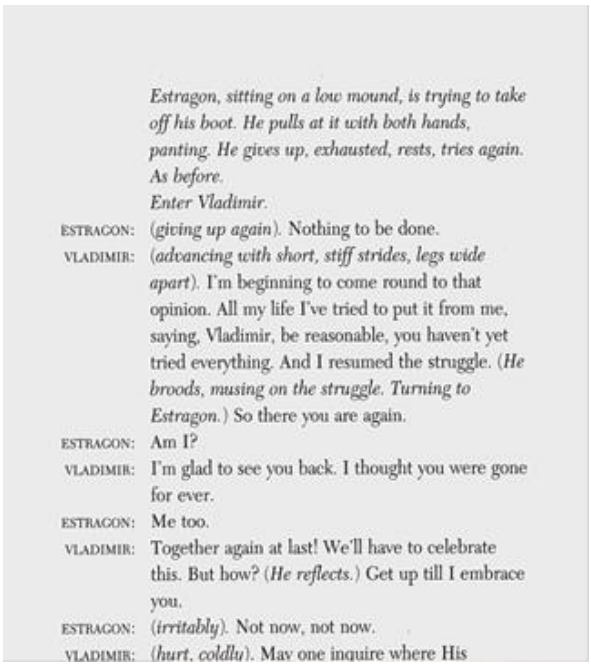

Figure II.

Another aspect of register refers to the variation of "grammar, […] and pronunciation related to the tenor or social relationship between participants" (Halliday 33). In fact, the level of formality of style indicates the variation of grammar and vocabulary. For instance, the level of formality of register is higher in Beckett's letters in comparison to his tragicomedy. Each volume demonstrates the author's evolution of writing style from the 1930s to the 1980s. However, in his well-known German letter of 1937, he talked about his strong desire of disintegrating the English formal grammar from syntax. In his letters, he maintained a pejorative tone about his own English style. On the other hand, he believed that French language gave him more advantage of control in terms of grammar and vocabulary. In this regard, he asserts (Craig et al 366): "I am inclined as always in English to shit and pullulate–but there's a play there all right I think–if I can retrain my native vulgarity".

Textual Analysis

The focus of the present study is on Samuel Beckett's correspondences and his tragicomedy in English and French. In 1952, he published his famous play *Waiting for Godot*[1] first in French and later in English. Beckett's play turned to become a success in the *Theater of the Absurd*. In 1953, *Waiting for Godot* was played in the *théâtre de Babylone* in Paris. With this performance, Beckett started to pave his path to the hall of fame. In 1969, he won the Nobel Prize. He never appeared in any public speech that is why he accepted the award without presenting himself at the ceremony. In 2016, a selection of his correspondences was published under the title of *Dear Mr. Beckett: Letters from the Publisher, the Samuel Beckett File*.

The question of register in Samuel Beckett's writing has been a complex subject since he wrote texts both in English and French. In fact, Beckett's register reveals a cultural, historical, and above all philosophical complexity. His writing style consists of abundant allusions to the work of other writers. In other terms, his writing opposes to the dominant literary, philosophical, and theological ideas of his era.

Dante Alighieri[2], René Descartes[3], Arnold Geulincx[4], and James Joyce[5] are the writers whose thoughts and philosophies are referred to in Beckett's writings. In fact, in his writings, he tried to talk about existential concepts such as the relationships between different individuals and their struggles for life. He frequently questioned the existence of human being and quested for finding the true nature of *I*. For instance, the two main characters in *Waiting for Godot* are depicted in two acts, living a miserable life, asking themselves the reason of their being. They think that they are waiting for a person whose name is *Godot*, though they are not sure whether he appears. One of the notions which is

[1] In French, *En attendant Godot*.
[2] Dante Alighieri was an Italian poet, writer, thinker, and a political person who lived in 9th century.
[3] René Descartes was a French mathematician, physician, and philosopher who lived during 12th century.
[4] Arnold Geulincx was a Belgian philosopher who lived in 12th century and followed Descartes in his philosophy.
[5] James Augustine Aloysius Joyce was an Irish novelist, writer, poet, and literary critic. He was a follower of avant-garde movement in 20th century.

referred to in this context is the saying of Descartes: "I think, therefore, I am". *Who am I? Where am I going? What am I supposed to do in this world? What will happen to me?* These are the questions that Beckett attempted to ask through his literary texts.

One of the peculiarities of Beckett's register is *brevity*. The sentences are short and the grammar is very simple. In other terms, the words which are spoken by the characters throughout *Waiting for Godot* are short and a few. This brevity offers the readers the opportunity to reflect on the action which is taken place in each page of the tragicomedy. The brevity is also demonstrated in *mise en scène* of his play, i.e. there is only one leafless tree throughout the two acts. By following the simplicity of the writing style of certain authors and philosophers such as René Descarte, Arnold Geulincx, and James Joyce, Beckett chose concentration in the construction of linguistic structures in his writings.

Another peculiarity of Beckett's register is the *time slicing*. Throughout his writings, he created silences and pauses between the conversations of the individuals. According to Daniel Katz (Uhlmann 363), "Beckett is the great technician of the pause, the materialized linguistic rupture. Any linguistic unit is structurally temporal in that phonemes and morphemes need to be deployed in sequence, and that word order determines meaning, but this logical temporality is attacked by pressures on the aural temporality of the spoken word on Beckett's stage, by both the pause and its dialectical observe, and speed". For instance, in *Waiting for Godot*, in the first act, 41 silences, and 38 pauses are observed, and in the second act, 70 silences, and 24 pauses are seen. The time slicing is, in fact, a type of structure that the Irish author has used a lot in his play. On the contrary, Lucky's dialogues demonstrates a "Lucky's logorrheic flow" (Uhlmann). Lucky's long nonsense dialogue in act one on page 36, 37, and 38 could be a good evidence of the above assertion (Beckett 36-38):

> Given the existence as uttered forth in the public quaquaquaqua with white beard quaquaquaqua outside time without extension who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown but time will tell and suffers like the divine Miranda with those who for reasons unknown but time will tell are plunged in torment plunged in fire whose fire flames […].

Another aspect of Beckett's register is the *syntax slicing*, i.e. the language has been deliberating decomposed. The sentences have no subject, no specific pronoun or they are not even conjugated. For instance, in the first page of the first act of *Waiting for Godot*, Estragon opens his conversation by saying "Nothing to be done". On the second page, Vladimir's catalogue opens up with another sliced syntax of "Hand in hand from the top of the Eiffel Tower, among the first. […] Now it's too late". In the next line Estragon says "Taking off my boot". In the second act, on page fifteen, there are more evidences of the *syntax slicing*. As an example, on the first line, Estragon says: "What a day". Afterwards, on line ten, Vladimir opens his conversation by saying: "one isn't master of one's moods". On line sixteen, Estragon only says one word of "Happy?" without using any pronoun subject and/or verb. As it could be seen in the given examples, the syntax of the text is decomposed. In addition, with respect to the formality of his language, on 6 February 1937, Samuel Beckett writes to Thomas

McGreenvy[6]: "It is indeed getting more and more difficult, even pointless, for me to write in formal English. And more and more my language appears to me like a veil which one has to tear apart in order to get to those things (or the nothingness) lying behind it…To drill one hole after another into it until that which lurks behind, be it something or nothing, starts seeping through–I cannot imagine a higher goal for today's writer" (Craig et al 69). It could be said that Samuel Beckett uses these two peculiarities of style in order to enhance the notion of obscurity in his work. In addition, the silence, the pause, and the decomposition of sentences result to the chaos, darkness, confusion, and ambiguity of the 20th century.

With regard to the fact that Samuel Beckett wrote both in English and French, Corinne Scheiner (Craig et al 613) asserts: "It is good to know that while translating his own texts, Beckett has always remained faithful to the original text". Scheiner adds "it is clear from accounts of his collaborations that Beckett does not seek to produce literal, word-for-word renderings of his texts. Rather, he clearly understands the process of self-translation to be one of rewriting" (Craig et al). As already mentioned, Beckett's texts are embellished by allusions. To translate these allusions from English into French, the Irish author has engaged the process of cultural transposition. According to Scheiner, in his translations, Beckett has used the three following translation strategies: "(I) he replaces unfamiliar references with ones familiar to the new reader; (II) he retains the references present in the first version but, recognizing that these references are likely unfamiliar to the new reader, he offers more information, (III) he interpolates additional references drawn from the new reader's culture" (Craig et al). For instance, in *Waiting for Godot*, Beckett changes *Connemara* for *Normandie*, and *Puncher* for *Poinçon*. In fact, for him, translation equals rewriting. Thus Beckett's register in his translations is not identical with his register in the original text.

According to Lois More Overbeck (Craig et al), from 1929 to 1989, Samuel Beckett wrote about sixteen thousand letters. His letters are the description of "his own work, from the insecurities of a fledgling writer to a man who feels, frequently, that he has written himself out" (Craig et al 428). The letters also show the crisis and changes that happened in Irish, French, and German society and culture. Since, Beckett always refused to publically appear in any type of ceremony or interview, his letters could be taken as expression of his opinion and feelings about his literary works. He wrote the letters to his close friends, i.e. Thomas McGreevy, Georges Duthuit, Alan Schneider, and Barbara Bray describing his difficulties and emotions with regards to his efforts for writing. For instance, he wrote to Avigdor Arikha saying: "The rhythm and the syntax of weakness and penury, not easy to catch. All the same, I am getting there a little better-VIth version of the beginning". In fact, Beckett's letters depict the gradual change that happens "between his original conception and the realization of his work" (Craig et al 30).

[6] MacGreevy changed his name to MacGreenvy. From the second volume of Beckett's letters, the changed name is reflected.

With regard to the language used in Beckett's letters, it must be said that he tried to "communicate the incommunicable" about his private life with his close friends[7], collaborators[8], and close relations[9], therefore, the punctuation, and the grammar applied follow a coherence (Rahimipour & Hashemi 821). In addition, the lexis which are used maintain a certain coherence in comparison to the lexis used in *Waiting for Godot* either in English or in French. For Beckett, words are timeless. His attempt was to destroy the rationality, tense, aspect, and above all structure in his sentences used in his tragicomedy. According to Rahimipour, "he tries to develop a new language of timelessness and spacelessness, a language as 'a system of sounds devoid of content which moves only within itself" (Rahimipour & Hashemi 821). The register used in his play reveals a sort of breakdown and disintegration of language. In fact, "the disintegration captures the language and the dialogue fades in sheer minimalism" (Rahimipour & Hashemi 821). Beckett's intention of applying such a detached register in his play is to show the reality of wordless of self of the human in 20th century. The repetition of words is another technique for Beckett to demonstrate the disintegration of language throughout the two acts in his play. By using nonsense words and irrational sentences and long pauses, the Irish author attempts to break the rationality of the conventional language of his era. In other terms, an ambiguous language is used to communicate the serious dilemmas of man after the Second World War. The words have lost their meanings as the 20th-century man has lost his purpose of life after seeing the death and depression of the post-war era. In fact, Vladimir and Estragon's register shows their bewilderment in search to find the meaning of their existence.

The language is also disintegrated from its action. The characters talk about taking action, they agree on it and at the end, no action is taken. This pattern happens over and over especially when the reader reaches the end of the second act of the play. As an example, on page 123, Vladimir asks from Estragon if they agree on going. Estragon replies "yes, let's go". However, no action happens.

Concerning the disintegration of register in relation to other elements, it might be asserted that the role of the words and their meanings are also decentralized in the favor of existential concepts that the author tried to transfer to his readers. Since the characters of the play are waiting for someone whose name is Godot, they constantly refer to a type of absence of a protagonist. The absence underlined in the dialogues of the characters creates an absence of speech and long pauses. Therefore, language loses its main role in the play in order to highlight the plot of the play. The absence of words could also be eradicated only through one fulfilling action, i.e. the appearance of Godot. In this regard, Rahimipour explains (Rahimipour & Hashemi 823):

> To penetrate into the sheer the core of the theme, Beckett finally demolishes the structure of language in every aspect violating its syntax, semantics, etc. This can be detected in lucky's supposedly meaningless and uncontrollable stream of words. What climaxes the point is his strong belief in it manifested in his vigor and strength of his speech. He talks seriously and

[7] Tom MacGreevy, Ethna MacCarthy.
[8] Jérôme Lindon, Robert Pinget.
[9] Barbara Bray.

> "delivers a long, gabled monologue about the fate of man caught between an indifferent Godot and an inhospitable nature" highlighting the exact dilemma of modern man. The annihilation of the convention of language has enabled Beckett to convey meaning through nonsense. Lucky: Given the existence as uttered in the public works of Puncher and Wattmann of a personal God quaquaquaqua with white beard quaquaquaqua outside time without extension who from…

Conclusion

By using different strategies such as repetition, disintegration, nonsense, ambiguity, and above all decentralization of the language in *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett attempted to underline the notion of annihilation of the existence of the human being in the 20th century. In other terms, apart from his letters, in his play he has completely separated the meaning from the syntax in order to highlight the perplexity, and confusedness of the man looking for a significance and purpose of existence. The man who is waiting for coming the Messiah who might help him out in finding hope. At the same time, the detachment of the aspects of the verbs applied in his play show the futility and bitterness of this anticipation. Through different variations in terms of lexis, grammar, and above all, punctuation, the Irish author intended to transfer his feeling of suffer, his inner anguish, and loss of hope after what he psychologically experienced through his life especially during his fight against Nazi Germans during the Second World War (Britannica). At the end, it must be asserted that the writing style of Beckett is different in his play in comparison to his letters; since in his English version of the play, he has shown a sort of hostility towards English syntax. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, he kept a positive viewpoint about the French language and attempted to have a coherent style in his French translation of *Waiting for Godot*. As far as the register is concerned, his letters kept an informal language since they were mostly written to communicate with his acquaintances. On the other hand, the register of his play could, at some extent, be considered as vulgar; because it aims to tell the story of two tramps.

With regard to the punctuation of the French and English versions of *Waiting for Godot*, an extent of nuance could be observed. In other terms, the English square brackets are changed to parenthesis in French. In addition, the place of periods are, to some extent, changed in the French version. As an example, one could refer to the very first page of the play where Estragon says: "[Giving up again.] Nothing to be done". In the French version, Beckett eliminated the sign of colon which is in front of the dialogue of the character and translated this phrase as it follows: "Estragon (renonçant à nouveau)—Rien à faire" (Beckett 1).

All things considered, one could conclude that by decomposing the language of *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett aimed to depict the philosophical enquiry of human being in search of the nature of his existence. The enquiry of two tramps led to their confusion, disorientation, and above all depression due to their meaningless or absurd existence.

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On a Personal Note: Meditations upon Care while Translating "The Management of Grief"[1]

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I cried when translating into Spanish "The Management of Grief", the story by Bharati Mukherjee which narrates the tragedy of the families destroyed by the Air India 182 attack occurred in 1985 (Mukherjee 1988, 177-197). It happened near the end of the story, as I reached the sentence "I heard the voices of my family one last time," which I translated as "Escuché las voces de mi familia por última vez" (Alonso-Breto 2018, 625). This is the moment when Shaila Bhave, the main character, begins to see some light at the end of the dark tunnel she has inhabited since the death of her loved ones, the infinite tunnel of grief, the deep pit of mourning. This is a relatively positive moment for her, yet as I translated, I found it unbearable that her family should stop talking to her for good, that they wouldn't be with her any longer soothing her pain as they had done since their death in the attack.

It was just my eyes getting wet, my heart hardening. It happens like that sometimes, that your heart suddenly hardens like a rock, it goes impervious, as if it couldn't go on absorbing unfathomable emotions. In this case it was sadness, that quiet grief which assaulted me every time I sat at my computer to work on the translation of that particular short story, and which suddenly had become immense. I stopped there, unable to stand the thought of such loss, the loss of Shaila's entire family for good. And, I wondered, if the mere *thought* of this feeling is unbearable, how must her pain *feel*? After a short while my heart went back to its ordinary texture, fragile and porous. But I kept—I keep—being horrified by the magnitude of Shaila Bhave's tragedy.

Again I wondered why I was translating that story, how could I just be doing something which, while so necessary, was so trivial as deciding what word to choose, what turn of phrase, so that the translation be more readable and accomplished. I felt an intruder who downplayed the unbearable grief felt by a woman who has suddenly lost to death her two sons and her husband. Do language trifles (or are they?) mean something when put next to Shaila's experience? And next to those of Kusum, Dr. Ranganathan and the hundreds of persons who, like them, lost those they loved best in the attack... Do I have any right to meddle with their feelings in such manner, putting them at the service of an exercise in translation?

I first considered translating "The Management of Grief" at a conference celebrated at the University of Zaragoza. I was contributing a paper about this story in Spanish, and

[1] A previous version of this essay was published in Spanish in *Hermeneus: Journal of Research in Translation and Interpreting* Vol. 21, 2019, pp. 609-625.

while doing so had to translate some passages, and of course the title. I then realized that many in the audience could not have read the story even if they wanted, since they could not read English. In any event, I opened my presentation saying what I actually want to repeat in this text: that I am sorry, that I am apprehensive of daring to take those persons' sorrow as a motif for academic discussion. In the paper, which later turned into an article (Alonso-Breto 2017), I compared Shaila Bhave's tragedy and that of "the relatives" (as Shaila refers to those who, like her, by a twist of fate have become the unexpected members of a torn community) to the way diasporas usually crystallize in their new locations. I symbolically equated the deep grief that brings "the relatives" close to each other with the grief for the loss of the place of origin which often characterizes the lives of displaced peoples. I also found a clear parallelism (and I still do) between the neglect that Shaila and the relatives perceived in the Canadian society at the time of the attack, and the multiple forms of disaffection, from open hostility to meek indifference, that host societies often show to immigrant or refugee communities. As is often the case with diasporas, the community of relatives in the story is condemned to live their bitter experience in a sort of limbo between the ancestral place of origin and the host society. The fact that the Air India 182 explosion should have occurred in the ocean, and that the relatives had to travel to Ireland in order to identify the few retrieved corpses, corroborates this parallelism. In Ireland they are, literally, between America and Asia, that is "between worlds," as Shaila herself formulates in the story (Mukherjee 1988, 189). But they are also alien to both places, self-absorbed in their own indecipherable sorrow. Together with these parallelisms, in the paper I read at the University of Zaragoza, I concluded that the final moment when Shaila feels that her husband and sons leave her for good (after months of having felt them around herself, allaying her grief with their invisible presence), the moment when she finally finds the energy to take some command of her life—which marks the end of the toughest phase of mourning—metonymically signals the access into the political tissue of Canada for non-white immigrants, those who arrived in the 1960s and 70s. That moment symbolizes those former immigrants' uncontestable self-proclamation as full Canadian citizens, and their access to a sense of 'belonging' and 'agency' which until then had not been altogether *real*. These were the points about Shaila Bhave's and the relatives' grief I made at the conference in question, and would then go on to write in the article. That is why I had to begin my intervention, and the article later on, apologizing somehow, and asserting that nothing was further from my intention than trivializing the sorrow of all those persons into *mere* (and I'm purposefully using this term here) academic endeavour.

And to add to the pain that I felt and, more importantly, that was revived in that presentation and article, I decided to translate the story into Spanish. I still wonder why, as I wonder why the paper, why the article. I guess this is another reason for writing this personal note right now: to apologize, but also to investigate my reasons to undertake such painful experiences.

The first reason which crosses my mind is the author, the late Bharati Mukherjee, may she rest in peace. If she was courageous enough to write this story, which is so important but also so difficult, why shouldn't I be just a bit bold too and translate it, only that, such a

modest enterprise in comparison to the audacious gesture of writing it? Well, Bharati Mukherjee did something that I did not: she met Shaila Bhave. She met dozens of persons who lost their families in the attack, talked to them for hours, shared their sorrow. In the end she even wrote a book about them, with her husband, Blaise Clarke, so as to call the world's attention over the detached reaction of the Canadian society and government, and to expose those persons' grief and vindicate their category of human beings (Blaise and Mukherjee 1997). And it was worthwhile. It was a gesture of courage because she said what nobody else dared saying, or at least not with the same energy and resolution. That gesture, those hundreds of hours of talk sharing silences and quiet sobs and perhaps also resigned smiles gave Bharati Mukherjee the right to write Shaila Bhave's story. She earned that right.

But that is not my case. I haven't earned that right.

Or have I?

Perhaps those reasons: calling the world's attention over the uncaring reaction of the Canadian society and government, and exposing those persons' grief and vindicating their category of human beings, are also enough to justify my intrusion, in all its forms. Certainly with the passing of time Canadian society has become more consciously multicultural, and the Canadian government already offered a public apology to the relatives in 2006 (more than twenty years too late!) for the inappropriate institutional and societal treatment they received back then, when the catastrophe happened. Yet, although after such gesture and the passing of time this may seem a paid-off debt (surely not for everyone), it is always good to remind ourselves of past errors so as not to repeat them. And perhaps it is not redundant either to remind ourselves that the other's sorrow is always sorrow, and is always human, regardless of filiations or affiliations. Hopefully these justifications can become reasons for my insistence on revisiting pain as well.

The point is, perhaps we need to keep reminding ourselves of the other's humanness, which too often we tend to overlook.

I still don't quite understand why it is that, while we live in multicultural societies, we so often treat each other as complete strangers—one must say, polite and politically correct strangers, most of the time. It is as if the fact of having a different skin hue or hair texture, or speaking different languages, made us belong to different species. It is a feeling I get much too often, and I wonder whether something as routine as translating a story (even if the story is as grand as this particular one) can somehow contribute to diminishing this fictive distance. Perhaps it can work, again, as a gesture. After all, gestures are the only thing we can really make.

Another reason which comes to my mind to justify my insistence on approaching this story, is the harrowing thought that the plane explosion was not an accident, but a purposeful attack. Human minds ideated that improbable narrative of destruction and sorrow, human hands fabricated the bombs which exploded in the suitcases travelling in the plane. We live

in a world daily ransacked by terror (bombs not only explode in Europe or in the west; in Syria, Palestine, and dozens of places, terror is a daily occurrence, although it seems hard for us to believe it and we cringe at the occasional explosion within our comfort zone). Yet, although terrorism has become a nearly routine matter worldwide, I cannot reconcile myself with the idea that human minds engineered the bombs which exploded in the Air India 182 flight, that human hands brought those suitcases inside the plane. How can we possibly inflict so much harm on one another? And then, is there any remote possibility that awareness of other persons' pain could make us more caring? Perhaps that is the main worth of translation, of talking pain once and again in as many languages as possible: bringing closer to more and more readers the other's humanness and the other's capacity for love and sorrow, none of which are far from our own.

I guess that here lies the sense, if there is any, of deciding to work in the area of Postcolonial Studies, with all the pain such a choice entails. Colonial aggressions, so gratuitous and deadly; slavery and trade, which go on existing in many forms around the world; massacres; genocides… we keep revising and discussing all forms of barbarization of humans on humans. Perhaps that is the sense of it all: to constantly remind ourselves of our humanity in spite of our tendency to forget. It is surely a form of care, a singular way of taking care of one another, this reminding ourselves of our lurking capacity to harm.

I am not sure whether these spare ideas justify my undertaking, in spite of the pain I felt when approaching it from an academic perspective, of the translation of "The Management of Grief," but perhaps they do. I go aghast at the thought of Shaila Bhave's pain for the loss of her husband and children in an explosion produced by human will. The mere thought of the attack makes me feel something for which I don't have a name. And of course, it brings to my mind the thousands of corpses the victims would meet in the frozen water. To begin with, those of the multitudes who lost their lives over the Atlantic slave trade for centuries. We know how it was possible to eventually put an end to that massacre: enacting laws which outlawed the institution of slavery. But those corpses of one time also bring to mind, it cannot be otherwise, the ones of the many who, in our epoch, die at the sea every day in small boats, launches, *balsas*, *pateras*, *cayucos*. Which hands fabricate these bombs? Where are the suitcases hidden which lead to the loss of so many precious lives? Who hides them? As compared to the Atlantic Trade or the terrorist attacks, when it comes to those lives lost at seas around the world everyday while men, women and children try to reach a better life or, simply, a safe one, the question of guilt turns ever more insidious, less easy to elucidate. And the feeling is again of absolute distress. The hemorrhage of migrant and refugee lives lost to the world's oceans has grown so ubiquitous and abundant that we don't really know how to contain and heal so much pain. Is it really out of hand?

The idea also crosses my mind that translating "The Management of Grief," like devoting my efforts to researching rough issues such as those dealt with in Postcolonial Studies, like the ones in Bharati Mukherjee's story, is perhaps a form of penance. Not just a way to revisit history so as not to repeat it; not just a way reminding something as obvious as the other's humanity. I am beginning to understand that translating this story, like

choosing to work on matters related to Postcolonial Studies, is a form of purging sins which are also my own: In more ways than one, like everybody else, I also engineer those bombs, take them into the plane in their suitcases, allow those women, men and children to die in oceans every day.

I hope that, eventually, Shaila Bhave and the community of "the relatives" may forgive my academic and linguistic intrusion and condone my good intentions (as we know, the road to hell is paved with good intentions). I can only say that I pity those unfortunate men and women from the bottom of my heart. It may not be much or help them in the right direction. But I would like to think that through my interpreting, writing, and translating that story about them written by Bharati Mukherjee, I have succeeded, at least, in briefly accompanying their inconsolable grief.

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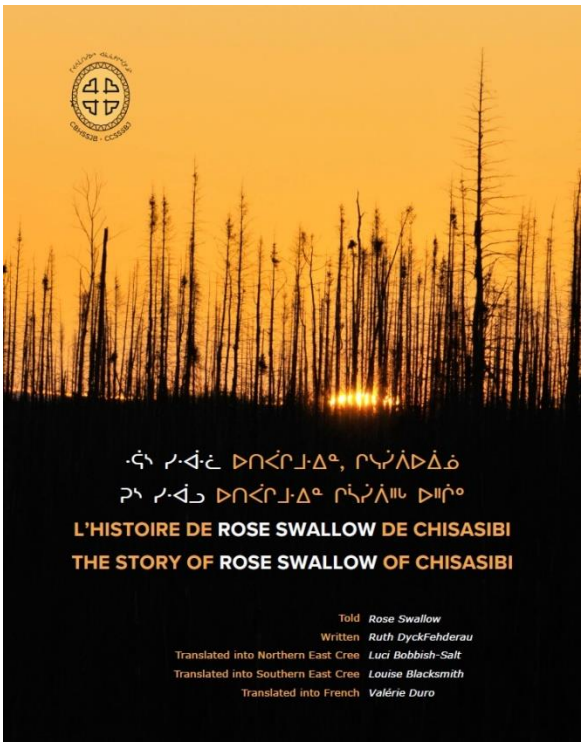
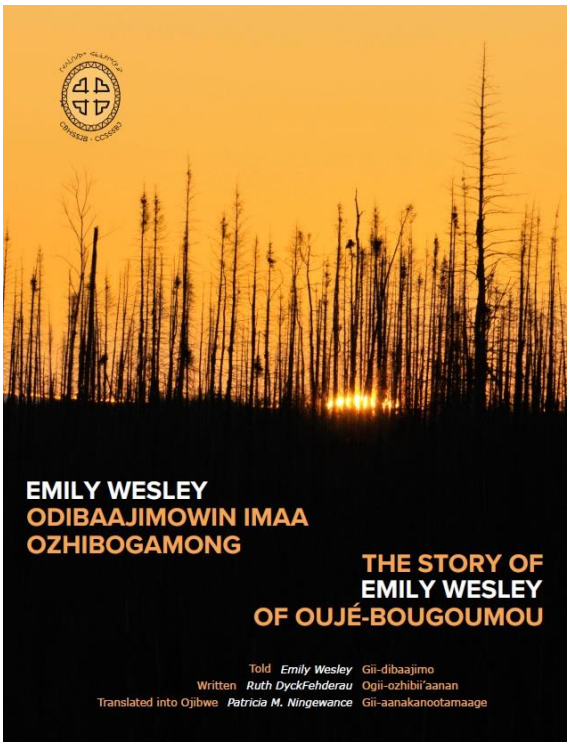
Writing and Translation with the James Bay Cree of Northern Québec

Ruth DyckFehderau





In about 2013, while I was living in the Cree territory of Eeyou Istchee in Northern Québec, I was commissioned by the public health sector of the James Bay Cree (Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, or CBHSSJB) to write stories of people in Eeyou Istchee who live with diabetes. Officially, it was to be a public health document, but in a literary format: story, in Cree culture, plays an important role in healing. CBHSSJB would hold copyright.

Over the next couple of years, my Cree supervisors sent me to each of nine Eeyou Istchee communities—the northernmost accessible only by plane or boat—and I listened as 28 individuals living with diabetes, some thriving, some barely coping, told me their stories. Sometimes, the storytelling would be over in an hour. Sometimes it went on for days. For the longer sessions, I joined storytellers at their homes as they talked and cooked or butchered moose or whatever they were doing that day. Or they dropped by my accommodations with another story to include or a detail to change and then stayed for tea. I had no set questions. They told me what they wanted me to know.

After the story-gathering, I flew home to draft the stories. I had been given some (not many) parameters. For instance, the book had to contain many stories so no single story could be more than around 15 pages. Some of the stories, especially those of Elders, could have been much longer. And previously, in an effort to understand more about what they were looking for, I had written up one story in several different ways—word-for-word interview, magazine journalism, and so forth. My supervisors had preferred literary creative nonfiction in a short-story format with third-person narrators.

With drafts in hand, I returned to the communities where I sat down again with the storytellers. We combed the drafts together, line by line, word by word, and I edited accordingly. We did this as often as necessary until they approved of how their stories laid on the page. Then, since confidentiality was important to the project, I deleted all previous notes and recordings so that the finished stories approved by the tellers are all that now remains.

What this short process description doesn't say is that the project was very much a community undertaking. Beyond the storytellers themselves, many people had to participate for the project to come to fruition. They facilitated my travels across the vast and remote Eeyou Istchee (approximately 450,000 km^2). They found me accommodations in communities where housing is at a premium. They contacted potential storytellers. They supported storytellers when the telling itself was emotionally difficult. They translated for me. They explained any number of cultural subtleties and histories that an outsider couldn't hope to understand. And they did so much more.

In fact, for several reasons, the gathering and crafting of the stories was itself an act of translation. First, and most obviously, I am not Cree. The James Bay Cree publish a great deal of material and have many accomplished writers, but for stories likely to include a fair amount of trauma, as some of these stories do, CBHSSJB sometimes hires outsiders. I've spent almost half my professional life living in cultures other than my own and know that every moment has nuances or personal responses I'd never be able to pick up.

Second, in Eeyou Istchee, almost everything happens in one of the Cree languages. Conversations around me were almost always in Cree—my Cree vocabulary includes about 25 words—and if it became necessary, someone would switch into English and translate for me. The storytelling itself, however, happened in English. We offered storytellers the option of speaking through translators, but all—including those struggling in English—preferred to speak directly to me, alone. I believe this was partly because of the importance that many placed on confidentiality. (We hid identities if necessary.)

And third, I have lost a great deal of hearing and rely heavily on lip reading, something that can make people uncomfortable and can require yet another act of mediation. The storytellers seemed unfazed by my disability, and ready with *What-did-the-deaf-man-say* jokes. Indeed, they appeared to tell

their stories openly and to take pleasure in the process. And each of them said, without being asked, that they were doing this to help others in the community.

The stories themselves, 26 in all, turned out to be less about diabetes than about life in the North. Hockey and hunting, residential school recovery, trying to raise six kids when the price of milk is staggeringly high and twelve people live in your tiny house, childbirth in the most inopportune places, and so on.

The Sweet Bloods of Eeyou Istchee: Stories of Diabetes and the James Bay Cree was released in 2017. Both the *Second Edition* and audiobook, narrated by Cree artist/musician Matthew Iserhoff of Juno-winning CerAmony, available through our distributor Wilfrid Laurier University Press, were released in 2020. All proceeds go to long-term health care in Eeyou Istchee.

A couple of years after the release of *Sweet Bloods*, CBHSSJB decided to translate it into several languages. *TranscUlturAl: A Journal of Translation and Cultural Studies* had already published one of the stories in Chinese translation (translated by Leilei Chen in vol. 12.2). But CBHSSJB wanted the stories to be usable in Indigenous classrooms for language and cultural retention.

We embarked then on another project. CBHSSJB commissioned four translators to translate the entire work: Pat Ningewance for Ojibwe, Luci Bobbish-Salt for Northern East Cree, Louise Blacksmith for Southern East Cree, and Valérie Duro for French. We are working with Mohawk designer Nicole Ritzer to print each of the 26 stories in two series of single-story multi-language format. In one series, a story appears in Ojibwe and English columns, side by side. And in another series, a story appears in Northern East Cree, Southern East Cree, French, and English columns, again side by side. One front cover from each of these series is pictured here. We've just released the first five in each series (distributed through WLUP). We hope to release six or seven every year until all stories are in this format.

For me, this translation project has been a profoundly moving, humbling, and intimate experience as the translators connect with the stories in ways that are often deeply personal. Three of these translators have written briefly about their experiences here in this volume of *TranscUlturAl.*

These days, I'm at work on another project with Cree storytellers and CBHSSJB. We expect to release the first volume of *Finding Our Way Home: Indian Residential School Recovery Stories of the James Bay Cree* in 2022.

My own words and the translations of *Sweet Bloods* stories appear here in *TranscUlturAl* with the permission of Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay.

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The Story of Jennifer Susan Annistin of Waskaganish[1]

Told by Jennifer Susan Annistin
Written by Ruth DyckFehderau

[2]Jennifer Susan Annistin of Waskaganish was a good wife and mother. She lived with her husband and three kids. During the days she worked, and then she came home in the evenings and looked after her family. She cooked dinner, she prepared lunches, she got everything ready for breakfast the next morning, and she hauled out the trash and all of her husband's empty beer cans. She helped the kids with their homework or whatever they needed. Every couple of days, she did the laundry for everyone in the house, she washed the floors and vacuumed, scrubbed the bathrooms, and cleaned the frig. She went to her kids' sport or school events and arranged family evenings with friends and weekends out in the bush. Everything that had to happen in that house, Jennifer did it. It was exhausting and she didn't enjoy all of it, but as long as she did all those things, she knew she was a good wife and mother.

In 2002, Jennifer did a 300-kilometre walk to experience what her ancestors had experienced in their long-distance treks. At the end of it, she felt sore all over and her feet ached more than they ever had before, but she also felt strong and capable of anything. Her mind was at ease. She did the walk again in 2003 and in 2004.

[1] Names and details in this story have been changed to protect identities.

[2] We are very grateful to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay for the permission to reproduce this story here.

In 2006, Jennifer was tired all the time. Tired and anxious and *off*. Maybe she was going through a bout of depression. Or maybe it was diabetes. Diabetes ran in her family.

"Go to the clinic," her sister said. "If it's something like high blood pressure, you'll just need a pill and you'll feel better."

Jennifer went to the clinic. The doctor took some blood and sent her home. Soon after, the clinic called her back and told her to come in right away. They had the results from her blood test and it was urgent.

She went back to the clinic, and slumped down in the chair in the exam room. She had never been so tired. The doctor came in and closed the door behind him. "Have you ever heard anything about anyone in your family having cancer?" he asked.

Jennifer thought for a while. Then she remembered her uncle. He had had leukemia, a cancer of the blood. They gave him a bone marrow transplant and that got rid of his cancer and they sent him home to recover. When he stepped off the plane at home, his community held a feast to celebrate his homecoming and the end of his cancer. There was plenty of food – moose and beaver and fish—and everyone in the whole community came up to him and gave him a big hug or shook his hand. He was a popular guy and people were happy to see him and to know he had that cancer licked. But someone who shook his hand or hugged him had a cold and passed it on to him. His cancer was gone, but his immune system wasn't very strong yet: the cold developed into a bad case of pneumonia and he died a couple of weeks after that feast.

Jennifer told all of this to the doctor, and then yawned. He listened thoughtfully.

"I, uh, I think you might have leukemia too," he said. "We're going to send you to Montréal—you might even get the same specialist your uncle had. But there are better medications and treatments for leukemia now than there were when he was sick. And in fact, we're going to start you on some of those medications now, before we even have all the test results back. The trick to beating leukemia, if that's what this is, is getting it in the early stages."

Jennifer started the medication. A week later the test results came back. She had exactly the same leukemia that her uncle had had. Other than exhaustion, she had felt no symptoms at all.

Jennifer's mom heard "leukemia" and thought her daughter was about to die, and cried herself to pieces. But Jennifer herself was so surprised that she just went about her days as if nothing had happened. By now she was weak and couldn't even do something as simple as wash the dishes, so her mother washed the dishes for her, and cried while she did them.

One evening Jennifer sat down and watched a movie in which the actor Mandy Moore played a girl with leukemia. While she watched the girl on screen go through the things that she was going to go through, a fountain of sadness began flowing inside of Jennifer. Sadness for her uncle who had died, sadness for herself because she might die now too, and sadness for the people who would miss her. She began to weep.

And then it was time to go to Montréal.

In Montréal, the doctors saw right away that Jennifer was very sick. They were surprised she was walking at all. But Jennifer had felt like this for a long time already and barely noticed their expressions of shock and concern.

The oncologist, a doctor specializing in the treatment of cancer, gave her chemotherapy pills that would gradually kill the cancer in her blood. "This is something new," she said. "I wish I'd had this pill for your uncle because it would have helped him."

The treatment began working right away and that was good news. It meant that Jennifer would not need a bone marrow transplant like her uncle had had. She could even go home and take the pills every day there.

The oncologist wanted to see her each month. The problem was that Jennifer lived way up in Waskaganish. Flying down and back once a month on the Waskaganish-Nemaska-Chibougamau-Montréal milk run wasn't reasonable. A single doctor's appointment would take three days, more if the weather was bad. They decided together that her home clinic would take her blood every month and send it to the cancer clinic laboratory in Montréal where they would run a special test that detects even the smallest amount of cancer. Every third month, Jennifer would fly down and visit the oncologist in person. And every single day, without exception, she would take her chemotherapy pills. They were as important to her, the oncologist said, as insulin is to someone with severe diabetes.

Jennifer expected to get side effects from the chemotherapy. She met other people on the same treatment who had terrible nausea and spent time each day hung over the toilet bowl, vomiting. And their hair either fell out or lost its lustre and dried into something like straw. But Jennifer had no side effects at all.

Gradually, the cancer in Jennifer's blood was going away. For a while, life became less terrifying. Then, early in 2007, she began to menstruate more than she had ever menstruated before – and she had always had troubles with heavy menstruation.

A few months later, the doctors decided to insert a specific type of IUD (intra-uterine contraceptive device) into her uterus, thinking that it might slow or minimize her monthly blood loss. She would still bleed heavily for a little while from hormonal fluctuations, they said, but then the bleeding would correct itself.

It didn't correct itself. Jennifer bled more than she had ever bled. She bled so much that the IUD passed right out of her in one of the giant clots of blood that were always coming out of her these days—and she didn't even notice it had happened until the gynecologist gave her a CT scan and discovered the device was no longer in her uterus. Usually, an IUD exiting the uterus is very painful, but Jennifer hadn't felt a thing.

And still she was bleeding. Instead of menstruating for a few days of each month, like most women do, Jennifer bled every single day for months and months and months.

In November, she visited a new doctor in the Waskaganish clinic. The doctor noted Jennifer's excessive menstruation and prescribed some pills to stop the bleeding. Jennifer talked about her leukemia and the chemotherapy medication she was taking – but the doctor didn't seem to pay attention and said again that these new pills should stop the bleeding.

Jennifer started taking the pills.

And everything got so much worse. She bled and bled and bled, more than she ever had. So much blood flowed now that she could feel it squish between her legs every time she moved. In just two days, she was white from loss of blood.

Her sister came to her house that Saturday on her way to work. "What's wrong with you?" she asked. "You're so white you don't even look Cree anymore."

"I'm having my period and the doctor put me on these pills and they're not helping."

"Call the clinic," she said. "You of all people can't mess around with this stuff."

"It's Saturday. The clinic is closed."

"Call. There's always a nurse on call. Call the clinic."

Her sister left for work and Jennifer called the nurse. The nurse knew she was a cancer patient and told her to meet him there in thirty minutes.

With each passing minute, Jennifer felt worse. Her heartbeat was weak and fluttery and she couldn't get enough air. She had a bit of laundry to do in the thirty minutes before her meeting at the clinic and stumbled downstairs to the laundry room. But when she got there, she slumped against the washing machine. She didn't have strength even to sort laundry. She felt as if she might die in the next couple of minutes. Maybe it was her time. But if it was—she certainly didn't want to die in her laundry room.

She gathered all her strength and started the long journey upstairs, leaning heavily on the rail to pull herself up. It was every bit as difficult as the 300 kilometres she had walked years back.

When she got upstairs, her twenty-year-old son was there. "I'm getting dressed to go to the clinic," she said. "If something happens to me in the next few minutes, call the clinic. I don't know if I can make it there."

Her son looked at her and nodded wordlessly.

She was too weak to drive, she realized. Her sister was at work, her husband was out drinking, her parents were in the bush, and her son didn't have his driver's license. She was alone. She called her pastor and he came around and took her to the clinic.

The nurse at the clinic was shocked at the state of her and quickly arranged to med-evac her down to Val D'Or.

In Val D'Or, the gynecologist met her, also shocked. "You need a blood transfusion!" she said. "Your body is almost out of blood! What happened?"

Jennifer explained how she'd been bleeding for months—and the gynecologist interrupted: "You're a cancer patient! With blood cancer!" she said. "Why didn't they send you here right away?"

"There's a new doctor at home. I don't think she even read my file. I told her I was bleeding and she prescribed the pills. Then I talked about leukemia and chemotherapy, but she didn't seem to hear me. She just said the pills would make me stop bleeding over the weekend. I think they made me bleed more."

The gynecologist looked at the pills the Waskaganish doctor had prescribed.

"Of course you're bleeding," she said. "These pills should never be taken by someone on chemotherapy! The doctor should have known that. And how can a doctor *not read* a patient file??"

"Well," Jennifer said, "now I'm here. I thought I was going to die so this is better."

And then she fell asleep.

The gynecologist gave Jennifer a blood transfusion and did a process called dilation and curettage (D&C), where the uterus is cleaned out, and gave her iron pills to rebuild her blood supply. Jennifer had lost a massive amount of blood. If it had taken much longer for her to get to Val D'Or, she would have bled to death. The gynecologist began to wonder if the chemotherapy wasn't making the bleeding worse. Jennifer reminded her that she had had problems with bleeding earlier in her life, before the chemotherapy, but still, the gynecologist was suspicious – and prevented Jennifer from taking the chemotherapy pills.

Jennifer began to feel a bit panicky then. The chemo was saving her life. Her oncologist had warned that she must never miss a day of chemotherapy because her cancer could quickly come back, worse than before, and she would have no hope.

Finally, she convinced the gynecologist at least to call the oncologist and talk about it.

And over the phone, the oncologist shouted exactly what Jennifer had said: "Ms. Annistin had problems with bleeding long before she had cancer!

Obviously, her bleeding is *not* being caused by caused by the chemo pills—and in fact they're saving her life. Will you please get her back on those pills?!!"

The gynecologist relented. After four days without chemotherapy, Jennifer began taking her chemo pills again.

Two other things happened then: the gynecologist ran a whole bunch of tests on Jennifer. It turned out that she had a condition called adenomyosis and it had caused all the heavy bleeding. And she also gave Jennifer a note to put in her Waskaganish medical file: "URGENT: If Jennifer ever menstruates abnormally or haemorrhages in any way, or has unusual symptoms of any sort, send her straight to the gynecologist in Val D'Or."

With the new treatments, Jennifer's bleeding slowly lessened though she still bled more than she was supposed to. And slowly the cancer in her blood began to disappear. Each cancer screen looked better than the one before, until the screens came back cancer-free. Later her son said, "Remember that time you almost didn't make it to the clinic? You looked so sick I was afraid for you! I'm glad you're okay now."

Jennifer *was* okay—but she made a few changes at home. Even when she had been at death's door, her family had expected her to do all the housework. She could have died doing laundry.

What a way to go.

"From now on," she announced to her family, "I'm not doing anyone's personal laundry. I'm doing my own laundry and the towels for the house. If the rest of you want clean clothes, you can wash them. If you don't want to do

laundry, then wear dirty clothes." She would always remember 2007 as the year of the haemorrhaging.

For a few beautiful months, Jennifer felt normal. She had normal levels of iron in her blood, she had normal amounts of blood, and she had normal cancer-free blood. She still bled too much, all the time, but it was at a level she could cope with.

Then she went to the doctor for a routine check-up and found out that she had diabetes. The doctor gave her some pills. So much for normal. *Whatever*, she thought. *After cancer and haemorrhaging, diabetes isn't scary at all.* Other than taking her pills regularly, she didn't pay much attention to the new diagnosis.

In 2008, Jennifer sat down and wrote a letter to the corporate sector of Waskaganish saying that she needed her own place. She didn't write a word about her health problems—not the bleeding, not the leukemia, not the diabetes. A friend read the application before she sent it in.

"Jennifer," she said, "maybe you should tell them about your health problems. Tell them the cancer might come back and how hard it is to deal with. Tell them that you need your own space if you're going to be healthy. Be honest."

It wasn't a comfortable thing to write. Jennifer didn't want to think of herself as a person with more needs than other people. She didn't like speaking badly of anyone, even if it was just that her husband wasn't there for her when she needed help, or that in their home no one looked after her when she was sick. She didn't want people to pity her, she didn't like to sound like she was complaining, and she especially didn't want to think of herself as someone who would turn her back on a marriage. Writing those things made her feel guilty.

But in the end, she took her friend's advice and re-wrote the application. She wrote frankly about her year of cancer and about her year of haemorrhaging and how she needed space and time to herself for healing. She wrote that her cancer might come back, and, if it did, she would need reliable people around and a home where she didn't have to worry about running a complicated household or about the troubles surrounding a husband who hadn't yet confronted his addictions. Her doctor in Waskaganish also wrote a letter of support, and a nurse who knew Jennifer's background talked to her and showed her that moving to her own home to look after herself was the right thing to do. Her friends and parents supported her, her kids were grown and didn't need her at home anymore, her son said he just wanted her to be happy and knew his dad had no plans to stop drinking. Even her pastor supported her decision. At first the council was reluctant to give her housing: they thought that she and her husband were just squabbling like any long-married couple, would soon mend their relationship, and she would want to stay where she was. But they changed their minds and one day she received a letter that a house was being built for her. In 2010, she could move in.

Jennifer spoke to her husband then, gave him two years to clean up his act, and said she would leave if he didn't. He tried, for a while. But addictions are powerful and his drinking won out again.

In 2010, Jennifer left his house and moved into her own place.

As she was out shopping, buying her own pots and pans and towels and sheets, she thought about guilt. Once, she had believed that two married people have to stick together no matter what. Once, she had believed that good moms didn't have their own lives: everything they did was for their families. They would put up with anything at all from their families and would do everything possible to make them look good. Once, she would have been wracked with guilt just for thinking about looking after herself. Cancer had

changed all of that. She had to look after herself. No one else was going to do it. She knew that now. It was a good change.

When she moved into her own place, she felt neither guilt over her choice nor anger with anyone. Only peace. Plenty of peace.

Jennifer loved her new home, and her health began to improve noticeably now that, for the first time in her adult life, she could focus on herself. Her granddaughter moved in with her to keep her company, she still had plenty of contact with her kids and other grandkids, and she was able to be more involved in the community. The cancer stayed where it belonged (in remission and not in her body) and she didn't pay too much attention to the diabetes. But still, she was bleeding. She had been menstruating non-stop now for about five years. It was inconvenient, expensive, and annoying. And kind of amazing that a person could bleed for that long and not die.

In March of 2012, without warning, it began to storm—and Jennifer began haemorrhaging again. Outside snow fell by the bucket, and inside it felt like blood was pouring out of her by the bucket.

This time, she didn't hesitate. She went straight to the clinic.The doctor there called the gynecologist in Val D'Or, and explained what was happening. Then she turned to Jennifer.

"They want you in Val D'Or right away."

They both looked out the window. The storm was getting worse. Snowdrifts were piling up under the clinic windows and cars on the road had slowed to a crawl.

Still, Jennifer went to the airport. The winds were too strong for planes to land, the airline worker said. There would be no flights today.

Jennifer called the clinic. "I'm going to have to drive there," she said.

"The weather's insane! You can't drive."

"If I wait, I'm either gonna go into shock or lose so much blood I might die—you know this. It's less risky for me to drive. I have to take care of myself. I'll call you when I get there." She called her ex then and he offered to drive her to Val D'Or so she wouldn't have to go alone.

Now she hurried. Her ex fueled up the car, she grabbed an armful of extra pads to absorb the blood flowing out of her, and they drove as quickly as the roads allowed from Waskaganish all the way down to Val D'Or. In the storm, the trip took two hours longer than it usually would, and by the time she got there, she had that old familiar weakness from loss of blood.

In Val D'Or they were waiting for her. They had scheduled her surgery a few days later, but, when they saw her, they gave her papers to sign and wheeled her into surgery right away. Jennifer didn't even have time to call the clinic in Waskaganish and tell them what was happening.

Again the surgeon did the D&C procedure and everything worked out nicely. They gave her a hormone injection to help control the bleeding, and said she would have to get one of these injections every three months. When her strength came back again, Jennifer and her ex drove back home.

At first, it seemed like the shots weren't doing anything, but then Jennifer started bleeding less and less, until her menstrual cycle finally, after all those years, became normal again.

The time had come for Jennifer to focus on her diabetes. For a long time, her other health problems had seemed so much more pressing that she hadn't given it much thought. But then a doctor told her that diabetes is as lethal as cancer. If she didn't take it seriously, it would finish the job that cancer started. After all the effort she had put into building a healthy life for herself, a life where she mattered, it didn't make sense to ignore diabetes.

She was already eating carefully to help her body fight the cancer and the bleeding, but she met with a nutritionist nonetheless, and made a few more changes in her diet. She also began to measure her blood sugar levels regularly and to take insulin. The doctor said she should walk. That was a bit frightening. When she had been so sick with cancer or haemorrhaging, she had forced herself into physical activity and had collapsed from exhaustion. Still, she gave walking a thirty-minute try.

It felt okay. Good even. It reminded her of those long long walks she had done ten years earlier. Maybe she would work up to one of them again.

It had been a long journey and a difficult decade. And what she had learned most of all was that the key to good health—physical and emotional and spiritual—was looking after herself with as much care and diligence as she had once looked after others. For the people who loved her and wanted her to stick around, it was the most important thing she could do.

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L'histoire de Jennifer Susan Annistin de Waskaganish[1]

Racontée par Jennifer Susan Annistin
Écrite par Ruth DyckFehderau
Traduite par Valérie Duro

Jennifer Susan Annistin, de Waskaganish, était une bonne épouse et une bonne mère. Elle vivait avec son mari et ses trois enfants. Elle travaillait le jour, puis rentrait à la maison le soir pour s'occuper de sa famille. Elle cuisinait le souper, elle préparait les dîners, elle préparait tout le nécessaire pour le déjeuner du lendemain matin, et elle traînait les poubelles et toutes les canettes de bière vides de son mari à l'extérieur. Elle aidait les enfants à faire leurs devoirs ou avec tout ce dont ils avaient besoin. Tous les deux jours, elle faisait la lessive pour tout le monde dans la maison, elle lavait les sols et passait l'aspirateur, récurait les salles de bain et nettoyait le frigo. Elle allait aux événements sportifs ou scolaires de ses enfants et organisait des soirées en famille avec des amis et des fins de semaine dans le bois. Tout ce qui devait être fait dans cette maison, Jennifer s'en occupait. C'était épuisant et elle n'aimait pas toutes les tâches, mais tant qu'elle s'occupait de toutes ces choses, elle savait qu'elle était une bonne épouse et une bonne mère.

En 2002, Jennifer participa à une marche de 300 kilomètres pour vivre ce que ses ancêtres avaient vécu lors de leurs périples de plusieurs jours. À la fin de la marche, elle avait mal partout et ses pieds étaient plus douloureux que jamais, mais elle se sentait également forte et capable d'accomplir n'importe quoi. Son esprit était apaisé. Elle participa à nouveau à la marche en 2003 et

[1] Les noms et les détails de cette histoire ont été modifiés pour protéger les identités.

en 2004.

En 2006, Jennifer était constamment fatiguée. Fatiguée et anxieuse, et elle ne se sentait pas *elle-même*. Elle traversait peut-être une période de dépression. Ou peut-être était-ce le diabète. Le diabète était courant dans sa famille.

« Va à la clinique, lui dit sa sœur. Si c'est quelque chose comme de l'hypertension, tu auras seulement besoin de prendre une pilule et tu te sentiras mieux ».

Jennifer se rendit à la clinique. Le médecin lui fit une prise de sang et la renvoya chez elle. Peu après, la clinique la rappela et lui dit de revenir immédiatement. Ils avaient les résultats de son analyse de sang et c'était urgent.

Elle retourna à la clinique et s'affala sur la chaise de la salle d'examen. Elle n'avait jamais été aussi fatiguée.

Le médecin entra et ferma la porte derrière lui.

« Avez-vous jamais entendu parler qu'un membre de votre famille ait été atteint d'un cancer ? » demanda-t-il.

Jennifer réfléchit pendant un moment. Puis elle se souvint de son oncle. Il avait fait une leucémie, un cancer du sang. Ils lui avaient fait une greffe de moelle osseuse, qui avait permis d'éliminer son cancer et de le renvoyer chez lui pour qu'il se rétablisse. Lorsqu'il était descendu de l'avion chez lui, sa communauté avait organisé un festin pour célébrer son retour et la fin de son cancer. Il y avait beaucoup de nourriture — orignal, castor et poisson — et tous les membres de la communauté s'étaient approchés de lui pour le serrer dans leurs bras ou lui serrer la main. C'était un homme populaire et les gens

étaient heureux de le voir et de savoir qu'il avait vaincu ce cancer. Toutefois, une personne qui lui avait serré la main ou l'avait serré dans ses bras avait un rhume et le lui avait transmis. Son cancer avait disparu, mais son système immunitaire n'était pas encore très fort : le rhume s'était transformé en un mauvais cas de pneumonie et il était mort quelques semaines après ce festin.

Jennifer raconta tout cela au médecin, puis bâilla. Il l'écouta attentivement.

« Je, euh, je pense que vous pourriez également souffrir d'une leucémie, lui dit-il. Nous allons vous envoyer à Montréal — vous pourriez même être suivie par le même spécialiste que votre oncle. Toutefois, il y a de meilleurs médicaments et traitements pour la leucémie désormais qu'il n'y en avait quand il était malade. Et nous allons d'ailleurs commencer à vous donner certains de ces médicaments tout de suite, avant même d'avoir tous les résultats des tests. Le truc pour vaincre la leucémie, si c'est bien ce dont vous souffrez, c'est de la traiter à un stade précoce ».

Jennifer commença à prendre les médicaments. Une semaine plus tard, les résultats des tests étaient disponibles. Elle souffrait exactement de la même leucémie que son oncle. Mis à part son épuisement, elle n'avait ressenti aucun symptôme.

La mère de Jennifer entendit « leucémie » et pensa que sa fille était sur le point de mourir. Elle s'effondra en pleurs. Toutefois, Jennifer était quant à elle si surprise qu'elle continua à vivre comme si de rien n'était. Elle était faible désormais et ne pouvait même pas faire quelque chose d'aussi simple que la vaisselle, alors sa mère faisait la vaisselle pour elle et pleurait pendant qu'elle la faisait.

Un soir, Jennifer s'assit et écouta un film dans lequel l'actrice Mandy

Moore jouait une fille atteinte de leucémie. Pendant qu'elle regardait la fille à l'écran traverser les épreuves qu'elle allait traverser, une fontaine de tristesse commença à jaillir à l'intérieur de Jennifer. De la tristesse pour son oncle qui était mort, de la tristesse pour elle-même parce qu'elle allait peut-être aussi mourir désormais et de la tristesse pour les gens à qui elle manquerait. Elle se mit à pleurer.

Et puis, il fut temps d'aller à Montréal.

À Montréal, les médecins virent tout de suite que Jennifer était très malade. Ils étaient surpris qu'elle puisse même marcher. Toutefois, Jennifer était dans cet état depuis longtemps déjà et remarqua à peine leurs expressions choquées et inquiètes.

L'oncologue, un médecin spécialisé dans le traitement du cancer, lui donna des pilules de chimiothérapie qui tueraient progressivement le cancer dans son sang. « C'est quelque chose de nouveau, déclara-t-elle. J'aurais aimé avoir eu cette pilule à donner à votre oncle, parce que ça l'aurait aidé ».

Le traitement commença à fonctionner immédiatement et c'était une bonne nouvelle : cela signifiait que Jennifer n'aurait pas besoin d'une greffe de moelle osseuse comme son oncle en avait eu besoin. Elle pouvait même rentrer chez elle et prendre les pilules tous les jours là-bas.

L'oncologue voulait la voir tous les mois. Le problème, c'est que Jennifer habitait tout là-haut, dans la ville de Waskaganish. Faire l'aller-retour une fois par mois par le trajet Waskaganish-Nemaska-Chibougamau-Montréal n'était pas raisonnable. Un seul rendez-vous chez le médecin prendrait trois jours, davantage si le temps était mauvais. Elles décidèrent ensemble que sa clinique locale lui ferait une prise de sang tous les mois et l'enverrait au laboratoire de la clinique du cancer à Montréal où ils effectueraient un test spécial qui détecte

la moindre trace de cancer. Tous les trois mois, Jennifer prendrait l'avion pour aller voir l'oncologue en personne. Et tous les jours, sans exception, elle prendrait ses pilules de chimiothérapie. Selon l'oncologue, elles étaient aussi importantes pour elle que l'insuline l'est pour une personne souffrant d'un diabète grave.

Jennifer s'attendait à subir des effets secondaires de la chimiothérapie. Elle rencontra d'autres personnes suivant le même traitement qui avaient de terribles nausées et passaient du temps, chaque jour, suspendues au-dessus de la cuvette des toilettes, à vomir. De plus, leurs cheveux tombaient ou perdaient de leur éclat et devenaient aussi secs que de la paille. Toutefois, Jennifer ne souffrait d'aucun effet secondaire.

Peu à peu, le cancer disparaissait du sang de Jennifer. Pendant un certain temps, la vie devint moins terrifiante. Puis, début 2007, elle commença à avoir des menstruations plus importantes que jamais auparavant — et elle avait toujours eu des problèmes de menstruations abondantes.

Quelques mois plus tard, les médecins décidèrent d'insérer un type spécifique de stérilet (dispositif contraceptif intra-utérin) dans son utérus, pensant que cela pourrait ralentir ou minimiser ses pertes sanguines mensuelles. Selon eux, elle continuerait à saigner abondamment pendant un certain temps en raison des fluctuations hormonales, mais les saignements se corrigeraient ensuite d'eux-mêmes.

Ils ne se corrigèrent pas d'eux-mêmes. Jennifer saignait plus qu'elle n'avait jamais saigné. Elle saignait tellement que le stérilet fut expulsé par l'un des énormes caillots de sang qui sortaient constamment d'elle ces jours-là — et elle ne remarqua même pas ce qui s'était passé jusqu'à ce que la gynécologue lui fasse passer un scanner et découvre que le dispositif n'était plus dans son utérus. Un stérilet évacué de l'utérus est très douloureux, mais Jennifer n'avait

rien senti.

Et toujours, elle saignait. Au lieu d'avoir ses règles quelques jours par mois, comme la plupart des femmes, Jennifer saigna tous les jours pendant des mois et des mois et des mois.

En novembre, elle rendit visite à un nouveau médecin à la clinique de Waskaganish. Le médecin constata les menstruations excessives de Jennifer et lui prescrivit des pilules pour arrêter les saignements. Jennifer parla de sa leucémie et des médicaments de chimiothérapie qu'elle prenait — cependant, le médecin ne sembla pas y prêter attention et répéta que ces nouvelles pilules devraient arrêter les saignements.

Jennifer commença à prendre les pilules.

Et tout devint tellement pire. Elle saignait, saignait et saignait encore, plus qu'elle ne l'avait jamais fait. Tellement de sang s'écoulait d'elle désormais qu'elle pouvait sentir la succion causée par le liquide entre ses jambes à chaque fois qu'elle bougeait. En deux jours seulement, elle était blanche de la perte de sang.

Sa sœur passa chez elle, ce samedi-là, en allant au travail. « Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas ? lui demanda-t-elle. Tu es si blanche que tu n'as même plus l'air crie".

« J'ai mes règles et le docteur m'a prescrit ces pilules qui ne m'aident pas ».

« Appelle la clinique, dit-elle. Toi, plus que quiconque, tu ne peux pas te permettre de faux-pas avec ces choses-là ».

« On est samedi. La clinique est fermée ».

« Appelle. Il y a toujours un infirmier de garde. Appelle la clinique ».

Sa sœur partit au travail et Jennifer appela l'infirmier. L'infirmier savait qu'elle était une patiente atteinte d'un cancer et lui dit de le retrouver là-bas trente minutes plus tard.

À chaque minute qui passait, Jennifer se sentait de plus en plus mal. Son pouls était faible et agité, et elle n'arrivait pas à inspirer suffisamment d'air. Elle avait un peu de lessive à faire pendant les trente minutes précédant son rendez-vous à la clinique et elle descendit en titubant jusqu'à la buanderie. Toutefois, en y arrivant, elle s'affaissa contre la machine à laver. Elle n'avait même pas la force de trier le linge. Elle avait l'impression qu'elle allait mourir dans les deux minutes à venir. Peut-être était-ce son heure. Cependant, si c'était le cas, elle ne voulait certainement pas mourir dans sa buanderie.

Elle rassembla toutes ses forces et commença le long voyage jusqu'à l'étage, en s'appuyant fortement sur la rambarde pour se hisser. C'était tout aussi difficile que les 300 kilomètres qu'elle avait parcourus à pied des années auparavant.

Quand elle arriva en haut, son fils de vingt ans était là. « Je m'habille pour aller à la clinique, dit-elle. Si quelque chose m'arrive dans les prochaines minutes, appelle la clinique. Je ne sais pas si je vais pouvoir aller jusque-là ».

Son fils la regarda et hocha la tête sans mot dire.

Elle était trop faible pour conduire, réalisa-t-elle. Sa sœur était au travail, son mari était sorti boire, ses parents étaient dans le bois et son fils n'avait pas son permis de conduire. Elle était seule. Elle appela son pasteur, qui vint la chercher et l'emmena à la clinique.

L'infirmier de la clinique fut choqué par son état et prit rapidement des dispositions pour l'évacuer par convoi médical vers Val d'Or.

À Val d'Or, la gynécologue la rencontra, elle aussi choquée. « Vous avez besoin d'une transfusion sanguine ! lui dit-elle. Votre corps est presque à court de sang ! Que s'est-il passé ? »

Jennifer expliqua qu'elle saignait depuis des mois — et la gynécologue l'interrompit : « Vous êtes une malade du cancer ! Avec un cancer du sang ! s'écria-t-elle. Pourquoi ne vous ont-ils pas envoyée ici tout de suite ? »

« Il y a un nouveau médecin chez nous. Je ne crois pas qu'elle ait même lu mon dossier. Je lui ai dit que je saignais et elle m'a prescrit les pilules. Puis, je lui ai parlé de la leucémie et de la chimiothérapie, mais elle n'a pas semblé m'entendre. Elle a juste dit que les pilules me feraient arrêter de saigner pendant la fin de semaine. Je pense qu'elles m'ont fait saigner davantage ».

La gynécologue regarda les pilules que le médecin de Waskaganish avait prescrites.

« Bien sûr que vous saignez, dit-elle. Ces pilules ne devraient jamais être prises par quelqu'un qui suit une chimiothérapie ! Le médecin aurait dû le savoir. Et — comment un médecin peut-il *ne pas lire* le dossier d'un patient ?? »

« Eh bien, dit Jennifer, je suis là désormais. Je pensais que j'allais mourir, alors être ici c'est déjà mieux ».

Et puis, elle s'endormit.

La gynécologue fit une transfusion sanguine à Jennifer, lui fit subir un processus appelé dilatation et curetage (D et C), au cours duquel l'utérus est

nettoyé, et lui donna des pilules de fer pour reconstituer ses réserves de sang.

Jennifer avait perdu une énorme quantité de sang. Si elle avait mis beaucoup plus de temps pour arriver à Val d'Or, elle serait morte vidée de son sang. La gynécologue commença à se demander si la chimiothérapie n'aggravait pas les saignements. Jennifer lui rappela qu'elle avait eu des problèmes de saignement plus tôt dans sa vie, avant la chimiothérapie. Toutefois, la gynécologue demeurait suspicieuse — et empêcha Jennifer de prendre les pilules de chimiothérapie.

Jennifer commença alors à sentir la panique l'envahir un peu. La chimio lui sauvait la vie. Son oncologue l'avait avertie qu'elle ne devait jamais manquer un jour de chimiothérapie, car son cancer pourrait rapidement revenir, pire qu'avant, et elle n'aurait plus aucun espoir.

Finalement, elle convainquit la gynécologue d'appeler au moins l'oncologue pour en discuter.

Et au téléphone, l'oncologue cria exactement ce que Jennifer avait dit : « Mme Annistin avait des problèmes de saignements bien avant d'avoir un cancer ! De toute évidence, ses saignements ne sont *pas* dus aux pilules de chimio — et elles lui sauvent d'ailleurs la vie. Pourriez-vous, s'il vous plaît, lui redonner ces pilules ?!! »

La gynécologue céda. Après quatre jours sans chimiothérapie, Jennifer recommença à prendre ses pilules de chimio.

Deux autres choses se produisirent alors : la gynécologue fit passer toute une série de tests à Jennifer. Il s'avéra qu'elle souffrait d'une maladie appelée adénomyose et que c'était elle qui avait causé les saignements abondants. Elle remit également une note à Jennifer à insérer dans son dossier médical de

Waskaganish : « URGENT : Si jamais Jennifer souffre de menstruations anormales, d'hémorragies, de quelque façon que ce soit, ou de symptômes inhabituels, envoyez-la directement chez la gynécologue de Val d'Or ».

Avec les nouveaux traitements, les saignements de Jennifer s'atténuèrent lentement, même si elle saignait toujours plus qu'elle ne le devrait. Et lentement, le cancer dans son sang commença à disparaître. Chaque test de dépistage du cancer donnait de meilleurs résultats que le précédent, jusqu'à ce que les tests indiquent l'absence de cancer.

Plus tard, son fils lui dit : « Te souviens-tu de la fois où tu as failli ne pas arriver jusqu'à la clinique ? Tu avais l'air tellement malade que j'avais peur pour toi ! Je suis content que tu ailles bien désormais ».

Jennifer *allait* bien — cependant, elle apporta quelques changements à la maison. Même lorsqu'elle était aux portes de la mort, sa famille s'attendait à ce qu'elle s'occupe de toutes les tâches ménagères. Elle aurait pu mourir en faisant la lessive. Quelle façon de partir !

« À partir de maintenant, annonça-t-elle à sa famille, je ne ferai plus la lessive de personne. Je laverai mon linge et les serviettes de la maison. Si vous-mêmes voulez des vêtements propres, vous pouvez les laver. Si vous ne voulez pas faire la lessive, alors portez des vêtements sales ».

Elle se souviendrait toujours de 2007 comme de l'année des hémorragies.

Pendant quelques beaux mois, Jennifer se sentit normale. Elle avait un taux normal de fer dans le sang, elle avait une quantité de sang normale et elle avait un sang normal, dénué de cancer. Elle saignait encore trop, constamment, mais à un niveau qu'elle pouvait supporter.

Elle alla alors chez le médecin pour un examen de routine et découvrit qu'elle était diabétique. Le médecin lui donna des pilules. Autant pour la normalité. *Peu importe*, pensa-t-elle. *Après le cancer et les hémorragies, le diabète ne me fait pas peur du tout*. Mis à part la prise régulière de ses pilules, elle ne prêta pas beaucoup d'attention au nouveau diagnostic.

En 2008, Jennifer écrivit une lettre au secteur des entreprises de Waskaganish pour dire qu'elle avait besoin de son propre logement. Elle n'y mentionna pas un mot sur ses problèmes de santé — ni sur les hémorragies, ni sur la leucémie, ni sur le diabète. Une amie lut la demande avant qu'elle ne l'envoie.

« Jennifer, dit-elle, tu devrais peut-être leur parler de tes problèmes de santé. Dis-leur que le cancer pourrait revenir et combien il est difficile à gérer. Dis-leur que tu as besoin de ton propre espace si tu veux pouvoir être en bonne santé. Sois honnête ».

Ce n'était pas quelque chose qu'elle était à l'aise d'écrire. Jennifer ne voulait pas se considérer comme une personne ayant plus de besoins que les autres. Elle n'aimait pas dire du mal de quelqu'un, même si c'était seulement pour dire que son mari n'était pas là pour elle quand elle avait besoin d'aide ou que dans leur maison personne ne s'occupait d'elle quand elle était malade. Elle ne voulait pas que les gens aient pitié d'elle, elle n'aimait pas avoir l'air de se plaindre et elle ne voulait surtout pas se considérer comme une personne qui pourrait tourner le dos à son mariage. Écrire ces choses, la faisait se sentir coupable.

Toutefois, au final, elle suivit les conseils de son amie et réécrivit la demande. Elle écrivit en toute franchise à propos de son année de cancer et de son année d'hémorragies et sur le fait qu'elle avait besoin d'espace et de temps pour guérir. Elle écrivit que son cancer pourrait revenir et que, si c'était le cas,

elle aurait besoin d'être entourée de personnes fiables et d'un foyer où elle n'aurait pas à s'inquiéter de la gestion d'une maisonnée compliquée ou des problèmes d'un mari qui n'avait pas encore fait face à ses dépendances. Son médecin à Waskaganish écrivit également une lettre de soutien et une infirmière qui connaissait le passé de Jennifer lui parla et lui montra que déménager dans sa propre maison pour s'occuper d'elle-même était la chose à faire. Ses amis et ses parents la soutenait, ses enfants étaient grands et n'avaient plus besoin d'elle à la maison, son fils lui dit qu'il voulait simplement qu'elle soit heureuse et qu'il savait que son père n'avait pas l'intention d'arrêter de boire. Même son pasteur soutenait sa décision.

Au début, le Conseil était réticent à lui donner un logement : ils pensaient que son mari et elle se chamaillaient simplement comme n'importe quel couple marié depuis longtemps, qu'ils se réconcilieraient bientôt et qu'elle voudrait rester là où elle était. Toutefois, ils changèrent d'avis et un jour, elle reçut une lettre lui annonçant qu'une maison était en construction pour elle. En 2010, elle pourrait y emménager.

Jennifer parla alors à son mari, lui donna deux ans pour se reprendre et lui dit qu'elle partirait s'il ne le faisait pas. Il essaya, pendant un certain temps. Toutefois, les dépendances sont puissantes et sa consommation d'alcool prit à nouveau le dessus. En 2010, Jennifer quitta la maison qu'elle partageait avec lui et s'installa dans son propre chez-soi.

Alors qu'elle faisait du magasinage, pour acheter ses propres casseroles, serviettes et draps, elle pensa à la culpabilité. Fut un temps, elle pensait que deux personnes mariées devaient demeurer unies quoi qu'il arrive. Fut un temps, elle pensait que les bonnes mères n'avaient pas leur vie propre : tout ce qu'elles faisaient était pour leur famille. Elles supporteraient tout de la part de leurs familles et feraient tout en leur pouvoir pour les faire bien paraître. Fut un temps, elle aurait été rongée par la culpabilité juste à la pensée de prendre

soin d'elle-même. Le cancer avait changé tout cela. Elle devait prendre soin d'elle-même. Personne d'autre ne le ferait. Elle le savait désormais. Ce changement était une bonne chose.

Quand elle emménagea dans sa propre maison, elle ne se sentit ni coupable de son choix ni en colère contre quiconque. Elle ressentit seulement de la paix. Beaucoup de paix.

Jennifer adorait sa nouvelle maison et sa santé commença à s'améliorer perceptiblement maintenant que, pour la première fois de sa vie d'adulte, elle pouvait se concentrer sur elle-même. Sa petite-fille emménagea avec elle pour lui tenir compagnie; elle avait encore beaucoup de contacts avec ses enfants et ses autres petits-enfants, et elle put s'impliquer davantage dans la communauté. Le cancer demeurait là où il devait être (en rémission et non dans son corps) et elle ne prêtait pas trop d'attention au diabète. Toutefois, elle saignait toujours. Cela faisait désormais cinq ans qu'elle avait ses règles sans interruption. C'était gênant, coûteux et pénible. Et c'était assez incroyable qu'une personne puisse saigner pendant aussi longtemps sans mourir.

En mars 2012, sans avertissement, une tempête se déchaîna et Jennifer fut atteinte d'une nouvelle hémorragie. À l'extérieur, la neige tombait « à sciaux » et, à l'intérieur, on avait l'impression que le sang s'écoulait d'elle également à sciaux. Cette fois-ci, elle n'hésita pas. Elle se rendit directement à la clinique.

Le médecin appela la gynécologue de Val d'Or et lui expliqua ce qui se passait. Puis elle se tourna vers Jennifer.

« Ils veulent vous voir à Val d'Or immédiatement ».

Elles regardèrent toutes les deux par la fenêtre. La tempête s'aggravait. Des congères s'accumulaient sous les fenêtres de la clinique et les voitures sur la route avançaient à une allure d'escargots.

Malgré tout, Jennifer se rendit à l'aéroport. Les vents étaient trop forts pour que les avions atterrissent, dit l'employé de la compagnie aérienne. Il n'y aurait pas de vols ce jour-là.

Jennifer appela la clinique. « Je vais devoir y aller en voiture », leur dit-elle.

« Par ce temps ? Vous ne pouvez pas conduire ! ».

« Si j'attends, je vais soit entrer en état de choc, soit perdre tellement de sang que je pourrais mourir — vous le savez. C'est moins risqué pour moi de conduire. Je dois prendre soin de moi-même. Je vous appellerai quand j'arriverai là-bas ».

Elle appela alors son ex et il lui proposa de la conduire à Val d'Or pour qu'elle n'ait pas à y aller toute seule.

Elle se dépêchait désormais. Son ex fit le plein de la voiture, elle attrapa une brassée de serviettes sanitaires supplémentaires pour absorber le sang qui s'écoulait d'elle et ils roulèrent aussi vite que les routes le permettaient de Waskaganish en descendant jusqu'à Val d'Or. Dans la tempête, le voyage dura deux heures de plus que le trajet ne prenait habituellement et le temps qu'elle arrive sur place, elle ressentait cette vieille faiblesse familière due à la perte de sang.

À Val d'Or, ils l'attendaient. Ils avaient prévu de l'opérer quelques jours

plus tard, mais lorsqu'ils la virent, ils lui donnèrent des papiers à signer et l'emmenèrent immédiatement en chirurgie. Jennifer n'eut même pas le temps d'appeler la clinique de Waskaganish pour leur dire ce qui se passait.

Une fois de plus, le chirurgien lui fit subir la procédure D et C et tout se passa bien. Ils lui firent une injection d'hormones pour aider à contrôler le saignement et lui dirent qu'elle devrait recevoir cette injection tous les trois mois. Lorsque ses forces revinrent, Jennifer et son ex prirent la voiture pour rentrer chez eux.

Au début, il semblait que les injections n'avaient aucun effet. Cependant, Jennifer commença ensuite à saigner de moins en moins, jusqu'à ce que son cycle menstruel redevienne enfin normal, après toutes ces années.

Le temps était venu pour Jennifer de se concentrer sur son diabète. Pendant longtemps, ses autres problèmes de santé lui avaient semblé tellement plus pressants qu'elle n'y avait accordé que peu d'attention. Toutefois, un médecin lui dit un jour que le diabète était aussi mortel que le cancer. Si elle ne le prenait pas au sérieux, il finirait le travail que le cancer avait commencé. Après tous les efforts qu'elle avait déployés pour se construire une vie saine, une vie où elle comptait, il n'était pas logique d'ignorer le diabète.

Elle mangeait déjà avec soin pour aider son corps à combattre le cancer et les hémorragies, mais elle rencontra néanmoins un nutritionniste et apporta quelques modifications supplémentaires à son alimentation. Elle commença également à mesurer régulièrement sa glycémie et à prendre de l'insuline.

Le médecin lui dit qu'elle devrait marcher. C'était un peu effrayant. Quand elle avait été si malade à cause du cancer ou des hémorragies et qu'elle s'était forcée à faire de l'activité physique, elle s'était effondrée d'épuisement. Elle essaya tout de même de marcher pendant trente minutes.

Elle ne se sentait pas si mal. Bien, même. Cela lui rappelait ces longues, longues marches qu'elle avait faites dix ans plus tôt. Peut-être pourrait-elle recouvrer la santé au point d'être capable d'en faire une autre à nouveau.

Le chemin avait été long, la décennie difficile. Et ce qu'elle avait surtout appris, c'est que la clé pour être en bonne santé — physique, émotionnelle et spirituelle — était de prendre soin d'elle-même avec autant de soin et de diligence qu'elle en avait pris autrefois pour les autres. Pour les personnes qui l'aimaient et qui voulaient qu'elle reste des leurs, c'était la chose la plus importante qu'elle puisse faire.

When It's in Your Blood

Valérie Duro
Montréal

Some things, you find, are in your blood. They are so because of where you were born. Because your parents and your community were who they were. Because you carry the same genetic markers as your ancestors, but most importantly because you carry their history. Some things, you find, are in your blood. But what happens when your blood turns against you? The very blood coursing through your veins starts to poison you or rushes through your body as if to escape it, taking your life with it? Do you lay down until the flow of that river, the one giving you life, dries up, or do you listen to the message it is carrying in and out of you?

I was taken on this journey with Jennifer. Translating a story is always a very powerful experience. We cannot translate well without appealing to our capacity to empathize with the other, with the characters in whose shoes we walk for a mile—or a 300 km trek—and without learning that we can see ourselves—past, present, future selves—in just about anyone. And when a character learns a lesson which is so dear to us because it shaped a big part of who we are today, it is even more powerful.

Of course, different people will see different things in Jennifer's story. So here, I speak of what *I* see, of what it meant for me to translate her story. I see her strength, her resilience, and her kindness. I see that despite what we feel is in our blood, like putting others' needs before our own, there might come a time when that very blood sends us a different message. It might tell us, as the river flows, that taking care of ourselves should not carry guilt, that it is simply part of the gratitude we show to life, to being alive; and that by taking care of our own body, mind, and spirit, we honour the river which in turn allows us to be the kind and loving human beings we thrived to be all along—not out of duty, but out of love.

Some things, you find, are in your blood. I find that the one thing that is in our blood is to learn and grow. Thank you, Jennifer.

The Story of Rose Swallow of Chisasibi

Told Rose Swallow
Written Ruth DyckFehderau

[1] When Rose was a young girl, not yet in school, she and her grandfather swaddled against the cold bay wind and took the dogsled over Hudson Bay and up the La Grande River to check the fishnets. Rose perched up on the sled, the sun glinted off snowdrifts around her, the frenzied huskies kicked up snow in front of her, and her grandfather ran alongside the sled. Sometimes he jumped on for a minute or two of rest.

"Look," he said then, "you can see how smart the dogs are. They know where the ice is thin and they avoid it. We can go to my river nets, where the water runs faster and the ice is more dangerous, only because of them."

He didn't want to tire the huskies with his extra weight, though, and soon hopped off the sled again to lope along beside.

When they reached a fishnet, Rose climbed down from the sled and the dogs rested while her grandfather, after all that running, heaved up the catch. The net was so heavy with ice and water and fish that his body leaned back on an angle and his arms and legs strained with the weight of it. He untangled the fish from the net, bashed them on the ice to kill them quickly, bundled them and lashed the bundle to the sled. Rose climbed back on top of the load, and they were off again, on to the next net, grandfather running beside.

Back at the cabin at the end of the day, her grandfather cooked up a big meal with bones and meat and rice for the dogs.

[1] We are very grateful to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay for the permission to reproduce this story here.

"You must feed dogs well," he said. "Every day, twice a day, and not only on the days they pull the sled. Never be cruel to a dog; you have to respect each one."

Only after the dogs were fed did he sit down himself and rest.

In the summers, when fish were more plentiful, Rose helped her grandmother build a drying rack from saplings and sinew. They straddled it across a damp-wood fire and together they draped fish over the rack to smoke until they were well-preserved. They wrapped the fish up in a cloth from a flour sack and loaded the bundles into sacks. Then they carted the sacks on their backs to her grandmother's cache, a storage area 15 minutes away that she had dug out underground and lined with moss for insulation. They placed the fish bundles inside the moss where they would stay cool and piled on top the heaviest rocks they could find so the wolves couldn't get at them.

The big and small game – moose and caribou and grouse and rabbit – was all hunted on foot, or caught in snares and traps that her grandparents would walk to every week. Over long afternoons, Rose's grandmother would slow-cook the game into stews and float soft dumplings in the dark gravies. The flour had been purchased in town and sometimes, when there was enough of it, she made bannock to sop up the juices.

Berry-picking time came around August, when the blueberries were a deep navy and had sweetened in the sun. Rose and her grandparents walked out in the afternoons and picked all they could find. Her grandmother boiled some berries into jams or folded them into cakes, and the rest she dried and preserved in a cotton bag where they wouldn't mould. And with the fish and the berries and other hunted meats, they had food in the long winter months. Some years, the years of starving, were bad. Even with the fishing and the

hunting and the berry-picking, there wasn't enough food. Then Rose's grandfather would go out to the islands in the bay. There was a plant that grew there; it was something like a black moss and something like lettuce. You could boil it, if you had to, and eat it. It would get you through the bad times.

It was an athletic life, living on the land. You were always moving, just to be able to eat. Always doing something. No one in the area had heard of diabetes then.

The year after the dogsled rides to the fishnets, Rose sat in the residential school dining room contemplating something on her plate. The teachers called it "broccoli" and Rose was supposed to eat it – but it didn't look like food. She was being watched, though: if she didn't clean her plate she would be punished and either starved or beaten until she couldn't get out of bed. And so she closed her eyes, tried to think about the parts of her school day that she enjoyed – like French class and baking class and handicrafts – and she stabbed her fork into that vile broccoli stem and willed her mouth to open. When she closed it, bitter juices squirted across her tongue and in seconds the broccoli became a revolting mush. All around her in the dining room, Cree kids were gagging and vomiting at the strange food. This had to be worse than that black mossy plant her grandparents had eaten in the starving times. But Rose forced it down and avoided a beating. *When I grow up*, she thought, *I will have kids. And I will never force them to eat broccoli.* In those years, there was still no talk of diabetes.

In the late '60s, Rose walked into the bathroom of her high school in Rouyn-Noranda. Another student was there: a girl who had hiked up her skirt, propped her leg up on the big round water fountain – and was sliding a needle into the flesh of her thigh. *A heroin addict,* thought Rose, *right here, in my high school!* Rose washed her hands at the fountain and returned to class without saying anything to the girl. A few years later, though, in Biology class, the girl

came to mind again. The teacher talked about the pancreas and a disease called diabetes which was treated with injections of insulin. That needle girl had been injecting not heroin but insulin, Rose realized, and without it she would have died. She was the first person with diabetes that Rose ever saw.

Rose finished her schooling and found work at the Chisasibi Hudson's Bay Store. It was the '70s, a time of big changes. Hunters and fishermen used snowmobiles for their work and no longer ran alongside dog-pulled sleds. Many of the dogs were neither respected nor looked after. Locals didn't walk to the grocery store anymore; they drove for even the smallest errand and trucks and cars crowded the narrow streets. For the first time, the store began to stock televisions. People bought them up so quickly the store couldn't keep them stocked. CBC was the only channel in those days, and it was on for just an hour a day – but when that hour came, people all around town stopped whatever they were doing to go to their living room or the living room of someone who had a TV. And they sat immobile for an entire hour looking at the screen and watching the news.

A Métis lady, about 50 years old, worked with Rose at the store in those days, and she was thirsty. She stuck some price tickets on a stack of boxes, then hustled over to the water fountain, gulped a whole cup of water, and came back to work. One minute later, she needed to drink again. She drank and drank, all day long, but couldn't quench her thirst. Rose could see the desperation on her face, as if she would die of thirst even after having so much water, and it was something terrible. Another lady working there saw all this, and noticed too that the thirsty lady's vision had gotten much worse in a few weeks. She gently told the thirsty lady to go to the doctor – she had heard about an illness that made people thirsty and affected their eyesight. Maybe there was some medicine. A few days later, the thirsty lady was back at work with an enormous glass-and-metal syringe. She stabbed the needle into a bottle

of insulin, pulled back to fill the syringe, and injected it into her flesh every single day. She would have to do this, she said, for the rest of her life. Sometimes the insulin wouldn't be enough; she would feel shaky and would run to the coffee tray and pop a sugar cube into her mouth. She was the second person with diabetes that Rose ever met.

Then, suddenly, talk of diabetes was everywhere in the community. Rose's friends and neighbours, several elders, even her family had diabetes. One by one, Rose's seven sisters were diagnosed, and one of them even had two miscarriages as a result of the disease. In 1991, Rose began working as a Community Health Representative (CHR) for the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay. Twenty years had passed since she had met the thirsty lady and thirty years since she had seen the girl with the needle in high school, and now Rose worked every day with people with diabetes. More people were being newly diagnosed every month – and almost every one of them was surprised.

"That can't be right," they would say to her. "I never eat sweets. It can't be diabetes."

Rose would explain to each person, in the Cree language that the doctors and nurses couldn't speak, that the flour in dumplings and bannock might not taste sweet, but it was a kind of sugar nevertheless.

"But," they would say, "our grandparents ate bannock and dumplings and they didn't have diabetes."

"Yes," Rose would answer, "they ate bannock and dumplings. But think of all the exercise they did that we don't do. Think of all the ways our lives are different from theirs."

She began talking about diabetes on the radio and in schools, teaching people not to have both rice and potatoes in the same meal because both are a kind of sugar, teaching that a long walk would lower blood sugar for up to two days, teaching that alcohol could be dense with sugar even if it didn't taste sweet, teaching that stress aggravated the disease. And still, there were so many new diagnoses of diabetes and other chronic illnesses that Rose couldn't do all the work herself and the Cree Board of Health had to hire another CHR for Chisasibi just to meet the demand.

And then another.

And then another.

From time to time, Rose used the glucose-testing kits to screen herself. She didn't have diabetes symptoms, but it ran in her family and there was quite a bit of stress in her home in those days, before her husband stopped drinking. So many people in the community were getting sick. For years her test results were fine but Rose continued self-screening. For years, she brought test kits home from work and tested her husband and all her kids. She even did what she had vowed never to do: she made her children eat broccoli – but without even once using the extreme residential school methods.

One day, in '97, her self-screening showed a new result: pre-diabetes, a warning sign that diabetes was not far away. Rose began to take medication and became still more diligent about exercise and careful eating. Then, on a sunny day in spring 2002, she went to the bathroom at work and remembered, as she zipped up her pants, that she had been to the bathroom just ten minutes earlier – and ten minutes before that. She could already feel she would need the toilet in a few minutes again. She crossed the office to the cupboard with the test kits. She pricked her finger with the lancet, wiped the blood on the

strip, and inserted it into the reader. The number in the glucose reader was too high. Rose Swallow, like the needle girl in high school and the thirsty lady from the Hudson's Bay Store, like every one of her sisters, had diabetes.

She sucked in a deep breath and let it out. And then she ran back to the bathroom.

Rose is still a CHR in Chisasibi, along with four other CHRs. She's in charge of the diabetes portfolio and spends most of her work time teaching people, in their own language, how to manage the disease. By now, every Chisasibi family is directly affected by diabetes and the newly diagnosed are getting younger and younger. Rose organizes healthy-food tastings. Vegetables and fruits are so expensive in the North that people don't want to spend money on new ones they might not like, so Rose finds ways to let them taste new foods without having to pay all that money. She also organizes Leave-Your-Vehicle-At-Home days for people to try exercising as a way of getting to work, as their grandparents once did. And she encourages people to try the fitness centre, even if it is a little intimidating at first. Chisasibi is seeing big changes again: people are exercising more, walking outside along the highway or the river in the long summer evenings, or snowshoeing across the open spaces in winter. So far, though, Rose hasn't seen anyone running alongside a dog team.

Like all the people she teaches, Rose has to work at her own diabetes every day. She takes her pills and tests her blood sugar. She experiments with vegetables and cooks with whole grains and high fibre. She has to be especially careful about stress – it's the one thing drives up her blood sugar levels very quickly. Sometimes calming down is as easy as taking a few deep breaths or reading a good book. Years ago, her husband's drinking was what drove up her anxiety, but he hasn't had a drink in years. These days, Rose worries for her kids and grandkids and also looks after some of her grandkids on the days

they're neglected. It gets to be a lot of work and anxiety for someone no longer young enough to sit on her grandfather's dogsled.

Then her husband says, "Oh Rosie. I can see on your face – it's time to go for a walk."

And they tie on their boots and swaddle the grandkids against the cold and head out for a long walk by the highway where the sun glints off the snowdrifts and the grandkids kick up snow around them.

If you would like to be tested for diabetes, contact the clinic in your community:

Chisasibi (819) 855-9011

Wemindji (819) 978-0225

Oujé-Bougoumou (418) 745-3901

Mistissini (418) 923-3376

Eastmain (819) 977-0241

Waskaganish (819) 895-8833

Nemaska (819) 673-2511

Waswanipi (819) 753-2511

This story is taken from the book *The Sweet Bloods of Eeyou Istchee: Stories of Diabetes and the James Bay Cree*. The book is free to Indigenous people living on Canadian reserves and traditional territories. (Postage fees may apply.)
Contact: Paul Linton (418) 923-3355 www.sweetbloods.org

Cover Photograph by David DyckFehderau

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Rose Swallow Odibaajimowin imaa Chisaasibiing

Told by Rose Swallow
Written by Ruth DyckFehderau
Translated by Patricia Ningewance Nadeau

Gii-ikwezensiwipan Rose, gaamashi gikino'amaadiiwigamigong gii-ayaasii iwe apii, omishoomisan o-gii-wiijiiwaan wedi Gichi-ziibiing e-gii-izhaawaad ji-naadisabiiwaad. Gii-gichi-giizhoopizowag. Animosha' o-gii-odaaba'aawaa' imaa gichi-wiikwedong Hudson Bay gaa-izhinikaadeg. Wiin wiin Rose gii-bimidaabaazo, wiinge ishpaagwanagaanig, e-gizhaateg gaye gii-gizhebaawagak. Gichi-bimiba'idiwag igi animoog, omishoomisan dash bimibatoowan jiigi-daabaanaak. Ngoding ako ogijigwaashkwani imaa odaabaanaakong ji-anwebid ajina.

"Inashke!" odinaan oozhisan, "Inashke epiichi-gagiitaawendamowaad igi animoog. O-gikendaanaawaa aaniindi ezhi-naniizaanadaninig, ezhi-bibagizhezigwaag amii dash imaa gaawiin izhaasiiwag. Ogikendaanaawaa. Bizaanigo gidizhaamin ebiwaad nindasabiig gaa-izhi-gizhiijiwang ziibi, nawach naniizaanizi mikom, wiinawaa dash ogikendaanaawaa aaniindi ge-izhaasigwaa."

Gaawiin dash wii-ayeko'aasii' oda'isha, e-gozigonid wiin. Gii-gabaagwaashkwani wiiba, miinawaa e-bimibatood.

Gii-odisaawaad bezhig asabiin, Rose gii-gabaa. Gii-anweshinoog dash igi animoog. Omishoomisan dash gii-naadisabiibani'owan. Gozigwani a'a asab e-bida'anaad giigooya'. Gichi-gaanjitaa e-zaagijidaabiid ini giigooya' epiichi-gozigoninid. Wewiib ogijigonaa' imaa asabiing ebakitewaad giishpin giiyaabi bimaadizinid. O-gii-dakobinaa' dash imaa, odaabaanaakong o-gii-asaa'. Aazha miinawaa boozi Rose. Apane miinawaa godag asabiin enaanzikawaawaad.

Gii-onaagoshininig gii-ayaawaad waakaa'iganensing, o-gii-giizhideboonaa' animoo' omishoomisan, okanan gaye wiiyaas gaye manoomin.

"Weweni gi-daa-ashamaag animoog," odigoon, "Endaso-giizhig, niizhing endaso-giizhig, gaawiin gaye eta gii-odaabiiwaad. Gego wiikaa maanzhidoodawaaken animosh. Weweni doodaw."

Baamaa gaa-ishkwaa-wiisiniwaad animoshag gaa-izhi-onabid wiin, e-wiisinid.

Gii-niibininig, gii-giigooyikaanig, owiiji'aan ako ookoman Rose e-ozhitoowaad agwaawaanaak. Mitigoonsa' odaabaji'aawaa', gaye ojiitadeyaab. Gii-giizhitoowaad boodawewag imaa, gaa-zhakaakwag mishi odaabajitoonaawaa ji-gichi-biskanesinog. Amii dash imaa ezhi-agoonaawaad giigoowa' gaa-ishkwaa-baanizhwaawaad. Gabe-giizhig baasowag. Amii dash bagwaanishing ezhi-gashkiiginaawaad, mashkimoding ezhi-biinawaawaad. Amii dash ezhi-bimiwanewaad waanikaaning ji-izhi-asanjigowaad. Aki aasaakamig imaa o-gii-atoon ji-onji-dakiziwaad igi giigooyag gaa-baasowaad. Gaawiin dash da-onaajishinziiwag niibing gizhideg. Gaa-ishkwaa-ningowaawaad amii ezhi-asaawaad gaa-gozigoninid asinii' ogijiya'ii ji-waanikesigwaa ma'iinganag.

Aya'aawishensa' daabishkoo bineg gaye waaboozoog onisaawaa' gaye gaa-mindidowaad daabishkoo moonzoog adikwag emitosewaad omishoomisan gaye ookoman, maagizhaa gaye enagwaanaawaad ewanii'igewaad. Gii-ishkwaa-naawakwenig ako ookoman Rose owanzaan wiiyaas boodawaanaabikong, bakwezhiganaabo e-ozhitood gemaa naadowensa'. Oodenaang odoondinaawaan ini biisadaawang bakwezhiganan. Gii-baatiinod bakwezhiganike ko.

Mawinzowag ngojigo miinigiizis gii-bimangizod, gii-miinikaag iwe apii. Wiinge ko gichi-mawinzowag gii-ishkwaa-naawakwenig. Baashkiminisigewan ookoman, gemaa zhiiwi-bakwezhiganing odasaa'. Amii dash gaye gaa-izhichiged e-gii-baasang ini miinan mashkimoding dash ebiina'ang gaawiin dash wanaadanzinoonan. Amii dash ako gabe-biboon e-ayaawaad niibiwa miijim ge-miijiwaad.

Ngoding gii-maneziwag miijim. Aanawi gii-ozhitoowaad miijim gii-niibininig ge-miijiwaad bibooninig giiyaabi ko gii-jaagisewag. Amii ko wedi minising wiikwedong ezhaanid Rose omishoomisan enaanzikamonid waakon. Nitaawigin imaa ogidaabik. Makadewaa daabishkoo gichi-aniibiish gaa-adaaweng adaawewigamigong izhinaagwan. Wanzigaadeg bizaanigo gi-miijin. Amii gaa-miijiwaad awiyag ji-gawaskadesigwaa mewinzha.

Gii-gichi-anokiiwag mewinzha awiyag ji-bimaadiziwaad, ji-ondinamowaad ge-miijiwaad. Apane go gii

anokiiwag. Gaawiin dash wiikaa awiya gii-ziizibaakwadwaapinesii iwe apii**.**

Ango-biboon gaa-izhiseg gii-wiijiiwaapan omishoomisan Rose enaadisabiinid, gii-namadabi gikino'amaadiiwigamigong e-ganawaabandang gegoon odoonaaganing. Broccoli odizhinikaadaanaawaa igi wemitigoozhii-gikino'amaagewikweg. Gii-inaa ji-miijid gaawiin dash miijim odinendanziin. Oganawaabamigoo'. Giishpin miijisig o-da-bakite'ogoo'. Gemaa gaawiin da-ashamaasii miijim. Ezhi-gashkanzagwaabid enaanaagadawendang gegoon gaa-zaagitood daabishkoo gii-gikino'amawind ji-baakwaa'ishiimod gemaa ji-bakwezhiganiked. Izhi-daawani ebakiindang iweni broccoli. Omaanzhipidaan. Ozhaashaagwandaan. Onoondawaa' godag

abinoojiizha' e-aa'aagadenid e-gagwe-miijinid iweni broccoli. Nawach maawiin maanzhipogwan owe broccoli apiich wiin waakon inendam. Amii sa gaa-izhi-gidaanawed. Gichi-ayaawiyaan ayaawagwaa abinoojiizhag gaawiikaa nin-ga-ashamaasiig broccoli inendam. Iwe apii gaawiin mashi awiya gii-ziizibaakwadwaapinesii.

Ngoji go 1960 gii-izhisenig biindige gaa-izhi-zaaga'amowaad ikwezensag imaa ishpi-gikino'amaadiiwigamigong imaa Rouyn-Noranda. Bezhig ikwezens imaa niibawi. Odishpiiginaan ogoodaas, amii dash ezhi-jiita'odizod zhaabonigan e-aabajitood, mashkiki e-miinindizod. Gaa-minwendamoshkaagemagak mashkiki odaabajitoon, odinenimaan. Maamakaadendam Rose. Gii-giziininjii, amii dash gaa-izhi-maajaad. Gaawiin gegoon odinaasiin. Eniizho-biboonagaak dash Biology gaa-izhinikaadeg gikendaasowining odizhi-bizindawaan gikino'amaagewikwen e-dazhindaminid ziizibaakwadwaapinewin, e-jiita'odizowaad dash iwe gaa-inaapinewaad. Omikwenimaan ini ikwezensan gaa-gii-waabamaapan e-jiita'odizonid. Amii ngwana nitam e-gii-waabamaad awiyan iwe e-inaapinenid.

Ogii-giizhitoon ogikino'amaagoowin Rose, gii-anokii dash imaa Jizaasabii HBC adaawewigamigong. Ngojigo 1970 gii-izhise iwe apii. Aazha niibiwa gegoon gii-ani-aanjise bimaadiziwin. Gaa-bimibizowaad ogidaagonag gii-ayaawag. Gaawiin noongom animoo' o-gii-aabaji'asiwaawaa' ininiwag gii-gii'osewaad gaye gii-bagdawaawaad. Gaawiin noongom o-gii-gichi-inenimaasiwaawaa' animoo'. Gii-babaamiba'idiwag animoshag miziwe biniskwe. Gaawiin noongom awiyag gii-bimosesiiwag. Gii-izhaawaad adaawewigamigong gii-bimibizowag odaabaanensing. Gaa-mazinaateseg gaye o-gii-ayaanaawaa. Gii-adaawaadegin adaawewigamigong gakina awiya zhemaak gii-adaawe. CBC eta gii-mazinaatese iwe apii, ango-diba'igan endaso-giizhig. Amii ko iwe apii gakina awiya gaa-gibitinang wegonen ezhichigewaad e-ando-ganawaabandamowaad gaa-mazinaatesenig.

Bezhig wiisaakodewikwe ngojigo naanimidana daso-biboone Rose o-gii-wiidanokiimaan adaawewigamigong. Apane ko wii-minikwe nibi. Wewiib ako ozhagashkinaanan mazina'iiginoonsan makakong wedi dash gaa-izhi-ayaag gaa-mookojiwang nibi izhaa eminikwed ango-minikwaagan nibi. Biizhaa ajina e-anokiid. Aazha miinawaa wii-minikwe nibi. Amii sa gabe-giizhig iwe ezhichiged e-minikwed nibi gaawiin dash debijii'aabowesii. Gegapii o-ganoonigoon bezhig owiidanokiimaaganan. Aaniish owaabamigoon bizhishig e-minikwenid nibi gaye gaawiin aapiji waabisiiwan. Odinaan ji-ando-waabamaad mashkikiiwininiwan. Onoondaan e-ayaamagak inaapinewin. Debwe gii-bigiiwe awe ikwe. Odayaan gegoon ge-aabajitood ji-jiita'odizod. Amii dash gaa-izhichiged endaso-giizhig ejiita'odizod. Amii owe ge-izhichigeyaan wii-bimaadiziyaan odigowaan. Ngoding ako gaawiin deminik iweni gii-jiita'odizod. Apatoo ko imaa gaa-izhi-ozhichigaadeg gaa-makadewaagamig, e-miijid ziizibaakwad. Amii ini miinawaa bezhig gaa-gikenimaad Rose iwe e-inaapinenid.

Amii noongom iwe inaapinewin e-maajii-dazhinjigaadeg. Niibiwa awiyag iwe inaapinewag. Rose owiijiiwaagana' gaye awiyag gaa-daawaad besho, gaye gichi-ay'aag, gaye odinawemaagana'. Bepezhig Rose oshiimeya' gaye omiseya' iwe inaapinewa'. Bezhig gii-ozhigwaapine. 1991 gii-izhisenig Rose gii-maadanokii CHR e-inanokiid. Niishtana daso-biboon apane ishkwaawaach gaa-gii-waabamaapan ini ikwezensan ejiita'odizonid. Noongom dash endaso-giizhig owaabamaa' awiya' eziizibaakwadwaapinenid. Endaso-giizis aazha miinawaa awiya wiindamawaa iwe e-inaapined, egoshkwendang dash.

"Gaawiin editawe!" ako ikidowag. "Gaawiin wiikaa nimiijisiin gaa-zhiiwang. Gaawiin iwe nindinaapinesiidog."

Owiindamawaa' idash ako, e-omashkiigomod, bakwezhigan bezhig gegoon gaa-maanishkaagemagak. Daabishkoo ziizibaakwad inendaagwan bakwezhigan.

"Nin-gichi-ayaamag o-gii-amwaawaan bakwezhiganan gaawiin dash wiikaa gii-ziizibaakwadwaapinesiiwag," ikidowag miinawaa.

"Eya," odinaa'. "O-gii-amwaawaan bakwezhiganan. Wiinge dash gaye gii-gichi-anokiiwag endaso-giizhig. Gaawiin giinawind iwe gidizhi-bimaadizisiimin noongom."

O-gii-maajii-dazhindaan ziizibaakwadwaapinewin bizinjiganing, ewiindamaaged gaawiin awiya odaa-amwaasiin waabimanoominan gaye opiniin gii-wiisinid. Ziizibaakwad inendaagwanoon ini miijiman. Giishpin ginwesh bimoseyin, gidaa-niisinaan ziizibaakwad gi-miskwiiming niizhogon. Giishpin minikweyin ishkodewaabo zhingobiiwaabo zhoominaabo wegonen igo iwe dinookaan, gaawiin onizhishinzinoon ozaam daabishkoo ziizibaakwad inendaagwan. Aapiji niibiwa noongom iwe gii-inaapinewa' gaawiin gii-de-izhisesii ji-wiiji'aad gakina. Ndawaach bezhig miinawaa gii-anokii'aa.

Miinawaa dash bezhig.

Miinawaa bezhig.

Aayaakaw ako Rose gewiin gii-nanaando-gikenindizo ji-ziizibaakwadwaapinegwen. Gaawiin gii-inamanji'osii daabishkoo gaa-inamanji'owaad iwe gaa-inaapinewaad. Niibiwa dash odinawemaagana' o-gii-ayaanaawaa iwe aazha. Gii-ojaanimendam gaye nasine iwe apii giiyaabi gii-nitaa-giiwashkwebiinid onaabeman, ji-boonitoonid. Niibiwa awiyag gii-aakoziwag odazhiikewining. Ginwesh gii-mino-ayaa Rose. Obiidoonan ako iniwe gaa-aabajichigaadegin ji-gikenjigaadeg. Onanaando-gikenimaan ako onaabeman gaye oniijaanisa'. Amii noongom gaa-inanjige'aad oniijaanisa' iwe broccoli.

Aabiding dash 1997 gii-izhisenig gii-nanaando-gikenindizod, gii-ishpaakoshkaani iweni. Amii gewiin iwe ji-inaapined inendam. O-gii-maajii-odaapinaan mashkiki.Nawach gaye gii-maajii-babaamose gaye gwayak e-gagwe-inanjiged. Aabiding dash e-gizhaatenig gii-ziigwang 2002 gii-izhisenig, gii-zaaga'am imaa gaa-dananokiid. Aazha tagiin midaaso-diba'iganens gii-zaaga'amooban aazha dash miinawaa e-inamanji'od. Nanaando-gikenindizo. Wiinge ishpaakoshkaani iweni. Amii sa gewiin Rose Swallow eziizibaakwadwaapined.

Wiinge gichi-ikwanaamo. Bagidanaamo. Apane miinawaa izhaa imaa zaaga'amoowigamigong.

Giiyaabi iwe inanokii Rose imaa Jizaasibiing. Aazha naananiwag iwe gaa-inanokiiwaad. Wiin odazhiikaan e-gikino'amaaged aaniin ge-izhichigeng giishpin ziizibaakwadwaapineyin. Gakina gaa-ayaawaad imaa Jizaasibiing odookishkaagonaawaa iwe inaapinewin. Aazha gaye nawach ani-oshkaadiziwag iwe gaa-inaapinewaad. Amii dash ezhichiged Rose e-wiiji'aad awiya' ji-gojitoowaad ini gitigaanan wiikaa gaa-gii-miijisigwaa gaa-onizhishingin ji-miijinaaniwangin. Izhichige ji-gojipidamowaad jibwaa-adaawewaad adaawewigamigong. Amii gaye ezhichiged e-wiindamawaad awiya' ji-mitosenid, gaawiin ji-bimibizosigwaa miziwe. Odinaa' gaye ji-gagwejiinid. Amii dash enaagwak noongom imaa Jizaasibiing, e-gagwejiiwaad awiyag gagwejiiwigamigong gaye ebimosewaad miikanaang gemaa jiigew ziibiing gii-niibininig, gaye ebabaamaagimosewaad gii-biboominig. Gaamashi awiyan owaabamaasiin ji-bimibatoonid animoo' gii-odaaba'iwenid daabishkoo gaa-gii-nitaa-izhichigenid omishoomisan.

Daabishkoo gakina ini gaa-gikino'amawaad Rose, amii gewiin ezhichiged e-odaapinaad omashkikiima' endaso-giizhig, gaye e-nanaando-gikendang omiskwiim. Omiijinan gitigaanensan gaye ozaawi-manoominan ogiizizwaan. Gaawiin gaye gagwe-ojaanimendanzii. Giishpin ojaanimendang aapiji wiiba ishpaagoshkaani gaa-aabajitood ji-gikendang ezhisenig omiskwiim. Amii ko ezhi-gichi-babaapagidanaamod nishikaach. Gemaa odagindaan mazina'igan gaa-zaagitood. Noongom gaye gaawiin minikwesiiwan onaabeman. Noongom oniijaanisa' gaye oozhisa' gaa-ojaanimendami'igod. Ngoding oganawenimaa' oozhisa' giishpin naganaaganiwinid. Aapiji ko ojaanimendam iwe gii-izhisenig.

Amii ko egod onaabeman, "Haaw sa, Rose, aazha gidoojaanimendam gidizhinaagoz. Ando-babaamosedaa."

Wawepizowag dash gaye owawepinaawaa' oozhisiwaa' ozaam egisinaanig agwajiing, apane dash e-ando-babaamosewaad miikwanaang, ewaasaagonagaag gaa-izhi-ishpadaasing, e-babaamaagonagiinid oozhisiwaa'.

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Thoughts on Translating Rose Swallow's Story

Patricia Ningewance Nadeau
Lac Seul, Ontario

I learned English at age 6. I'm 70 now. I spoke Ojibwe easily during my early years. I remember thinking that there was no concept I couldn't express in my language at age 14. Now I can't say that. I've been speaking mostly English since I've been in my 20s. The longer I live in the city, the more English I speak and the less fluent I become in my language. I have to think first now before forming a complex sentence.

I went to residential school in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario as a teenager with Cree girls from James Bay area and northern Quebec. Maybe I know Rose Swallow. I lived a similar lifestyle that she did with her grandparents. I experienced reserve life that she describes – the skidoos, the HBC store, etc.

I enjoyed the description of the 'old time' lifestyle. The parts that made me uneasy were the descriptions of full-blown diabetes. I see too much of that in my own home community. I see young men in their 30s with amputated limbs. They're on dialysis. My own family members are diabetic including my son. I am told I am borderline but actually I think I am there already. So translating these stories about diabetes is too close to home. However, the message is a hopeful one. In Rose's story, her response to having diabetes is very proactive. She is also fortunate to have found a partner who is a good support. Working to fight diabetes becomes her life work.

Now I'd like to talk about the translation itself. I do technical translation and literature translation. In technical translations, there is no thought given to whether a reader will need an almost literal translation to further his/her study of the language. The object is communication. With artistic translation, I must look at communicating the intent of the story with some free translation but also attempt to stay with the original version so a learner can go back and forth without consulting a dictionary too much.

The Ojibwe and Cree languages are polysynthetic languages. They are very different from the European languages that we are familiar with (English, French, Spanish, etc.). One Ojibwe word can also be a sentence because it contains the subject, verb, object and many modifiers. Reduplication is commonly used to convey repeated or prolonged action or state of being.

1. Example:
Nin-gii-wii-gichi-babaamose-mi-naaban. *We had wanted to walk around lots.*

Nin	gii	wii	gichi	ba	bimose	mi	naaban
I	past tense	want	lots or big	prolonged	walk	we	pluperfect

2. Another example:

Maajiimadwebagaasin. *The leaves are starting to rustle in the wind.*

Maajii	madwe	bag	aasin
starting to	make sound	leaf/leaves	in the wind

The particles that make up the above sentence/words are not words in their own right. They are particles or morphemes. The Ojibwe translator strings the morphemes tersely and the end result is poetic and true to Ojibwe thought. One is able to reach into one's bag of morphemes and build beautiful words.

So the opportunity to translate these stories about diabetes and ways to overcome it in one's life has been beneficial in two ways for me: 1. the stories give hope and 2. I was able to reach into my memory and use old words that were there all along and put them on a page. I hope the new learners of the language will be able to use them in the future. Miigwech.

The Story of Jennifer Gloria Lowpez of Waswanipi

*Names and details in this story have been changed to protect identities.

Told Jennifer Gloria Lowpez
Written Ruth DyckFehderau

[1]In 2007 or so, things at Jennifer Gloria Lowpez's home were not going so great. One night she slugged back some pills, lots of pills, and went out to a bar where she drank some beer and then some wine and then some rum and then some vodka. Then she grabbed an empty beer bottle, broke it against the bar, and cut herself right across a vein. She crumpled in a heap and her spirit lifted and left her body that was still bleeding out on the grimy pub floor.

Someone was saying into her ear, "Stay Jennifer, your kids need you." But kids or no kids, it was time to go. Finally, it was time to go.

Jennifer woke up in the Chibougamau hospital. Someone, probably that person who spoke in her ear, had called an ambulance. Her boyfriend, who had told her that no one could ever love someone as fat and ugly as Jennifer, sat in the chair by the bed. She turned over on her side and faced away from him.

If only the suicide had worked.

In January 2010, the doctor told Jennifer she had diabetes.

She cried and cried and cried. What was diabetes anyways? Didn't people with diabetes go blind and get infections and then amputation after amputation until they didn't have any arms or legs left? Jennifer's heels were always cracked: if anyone's foot was gonna get infected and have to be sawed off, it'd be hers. And then it'd be her other foot and then one arm and then the other and soon she wouldn't have any limbs and would die a horrible pus-filled death.

[1] We are very grateful to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay for the permission to reproduce this story here.

The nutritionist who talked to Jennifer about diabetes kept handing her Kleenex for her tears but didn't really explain much. Still, Jennifer started taking diabetes pills because she was supposed to. They made her lose a few pounds, but not many. She still felt like a Christmas tree. A terrified Christmas tree.

The good thing was that comfort was available every single day. Three meals plus two chocolate bars a day, plus snacks of cookies and poutine between meals, plus a big Costco bag of chips and dip along with a couple of bottles of Pepsi with her kids every night, plus a six-pack of beer and a glass or two of wine gradually emptied over dinner and through the evening after the kids had gone to bed. And then, every ten days or so, Jennifer would binge-drink to get good and wasted for two solid days. The bingeing bugged her kids, but Jennifer needed comfort, escape. Oh, and cocaine. Cocaine definitely made her feel better. It made her feel better about seven or eight times a week.

A few months after her diabetes diagnosis, in spring of 2011, Jennifer went with her family to Marineland and stood in line with them to go on a ride. Her boyfriend was standing in front of her, joking with the kids in line, and Jennifer was looking him over and thinking. He was gone at work half the time and he was hot. Even after eighteen years of being together on and off, he was hot. It was his blue eyes that did it.

But something weird was going on. These days he was acting even more moody and strange and secretive than usual: he had accused Jennifer of cheating on him which was the most ridiculous thing in the world because, as he sometimes pointed out, no one would ever want her—so, you know, how could she cheat? And their daughter was acting strange and secretive too. Everything was awkward and uncomfortable all around. Something was up.

Their turn at the ride came and Jennifer stepped into the enclosure to sit in her seat—but the ride gate couldn't latch behind her. It just banged into her

Christmas tree ass which was, for everyone there to see, obviously too fat for the ride.

"I'm sorry ma'am," the ride operator said gently. "The safety regulations won't allow us to take you on this ride. But if you walk up there," and he pointed to where the ride ended, "you can meet your family when they step off."

He was polite and spoke softly. Jennifer nodded, stepped down from the enclosure, and headed up to where she would meet her family. She wanted to disappear.

Sure, she had a hard time moving her body – just looking at a hill and thinking about walking up would make her cry. Sure, she was a big girl – she joked about her Christmas tree ass louder than anyone in the room. A big ass is what happens when you start having kids at 18 and keep on having them until there are four of 'em, and then you get a job at a grocery store to help pay the bills and you're surrounded by junk food all the time, and you eat it because you're so friggin' exhausted from chasing after your kids and you need energy to keep chasing after them. Okay okay, she was 300 lbs and that was really big. But too big for an amusement park ride? She really wished her kids hadn't seen that.

When they got home from their Marineland vacation from hell, she found out her handsome boyfriend and father of her four kids was leaving her. And then she found out that he – who had accused her of cheating – had been seeing another woman for a year already. That through the whole family vacation at Marineland he had been telling his girlfriend he had already left Jennifer and the kids. And that he, who had always said he didn't want more kids, had gotten that other girl pregnant. And, worst of all, that he had made their daughter lie to Jennifer to help cover up his affair.

Her handsome blue-eyed boyfriend was kind of an asshole.

It was a lot to take in.

It was *a lot* to take in and it kind of got under Jennifer's skin. She reached for some chocolate-bar comfort—and stopped. Food wasn't really what she wanted. She went to her cupboard and reached instead for the vodka bottle, but she didn't really want that either. Maybe some blow? That always made her feel amazing. She picked up the phone to call her dealer and set it back down on the cradle. Cocaine wasn't it either.

What she wanted, what she really really wanted, was to go for a walk. And that was as big a surprise as her boyfriend cheating on her.

Jennifer tied on her most comfortable shoes and walked to the track and began to go around. She was a big girl and she couldn't walk effortlessly like her kids did. She had to shift her weight to the one side, swing her leg around to take a step, and then shift it to the other side for the next step. By the end of the first lap, she was sweating. By the end of the fifth lap, she was exhausted. By the end of the tenth, she was half dead. Still, she kept walking until she had gone around that friggin' track twenty friggin' times.

And the next day, she did it again.

You know what, she thought to herself as she walked, *this walking thing sucks. I'm gonna do more of it. Twenty laps a day, every day, for one month. And then I'll quit.*

While she walked, she thought about her boyfriend. Sure, he was Mr. Blue Eyes and a whole lot of women wanted him, but handsome isn't everything. Now that he was gone, his blue eyes were gone too, but she sure

didn't miss hearing all that fat-and-ugly shit he hurled at her every now and then. The sound waves in her house were a whole lot happier without all that. She actually didn't miss him at all. Money was gonna be a problem now – she and her kids would have to go on welfare until she found other ways to make ends meet. That was stressful. Thinking about it made her cry.

Remembering all the ways he had been mean to her made her cry.

The good thing was that even with the crying, walking was getting easier and sucking less. So she started walking to work every day too, and anywhere she needed to go that was in walking distance, always avoiding shortcuts – if a path cut across a yard, she walked around to collect twenty extra steps.

By the end of the month, she thought she might like to keep walking. It gave her time to think. Cleared her head. Felt okay.

Walking made Jennifer hungry, so, naturally, she started thinking about junk food.

Okay, when she really thought about it, she had to admit she ate more of it than most people. Maybe she could cut back, a little less of it every day.

Or she could try one month without it—Ohhh man.

That was not gonna be easy. One month of walking and sweating seemed a whole lot easier than one month without chocolate bars and cookies and chips and pop.

But she was gonna have to try.

The first month of walking had been a challenge. The first month of no junk food was friggin' brutal. She started inventing tricks to get through the

month. She froze water and crushed the ice into a slurpee so that she could still go through the motions of drinking pop, even if there was no pop there. But, without all the sugar she was used to, she got the shakes every afternoon. She would shake so badly that she couldn't still her hands enough to hold a pen or type. She had to ease up on herself then and have a Pepsi. Immediately the shakes would subside.

This was full-on addiction withdrawal. This was what heroin junkies went through when they went off smack. Worse, because heroin detox lasted a few days, a week at most and, after three weeks then four weeks, Jennifer's detox symptoms were still coming on strong. When the first month was up, she still really wanted junk food, so she had some. Then she figured she had come this far, might as well keep goin'. Once a month she would have a junk food night with her kids so that she wouldn't feel deprived, but the other nights she might as well keep on eating healthy. What did she have to lose? Jennifer's detox symptoms, though, lasted beyond that first month and the next and the next. They lasted for *six friggin' months*.

She thought about that as she walked. Did other folks around here know that sugar was a nasty ol' addiction? Had she missed that class in school? Was she the only one who had always thought junk food was, you know, *food*? Was she the only one who had never known?

One morning, a while after she had quit junk food, Jennifer woke with a bad-ass hangover. Headache, puking, dry mouth, the works.

She hung over the toilet, heaving out the dregs of her unhappy gut, and thinking.

She sure had had plenty of hangovers in her day. She had been drinking at the same level, the teenager-trying-to-get-goodand-wasted level, for twenty

years, since she had been 18 years old. Two or three times a month for twenty years plus a few extra-intense years along the way—Over *a thousand* hangovers.

She was sick of hangovers. And of how her drinking upset her kids. When she went out drinking, she would leave the younger kids in the care of the eldest, who was old enough to babysit, but the younger ones resented having the oldest be the boss of them, and the oldest hated being in that difficult position with younger kids who wouldn't listen. It was hard for everybody, all around.

That's it, Jennifer thought, looking into the toilet bowl. *No more.*

Now she knew what to do. She could do one month without booze. Well, maybe not totally without – this wasn't AA. She would savor a glass of something every week or so, sip it slowly, but for a month there would be no more getting wasted, and no more sixpack of beer every evening.

Besides, she didn't need it so much. Now that she didn't have to listen to her ex hurling insults at her, now that her body didn't feel sick all the time, she didn't need escape. Her life was beginning to feel like something worth living, something worth sticking around for.

Cutting out most drinking wasn't exactly easy – she had heavy liquor cravings for a month, and light cravings for a few months after that – but it was manageable. And wouldn't you know, at the end of a month without a single hangover, she liked how she felt and didn't want to get wasted again.

She wasn't *quitting* – she didn't like that word because *quitting* sounded like she might begin again, like the folks who quit smoking for a couple of weeks and then took it up again. She was *stopping*. Full *stop*. Done. No more.

Not another binge or hangover in her entire life.

Soon after the end of booze, Jennifer went to the clinic for her diabetes follow-up. The nutritionist went on and on again. There were some Science words and then Jennifer was supposed to do this and not supposed to do that and she was doing this wrong and that wrong and she should eat more of this and less of that and blah blah blah blah blah blah blah.

She walked home from the clinic and thought about it.

Really, it was just all negativity and confusion, and it wasn't helping at all. She didn't want someone else telling her what she was doing wrong or what to eat or that she was too fat – she'd had enough of all that with ol' Blue Eyes.

That's it, she thought, *No more nutritionist, no more diabetes appointments*. She would keep on doing stuff that made her feel better and would keep on not doing stuff that made her feel worse. She'd check in with the doctor every now and again, like she always had, for general check-ups. But not for diabetes appointments.

Quitting the clinic was easy. She wasn't gonna need a month to wean herself off of that. She could do it in one day.

There was just one more habit to get under control. Beautiful, beautiful blow. Jennifer was still using every day and she wasn't entirely sure she wanted to quit. Not because she feared withdrawal – she didn't – but because cocaine felt amazing. Even after all these years it felt amazing. When she had started walking and had stopped junk food and then drinking, she had always eventually felt better for it. But she was pretty sure that she felt a whole lot better high on blow than she ever would feel if she were clean.

Still, she could try it for a month. She'd probably sleep better. It'd be good for the kids, too, to see her try. To see her not be good at something and then try to get better at it.

And maybe she could still do a line every few weeks or so.

The first couple of days brought some intense cravings. Not as bad as the sugar cravings had been when she cut out junk food, but still, pretty bad. Jennifer went through the motions. She went to work and looked after her kids and hung out with her friends, but, through it all, she thought about sniffing back lines of white powder and that electric buzz when it hit your brain, when you knew that for a few minutes everything would be all right. And for the first week or so, she was so cranky that any little thing would set her off.

Sometimes, in the evenings, she smoked a bit of weed to take the edge off. It did the trick and didn't make her heart race nor her eyes look weird.

After a few weeks, she snorted a line of blow. Surprisingly, the high wasn't really all that great. She still craved it, of course – it was cocaine – but she didn't really need it. It wasn't worth what it took out of her. She was done with it. Without rehab or treatment or AA or even talking with an elder about it, she had brought her cocaine addiction under control.

And stopping blow had been easier than stopping junk food.

That was something to think about too.

Jennifer found work eventually. Financially things levelled out at home. She kept walking and thinking.

Half the time, she was thinking about the toilet. She felt so much better now, but her body was still getting used to all the changes she had made and it had become anemic – she had had to go on iron pills and they plugged her up like a drain full of hair. So, at work, when everybody else was thinking about a drink and a barbeque after work, Jennifer was thinking about the toilet. And

when she walked around the track, she thought about it more: *When I go to the toilet, is it actually gonna come?* The doctor said that would fix itself eventually. And it did.

The other half the time, she was thinking about other things. Her cousin, who had been one of her favourite people, had committed suicide and there were a few things about that whole situation that just didn't make sense.

She thought about her kids too. "Mom, you're killin' me!" her son would say when dinner would again be something healthy with lots of vegetables, but he would eat it anyways. She was a better mom now that she was healthier. She liked her kids more and had more patience with the ways they were kids.

Sometimes she still thought about her ex-boyfriend. He was gone, moved to another community to be with his new family. Jennifer was much smaller than she had once been. People kept asking her if she was starving herself. (She wasn't.) Even her doctor had had to pick up his jaw from the floor when she walked into his office. But she hadn't lost the weight for ol' Blue Eyes. She had done the work for herself to feel good in her own body. She would never have been able to do it if he had been around.

On one of those walks, half thinking about the toilet and half thinking about her new life, she realized that she wouldn't take Blue Eyes back. She had seen him across the crowd at a recent community event and he couldn't stop staring at her, at how she looked now. If he left his other family and came to her and begged, she would never ever take him back.

Jennifer is about half the weight she was on that trip to Marineland a couple of years ago. She doesn't take any diabetes medication now. She still fights sugar cravings, and, when a craving gets out of hand, she takes a bite or two of a chocolate bar, chews reeeaaaallllyyy slowly, and throws the rest away.

Of all her old addictions that might come back, she's most afraid of the junk food addiction. Most afraid that one junk food meal will lead to another and then another and all that weight and unhealthiness will pile back on.

But most of the time she knows – she is in charge of her life. And it's so much better now, so much better, she ain't *never* goin' back to that way of living.

She'd like to see junk food restricted in Eeyou Istchee for everyone. Folks oughta know it isn't actually food.

Next up, she thinks, she might stop smoking. That'll probably be another tough one. And maybe she'll take up some other kinds of exercise. Like some of those weight or resistance exercises that sculpt your arms and ass. Years ago, she had a Christmas tree ass and everyone knew. It'd be good to have a famous ass again. A healthy, well-shaped, look-how-strong-I-am, famous ass.

If you would like to be tested for diabetes, contact the clinic in your community:

Whapmagoostui (819) 929-3307
Oujé-Bougoumou (418) 745-3901
Waskaganish (819) 895-8833
Waswanipi (819) 753-2511
Nemaska (819) 673-2511
Wemindji (819) 978-0225
Chisasibi (819) 855-9011
Mistissini (418) 923-3376
Eastmain (819) 977-0241

This story is taken from the book *The Sweet Bloods of Eeyou Istchee: Stories of Diabetes and the James Bay Cree*. The book is free to Indigenous people living on Canadian reserves and traditional territories. (Postage fees may apply.)
Contact: Paul Linton (418) 923-3355 www.sweetbloods.org

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Jennifer Gloria Lowpez Story

Told by Jennifer Gloria Lowpez
Written by Ruth DyckFehderau
Translated by Louise Blacksmith

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ᒥᔪᑦ ᐅᑕᐅᐊᔨᓕᖅ, ᑲᔪᓂᓚ ᑲᐃᐸᑲᒥᔭᑦ ᑲᓂᐅᑲᒥᔨᑲᑲᓄᖅ ᑭᒥᓂᖅᐳᑦ, ᑲᔪᒻᒃ ᓄᑕᖅᑦ ᑲ ᐋᖏᑌᐳᔨᔨᑲᓄ ᓗᖅᑕ ᐯᔾᓄ ᐅᓂᖅᐳᑲᓄ ᑭᑕᖅᑦ ᐅᓂᖅᖁᓂ, ᑲ ᓄᔨᒪᔭᑦ ᐅᑕᐅᐊᔨᓕᖅᒪ ᐅᓂᖅᖁᓂ ᑭᑕᖅᑦ ᑭᔨᑲᑲᓄᖅ ᐅᑕᐅᐊᔨᓕᖅᒪ ᐅᓂ ᐅᑕᐅᐊᔨᓕᖅᒪ ᐅᓂᖅᖁᓂ ᐅᑕᐅᐊᔨᓕᖅᒪ ᐅ

ᓇᓴᐱᓂᑕ·ᑕᑉᐤ 300 ᑎᕿᐁᖅ"ᐃᑲᐦ ᑭ ᐃᓴᐱ"ᑎᓂᓄᔪᑐ, ᑕ·ᐯ ᑭᕿ ᑭ ᒥᓴᑕ ᒥᓯᑎᓐᔪᐤ ᐊ·∇ᓴ, ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᒣᑦ ᐅ"ᑭ ᐅᓀ ᐅ"ᑭ ᐃ"ᑕ·ᐊᔪᓇᖅᓄᓂᑦ ᐊᓂᑕ ᓂᑕ·ᐊᔨᒥᑦ ᑭ ᐃᑌᓵ"ᑕᒪᐤ

ᐃᓴᔪᑕᐦ ᒧᐦ ᑲ·∇ᐸᓵᓵ·ᑕᐤ ᑲᑭᔨ ᐸᐸᒥᐸᓵ·ᑕᐤ ᐊᓂᑌ ᒪᓱᓀᓭᓂᑦ ᑲ ᐃᓴᐸᓵ·ᑕᐤ, ∇ᔪ ᑲ ᓇᑲᑎᔪᑦ ᐅ·ᐃ"·ᑫᑦᓀ ᐅ"ᑕ·ᐊᔪᐤ ᐊᓂᔨ" ᑲ ᓄ·ᐃᓵᐦ ᐅ·ᑕᔨᒪᖏᐤ ᑐᐦ ᐸᑎᒧ ᑲ ᑭᓴᒪᖏᐤ ᐊᓂᔨ" ᐅ·ᐃ"·ᑫᑦ - ᐊᓂᔨ ᑲ ᐃᑎᔪᑦ ∇ ·ᐃ"·ᑫᑦᒥᑦ ·ᐃ - ᑭ ᐊᑦ·∇ᔨ" ᐃᓴ·ᑫᐤ ᓴᓴ ᐯᓵᔪ ᐱ>ᓄ" ∇ᑭ ·ᐃᑐ·ᐊᔪᐸᓄᓀᐤ ᒣ·ᑲᐦ ᐊᓂᑌ ᒪᓱᓀᓭᓂᑦ ᑲ ᐃ"ᑕ·ᑕᐤ ᑭ ᐃᑌᔪᐸᓄ ᐊᓂᔨ" ᐃᓴ·ᑫᐤ" ᓴᓴ ∇ᑭ ᓇᑲᑕᑦ ᓀᓂᕐᐦᐢᐤ ᑲᓴᑦ ᒪᐦ ᐸᒧᒪ, ᐸᑦ ∇ᑭ ᐃ·ᑌᔪᐸᓄ ∇ᑲ ᒡᓀ ∇ ᓂᑐ·∇ᔨᒪᑦ ᐊ·ᐊᔨᔪ, ᑭ ᐅᑕ·ᐊᔪᑎᑦ"∇ᔪᐸᓄ ᐊᓂᔨ ᐅᑕᐦ ᐦᐃᓴ·ᑫᐤᓀ ᓇᓴᐱ ᒪᐦ ∇ᑭ·ᐃ ᐃ"ᑎᑦ ᑲᓴᐱ ∇ᑭ ᐃᔪᐸᓄᑦ ᐊᓂᔨ" ᐅᑕᓂᔨ ∇ᑲ ᒣᑎ·ᐃᑕᒧ·ᐊᔨᔪ ᐅᑲ·ᐃ ᔪᑕᐦ ᐃᓴ·ᑫᐤ ∇ ·ᐃᑐ·ᐊᔪᑦᓀ

ᑕ·ᐯ ·ᐃ ᐃ"ᑐ ᑭ ᐃᑌᔨᒣᐤ ᐊᓂᔨ" ᐅ·ᐃ"·ᑫᑦᒪ ᑲ ·ᐊᑎᑲᒥᑐ·ᐊᐱᔪᐤ ∇ ᒥ·ᔭᐯᐅᑦᑕ ᑲ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦᓀ

ᓇᓴᐱ ᑕ·ᐯ ᑭ ᐊᔨᒥ"ᐃᔪᑯ ᐅᑦᓀ

ᑕ·ᐯ ᑭ ᐊᐃᒪᓂᔨ ᑕᓵ ᑲ ᐃᓴᐸᔪᑦ ∇ᔪ ᓇᓴᐱ ᑲ·ᐃ ᑭᓴᑲᔨ"ᑕᒥ"ᐃᔪᑯᑦᓀ

ᒧ·∇"ᐱᓀ ᑭ ·ᐃ" ᐅᑎᓇᒪᐠ ·ᓗᑲᓪᑎᔨ ᑎᑭ ᐅ"ᑭ ᒥᔪᔨ"ᑕᓵ - ∇ᔪᓂ ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᑲ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦ"ᑕᐱᓀᓂᓀᐤ

ᓇᒪᔪᔨ·ᐃᐃ ᑭᑎᒥᔨ ᑲ ᐃᑎᑦᓂᓀᐤ ᐅᑲᐸᑎᐠ ᑲ·ᐃ ᐅᑎᓇᒪᐱᐤ ᐊᓂᔨ ᐃᓴᔪᑌ·ᐊᐳᔨ, ᒥᔪ ᒪᐠ ᓇᒪᔪᔨ ᑲᐸᐠ ᓇᒪᔪᔨ ᑲᐸᐠ ᑲ ᓂᑐ·∇ᔨᒪᑦᓀᐤ ᒪᑭᑎᔪᑦ ∇ᔪ ᐊᑭᑎᑦᓀ ᑲ·∇ᔨ" ᑲᑭ ᐊᔪᑦᓀᐤ ᑲ ᐅᑎᓇᒪᐱᐤ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦᓀᐤ, ᑲᐠ ᒒᒥ"ᐊᑦ ᐊᓂᔨ ᐊ·∇ᔨ" ᑲᑭ ᐊᑭᑎᔪᑦ ∇ᔪ ᐊᐱᑦᓀᐤ ᑲ ᐅᑎᓇᒪᐱᐤ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦᓀᐤ, ᑲᐠ ᑲ ᐊᔪᑦᓀᐤ ᑲ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦᓀᐤ ᐊᓂᔨ ᐊᑭᑎᔪᑦ ∇ᔪ ᐊᐱᑦᓀᐤ ᑲ ᐅᑎᓇᒪᐱᐤ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦᓀᐤ ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᐊᓂᔨ ᐊᑭᑎᔪᑦ ∇ᔪ ᐊᐱᑦᓀᐤ ᑲ ᐅᑎᓇᒪᐱᐤ ᐃᑌᔨᒪᑦᓀᐤ ᒪᐧ∇"ᐱᓀ ᑲ ᐃᑌᔨᒪ

ᓇᒧᐃᐅᑭᓂ ᐅᖏᑕᕐᕆᐅᑉ ᐊᓂᔪᓂᖅ ᒪᒪᖏᖅ ᑲᑎ ᐃᑎᓂᕐᓂᖅ, ᑎ ᑕᖏᑎᐅᓐᓄᑦ ᑲᓪᓚᕐᓂᖅ ᑎ ᒪᒋᑎᓄᓐᓄᑦ ᑲᑎ ᐃᑎᓂᕐᓂᖅᓴᖅ ᐊᓂᔪᓂᖅ ᐅᖏᑕᕐᕆᐅᑉ ᐃᓕᓴᐅᑎᓂᖅ ᐅᖏᑕᕐᕆᐅᑉ ᐊᓂᔪᓂᖅ ᐅ ᐃᔪᓂ ᐊᐅᒥᑦᐃᑲᓂᖅᓴᖅ ᓇᒧᐃᐅᑭᓂ ᐅᖏᑎ ᒥᖏᑲᖏᖅ ᐊᐸᑎᓄᓂᐅᓂᖅᓴᖅ ᑎ ᐊᐃᒪᓂᖅ ᐊᓂᑕ ᒣᑲᖏᓴ ᑎ ᒪᒐ ᒪᓐᖏ ᐅ ᒪᒥᑐᓴᐅᖏᑕᖏᓐ ᐅ ᐃᖏᐸᐅᑦᑕᑉᓐ ᑎ ᒪᒐ ᐅ ᑎᖏᓄᑦᓂ ᑕᖏᑦᑕᑉᓐ ᑲ ᐊᖏᑦᐃᑲᓂᖅᓴᖅ ᐅᑦᐃᓐᖓᓐᓂᖅᓴᖅ

ᑎ ᒪᒐ ᒪᓐᓇ ᒥᑯᒪᓐ ᑎ ᐃᑦᑎᐃᑲᑦ ᐅ ᐱᒧᐖᑕ ᐅᖏᑕᕐᕆᐅᑉ ᐃᓐᓇᓐ ᐊᖏᓴᑯᖏᑕᑎᓐ ᑎ ᐅᓪᓚᑦᑎᓐᓂᖅ ᖃᓄ ᐊᔪᑎᑯᖏᑕᑎᓐ ᑎ ᐱᒧᖏᑕᑎᓐ ᐅᑯᓐᓂᖅ ᑎ ᐱᒧᖏᑕᑎᓐ ᐅᑯᓐᓂᖅ ᐅᖏᑕᕐᕆᐅᑉ ᐃᓐᓇᓐ ᐊᖏᓴᑯᖏᑕᑎᓐ ᐅ ᐱᒧᖏᑕᑎᓐ ᐅᑯᓐᓂᖅ ᐊᖏᓴᑯ

ᐱᓴᓂᐤ ᓂ ᐃᓐᑎᓱᒋᐤ ᐅᓇᓗ, ᑭ ᒥᔪᐃᒡᓕᐢ ᒪᓗ ᐧᐁᔭ ᐅᔨᓛ ᒍᐢ ᐁ ᒥᓴᔪᐃᔭᓴ ᒋᑎᒥᓇᐟ ᑭ ᒍᒍᔭᓴ ᐁᔨᐅᒋᐢ ᐅᑕᑯᓯᐟᙳx ᐃᓐᑕᑯᓵ ᐊᒋᐢ ᐁᑎᑕᐢ ᐁᐧᐃᓐᑕᐢ ᐅ

ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᐅᑎᕆ ᐃᑌᓗᑎᑦ ᓂᒃ ᓴᓂᓐ ᐁ ᒥᓂ·ᖃᓄᓐ - ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᐅᑎᕆ ᒥᔪᑎᑦ ᐅᔪᐤ ᐁ ᐃ·ᑌᑦ ᐊ·ᐁᓐ ·ᐁᓴ ᒧ·ᐁᖅᑎᓪ ᐁ ᒥᓂ·ᖃᓄᓐ ᕆ ᐃᑎᑎᑦ, ᒧ·ᐁᖅᑎᓪ ᐊ·ᐁᓐ ᓂᓚᑐᓴᑌᑎᓄᒃ ᑲ ᓴᓂᑦ ᐁ ᐃᓐ·ᑦᑦ ᕆᓐ ᒪᒃ ᐁ ᐃᓐ·ᑦᑦᓯ ᓂᒃ ᓴᓂᑦ ᕆ ᐃᑌᑉ ·ᐃᓴᓯ ᑌᒃᓂ ᐁᑉᓯ

ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᕆᓐ ᒥᐧᑐᑐ ᕆᔨᑲᒃᑉ ᓂᒃ ᐅᑎᕆ ᒥᓂ·ᖃᓐ ᑲᔮ ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᕆᓐ ᓂᒃ ᐅᑎᕆ ᐊᐧᔨᓂ·ᐊᓪᓕᐊ·ᐁᓐ ᑲ ᐃᔭᐱᔭ ᐱᒪᒫᓂᔨ·ᐊᓪᓚ, ᕆ ᐃᑌᓗᑎᑦᓯ

ᐃᖏᔨᑐ ᒪᒃ ᑲ ᓴᓂᑎᑦ ᐃᖏᔨᑌ·ᐊᓴᔨ, ᓂᑐᐧᔨᐃᓂᒃᒥᔨᐧᐧᓗ ᕆ ᐃᑐᐧᑌᑉ ᑎᒃ ᓂᑐ ᑭᖏᒪᒪᓄᓂᑦ ᐊᓂᔨ ᐁ ᔨ·ᐊᒃᒥᐧᑦᓯᓂᑦ ᐁᓂ ᑭᔨ ᑕᓐ ᒃ ᐊᓗᒥᐧᐃᔨᓂᑦ ᐊᓂᔨᐧ ᒃ ··ᐊᓪᐃᐧᑎᒪᔨᓂᑦ ᑲ ᐃᔨᑦ ᓇᓄᒃᑎᑦᑎᓂᑦ ᐁ ᐃᔨᑦ ᕆᑭᔨᑦᓯ ᓴᖏ ᐊᓂᔨ ᒃ ᐃᑌᓗᖏ ᓇᒧᐃᐃ ᐅᐧᑎᕆ ᓂᔨᑐᑐᓂᐧᐧᓗ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐃᑎᑎᑦᓯ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᕆ·ᐃᐧᑎᒪᔨᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᑕᐧᐯ ·ᐃ ᓂᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦᓯᓴ

ᐊᓂᔨ ᐃᓴ ᐁ ᐊᑎ ᕆᐧᐁᓂ ᕆ ᓕᒥᑐᓴᔪᑎᑦ ᐅᔪᔨᓴ

ᑕᐧᐯ ᑭᐧᑦ, ᕆ ᓂᐧᑎᐅᔨᑦᑕ ᑕᓐ ᒃ ᐃᑌᓗᑎᑦ ᐊᐧᔨᐃᓴᔪᑎᒥᑦ ᐁᒃ ᒃ ·ᐁᔨᐃᐧᑎᒪᔨᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐃᑌᓗᑎᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂᑦ ᐁᒃ ᐁᑐᐧᑎᓂ

ᐅᓴᒃ ᑲ·Δ ᓗᓂᑦᑕᑦ ᓀᓴᒃ ᑕ·∨ ᑭ ᐊᐳᒪᐃΔᑯᓚ ᓀᒧΔ ᑭᓯ ᐅᐢᑎ ΔᕃΛᕃ ᐊᐳᒪᐃΔᑯ ᑲ Δᕃ∧ᕃ ᑭ ᐊᐳᒥᐃΔᑯᑦ ᐅᓴᒃ ᑲ·Δ ᓗᓂᑦᑕᑦ ∇ ᓱᐅᒋᒋᓱᑦ ᑯΔᓴᑯ ∇ᑭ·Δᔪᑭ ᒋᒋᓱᑦ, ᓴᐸᒃ ᑭᓯ ᓄ·ᐊᒃ ᐊΔᒪᓀ ᑭ Δᑌᐳᐢᑕᒃᓚ ᑭ Δᐢᑐᑕᒪ ᐊᓂᔪᐢ ᑎᑲᔪᐢ ᑕᐸ Δᐢᑐᑕᒪ ᒣᔪᑯ ᑭᑐᑲᑦᐢᓓ ᑭ ᓂᑐ ᐊᐸᑎᓱ ᑲᓴ ᑭ ᓀᓀᐅᓴᐢᑕᒪ ᑎᑭ ᐅᑎᓀᐢ ᐊᓂᔪ ᑲ Δᐢᑐᑕᒪᑦ ᐊᓂᔪᐢ ᑲᑲᔪᐢ ᒪᓴ ᑭᓯᐸᒃ ᐊᓂᔪ ᑲᑲᔪᐢ ᒪᓴ ᑭᓯᐸᒃ ᑭ ᐅᐢᑐᑕᒪ ᑎᑭ ᐅᑎᓀᐢ ᐊᓂᔪᐢ

ᐃᓕᓐᓂᒃ ᓴᖅᑎᑦ ᐊᓂᑌ ᕆᓴᑎᓕᕆᓕᖅᓯᐅᖅ ᓇᒪᐃᐃ ᑭᓴ ᐅᖅᑎᑦ ᐊᓂᔪᓂ ᐅᓐᕕᖏᑕᐃᓂᓕ ᐊᓂᔪᓂ ᐅᓐᕕᖏᑕᐃᓂᓕᐅᖅᑎᑦ

Translating Jennifer's Story

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Hard as it was to read about Jennifer's journey, it reminded me how heart wrenching it is to go through life when you feel so alone, not knowing what to do and where to get help. I felt connected to Jennifer because I experienced some difficult times in my own life. Not the same difficulties, but the feeling of rejection, loneliness, and pain was as real as hers.

I remember when the nurse told me I had diabetes. I was devastated and I didn't want to believe it. In fact, when the doctor came in he wanted to shake my hand and said, with a smirk on his face, "Welcome to the club!" I felt so insulted that I pushed his outstretched hand away. I told him in an angry tone that I was not joining his club! I was going to fight this as best as I could and be healthy!

I was very emotional as I translated Jennifer's story. I felt compassion for her when she talked about her weight and how her boyfriend treated her. I felt her pain and frustration having to deal with confusion, uncertainty, stress, and feeling rejected and unloved. She had a lot on her plate. Her weight, drinking, drugs, her boyfriend leaving her and their four children and then to be told she was diabetic.

When she finally began to step up and help herself, I found myself cheering her on! Slowly but surely, one by one, the challenges she faced every day diminished. I was so proud when she decided to take charge of her life, that she had no desire to go back to her old way of living. Jennifer shows what a person can do when they put their mind to it. She put her past behind her and moved on with hope for a better future, free of drugs, alcohol, and food addictions. It was especially amazing to me that she no longer needed diabetes medication at all because she was careful with her diet and walking was a big factor!

Well done, Jennifer. May you continue to walk on your journey towards wellness with determination and pride. Thank you for sharing your story with us. It was an honour for me to translate it into our Cree language (James Bay Southern East Cree).

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Pillière, Linda. *Intralingual Translation of British Novels. A Multimodal Stylistic Perspective.* Bloomsbury Academic, 2021, 270 pages.

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From the beginning of her book, *Intralingual Translation of British Novels. A Multimodal Stylistic Perspective*, Linda Pillière catches the attention of her readers. The opening scene is set in a bookshop where you stand with different editions of the same book in your hands and, as you ponder, the revelation occurs: Is this a copy, an adaptation, a new edition? A translation, perhaps? What happened in the editorial process when adapting this book for a geographically different audience? From the differences at the paratextual level (cover, illustrations, typeface, footnotes) to the stylistic choices (lexis, tense, syntax and punctuation), Pillière reminds us that the changes in a text are not irrelevant. Ultimately, there seems to be a reason behind everything in the editorial market, for "[i]f they did not influence the potential buyer, major publishing houses would not spend time and money on reformatting texts. The world of publishing is, let us not forget, first and foremost a commercial enterprise" (24), writes Pillière.

Historically, the discipline of translation—also linguistics prior to it—, has centered almost entirely on interlingual translations, that is, a transfer between different languages. However, Pillière's interest lies in studying intralingual translations, following Jakobson's categories for translation (1959). She declares that the American English (AmE) editions of British English (BrE) novels can be understood as intralingual translations, which are "the rewording or rewriting of a text by means of signs of the same language" (25). By focusing on this type of translation, one that has been greatly

neglected by translation studies up until the present time, Pillière identifies the gap and devotes Chapter 1 of her book to explaining Jakobson's concepts more in depth, and opens the ground for a very detailed state of the art regarding previous works that have recently touched on this topic.

In order to carry out her ambitious enterprise, she focuses on AmE editions of BrE novels and underlines how this kind of yet peripheral research can help translation studies break down the division started by the formalists in order to find a more enriching way of looking at transfers and adaptations through the lens of stylistics. Previous research, Pillière notes, brought to the forefront lexical changes when comparing English intralingual translations, specifically targeting children's literature, one of the most renowned examples being J. K. Rowling's bestselling Harry Potter series, and its adaptation for the US readership. Nonetheless, seeking to further this line of study, Pillière's corpus of over 80 texts includes "expert-to-lay translation, adaptations of classics for children, and modern renderings of classics" (26). The works chosen by Pillière were published between 1980 and the present day, and her reasoning behind selecting such a period is the many changes that the publishing industry has experienced in the last decades. The corpus is varied in terms of genre, including popular fiction, travelogues, biography, children's fiction, Booker Prize winners, and translations.

Rather than merely comparing the different versions under the light of dialectal, geographical differences, Pillière utilizes the 'cultural turn' in translation studies (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, 1995), in conjunction with newly explored ideas borrowed from the field of sociology, namely the power relation from which literature and translation cannot escape. Furthermore, Pillière emphasizes the key role that publishers hold in the book industry and their control over literary manuscripts. In this vein, the author draws different conclusions regarding the North American editorial market and altogether explains how the US editors intervene in the adaptation and rewriting of the texts during the editorial process a great deal more than their British peers. The notion of the "editors" as the agents in charge of modifying and adapting books is presented in Chapter 2, and, in order to tackle such power relations, Pillière makes use of the scholarly works of Arrojo (1997), Hermans (1999), and Venuti (1995, 2018).

Another rather noteworthy notion that Pillière takes into consideration in her study is the materiality of the text. Akin to Benjamin (2012) or Venuti (1995, 2018), she highlights the "no referentiality of language," and urges scholars to encompass such materiality when researching intralingual translations. That is why, in Chapter 3, she claims that there exists "different modes in creating textual meaning" (32). Indeed, not only words can create meaning, but visual aspects also included in the material construction of the text can equally influence the readership. Pillière labels the latter as "peritexts" (128), which are usually designed by the publishers and aim to serve a marketable end. With this, Pillière underlines the importance of incorporating a multimodal stylistic perspective when comparing intralingual translations, and how such an approach can help us reflect on the way translation has been defined.

After outlining the methodology and theories that serve as the basis of her research, in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 the author analyzes the texts, addressing the modifications found in the different geographical versions. Chapter 4 covers the grammatical and lexical differences, whereas Chapter 5 explores changes that are more subtle to the eyes of the reader that could not be considered dialectical, or categorized as "Americanizations," in the author's words. Finally, Chapter 6 shows how said changes alter the "voices within the text" (305), modifying decisive aspects for the reader's interpretation such as the subjectivity of the text and a significant loss of meaning, turning the AmE editions into a more concise, downplayed and Americanized version of the BrE novels.

One of the most compelling ideas that I found in *Intralingual Translation of British Novels* is the very topical "material" approach to translation. Pillière ponders on the materiality of texts, both originals and translations, by considering "the book in its entirety [in order] to raise awareness of the important role played by the material text" (30). By taking this perspective, she unearths the traces of the editors' intervention in the US editions of novels such as Sarah Ivens's *Forest Therapy*, Simon Winchester's *The Surgeon of Crowthorne*, Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love*, or Joanne Harris's *Blackberry Wine*, traces that inform on the reception and consumption of these books in the two different countries. All in all, Pillière's book is a ground-breaking and inspiring publication that certainly will benefit imminent dialogues in the field of translation studies, especially any kind of multidisciplinary research that waltzes around the circulation of literature and multimodal stylistic transfers when considering the cultural, sociological, and ideological aspects that intervene in the reception of a text.

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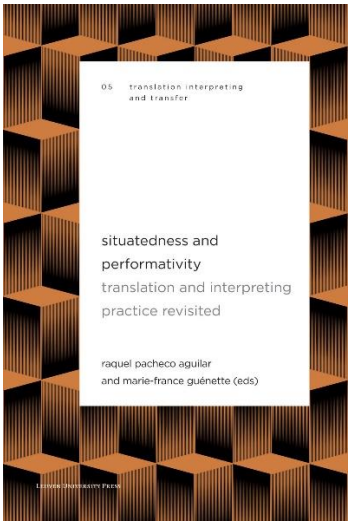

Situatedness and Performativity. Translation and Interpreting Practice Revisited, Edited by Raquel Pacheco Aguilar and Marie-France Guénette. Leuven: Leuven UP, 2021. 220 pp.

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In the last decade, the humanities have begun to turn away from considering merely discursive and interpretive practices to analyzing instead how such practices exist within, and impinge on, material realities. In "Translation and the Materialities of Communication" (2016) Karin Littau brought that discussion to the field of translation studies. *Situatedness and Performativity* is also a response to this material turn. Gathering a fascinating variety of linguistic and national contexts, and employing sundry methodologies, Pacheco Aguilar and Guénette endeavour to expand the understanding of translation and interpreting beyond a hermeneutic process, to a "performative-oriented approach […] from a less essentialist perspective" (11-12). As the introduction states, the editors look to bring out "the performers, and the material aspects involved in translation or interpreting events," in other words, "the situatedness and performativity of translating and interpreting" (12). This new approach also entails paying attention to political, ethical, and historical dimensions and employing methodologies that consider perspectives from fields such as the "sociology of translation, history of translation, performance studies, and even translation and interpreting education" (12-15).

Nine essays are organized into three main parts that address the political effects of translation and interpreting practices, the people involved in translation events, and the temporal and spatial situatedness of translation. The focus in the first part ranges from textual analysis, to analysis of multimedia performances, to framing analysis of translated news stories. In "A Different Story for a Different Readership: a *Skopos* approach to the Translation of Julio Ramón Ribeyro's *Alienación*," Ellen Lambrechts looks at a novel from Peru in the 1950s, a politically charged period in that country's history. Lambrechts assesses how the translator adapts and assimilates the text for a contemporary North American context, thus creating an instance of intercultural communication. Audrey Canalès's "Performative Translation and Identity, from Poetics to Politics" analyzes the Canadian singersongwriter Feist (stage name of Leslie Feist) and the Mexican American performance artist Guillermo Gómez Peña. Canalès brings these performers' vastly different temperaments into dialogue by examining how they link their creative processes to translation. Feist's use of collaborators she calls her "amplifiers" creates a web of relations that "translat[e] Feist's artistic identity in performances" (40), and Gómez-Peña's highly politicized use of verbal creations, clothes, and body language reinvents the border as a translation and cultural contact zone, thus initiating a debate of performance as translation. Yuan Ping's "News Translation as (Re)framing: A Critical Framing Analysis of the 2014 Hong Kong Protests in *Reference News*" presents a case study of the news frames, framing devices, and factors contributing to the framing process. Ping demonstrates how "*RN* mainly constructs its stories around several news frames of *justice*, *conflict*, *economy,* and *responsibility* not salient in the STs [and portrays] different social realities from those in the STs, reflecting the ideological differences involved and conveying *RN*'s attitudes" (60).

Part 2 focuses on "people involved in translating events." In "'Handy, the Middlemen!' Mediating Afrikaans Literature in the Low Countries," Marike van der Watt analyzes the backgrounds, knowledge, and actions of Dutch translators of Afrikaans prose. Relying on the notions of "habitus" and performativity, van der Watt concludes that, particularly in this case where peripheral languages are involved, translators feel a social responsibility and go beyond the call of duty to act as cultural mediators between the groups they represent (104). Also addressing the peripheries of the literary polysystem, Paola Gentile's "Publishers, Translators, and Literature Foundations: The Selection, Reception, and Image Building of Translated Literature from the Low Countries to Italy" considers the agents in the literary field and the role they play in bringing Dutch literature to Italian audiences. The article draws on the sociology of translation (the products and processes of translation), reception studies (the dynamics of how literary works are received in target cultures), and imagology (how literature constructs and disseminates national images) (112). Gentile's work reveals that grant managers of literature foundations act as cultural mediators and that translators are key in the choice of which novels should be translated. The article also concludes that "despite the high number of translations, the image of [Dutch] literature and culture is still very vague in Italy" (124). Employing Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital, Wenqian Zhang's "The Making of a Translator's Brand in International Literary Exchanges: The 'Discoverer' Howard Goldblatt" explores how

Goldblatt created a "brand" that exerted power and influence in the field of Chinese translation. A translator, professor, editor, and reviewer, Goldblatt singlehandedly "brought modern and contemporary Chinese literature to Western readers" (136), including Nobel laureate Mo Yan. Goldblatt built a "trademark in the field of Chinese-English literary translation" around a "distinctive, positive, and trustworthy image as perceived by other agents, rather than sales figures or profitability" (143).

The third part of the collection tackles the temporal and spatial situatedness of translation. In "Restoration Through Historicist Translation," Marie-France Guénette, the volume's co-editor, looks at French translations of *Oroonoko, or The Royal Slave* by Aphra Behn (1640–1689), the first English female writer to make her living by the pen and one of the first abolitionists. *Oroonoko* was first translated in 1745 by the writer and translator of Shakespeare, Pierre Antoine de La Place, yet instead of an abolitionist text, La Place's version was read as a story of lost love. Guénette analyzes the French retranslations by historian and translator Bernard Dhuicq (1956–2013), who contributed to restoring the image of Behn for contemporary readers. Guénette employs the concept of transhistoricity to gauge "retranslation in light of previous translations and the original work" (152). Also examining the historical effects of translation, Ehsan Alipour's "Translation and Culture Planning in NineteenthCentury Iran: A Study of State Actors as Planners" borrows from Itamar Even-Zohar's and Gideon Toury's concept of culture planning in analyzing the role of translation in the reign of three Qajar kings from 1797 to 1896. During this period, translators were keen on texts dealing with political modernization, specifically Western ideas of democracy. Alipour concludes that "[t]he role of translation in the culture planning endeavors, which eventually lead to the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911, varied and ranged from familiarizing the people with modern political ideas to undermining absolute monarchy" (182-183). The final chapter, "Deconstructing the Tensions Brought on by Cultivating Translators and Interpreters," by Raquel Pacheco Aguilar, the other coeditor of the volume, deals with the pedagogy of translation by exploring two German functionalist authors of translation textbooks, Hans G. Hönig and Paul Kussmaul, and bringing "the disciplines of T & I didactics and educational philosophy into a dynamic interaction" (189). The analysis shows how some of the textbooks shift focus from equivalent linguistic structures to communicative actions as well as considering "the nature and function of education in relation to the concept of translation" helping to "situate translation teaching practices in time and space" (205).

The pieces are carefully crafted and organized, which speaks to the care the editors have put into the collection, and the dialogue with many disciplines is evident. The multifarious contexts and approaches may strike some readers as not sufficiently focused. Still, such variety also attests to the dynamic nature of the driving concepts of the volume, namely, situatedness and performativity. Pacheco Aguilar and Guénette can be credited with opening up such a space for dialogue that other translation scholars will likely follow.

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