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La Belle Altérité: Towards a Dialogical Paradigm in Translation Theory?

L'acte éthique consiste à reconnaître
et à recevoir l'Autre en tant qu'Autre.
Antoine Berman

That a theory of translation might be implicit in Bakhtin's [Baxtin] general theory of discourse was suggested as far back as 1983 by one of his English translators, Caryl Emerson. Not until recently has this discussion gathered momentum, though alterity and even heteroglossia have begun to crop up increasingly in the recent corpus of translation studies, implicitly and sometimes explicitly.[1] This may be merely a side-effect of what some would call "Bakhtinomania," but there are now enough texts and passages relating heteroglossia and translation to inquire, however tentatively, into the grounds of a dialogical "paradigm" in translation studies.

Paradigm is deliberately set within inverted commas, first since those on a conceptual threshold of any kind are likely to be the last to know it, ourselves not excepted. The word is also more appropriate in the hard sciences than in our soft humanist or even mushier post-humanist noumenal sphere. Douglas Robinson, who makes the most pointed reference to and strongest case for an incipient paradigm shift in translation theory, notes that Thomas S. Kuhn "quite rightly denies the direct applicability of his

1 The principal works treated herein are Annie Brisset, *Sociocritique de la traduction: théâtre et alterité au Québec (1968-1988)* (Longeuil: La Préambule, 1991. Pp. 368. No price); Lieven d'Hulst, *Cent ans de théorie française de la traduction* (Lille: PU de Lille, 1990. Pp. 256. FF 100.00); Frederick M. Rener, *Interpretatio: Language and Translation from Cicero to Tytler* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989. Pp. 368. US$49.95); Douglas Robinson, *The Translator's Turn* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1991. Pp. 368. Hardcover US$ 42.00 paper US$ 14.95). Passing references will be made to Bednarski and Bensimon, ed. Rener and d'Hulst do not manifest concern with alterity nor cite Bakhtin; they do fit into the overall discussion.

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[own] remarks [about paradigm construction in] the history of science to the history of humanities" (66).[2] Robinson's assertion of a new dialogical paradigm in *The Translator's Turn* is therefore based on a soft definition of paradigm, one he terms "ideosomatic," by which he means the programmatic inscription of patterns of information onto our neurological systems, including not only our cerebral cortex, the seat of reason and intelligence, but the full reach of the limbic system — our emotions, our motor responses, our instincts, intrepid hunches, squeamish vagaries, and so on. A paradigmatic shift like the one Robinson entertains results from a collective repudiation and reassessment of those inscriptions. When enough individual somatic responses can no longer be accommodated by the prescribed interpretative routines, all hell breaks loose, and a paradigm shifts.

As touchy-feely and pop-psychological as Robinson may willingly sound (xi), his reading of the history of translation theory first turns around two rather austere, not to say ascetic, figures in Western religious history: St. Augustine, who left his mark on translation through three concepts still with us, dualism, instrumentalism, and perfectionism; and Martin Luther, who cast aside the "old dedication to descriptive stability" in favour of an avowed "politics of conversion," one stressing "the importance of translating into the everyday language of all men and women..., not just of a small scholarly elite" (67). Luther was principally interested in suppressing any hint that his Bible was a translation, a mediated and therefore artificial rendition of the Holy Scriptures. Goethe's response to Luther helps Robinson bridge over from the romantic paradigm embodied in the preface to *West-Östlicher Divan* to Robinson's own announced dialogical one, which he enunciates through innovative readings of Harold Bloom, Kenneth Burke, Martin Buber and, especially, Bakhtin. Heteroglossia, or perception of it, would thus be the driving force breaking the bonds of the previous ideosomatic programs that have driven translation, and translators. The last nuance is important to Robinson, for he assumes a task thankless in intellectual history: not the devil's, but the translator's advocate.

2 Not that Kuhn is the last word in the history of science (as presumably opposed to ideology and humanist/post-humanist theory). For a recent critique of Kuhn, see Zima (1991), who also argues that Karl Popper did not sufficiently distinguish "frameworks," "ideological sociolects," or paradigms from natural languages. The latter are primary, not secondary, modelling systems (the terms come of course from Lotman [Zima, 152]). If, however, secondary discursive formations are no less "reconcilable" than natural languages (which are capable of expressing radically contradictory positions), then paradigms are best thought of as merely heuristic reifications, without essence and, in the ultimate analysis, consequence. In such a case, discursive formations can only be studied, well, discursively.

But this is moving too fast. And as Robinson himself is well aware, is perhaps too neat a picture. In the first place, many themes of traductology, to borrow the useful Gallicism, were articulated well before Augustine, with whom Robinson has a personal bone or two to pick. Translation theory in the West was instead shaped most forcibly by Latin imitation of Greek texts, which is where Frederick M. Rener starts *Interpretatio*, his survey of language and translation from Cicero to Tytler (1797), and where we too should begin.

Unlike many scholars in the field, Rener does not see translation theory as "an archipelago with many islands and no bridges" (5), rather as a unified field of research rooted in given intellectual frameworks, "a body of norms organized into a system," as he quotes Jakobson on the definition of theory (3). Although he strongly asserts the common Latin heritage and the shared theory of language and communication and ideas about translation which underlie the vast sweep of his study, Rener nonetheless must play the detective, indeed "archaeologist," in search of a "*paradigm* by which to bring order into this confused array of fragments" (314 [my italics]).

> Fragments of the system [of *interpretatio*] are scattered over the entire Continent both in terms of time and of place. By assembling the tesserae of this mosaic, a whole manual of translation has been compiled which, though never written, nevertheless existed and was known to all translators and particularly to their critics. (7)

Deliberately leaving these fragments in Latin or the other languages in which they occur, Rener eschews translation, even gloss. He thereby backhandedly reveals his concern with alterity in translation, since he aims to preserve the integrity of the largely Latin heritage he discusses, and to compel the reader not to read these statements "through the glasses colored by his own mentality thus distorting what the author had in mind" (3). To put it bluntly, Rener insists upon the irreducible presence of an alien medium, albeit one with especial relevance to the West.

Translators have always had to decide whether to sublimate or to accentuate the otherness of the SL, however beholden they may have been to the principal criterion applied to translations, *fidelitas*. Alterity and fidelity are in fact not antonyms; instead, they represent two reconcilable hermeneutic principles themselves emeshed in other criteria. Rener's mosaic reconstruction of the *interpretatio* system affords much insight into the interaction of fidelity and alterity as complementary norms, though his focus falls necessarily upon the former (*alteritas*, which has the sense of "diversity" and "difference," is of late Latin origin and had no currency in metaliterary settings). The earliest references to translation in Latin writing were tangential remarks in works dealing with other matters, but they hit upon a question all translators initially face, or are taught to think they do: should

one translate *verba* or *res*, words or their meanings? To which is fidelity owed? To some extent, the dilemma is false, or at least exaggerated. Robinson contends that the very notion of word-for-word translation was a "straw man," a policy virtually no one ever espoused, with the exception of beginners, philistines, pedagogues and those with a spiritual commitment to the sacred words of the SL (ix). Against such a proposition stands the visceral experience of anyone with more than one language, who knows that no one can possibly translate word-for-word, and still make sense. In his *Optimo genere oratorum* Cicero argued, for example, that word-for-word translation was slavish and unappealing to the reader, and claimed to present his readers not with the same number of words, but with their equal weight, thus formulating the precept translators know by the name of compensation. That the phrase in *Ars poetica* by which Horace coined the term *fidus interpres* lends itself to both the defence of word-for-word and its refutation is a case in point of the very issue it discusses, the difficulty of literally interpreting complex utterance. (*Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus interpres* can be translated either "do not bother yourself with rendering one word with another, as faithful translators do" or "like a faithful translator, do not bother yourself with rendering one word with another," though the second of these is more probable in context). A century later Quintilian remarked on the difficulty of translating figures of speech from one language to another, hence upon idioms and the inconvertible truth that the sense of an utterance is greater than the sum of its verbal parts. Likewise, Aulius Gellius foreshadowed the textual strategies of *les belles infidèles* when he cited praise for Virgil's having bowdlerized the tryst between Venus and Vulcan, given its impropriety. Notwithstanding the standard texts on translation history, the sole early proponents of literal translation were those whose devotion to the SL text transcended mere secular fidelity. Even St. Jerome proudly proclaimed his rejection of word-for-word, except when translating Scripture, where the order of words partakes of the "holy mystery" of the source text (Horguelin 19-22). And traces of his lack of sensitivity to the TL are embedded in various Bibles, e.g. King James *Genesis* 3,14, where the felicitous (since addressed to the serpent) "dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" repeats Jerome's *terram comedes cunctis diebus*, a hyperliteral translation of the Hebrew idiom for "be despised all your life" — an error Luther reproduced: *Erden essen dein Leben lang*. In Jerome's case at least, literal recapitulation of words can be explained by the desire to accentuate the mystery, that is the alterity (but certainly not *alteritas*) of the Hebrew Bible, though this emphasis on the SL to the detriment of the TL also shades off into the translatorese Gregory the Great railed against, a jargon the translator and his specialized audience of readers who already have some access to the original may relish, but that is

opaque to the common reader (Rener 128). In Robinson's lingo, such an epitomized "turning away" from the TL reader is "aversion" practiced by "elitists who address a small group of their peers, sophisticated readers who already know the SL text well" (239) — an extreme case of what I am here calling *la belle altérité*, since aversionary translation is deeply implicated in alterity, the presence of the Other in the TL.

In the manual of rules for translation that Rener reconstructs, a major issue is word choice, a reflection of the classical rhetorical division into *inventio* and *elocutio*. The latter, finding words for the ideas presumed already present in the source text, was subject to the same criteria as all writing: *proprietas* (propriety, the proper relation between *signum* and *res*), *puritas* or *latinitas* (purity, not being foreign) and *perspicuitas* (clarity, accessibility to the reader). Both purity and clarity militate against alterity, the importation of foreign words, *verba peregrina*, in particular. Indeed, as Rener observes, classical rhetoric well understood the tug-of-war between *fidelitas* to the source text and the translator's duty towards the reader, *perspicuitas* (217). Yet the very nature of translation into Latin meant the importation of Greek terms and concepts unknown in the TL, neologisms, glosses and other marks of alterity. In the classical system, strict fidelity was thus virtually a synonym for alterity, especially at any point when the "simple reader" was cast aside for "readers who have come of age and are not afraid of the foreign culture," as Rener remarks on the target readers for many mid-eighteenth century translators working just as the paradigm of *interpretatio* came apart (332). A case in point was the Orientalist Michaelis' lecture in 1758 in which he envisaged a translation of *Job* which readers could read "as if they were Jews": "In this manner, instead of changing the original author into a compatriot of the reader, he reverses the roles so that the reader becomes a compatriot of the original author" (Rener 333). Another instance from the same period is Pope's translator, Etienne de Silhouette, for whom translation was both a form of knowledge and a bridge across the unknown into an alien culture: "une traduction ne doit jamais déguiser le goût et le caractère des ouvrages d'une nation; elle est imparfaite si elle ne met le lecteur en état de la connaître et d'en juger" (Horguelin 120). Silhouette was not speaking of any culture more alien than the one right across the channel, but he adumbrated an ethnographic function and cross-cultural sense of translation that was as much an outcome of the Enlightenment as a rejection of two centuries of French translation theory dominated by the ideal of *les belles infidèles*.

To be sure, it was not due to any eruption of alterity that the *interpretatio* paradigm disintegrated, rather to a shift in the conception of language Rener exemplifies by reference to Wilhelm von Humboldt's translation of *Agamemnon* (begun in 1797, though not published until 1816), one that

finally jettisoned the coupling between *signum* and *res* and came to see rhetoric, metaphor and style not as ornaments, but as part and parcel of thought itself (Rener 335). Here Rener, Robinson and Lieven d'Hulst, in *Cent ans de théorie française de la traduction*, are in general argument about the location of a particular fault line in traductological history, though perhaps not about its exact significance.

Lieven d'Hulst's decision to begin his survey of a hundred years of French translation theory with Charles Batteux and his 1748 *Cours de Belles-Lettres* unfortunately excluded Etienne de Silhouette by a scant decade, though to include him would have interfered with d'Hulst's own logic: the representation of a sequential development from the still classical sphere of Batteux to the full-blown romantic one of Paul-Emile Littré, or, in different terms, from a period in which translation actively reinforced the literary tastes and canons of the time to one in which "les traductions sont les agents d'une littérature 'militante' qui doit renverser l'ordre littéraire en place" (235).[3] Though far from doctrinaire, d'Hulst expressly places himself within the tenets of the polysystem (PS) theory, and his anthology and commentary are useful reminder that the themes of translation theory do not evolve in some ethereal void, but must be related back to the position "translated literature" plays synchronically and diachronically within the given TL literary system. Such a proposition calls into question both the grand sweep of Rener's mosaic and Robinson's slightly narrower but dramatic and compelling vision, principally because the terms on which they are predicated may well have etymological identity across time, but will have served different systemic functions at each and every juncture. For example, there may well have been similarities between the *imitatio* which fostered Latin assimilation of Greek and the *imitatio* that promoted vernacular Renaissance absorption of Latin, but the continuity of *imitatio* across eighteen centuries is, from the PS point of view, an illusion, since by Quintilian's time the Latin literary system was ruled by its own internalized norms; similarly, the Renaissance translation of Latin quickly took on different meaning within the French, English and other literary systems as

3 d'Hulst has excluded several interesting writers from his own period that the much broader survey of Horguelin managed to include, e.g. Turgot, Baron de l'Aulne (1727-1781) and, except in a footnote, Ange-François de Saint-Ange (1747-1810), both of whose rejections of *les belles infidèles* involved a certain embrace of alterity, viz. Turgot: "Si je veux vous montrer comment on s'habille en Turquie, il ne faut pas envoyer le doliman à mon tailleur pour m'en faire un habit à la française. Vous n'en connaîtrez que l'étoffe. Il faut que je mette l'habit turc sur mes épaules, et que je marche devant vous" (Horguelin, 128). Or again, Saint-Ange: "Sous leur plume [celle des belles infidèles] tous les écrivains ont le même style. Tous les étrangers ont le costume de Paris" (Horguelin, 141).

different meaning within the French, English and other literary systems as soon as they generated their own canons, genres, criteria, values — there is no better example of this than *les belles infidèles*. Likewise, duality, instrumentalism, and perfectionism, Augustine's triad of translational principles as conceived by Robinson cannot, from the PS point of view, be understood as having independent or intrinsic existence across time, but must be inserted into their contexts at each and every moment they were actualized. In other words, though by no means exempt from over-generalizations itself, PS theory would not see translation theory as undergoing shifts from one paradigm to another, rather as fields of discourse within specific literary systems and as contingent upon them. Under such constraints literary history becomes a daunting if not virtually impossible task, which perhaps explains why the PS theory has so far produced so much theory, and so little history.[4]

Yet while such a position weakens the sense of "paradigm" in cultural history, it is does not obviate the thematic continuity of a number of key terms in translation theory, as Rener and Robinson demonstrate beyond a doubt. Nor does this stance *per se* invalidate any given interpretation of a traductological moment, it only imposes precision in defining that moment. To take the *terminus* of d'Hulst's study: Littré's translations of Hippocrates, Pliny and Dante into Old French were extensions of Paul-Louis Courier's landmark 1822 version of Herodotus in which the Greek was stripped of his French garb and portrayed as Courier imagined him, and as Courier imagined himself: a peasant who spoke the language of the people. It is possible to read these daring experiments as "militant" attempts to seize the centre of the literary system, as d'Hulst does. But it is also possible to interpret them as rejection of the monotonous identities the cultural and political system had imposed, and as deliberate constructions of an Other in whom the translators and his readers could see themselves. Such romantic obsession with local colour doubtless marked a moment in translation history when "historical primitivism" (d'Hulst 151) was at a particularly high pitch, and *altérité* not necessarily *belle*, indeed provocatively homely. As Horguelin describes the period: "Ce louable effort d'historicité qui ne recule pas devant le dépaysment pour recréer la couleur locale, devait donner des résultats parfois surprenants" (148). Though we may now smile with embarrassment at the naivety of Courier's assertion that Herodotus and

4 Brisset, discussed below, is an exception; she provides a plethora of information about her target literary system. Of course PS theorists tend to presume that PS theory itself effects a paradigmatic shift in translation theory. *Poetics Today* 11.1 (Spring 1990) is an anthology of Itamar Even-Zohar contributions to PS theory, including "Translated Literature within the Polysystem."

Homer represent humanity just leaving the "l'état sauvage" (d'Hulst 152), there was nonetheless an element of loyalty to the inassimilable alterity of the Greeks in Courier's or Littré's rejection of Frenchified Greeks, one well expressed by Littré: "C'est grandement *desservir* Homère que de donner comme fait pour nous et applicable à notre poétique ce qui fut imaginé et chanté il y a près de trois mille ans" (d'Hulst 100 [my italics]). In other words, the ethnographical sense already nascent in Etienne de Silhouette at mid-eighteenth century was imbued with an implicit ethical imperative as translators, in some cases at least, came to perceive fidelity in more than textual terms.

Annie Brisset's *Sociocritique de la traduction* also belongs within the framework of the PS school, and as such is primarily interested in the devices by which a receptor or host literary system assimilates foreign texts and exploits them within the TL, not the SL. Brisset carries the argument one necessary step farther:

> Au lieu d'étudier uniquement la fonction littéraire que les oeuvres traduites viennent remplir dans le milieu récepteur, regardons *comment et à quelles conditions le «discours» porté par les textes étrangers peut venir s'insérer dans le «discours» de la société qui les reçoit.* (25)

Not that the gatekeepers maintain any particular watch for the foreign literary items, only that the foreign must pass the same muster as the native: "la littérature en traduction constitue *une formation discursive parmi les autres, réglée comme les autres*" (25). There is, in other words, no Other, since home systems alone prevail. While this may appear tautological, it is an inevitable consequence of systemic thought itself, since a system is defined by its elements, and its elements by the system to which they belong. Brisset's sophisticated application of PS theory to twenty years of Québec theatre translation is nonetheless exemplary. Both her quantitative study of Québec theatre history and her textual analysis of, especially, Michel Garneau's *Macbeth* against both the original and the larger discursive setting of nationalist Québec poetry set a benchmark that will prevail for quite some time.

But what about *la belle altérité* in Québec? Brisset concludes that "la traduction théâtrale est régie, au Québec, par des phénomènes dont le point nodal est sans aucun doute l'éclipse de l'altérité" (311). At first, this expunging of anything non-Québécois from, say, Garneau's *Macbeth* reads much like a contemporary variation upon *la belle infidélité*, since Québec poetic codes were rather ruthlessly applied to Shakespeare's text, and an emergent literary dialect defined as the linguistic norm. As Antoine Berman remarks in his introduction to Brisset's study, however, these contemporary Québec adaptations, though as ethnocentric as their distant French

precursors, do not really mirror *la belle infidélité*, because "la culture qui annexe et déforme n'est pas la puissante et autoritaire culture du Grand Siècle, mais une culture qui se juge opprimée et dominée" (13-14). Garneau's *Macbeth* and its counterparts are instead examples of the adversarial or agonistic translation one finds in creole and regional or dialectal literatures, where translations of internationally prestigious works are cast into an emergent literary language to show that it can bear the weight of accredited masterpieces. PS theory in fact describes such selection of foreign texts in terms of their compatibility with the "supposedly innovative role they may assume within the target literature" as arising when a literature is either young, peripheral, weak, or in a state of crisis (Even-Zohar 47), certainly the case or at least the internal perception of the Québec literary system since the Quiet Revolution, with emphasis falling on vulnerable. This dynamic does link Québec literature with other literatures of Africa, the Caribbean, and even of North America (Puerto Rican or Chicano literature, to take those examples alone), as Brisset notes (317). Translation in such a context, to cite Brisset again, "n'a plus pour objet de transmettre le discours de l'Étranger mais d'utiliser l'Étranger pour cautionner son propre discours, celui de l'émancipation nationale" (312).

Should we then presume that openness to alterity is the sole property of strong and stable literary systems? Obviously not, the hegemony of *les belles infidèles* in 17th century France being prima facie refutation. It would instead seem that the principle of alterity in translation cannot be easily corroborated with systemic interactions, and perhaps belongs to an altogether different sphere of human activity.

Here it is interesting to note that Annie Brisset operates at one and the same time within and outside the strict bounds of PS theory, since she is not only "socio-critical," but also ethical and almost phenomenological in orientation — as Berman, who himself works the latter veins, observes (17). In this passage in Berman's introduction and in Brisset's carefully worded critique of Québec literary doctrine as closed, exclusive and narcissistic, one can intuit the common core of concerns and concepts that relate them back to Robinson's dialogical paradigm, and to other recent works on translation, such as Betty Bednarski's *Autour de Ferron: Littérature, traduction, altérité*, where Bakhtin also plays an important role,[5] or the recent number of *Palimpsestes*, "L'Étranger dans la langue," inaugurated by a quote from Berman's *L'Épreuve de l'étranger*: "La *visée* même de la traduction — ouvrir

5 See in particular her chapter "Lecture, traduction, altérité" (103-128), a discussion of the infinite regression of identities into which must fall the translator of a text which already contains a vision of the TL (English in her translation of the Québécois Jacques Ferron). Bednarski's work will be reviewed separately in a later issue of *CRCL*.

au niveau de l'écrit un certain rapport à l'Autre, féconder le Propre par la médiation de l'Étranger (Bensimon 7). There is, in fact, an interesting parallel between PS theory as such and nationalist Québec literary culture, as Brisset describes it at least. While PS theory speaks directly to the issue of cross-cultural contact and mutual interaction, thereby relativizing any particular system in the process of integrating foreign texts, it leaves little or no room for alterity, at least as authentic experience of what is other — decidedly the case for the nationalist Québec literary system, primarily concerned thematically with identity and authenticity, institutionally with survival as a self-defining entity, and discursively with annexation of alien forms. Various items or traits may well be marked as /other/ within the TL culture as understood by PS theory, but that otherness is already a function of the host culture. To pursue the parallel, and as Bednarksi shows in her analysis of Jacques Ferron, the *appropriation* (i.e. annexation) of the Other is the prime goal of core Québec literary texts.

The twist Brisset imparts to PS theory is thus a crucial one, and is confirmed by the presence alongside her in print of Antoine Berman, whose perspectives as traductologist were philosophical and phenomenological, and whose conception of translation was as an *épreuve*, in all the senses of the word, of the Other, in no way a denial of fidelity, rather its heightening.

> La traduction, de par sa visée de fidélité, appartient *originairement* à la dimension éthique. Elle est, dans son essence même, animée du *désir d'ouvrir l'Étranger en tant qu'Étranger à son propre espace de langue*. Cela ne veut nullement dire qu'historiquement, il en ait été souvent ainsi. Au contraire, la visée appropriatrice et annexionniste qui caractérise l'Occident a presque toujours étouffé la vocation éthique de la traduction. La "logique du même" l'a presque toujours emporté. (Berman 89)

Brisset, while planting herself firmly within PS methodology, has known how to open herself to that other ethically and philosophically based traductology, the one embracing alterity.

This brings us back to the starting point, the dialogical paradigm Robinson professes to see aborning. While it is impossible to resume the three hundred or so pages of *The Translator's Turn*, several points are salient. In the first place, Robinson's very title implies a turning away, not only from the reader, but from the SL text, since it is the translator's "turn" to take centre stage. This does not bode well for fidelity as it is traditionally conceived, neither, at least initially, for any ethical recognition or reception of the Other per Antoine Berman's epigraph at the head of this text. A bit like Luther turned on his head, Robinson actively preaches the primacy of the translator and his or her creative somatic response to the text. His six master tropes, detailed discussion of which we must forego, are intended to demonstrate the variety of modelling procedures available to any translator,

among them metonymy ("the changing of names," exemplified by sense-for-sense translation), synecdoche ("part for the whole," reductive translations), metaphor (equivalence, the romantic ideal of absolute identity between source and target texts), and hyperbole (exaggeration, improvement of source texts).[6] These tropes, moreover, take no precedence over each other, but are all equally valid responses to a SL text. Robinson's systematic refusal to posit absolute criteria will make his work anathema to any and all who advocate evaluative theories of translation, usually for professional or pedagogical purposes, including even those whose models are flexible or open-ended. However subtly fidelity may be defined, any attempt to objectify it falls into the epistemological trap Robinson knows he must avoid: the final judge of any translation, at least in terms of equivalence between SL and TL texts, must be another translator, whose evaluation is itself a translation that can be validated only by another translation, and so on ad infinitum.[7]

The aforementioned bone that Robinson has to pick with Augustine becomes clear in his conclusion, since his tenets of translation read like a negative image of the Patriarch's three dogmas: dualism, instrumentalism, perfectionism. "Equivalence between [two] texts is not the final goal of translation"; "translators are never, and should never be forced to think of themselves as ... neutral, impersonal transferring devices"; "the striving for sense-for-sense equivalence is based on a reductive and ideologically contingent interpretation of the SL text" since "translators turn from the SL text towards a TL rephrasing in a wide variety of ways" (259-60). This committedly non-hierarchical vision of the world of translation and the world as translation (here Robinson agrees with Steiner) offers no safe harbour for any SL text, or any text period. Nor does Robinson accord translators any special privilege in this regard. They are as without moorings as the rest of us, and must simply ride out the storms of their somatic responses steering a course as best they can through the welter of words.

6 Applied to Michel Garneau's *Macbeth*, analyzed at length by Brisset, the following tropes are apparent: metonymy (changing the names of characters, objects and places in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*); synecdoche (reducing Shakespeare's tragedy to a nationalist statement); and hyperbole (raising certains aspects of the text, "improving" them, but also lowering others).

7 Robinson is apparently unfamiliar with the "théorie du sens" developed at the Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs de Paris (ENIT) by Seleskovitch, Lederer and others, which has had such influence upon French language traductology in Canada, for example Jean Delisle and Robert Larose. Yet even sophisticated conceptions of fidelity as can be found in Hurtado Albir (1990), also trained at the ENIT, fall prey to this *mise en abyme* or infinite regression of evaluative point of view.

Yet there is nothing intrinsically dialogical about such a perspective as so far exposed, only anarchic. In fact, alterity has as little a role in such a scheme of things as objectivity itself, since equivalence has been transferred into the subjectivity of the translator and his or her somatic responses, with the inevitable result that the SL and the Other's expressions in it have substance only as somatic inscriptions into the neurological system of the translator. But Robinson is no solipsist. He confirms his turn toward a dialogical paradigm by arguing that translators are involved in a "complex two-way dialogue with the writer of the SL text and the reader of the TL text" (259). The purpose of his "versions" or turns, which complement the above tropes, is to offer an approximate taxonomy of those dialogues, a gamut of models for interaction among translators, readers and sources. Professedly ethical in a special sense of his own (201), his *versions* include introversion and extroversion (postures of the translating self), conversion (turning with the SL text, e.g. Luther with the Bible towards his reader), subversion and perversion (whose goals would be called polemic by many — Derrida's reading of Walter Benjamin is an example of perversion), the above-mentioned aversion (turning away from the reader), diversion (in the sense of diversity as much as entertainment), and conversation (taking turns in two or more languages).[8] Anticipating the criticism he knows he will incur, Robinson insists that these are purely heuristic turns of phrase, whose purpose is to stimulate thought about the variety (the promiscuity some will doubtless feel) of translational relationships.

But dialogue in and of itself is hardly innovative, and in any event not dialogical, in a Bakhtinian sense. The challenge *The Translator's Turn* poses to mainstream translation theory is instead based on the cognizance that not only the TL but the SL are simultaneously present within the translator. Bakhtin's heteroglossia or internal dialogism accordingly has profound implications for translation.

> As Bakhtin says, ... in our native tongues ... we store all the dialects we have ever heard, all the class accents, race inflections, expressions of anger and love and anxiety and all the emotions in all their situational variety, everything we have heard in one language, in an unindividuated mass; why not in two or more languages? What is Bakhtin's heteroglossia or polyphonia but an internalized (somatized) Babel? (106)

The immediate implication is that there are no fixed boundaries between self and other. Even though idiosomatic (individually somatic) responses are the

8 In these terms Michel Garneau's *Macbeth* is marked by extroversion on the part of the translator, conversion (insofar as Garneau turns the SL texts towards the reader/spectator), subversion (since the text is *anglais* in the Québécois sense of the term), and certainly diversion, entertainment.

seat of thought and feeling, the cerebral and other neurological inscriptions experience brings us are already multi-voiced, babelic. Language belongs to no one, neither to the SL author, nor to the TL reader, nor even to the SL/TL translator. And of course it follows that the centre of texts themselves cannot hold, they must fall apart, figuratively at least, into manifold actualizations by their innumerable readers. Copyright is a legal fiction civil society imposes out of a fetish for property. A text no more belongs to the author who creates it than it does to the reader who makes it his or her own, or again to the translator whose version is contingent, ephemeral and probably going to be revised anyhow, and paid for by peanuts. "Boundaries are fictions imposed by people afraid of the instability of flux" (105).

The flux Robinson asks us to embrace will not be to everyone's liking. To refer back to Rener's *interpretatio* paradigm: *proprietas*, that which assured the corroboration of sign and referent, is caput. Now there is only the ebb and flow of the signifier. As for *puritas*, good usage, that too has disappeared into the maelstrom of many-voicedness — good-riddance some would say, others not. Finally, *perspicuitas*, concern for the reader, has also gone by the wayside, because the idiosomatic response of translators alone will determine their choice of words, and translators may well chose not to communicate with their readers, at least in the way readers want, the "working TL text" (259) working for translators alone. Of course every reader is himself or herself a translator of sorts, and can make up their own working text, or turn away from the one proposed. Readers are in addition free to note the names of and follow their personally preferred contingent of translators, much like fans follow a team or favourite players traded back and forth among teams, agents in a market perhaps not of their devising but who are at least free from the prescriptions of Augustinian sports theory.

Ironically, translation theory has almost always had a monolingual bias, the presumption that humans by nature know and use only one language and that translation between (among?) languages is the exception rather than the rule — that, in other words, the only players that count are professionals. The consequences are apparent, and are written into the terminology we use. Why speak only of SL and TL, and reify those entities as if they are hermetically sealed off one from the other, double stars orbiting in a much grander nebula? Nor need we all be magisterially multilingual, like George Steiner, to grasp the insufficiency of the monolingual model.[9] Amateurs also translate. Even monolinguals, after all,

9 The ethical imperative in translation theory cannot be addressed without reference to Steiner's 1975 *After Babel*, and in particular the dialectic of reciprocity he outlines in his chapter "The Hermaneutic Motion" (296-333). Yet the nature of the reciprocity he considers the "crux of the métier and morals of translation" remains obscure. See

have control over a wide range of registers and dialects, as Steiner himself argued, though he also supposed that there are perfect states or moments of elegance which best express the immanence of a language. The dialogical principle and its corollary, heteroglossia, quite simply denies such inherent cohesion of meaning. And for that matter any definitive mastery of a language.

Like traductology, ethics has also tended to be binary (a relation of two motivated monads), not multiplex (a complex interaction of manifold points of concern). The Other as contemplated by Antoine Berman in the epigraph at the head of this text has decided affinities with the Thou of Martin Buber, whose I-Thou and I-It configurations fascinate Robinson too (92-101). The ethical stance towards the Other is habitually predicated upon relations between two discrete identities, and the adumbrations of alterity referred to above usually had such connotations, like Steiner's "reciprocity" which, though text-oriented, sought to restore "integral presence" (302). But *la belle altérité* in a heteroglossic universe is neither individual nor external to anyone, especially the translator who has not only one but two or more "unindividuated masses" of "somatically stored dialogue" within (101). Heteroglossic alterity is thus a concomitant of flux and process, and the ethical imperative it imposes, while related to both Berman's "reception" and "recognition" of the Other and to Buber's I-Thou, is much more thorough-going. The Other is already within. The challenge is to find words for him, her, it, them, you and/or thee. *Alteritas* was, after all, both difference and diversity.

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