

THE PERCEPTION OF TRANSLATION IN COMPARATIVE
LITERATURE FROM THE 19th CENTURY ONWARDS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to investigate the perception of translation in Comparative Literature and its attitude towards translation use from the nineteenth century until today. In accordance with this purpose, a time span of approximately one and a half centuries has been explored and the dominant discourse on translation has been identified with the help of individual statements of major literary figures and translators, and with reference to Translation Studies.

Definition of the relationship between Comparative Literature and Translation Studies and the resulting theoretical problems is the other purpose of the present study. This definition is based on a chronological order, with relevance to specific literary dynamics of each period. In the nineteenth century, Romantic and nationalist movements; in the twentieth century Formalism, New Criticism, Reception Theory, functionalist and systemic translation theories; and in the last period post-structuralism, multiculturalism and deconstruction are the key words constituting the major pillars of the chapters.

The results show that elitist approach of Comparative Literature, namely the argument that literary works should be read in their original languages, from the nineteenth century onwards, has preserved its influence until recently. During the 2000s, questioning of this elitism by certain comparatists brought about a favourable change to this attitude. Another striking result is that literary and translation theories have affected each other giving rise to dramatic changes in the perception of translation in literary studies.

key words: comparative literature, translation studies, translation; perception of translation in literature

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı karşılaştırmalı edebiyatın bir çalışma alanı olarak ortaya çıktığı on dokuzuncu yüzyıldan günümüze uzanan süreçte Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat'ın çeviri algısını ve çeviri metin kullanımına bakışını derinlemesine incelemektir. Bu amaç yaklaşık yüz elli yıllık bir dönem incelenmiş, önemli edebiyat figürleriyle çevirmenlerin bireysel söylemlerinden faydalanılarak çeviri etrafında oluşan baskın söylem tespit edilmiş ve Çeviribilim çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir.

Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat ile Çeviribilim ilişkisi ve bu ilişkinin doğurduğu kuramsal sorunsalların tanımlanması bu çalışmanın diğer bir amacıdır. Bu tanımlama kronolojik bir düzene dayalı olup her dönem kendi edebi dinamikleri açısından incelenmiştir. On dokuzuncu yüzyılda Romantik akım ve milliyetçi eğilimler; yirminci yüzyılda Biçimcilik, Yeni Eleştiri, Alımlama Estetiği, işlevselci ve dizgesel çeviri kuramları; yirmi birinci yüzyılda ise yapısalcılık sonrası, çokkültürlülük ve yapısöküm bölümlerin ana yapısını teşkil eden anahtar kelimelerdir.

İnceleme sonucunda ortaya çıkan tablo, Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyatta on dokuzuncu yüzyıl ortalarından beri gözlemlenen elitizmin, yani yapıtların orijinal dillerinde okunması gerektiğini düşüncesinin yakın zamana kadar etkisini muhafaza ettiğini göstermektedir. 2000li yıllarda bu elitizmin bazı karşılaştırmacılar tarafından sorgulanması sonucunda disiplinin çeviri algısında olumlu değişiklikler olmuştur. Çalışmada göze çarpan bir diğer sonuç ise, edebiyat ve çeviri kuramlarının birbirlerini doğrudan etkilediği ve böylelikle edebiyat çalışmalarındaki çeviri algısını değişikliğe uğrattığını göstermektedir.

anahtar kelimeler: karşılaştırmalı edebiyat, çeviribilim, çeviri; edebiyatta çeviri algısı

To my dear Taha who showed me what I can do

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INTRODUCTION

Without any doubt, great waves of critical thought from structuralism to deconstruction, from feminism to cultural studies have left their traces on comparative literature since its emergence as a study field towards the middle of the nineteenth century. Goethe's notion of *Weltliterature*, together with the nationalist movements of the century, helped the discipline to delineate its limits and possibilities, and also its relation to national literatures. Object of study, methods, programs and working tools of the discipline have been discussed at length by primarily French, German and then American comparative literature scholars. All three approaches defined these borders according to a number of variables, including the political status of the country at the time and the level of literary development. As for the working tools and methods, which is partially the focus of the present thesis, binary study of literature was the primary model of the discipline in its inception. This model, with the involvement of comparison method, necessitated reading the texts in their languages and stood firmly against translation. That is, the process by which a text is transferred into another language was regarded as an inferior form of studying literature, thus relegating translation to a lower status. However, I should make it clear that comparative literature, in its early days, did not have the cosmopolitan and international outlook as it purported to do. Since the discipline was in a "Eurocentric slumber", as called by David

Damrosch (2003a: 326), it did not pose a problem for the scholars to be able to read in a few European languages, which rendered translation inessential. Yet, as it first expanded beyond European frontiers and then was institutionalized, translation could not be treated as a last resort. In the course of almost one and a half century comparative literature's attitude towards the notion and process of translation has undergone either slight or dramatic changes. The aim of the present study is, hence, to investigate deeply into this evolution of perception throughout the time span between comparative literature's emergence and current situation with reference to translation studies.

In order to clarify the aim of the present study, I should first briefly outline the scope and structure of translation studies. Although translation is a much debated notion on which a consensus has never been reached, it is only after the emergence of translation studies that systematic observation of the translational phenomena has been achieved. Despite its short history, the field underwent a paradigm shift from linguistics to culture. Linguistics-oriented translation studies, which was very prescriptive at the same time, ignored socio-cultural conditions and nourished the idea that translation was merely a linguistic transfer, yet descriptive translation studies has made it possible to view translation within a broader perspective, incorporating the cultural context with the linguistic one. Translation studies scholars have always, particularly from the eighties onwards, borrowed and adapted methodologies and frameworks from other disciplines ranging from literary theory to anthropology, from philosophy to communication theory and cultural studies. In this period, one is justified to call translation studies as an

interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary field. During the 1990s, the field achieved a certain institutional authority, and now, the era of post-movements as will be referred to in this study, it is in the process of self-questioning, and a new paradigm shift may be at hand.

Certain literary and translation theories which are selected according to the literary climate of the periods constitute the theoretical framework of the study. In Chapter 1, the perception of translation in comparative literature during the nineteenth century will be defined. This century bears a particular importance in that the nature of the field's relation to translation was essentially determined in this period. I will only touch upon the status and functions of translation before the nineteenth century in order to provide a historical context. German Romantics with their interpretation and translation theories will be central to this chapter. Individual statements of Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Johann Gottfried von Herder, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Arthur Schopenhauer will comprise the main framework besides that of Jean-Jacques Ampère and Abel François Villemain from the French school. Since my focal point is the conception of translation, the development of comparative literature or other theoretical issues of the field will be problematized only to the extent that they serve the needs and purposes of the study. For example, nationalist movements play a major role especially in the early days of comparative literature; however, they will only be dealt with reference to Polysystem Theory by Itamar Even-Zohar.

Having explained fundamental concepts in the first chapter, which are to be encountered in the following discussions as well, I will take Formalism,

New Criticism and Reception Theory as my departure points on the literary side of my arguments, and Skopos Theory and Manipulation School on the translation side, I will focus on the mutuality of these theories, how they are intertwined at some points, and their influence on the conception of translation in literary studies. Since the emergence of translation studies almost coincides with what the scholars call “crisis” in comparative literature, this period is of utmost importance in terms of changing paradigms and perspectives. Despite the overall abundance of sources on comparative literary theory, the scarcity of the ones on the attitude towards translation posed an obstacle for a more detailed discourse analysis. So, this chapter is confined with P. Van Tieghem, René Etiemble, Horst Frenz, Harry Levin, Charles Bernheimer and Thomas Greene. With respect to translation theory, I resorted to Roman Jakobson, Eugene Nida, Hans Vermeer, Itamar Even Zohar, Gideon Toury , Theo Hermans and André Lefevere.

The third and the last chapter of the study dwells on the last decade, which will also be referred to as post-movements era. A conspicuously favorable period starts with regard to translation and world literature, and also translation studies and comparative literature. Following the same methodology of analyzing the statements of the prominent comparatists of the period regarding translation with reference to parallel developments in translation studies, I will specifically refer to David Damrosch, Pascal Casanova and Franco Moretti as the representatives of my focus points. The repercussions of the so-called cultural turn in translation studies on comparative literature during the eighties and onwards; the functions attributed to translation in the notion of “world literature”, which is to be used

alternately with comparative literature in the last chapter; and the call by Franco Moretti for the abandonment of close-reading in favor of distant reading, which has parallelisms with the systems approach in translation studies, will be explored and explained. In so doing, it should be noted that the connection of comparative literature and translation, particularly in the last chapter, is not discussed merely within the framework of *reading in translation*; rather, this relationship is taken in a broader context.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PERCEPTION OF TRANSLATION IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

It would not be an overstatement to propound that comparative literature has never been engrossed in the notion and practice of translation as much as it did during the nineteenth century when the field as a cross-national discipline began to take shape. Much as the debate on the methods, object of study and scope of the field was carried out roughly by the French, American and German schools, it can be said that, when it comes to the discussion of translation, the Romantic movement, particularly German Romantics marked the relationship between the field of comparative literature and the notion of translation. Both the concept of *Weltliterature* developed by Goethe in 1827 and rising nationalist tendencies influenced the perception of translation in literary studies, and also shaped the theory of translation. For this relationship needs to be seen in a historical context it is of utmost importance to have a glance at the perception of translation before the nineteenth century, specifically, what functions were assigned to translation.

As Hugo Friedrich succinctly summarized in his essay “On the Art of Translation” (cited in Schulte and Biguenet 2) where he makes an overview of translation theories starting from the era of the Roman Empire towards the nineteenth century, translation was somehow assigned the role of enriching

one's own culture or language. For example, famous translators Cicero and St. Jerome regarded the translation of philosophical and literary works as a means of looting Greek culture that would enhance the aesthetic dimension of their own culture (ibid). In so doing, they did not pay any attention to linguistic or stylistic features of the texts, claiming that expropriating the ideas and insights from another culture and appropriation of the content were of their interest. In accordance with this purpose, the translator had the freedom to make the translation better than the original.

In parallel with this tendency, translators in the Renaissance period conceived the act of translation as a way of enriching their own languages, and preferred to exploit the linguistic structures of the source text. Now, the possibility of distortion in meaning did not bear any importance. These exploitative tendencies in terms of both content and linguistic characteristics were mainly due to the disrespect towards the foreign and the belief that languages were not equal. In other words, seeing the foreign culture and language inferior to one's own culture and language, in a sense, vested the translators with the freedom of exploiting the source text however they desired. The rise of the first generation of Romantics with their cosmopolitan worldview towards the nineteenth century caused this attitude to undergo a dramatic change, and the authors and translators began to see all languages as equal, rendering the respect for the foreign guiding principle in translation strategies. As a matter of fact, a great number of scholars and writers, who were influential translators of the time as well, reflected upon the phenomenon of translation and translational activity in the nineteenth century. In the context of the present thesis, the analysis of the perception of

translation in literary studies in this century will be based on the writings of these figures due to the fact that comparative literature was not yet institutionalized as an academic discipline in today's sense. As for the latter works on this relationship, it has been studied by various scholars, yet, from the point of and also for the benefit of comparative literature. Looking at this relationship from the point of translation, and within the framework of translation studies may provide the comparatists with a different outlook in that historical perspectives that have modified the theories of translation may have impact on the perception of translation in comparative literature.

In terms of historical conditions, comparative literary studies in the nineteenth century were trapped between the cosmopolitanism and nationalist movements, which had both conflicting and overlapping, yet deep influences on the reception of translation. In other words, comparative literature, in its early stages, represented a compromise between national and universal without abandoning the obsessive respect for the source and unity of national literature. Overall, as André Lefevere points out in his work titled "Translation: Its Genealogy in the West" (1990) the shift of intellectual climate around the turn of the nineteenth century was linked to various socio-cultural changes such as the break-up of a bi(multi)lingual coterie culture, the rise of a bourgeois middle-class, and thus the birth of a new reading-public, the professionalization of authorship and changes in the publishing industry, which in turn had a deep effect on the production and perception of translation. In the narrow sense, although basically French and German schools may be said to be in conflict with respect to both what the scope and tools of comparative literature would be and also the function of translation, it

was the German Romanticism that left its mark upon the phenomenon of translation, and still has repercussions on contemporary translation theories.

In this chapter, selected essays on translation written by influential translators and authors of the nineteenth century will be analyzed; the dominant discourse on the notion and act of translation will be defined and investigated in the light of contemporary translation studies. Basically, the works of Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Johann Gottfried von Herder, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Arthur Schopenhauer from the German approach; and the works of Jean-Jacques Ampère and Abel François Villemain from the French approach are included in the analysis for being representatives of this discourse and reflecting the outlook of the period. As for the key concepts, “genius” of the poet or writer is the first key word in the evaluation of the dominant discourse on translation, since the Romantic Movement introduced the artist as an inimitable god-like creator. Connected to the genius of the artist in a way, “roots” and “spirit” of a nation, and also of the text constitute the second determinant of the discourse. Thirdly, everlasting debate over the translation strategies which were generally established as binary oppositions of word-for-word vs. sense-for-sense, literal vs. free, faithful vs. free translations lied at the heart of the dominant discourse. Fourthly, one of the most controversial notions in translation studies, namely equivalence, aroused interest among literary scholars and translators. And one of the main objects of study of the comparative literary studies comprised the last part: influence of one literature on another. In the following parts of this chapter, I will define the perception of translation in the nineteenth century comparative literary

studies by using this five-legged structure and taking the individual statements of the above-mentioned scholars and artists into account.

Before reflecting upon literary translation, the provenance of the influential views of the time on the nature of literature and the relationship between nation, language and literature need definition. Romantic concepts of genius, creativity, and originality which are mostly associated with visionary, rather than mere talent underlie these views. As Theo Hermans concisely elucidated the outcomes of these concepts in his article entitled “Translation Studies and A New Paradigm” (1985):

If the literary artist is viewed as uniquely gifted creative genius endowed with profound insight and a mastery of his native language, the work he produces will naturally come to be regarded as exalted, untouchable, inimitable, hallowed. If, in addition, language is conceived as closely correlated with nationhood and the national spirit, the canonized set of texts that together make up a given national literature will also assume an aura of sacred untouchability. (7)

Although this frame of mind, at least of the first generation Romantics, did not condemn literary translation as a “foolhardy and barely permissible undertaking”, as an “outright sacrilege”, as Hermans asserted to lead to (ibid), it brought forth the mystification of the translation process and aroused questions on the problem of equivalence. In order to have a clear understanding of the main issues taken by the literary figures of the time it is necessary to have a look at the hermeneutic tradition of the German Romanticism, particularly that of Schleiermacher’s, which runs across all the statements, questions and the dominant discourse on translation. As can be

seen in fragments in his seminal work on translation theory, "On the Different Methods of Translation" (1813), Schleiermacher's both interpretation and translation theories rest on Herder's three principles in philosophy of language, which are briefly;

- a) Thought is essentially dependent on and bound by language,
- b) Meaning is word usage,
- c) There are deep linguistic and conceptual-intellectual differences between people. (2002b)

As Schleiermacher incorporated the theories of his contemporaries on both literature and translation, these principles can roughly be attributed to the other literary figures, as well. The first outcome of this sort of Romantic approach to literature is the belief that interpretation is based not on absolute universal truth, but on each individual's inner feelings and intuition (Robinson 225), which indeed takes us to the issues of the (im)possibility of equivalence intertwined with the notion of "spirit" of the text. Communication of the spirit of the text across cultures and languages is regarded by the German approach as the guiding principle of translation activities. This principle, by itself, embodies the universal ideals and the inherent nationalist discourse of the early days of comparative literature as a field of study. Actually, the growth of national consciousness, as Susan Bassnett indicates in *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (8), led significantly to the development of comparative literature in many parts of the world even today, in that it gives way to the exploration of both indigenous and imported traditions. And when the close relationship between national identity and cultural heritage became conspicuous to the nations, the desire to establish cultural roots went hand in

hand with the political struggle, resulting in the need to embrace the notion of the spirit of a nation. It is this spirit that is to be protected against any contamination through any kind of process –such as translation--and to be carried over. This is one of the reasons why the relationship between comparative literature and translation is a vexed and fruitful one. In analogues with the spirit of the nations, the question of spirit of the texts is involved in both literary criticism and translation activities, triggering an ongoing debate among the scholars and translators over the optimum translation strategy to retain this spirit. To illustrate one of the most striking statements about the spirit of the text, Herder, whose thesis would have enormous impact on both literary studies and translation theory in Germany, ascribes the translator interpretive expertise and entitles him “the morning star of a new day in our literature” who is to transfer not only the meaning of the original text, but also the soul of the writer’s style, the genius and the heart of the poetry (2002a: 207). This sort of a transfer was crucial in order to ensure the conservation and continuation of the spirit of the nation, because, according to the romantic theories of language and translation, every language expresses the inner lives –spirit-- of its speakers, which is embodied in literary productions on textual level. So, the question turned into that of how to achieve this transference. Likeminded scholars advocated maintaining the spirit of the original text in one way or another, yet the focal point is by way of creating the same impression. To illustrate, Schlegel defined this same impression as “fidelity entails making the same or a similar impression, for impressions are the essence of things” (219). He, as a translator, seeks to reproduce the character of the original as it struck him;

neither less nor more. Similarly, for Goethe, the goal of the translation is to achieve perfect identity with the original, so that one does not exist instead of the other but in other's place (61). Put it another way, the relationship between the original receptor and the text should be substantially the same as that which existed between the target receptor and the translated text. The question is whether it could be possible to discuss such an immediate transfer of effect during a time when the emphasis was laid on individual experience. While the reception of a text by the source receivers displays such a variety, which effect would be accepted as the one to be transferred; and on the other hand how could the translator make sure that each and every target receiver would receive the same impression? As a matter of fact, the discussion on the vexed question of equivalence reveals a peculiar scene as to what is meant by "the same effect". Returning back to Schlegel, he clarifies this issue in the following terms:

"[...] I have actively sought to reproduce the character of the original as it struck me. Too soften or prettify it would be destroy it" (214).

In fact, rendering the original according to the impression it made upon the translator was shared by most of the figures of the German approach, which means the acknowledgement of translation as an interpretation process. In the mean time, the translator is required to be a creative genius and skilled enough not to betray the original text and its author. If we attempt at reaching the ultimate motive lying behind this point of view, we confront not a refined and sophisticated translation theory, but the romantic principle that every language is unique and words have no exact equivalence in other languages. Further, this principle implies the impossibility of equivalence, thus

translation, relegating it to a tool for higher purposes. For instance, Wilhelm von Humboldt, who masterfully based romantic translation theory on romantic theories of language, argues that “translation is an important tool for broadening of the mind of both individuals and whole cultures” (239). Leaving aside the functions attributed to translation to be handled in the following discussions, it would be appropriate to delve into the concept of equivalence and how it was conceived. Widely accepted belief regarding equivalence was that it was impossible due to the language and culture specificity of texts. That is, a text is framed within the boundaries of the language it is written in, which is also culture-bound; so, the words, as well as the concepts they express in one language have no correspondence in another language. Particularly Schleiermacher, Humboldt and Schopenhauer made clear statements on the lack of correspondence between source and target languages, between original text and its translation. When it comes to the question of poetic expression and poetry translation, the problem of equivalence becomes more problematic. So much so that Schopenhauer claimed that:

“Poems cannot be translated; they can only be rewritten, which is always quite an ambiguous undertaking” (cited in Schulte 4).

On the grounds that the act of translation, being the transference of the impression of a foreign text on the translator, was regarded as merely one possible way of interpreting a certain text, multiple translations were welcomed as different forms of seeing and understanding. Although an analogy between this frame of mind and that of modern translation theory can be made in terms of the notion of translation as interpretation, underlying

motives are rather distinct. While the reason why the Romantics welcomed multiple translations is the desire to provide as many perspectives as possible in order to get closer to the “essence”, or “spirit” of the text, in modern translation theory the attempt at the construction of a single and absolute meaning is rejected. The basic tendency of the German Romantics to move the translation towards the original text, indeed, lays bare a deep change in perspective on the well accepted hierarchy among languages, and the guiding principle in translation. As mentioned above, up to the middle of the eighteenth century cultural and linguistic hierarchy prompted the translators to assign exploitative functions to translation, and since the objective was to enrich one’s own culture and language, and also supersede the original text, domesticating, rather than foreignizing translation strategies were employed. However, the so-called “fidelity” to the original text --as the Romantics titled their objective-- implies a desire to adapt to the foreign. This desire is embodied in such translation strategies as retaining the foreignness of the text; recreating oneself in the image of the foreign; moving the reader towards the author and so on. In this sense, a broad discrepancy can be seen between the French and German approaches to literary translation, which is quite related to the self-images of the two nations. The roots of this discrepancy are reflected also on the comparative literature approaches of these nations. Herder touches upon translating Homer into German and compares the two approaches with respect to the translation strategies:

The French, too proud of their national taste, assimilate everything to it rather than accommodating themselves to the taste of another time. [...] We poor Germans, on the other hand –lacking as we do a public,

a native country, a tyranny of national taste- just want to see him as he is. (2002a: 208)

If we look back at the political and cultural circumstances prevailing in France and Germany during the mid-nineteenth century, and consider the fact that comparative literature was closely linked to nationalism in its inception, it is no surprise that the issue of comparative literature developed so differently in two approaches, and in respect to this, both nations have rather different approaches to translation. While France was a world power with colonies, confident of the superiority of its culture and language, German, on the other hand, was still struggling to achieve national unity and “spirit”. Hence the French perspective, as Susan Bassnett points out (24) “appears as oriented more towards the study of cultural transfer, always with France as either giver or receiver, was concerned with defining and tracing the national characteristics”, whereas German comparatists tend towards the “roots” or “spirit” of a nation. The same tendencies, as explained above, are seen in the perception of translation in both approaches, the former smoothing over the foreignness of the text, which is called domesticating, and the latter retaining it.

Seeing that the reason underlying the issue of fidelity to the spirit of the original has much to do with nationalist motives as much as the respect to the foreign, a need to redefine fidelity in the light of binary oppositions frequently employed by the German perspective arises. Since the Roman times, many theorists of literature and translation, and also artists associated translation strategies with certain positions and functions in terms of power relations. During the nineteenth century as well, the reception of translation

was based on polarizations which are designated differently by different theorists, such as word-for-word vs. sense-for-sense; literal vs. free; faithful vs. free; domestication vs. foreignizing; bending vs. lax; author-to-reader vs. reader-to-author. Of these approaches, Schleiermacher's dualistic translation theory may be taken as a representative, since it is not only the epitome of these binary oppositions but also one of the major translation theories in general. Concerned with the problem of how to bring source text author and target text reader together, he initially puts forth the objective of the translator as communicating to his readers the same image and the same impression that he gained from the source text, and makes his frequently-quoted statement:

“Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader” (42).

To that end, he prefers the former approach due to the fact that the latter alternative may lead to the distortion of the author's ideas, which is unacceptable since the ultimate aim of translation is accelerating the development of national literature through foreign concepts and ideas. One point that is particularly mentioned and rigidly rejected by this school of translators is the assertion that the translator should translate the source text in such a way that the author would have written it had his native tongue been the target language. Before moving on with the relation of these strategies to the ideal of world literature, it should be made clear that the “foreign” is not valorized at the expense of the “native”. After all, European nationalism that was prevailing during the era called for an opposition to

cultural domination, in particular that of France, and promotion of the native language and literature. In this sense, Schleiermacher's preference is indeed rooted in a nationalist desire, much more than embracing the foreign *per se*. As the comparison method inherently incorporated the risk of exalting the native and degrading the foreign or vice versa; likewise, dichotomies in translation strategies had the same risks seeing that translation *is* indeed a comparison. Therefore, during the nineteenth century, comparative literary studies and translation theory met, first of all, at the juncture of nationalist movements, and their cultural and linguistic implications.

It has been mentioned above that the France approach to comparative literature basically favored domesticating translation strategies in order to avoid a linguistic and cultural influence of the foreign. On the other hand, study of influences, according to French comparatists of the time such as Abel Villemain, Jean-Jacques Ampere and Philarète Chasles, played a great part in comparative literature. Chasles defines the study object of comparative literature as such:

Let us calculate the influence of thought upon thought, the manner in which people are mutually changed, what each of them has given, and what each of them has received; let us calculate also the effect of this perpetual exchange upon the individual nationalities: how, for example, the long-isolated northern spirit finally allowed itself to be penetrated by the spirit of the south; what the magnetic attraction was of France for England and England for France [...]; and finally, the attraction, the sympathies, the constant vibration of all these living, loving, exalted, melancholy and reflected thoughts – some

spontaneously and others because of study – all submitting to influences which they accept like gifts and all in turn emitting new unforeseeable influences in the future. (Cited in Bassnett 13)

This idealistic cooperation envisioned for comparative literary studies obviously contradicts the translation strategies of the French approach and thus the underlying motives, which are nationalist rather than universal as the quotation purports to be.

When looked at from the point of a nation struggling for independence, unlike France, the questions of influence and translation reveals another perspective. Czech revival sets an example for “influence perceived as appropriation” (Bassnett 14), contrary to the German perspective of “influence as borrowing” (ibid). Translated literature, as is shown by Vladimir Macura in his article titled “Translation as Culture” (64-70), served as a tool in the Czech literary revival during the nineteenth century. In this sense, patterns of influence were shaped by the politics of translation in that translation was regarded as a significant tool of enriching the language extending the literature –quite similar to the perspective of the German. What differs in Czech approach is that “the point of origin of the text is less important than what happened to that text in the process of translation” (Jungmann cited in Macura 64). Although this statement does not disclose the translation strategies advocated by the Czech translators and literary figures, it, nonetheless, gives us clue as to whether they would valorize the foreign, as the German did, or exalt the native, as the French did, via translation strategies. As a matter of fact, the situation of the Czech nation seems to conjoin both approaches. As a nation struggling for independence

from foreign occupation and in pursuit of its cultural roots, the Czech did not welcome any foreign influence on their literature coming through translation, and at the same time strived to flourish their emergent literature by means of translation.

These three perspectives on influence explain the variety of the perceptions and functions associated with translation. The fact that both the conception of comparative literature and of translation is shaped by nationalist tendencies can be recontextualized within the framework of modern translation theory, in particular that of Polysystem Theory (1990) pioneered by the Israeli culture researcher Itamar Even-Zohar. This theory, aiming at describing the functions of literature in its complex socio-historical environment, accounts for interrelations between different layers of the literary system as well as between different systems including literature. Briefly, systems are composed of systems which in turn form a polysystem where borders are not closed and every constituent is in relation with the others. Main argument of Even-Zohar is that translated literature should be analyzed in a more systemic way in order to be able to accurately study the ways a literature functions. In accordance with this purpose, he designates central and periphery positions and place indigenous and translated literatures according to the shaping force they have in the literary polysystem and discerns three conditions when translated literature occupy a central position:

- (a) When a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is "young," in the process of being established;

(b) When a literature is either "peripheral" (within a large group of correlated literatures) or "weak," or both; and

(c) When there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature. (2000: 193-194)

Under these circumstances, translated literature is situated at the center of a literary polysystem and shapes its dominant poetics, bringing about changes in the indigenous literature. German and Czech examples can be subsumed under these conditions on the grounds that both were searching for the roots of their cultures and literature. When translated literature maintains a central position, new features from foreign works -linguistically, thematically and conceptually- are introduced into the home literature through translation, and also translation serves as an innovatory force. However, when a culture is self-sufficient, as in the France example, translated literature is in a peripheral position and since foreign elements may be seen as threatening, domesticating translation strategies are used. In this situation translation has a conservatory role and maintains the established literary norms.

This recontextualization of the position of translation in the literatures of nations with different political and cultural stances makes more sense today, when the efforts of establishing a national identity and the meaning of culture completely differ from those of the nineteenth century. And comparative literature as a full-fledged academic discipline is not anymore working on the premises of constructing *an* identity for *the nation*, but on world literature, which should not be taken in the Romantic sense of the first comparatists. Within these new cultural and political circumstances center,

periphery, source, target, the task of the translator, the function of translation as perceived by comparative literature need redefinition.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PERCEPTION OF TRANSLATION IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Starting from the onset of the nineteenth and heading towards the twentieth century, both translation theory and the conception of translation in literary studies were under the influence of German philosophical and literary tradition. As is shown in the first chapter, translation was seen as an interpretation and a process of transformation of the foreign text. In the early twentieth century this approach to translation was reconsidered in the light of modernist movements which experiment with literary forms and techniques. Back in the nineteenth century, the production of translation was mystified by the Romantic tradition via the concept of author's genius. And the somewhat conservative approach of comparative literature to translation in its early stages, which is rooted in this tradition, began to be shaken by influential figures during the 1920s. Autonomy of the translated text started to be discussed towards the third decade of the century. As André Lefevere exemplifies, the status of translation in comparative literary studies was as following:

When influences of one literature on another were studied, authors were described as having read each other in the original. When the influence of Goethe's *Faust* on Byron's *Manfred* was discussed, it was,

therefore, assumed that Byron had read Goethe in German. In reality, Byron had read Faust in the French translation Madame de Staël published in *De l'Allemagne*. (1995: 7)

While this was the common attitude of comparatists, in 1931 surprisingly favorable comments on translation and translators appeared in P. Van Tieghem's book *La Littérature Comparée*. Contrary to the assertion in Lefevere's quotation, he emphasizes the fact that lots of authors make their ways into the literatures of other languages through translation. For instance, Shakespeare was not known in Hungary and Serbia until partial translations were made from German into these languages (161). Assuming quite a farsighted approach, he also points to the significant role of translations in influence studies and argue that comparison of multiple translations of the same work or author could offer a prolific field of study for comparative literature in that we can trace the differing tastes and interpretations of different periods, ages through these translations (165). Nevertheless, as will be seen in the perspectives of the comparatists in the coming decades, comparatists are assigned the function of comparing the original and translation in order to assure the completeness, exactness and accuracy of content and style of the translation. That is, fidelity lies at the center of Tieghem's discourse, too. In terms of his approach to translators as intermediaries he is ahead of his colleagues and very much akin to modern translation theory. He asserts that we should be informed about translators since their biographies, literary careers and the social situations give us clue on their role as intermediaries. Furthermore, translators are supposed to explain the strategies adopted in a certain text in the preface so that they can

respond to possible criticisms towards the author and herself (166). It seems that Tieghem is aware of the fact that translation strategies and especially translators' prefaces are likely to reflect the literary climate of the era, thus should be undoubtedly made part of literary research.

Towards the 1950s, more systematic and linguistics-oriented analyses of translation came to the fore, triggered by structuralism as a growing approach in academic fields. In terms of translation theory, translatability and untranslatability, equivalence and formulation of translation methods were the key issues which were duly attended by influential figures of literature and linguistics. To begin with, Roman Jakobson, in his widely cited article "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation (1959) defines translation as a recoding process which involves two equivalent messages in two different codes (114). What he means by "recoding" does not denote the interpretive nature of translation, as is accepted in the nineteenth century, but a simple transference of the foreign message. As for Jakobson's position in the face of translatability issue, he, as a Formalist, differentiates between literary and non-literary texts and contributes to these controversial concepts in question by introducing his notion of "equivalence in difference", which he takes as the "cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics" (ibid). His theory, based on a semiotic approach, claims that there is no *signatum* without a *signum*, and Jakobson constructs his approach to translatability/untranslatability on this premise. Among his classification of translation types, interlingual translation (translation proper) is the pertinent one to this discussion. In interlingual translation, briefly, there is not a full equivalence between the different code units of the two different

languages/cultures. This is because languages differ from one another grammatically. However, according to Jakobson's theory, these different grammar patterns do not pose an obstacle to translatability. Recognizing the limitations of a linguistic approach, he accepts that if the translator is to follow a linguistic approach in the translation process she may face some difficulties with regard to finding an equivalent; however, "whenever there is deficiency (in the target grammar pattern) terminology may be qualified and amplified by loan-words or loan-translations, neologisms or semantic shifts, and finally, by circumlocutions" (115), i.e. there is always a suitable way to convey the "content" of the source text. However, when it comes to poetry translation – works of literature of all genres indeed-- he prefers to use "creative transposition" as he believes that "poetry by definition is untranslatable" (118). So, transference of content is somehow *possible* even if the translation is accompanied by long footnotes and explanations; however, the presence of a particular linguistic composition and structure, through which a work becomes a poem in Formalist view, adds the *impossibility* dimension to the discussion on translation. German Romantics in the nineteenth century also thought that exact equivalence was impossible, yet their point of reference was not the formal features of particular works, but deep structural differences between languages in general. Although Jakobson's views on translation contributed negatively to the perception of translation in literary studies --or consolidated its place as a derivative and subsidiary nature with respect to original works—it can be asserted that after Jakobson the relevance of translation to literature could not be dismissed by comparative literature and the issue found itself place in discussions by comparatists.

Before delving into how translation was discussed in studies of comparative literature during the twentieth century until 1970s, when translation studies emerged as a discipline, a literary movement which has still a remarkable effect on the perception of translation needs to be touched. The primacy of reading literary works in original languages in comparative literary studies was fostered by not only this Formalist view on literature, but also New Criticism that started in the late 1920s. The premise of the movement can be explained by the aesthetic beliefs of I. A. Richards, one of the major figures of New Criticism, which goes as a unified “meaning” exists and can be discerned and a unified evaluative system exists by which the reader can judge the value of that “meaning” (Gentzler 9). Contrary to his starting point of providing literary criticism and theory with a new technique, his assumption that perfect understanding of the author’s original meaning was possible was not offering anything new, and as Gentzler pointed out (11), on the contrary, it reinforced conservative literary institutions and political structures. With the purpose of elaborating on his theory of meaning, Richards worked in the field of translation theory and, as a matter of fact, chose such a risky field as translation which has the potential of undermining his project, rather than corroborating it. In his work titled “Toward a Theory of Translating” (1953) he admitted that “the translation process may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos” (250); however, he could not give up the idea of unified meaning and correct understanding. Seeing that different interpretations, not a unified response, were elicited in different translational actions of the same texts, he came up with the solution of proper translator training and determining the

right methodology to decode the original message and recode it in another language. That is, he believed that the laws and set of rules to disclose the original meaning could be determined by the translators through education, whereas translation opened up new ways of interpretation.

The position of and the functions attributed to translation in literary theory in the 1960s, having New Criticism at its center, was somewhat similar to those of the nineteenth century. As for comparative literature, discussions of the previous century over the roots and origins of a nation, and establishing a national literary canon were replaced towards the 1970s by a new “crisis” in the discipline, as called by the French comparatists René Etiemble. The crisis was, as he tried to diagnose in his concise book *The Crisis in Comparative Literature* (1966), one of a redefinition of the objects, methods, programs and working tools of the discipline. Etiemble, before problematizing translators and translations in a separate chapter, touches upon translation under the heading of working tools and reveals his perspective, which will form the core of the dominant discourse on translation in comparative literature:

“Yes, everything in our discipline is interdependent, and no one can, henceforth, concern himself seriously with any question whatsoever without reading works in at least a dozen of different languages” (18).

Also in Levin Report presented in 1965, distinctions between Humanities and World Literature, and undergraduate and graduate levels are drawn with the purpose of ensuring that comparative literature majors read the works in original; reading in translation is acceptable only on undergraduate level (23-24). Yet neither Etiemble nor Levin comments on the reasons of this bias

towards translation. What was obviously common in the discourse of comparative literature scholars regarding translation was that they were not concerned about the nature of translational action and the implications of reading in translation. Setting a theory of translation essentially drawn from Richards' literary theory as their vantage point, comparatists primarily concerned themselves with what translation is *not* capable of and what are its drawbacks vis-à-vis reading in original, rather than its contributions to interpretation process and literary criticism. Etiemble does more than that and accepts the role of translation in future comparative literary studies as:

“Whether it is a matter of original works or critical studies dealing with our discipline, the role of translations –and therefore translators—will increase decade after decade” (24).

As the expanding frontiers of the field rendered it almost impossible to have a command of “a dozen of different languages, unless one is not equipped with the chances of history as René Wellek who, of Czech origin, raised in Central Europe, and an emigrant to Anglo-Saxon countries, was equally at home in Slavic, Germanic, and Romance languages” (Etiemble 20), resorting to translation was out of mere obligation. Under these circumstances, training of excellent translators was, according to Etiemble, one of the essential tasks of comparative literature (25). What is meant by “excellent translator” is, although not described in detail, very much similar to that of the image of the ideal translator in the nineteenth century. It is not a coincidence that both René Etiemble from French and Horst Frenz from German schools of comparative literature refer to André Gide in order to hint at the ideal translator, henceforth, ideal translation in their minds. Gide thinks that “every

creative writer owes it to his country to translate at least one foreign work, to which his talent and his temperament are particularly suited, and thus to enrich his own literature” (cited in Etiemble, 25; Frenz 121). Along with the extensions of the German Romantics, deep traces of Formalism and New Criticism can be discerned in these two approaches, particularly in Frenz’s point of view. In his article entitled “The Art of Translation” (1961), Frenz not only assumes a prescriptive approach towards translation strategies, similar to his antecedents, but also assigns the translator the role of discovering the author’s original intention, in line with I.A. Richards’ inquiry. The translator:

“[...] must attempt to see what the author saw, to hear what he heard, to dig into his own life in order to experience anew what the author experienced” (120).

Accordingly, only a writer herself or a translator trained by literary figures could make a faithful and perfect intermediary. Apart from the interpretation techniques of the twentieth century in literature favoring close reading, which called for direct exposure to the original text, André Lefevere, in his essay titled “Comparative Literature and Translation” (1995: 4) takes the roots of this conservatism of Western literary tradition in translating and thinking about translation back to the enshrinement of word when Akkad and Sumer translators prepared bilingual word lists; then to Platonic thought on static and unchangeable truth and finally to the long reign of Christianity and word-for-word translations of Bible. Devotion to the word was fostered by the Romantics who equated the statuses of canonized texts of literature and Bible. Being the words of God Bible necessitated a word-for-word translation strategy; in the same vein canonized texts created by the God-like genius of

the artist could not have been disfigured by inefficient and unfaithful translation. That is why, as Lefevere points out, translation and criticism, although both essentially rewrite the original text, are not granted equal esteem. As a consequence, literary criticism came to be conceived as an occupation having a lofty aim, whereas translation is regarded as a last resort in comparative literature.

Between fifties and seventies the notion of translation was discussed in comparative literature only with respect to its instrumentality; on the other hand it was studied as an integral part of another discipline: linguistics. In these decades, translation is seen as a field whose dynamics are to be discovered by linguists, and the key concept for most of the translation theories is equivalence. By the end of the seventies several typologies of equivalence were developed the most influential ones belonging to Eugene Nida, Anton Popovič, Jiří Levý and Katharina Reiss. Since the most familiar and common characteristic of these theories is the establishment of a dichotomy between translation strategies, I will take Nida's translation theory as representative. In his book *Toward a Science of Translating: with Special Reference to Principles and Procedures Involved in Bible Translating* (1964), which was motivated by an opposition to literal rendering of meaning, Nida distinguishes between dynamic (functional) and formal correspondences. In dynamic equivalence, one is not so concerned with the matching the receptor language message with the source language message, but the dynamic relationship between the two. As can be seen in the translation strategies of German Romantics, an equivalent effect is aimed; namely, the relation between the original receptors and original message should be created

between the target receptor and translation. As for formal equivalence, linguistic and cultural features of the source text are recreated in translation in such strategies. Nida broadens the definition of translation by bringing out cultural aspects of texts; and also for the first time in modern translation theory he speaks of the target audience and target culture at a time when source was text at the center of the discussions on translation. Turning back to the conception of translation in comparative literature in this time span with this frame of reference in mind, we see that it is still deeply influenced by Jakobson's approach. As a matter of fact both Nida's and Jakobson's problems are related to linguistics, not culture; yet for Jakobson, translation is a merely linguistic correspondence, while Nida problematizes cultural issues to some extent, as well. As can be deduced from the reluctance of the scholars to use translation in literary studies, comparatists of the time perceived translation as only a linguistic activity which can by no means recreate the same effect, meaning, sense or feel –whatever is peculiar to the source text—because of the unique nature of literary language. All that could be done was to train translators who are proficient in this language so that the extent of loss could be minimized and the translation could be approximated to the source text as much as possible. Further, comparative literature scholars did not account for the fact what may be lost in translation –either formal or content-related features- may also go unnoticed while reading in the original. Each and every reading experience does not necessarily include comprehension of the original text in its entirety; but a translator has the opportunity to compensate for both culture and language-specific particularities of texts in various ways so as to offer them to

comparatists for close reading; except for giving the pure pleasure of reading a work of literature in its original language. And sometimes it happens that translations may serve as a more useful tool for the explication of certain texts when the original text does not easily lend itself to interpretation. One of the widely cited examples is, and also mentioned by René Etiemble (52) in order to illustrate the usefulness of translations for the method of explication of texts, that of Goethe's, who is said to have understood fully all he had incorporated into his *Faust* after reading Gérard de Nerval's French translation. As a matter of fact, working in translation is only one aspect of the relationship between comparative literature and translation; studying translations themselves, that is different translations of the same works, may open up new ways of interpretation in comparative literary studies. However, if studying translations does not go beyond the extent of fault finding; the role translations play in the development of literatures is not paid attention and translation is not accepted to be a major constituent of influence studies in comparative literature, in short, if source and target texts are taken into account *per se* without referring to context, then neither the status of translation can be improved in comparative literature nor comparative literature can get rid of the elitism binding the field for a century.

As we move towards seventies parallel revolutionary shifts in literary criticism and translation studies occurred. At the same time, pioneering comparatists had already started to submit the scope and methods of comparative literature to detailed description and criticism. René Wellek, for example in his seminal essay "The Name and Nature of Comparative Literature" (1968), covers various uses of the words "comparative" and

“literature” in different languages and aesthetic limitations of the terms while concurrently arguing about the controversial uses of “world literature”. He comes to the conclusion that comparative literature, being independent of linguistic, ethnic, and political boundaries, cannot be confined to a single method; description, characterization, interpretation, narration, explanation, evaluation are used as much as comparison. As mentioned above, comparatists of this period already started to investigate the limitations, possibilities, dead ends and methodological problems of the discipline touching upon the question of translation only in passing and in terms of its instrumentality. Wellek, despite embarking upon expanding the methods and tools of comparative literature by turning away from mechanistic concepts of the nineteenth century which still held at the time, dismisses the relevance of translation.

As for the shift in literary studies, which is embodied in the new approach to literary criticism “Reception Theory”, it shifted the attention from the work and author to the text and reader. The main contributor to Reception Theory, Hans Robert Jauss, displaced the prevalent methodologies involving the study of accumulated facts and focused on the importance of interpretation by the reader and. Much as this theory and its relevant concepts have a deep effect on literary history, within the scope of the present work I will only dwell on the problem of how the reader and text interact with each other in the process of meaning production. Wolfgang Iser, another prominent figure of Reception Theory, asserts that:

[...] the literary work cannot be completely identical with the text, or with the realization of the text by the reader, but in fact must lie

halfway between the two. The work is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized, and furthermore the realization is by no means independent of the individual disposition of the reader...The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and this convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual, as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader. (274-75)

Leaving aside the implications of this new approach to literature on literary theory and criticism, an analogy can be established between literary and translation studies in terms of their focal points in that both undergone a shift from source-orientation towards target-orientation, to speak in translation studies terminology. Up to the seventies while New Criticism in literary theory sought to reveal the unique meaning of works –source texts-, controlling concept in translation studies was equivalence –exact communication of the source text-.

Towards the middle of the seventies, through a decisive progress in translation search the nature of the relationship between literary studies and translation started to evolve. Translation studies, which were conducted as a branch of either comparative literature or linguistics until then, developed into an academic discipline in its own right. It was James Holmes who provided a framework for the discipline in his paper titled “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies” (1972), presented at the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics. In this paper, the study object of the discipline, the problems raised by the production and description of translation, and also its

application were designated. The newly emerged discipline, based on systematic observation of objects, aspired to avoid the misconception of translation as an art or craft, as was conceived by other disciplines reflecting upon translation. As I have tried to show, the relationship between the translation and comparative literature was principally marked by equivalence since the nineteenth century. However, the normative approach to translation prevalent during the previous decades and the key concept of equivalence were displaced during the seventies, and the new functionalist approach to translation theory suggested that equivalence was merely a hypothetical construction unrealizable in actual translations. In equivalence typologies, certain linguistic and textual models were matched with specific translation practices, yet functionalist trends placed the “receptor” at the center of translation theories. For example, the premise of Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury, who are the pioneers of target-orientation in translation studies and also of polysystem theory, is that translated texts are the facts of the target system (Even-Zohar 1978; Toury 1978). In target-oriented approach, actual translations, sometimes as corpora, are described and explained, instead of constructing ideal equivalences. Returning back to the quotation by Iser to define the relation of translation theory to literary theory, source text may be taken as the “work” and each translation of the work as the “text”; and just as the text cannot be identical with the work, “equivalence”, in the sense that is conceived and expected by literary scholars, is impossible. However the concept of equivalence itself was transformed by target-orientation in a similar vein as the Reception Theory transformed the relationship of text and reader. Particularly Gideon Toury’s

norm-based approach purports to explain the validity of the receptor system's norms on the terms "acceptability" and "adequacy". The "adequacy" of a translation to the source text, as Lawrence Venuti concisely sums up, becomes an unproductive line of enquiry, [...] because any determination of adequacy, even the identification of a source text and a translation, involves the application of a target norm (2000: 123). Therefore, describing the "acceptability" of a translation, a type of equivalence that reflects target norms at a particular historical moment, in a receiving culture became the focus of Toury. That is, meaning of texts –literary texts- are closely connected with particular audiences, receptors, as propounded by the Receptor Theory, too.

It is obvious that translation theory was constantly and immediately informed by the developments in literary studies; target-orientation being the common paradigm in both fields during the seventies implies a change in perspective in comparative literature towards translation. The main reason is the deep-rooted repercussions of the notion of "absolute" equivalence, which is desired by literary scholars and which has been nonetheless asserted not to be "absolute" at all and submitted to deconstruction by translation scholars. For modern translation theory, more than one typology of equivalence is possible, all of which are mere ideal schemes. And the consequence of this contention is that, despite its ubiquity, the question of translation was not duly treated by comparatists because of its supposedly undisputable nature.

As for translation studies, at the beginning of eighties equivalence questions were abandoned for a more holistic, culture-oriented theory of

translation in which target orientation was affiliated with an analytical sophistication used to study translated texts. Particularly three approaches to (literary) translation had the potential to transform the perception of translation in comparative literature. Firstly, Skopostheorie developed by Hans J. Vermeer and Katharina Reiss in 1978, in particular, bears the greatest resemblance to aesthetics of reception. The Greek word *skopos* means purpose and the theory suggests that faithful imitation of the original text, which is the most widespread practice in literary translation, is only one legitimate *skopos*; adapting to the norms of the target culture in which the translation will be used is another one. What the *skopos* states is that “one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principles respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is: this must be decided separately in each specific case” (Vermeer 228). The crux of the theory, which may also be its immediate implication on comparative literature, is that a source text does not have one correct or best translation, just as a literary work does not interact with each and every reader in the same way. The definition of translation turned into the production of a text in a target language by using the elements of the source language text. Likewise, a group of literary translation scholars called the Manipulation School, whose essays were collected and edited by Theo Hermans in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* argue that “from the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose” (10). And lastly, André Lefevere’s approach to literature that he refined out of the concepts of literary system and norms all takes translation, criticism, editing

and historiography as forms of “rewriting” and “refraction” (2000). Lefevere’s contention is that certain approach to translation studies can make a significant contribution to the literary theory and translations –refractions in general- play an important role in the evolution of literatures. The traces of Lefevere’s –Manipulation School’s in general- positioning of translation in literary studies and conception of literature will surprisingly be seen in the last decade particularly in David Damrosch’s and Franco Moretti’s conceptions of world literature. To mention the parallelisms briefly, a systems approach to literature, being the main framework of Lefevere and also of Franco Moretti, is free from the assumptions of author’s genius, sacred character of the source text, and also the expectations of discovering author’s intentions, which are at the same time the remnants of the Romantic tradition corroborated by Formalist approaches. And translations, as Lefevere points out (234), being texts produced on the borderline between two systems provide an ideal introduction to a systems approach. How Franco Moretti treats translations will be investigated in the following chapter. The other premise of Lefevere -the need to take translation as an important literary strategy within the framework of rewriting and refractions- bears resemblances with Damrosch’s approach to the question of world literature. Lefevere’s argument that “a work gains exposure and achieves influence mainly through ‘misunderstandings and misconceptions’, or to use a more neutral term refractions” (ibid), is quite suggestive of a conception of world literature in which translations are attributed the role of enriching it, as put forth by David Damrosch. Damrosch will also be discussed in the following

chapter with detailed emphases on the influence of translation studies over the position of translation in current comparative literary studies.

As a matter of fact, in the aftermath of the revolutionary changes both in literary and translation theories in the direction of reception/audience-orientation the attitude of comparative literature towards translation is expected to go through a change; however, until the last decade, when comparative literature scholars thoroughly questioned the still ongoing elitism regarding translated texts, concurrent developments in both fields went unnoticed and comparative literature did not allow a central place to translation studies in theoretical thinking about literature. As I will try to illustrate in the third chapter, an auspicious period in the relationship between comparative literature and the phenomenon of translation will commence.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PERCEPTION OF TRANSLATION IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN THE LAST DECADE

As can be seen in the previous chapters the perception of translation until the last decade has not been a favorable one in spite of the fact that translation is indeed central to the discipline of comparative literature and the notion of world literature. The primary reason underlying this attitude, as I have been emphasizing, is that translation is, as Steven Ungar concisely puts it, “under-analyzed and under-theorized” (127) in comparative literature. If we turn back to the coinage of the term world literature Goethe was most likely reading the Chinese novel, which gave way to his famous statement, in translation. Also in some of his previous works (*West-östlicher Divan*, 1819), he described the ways in which translation could ignite new modes of expression in the target language and culture (as cited in Eysteinnsson 21). He is so much ready to read in translation, even in the case of his own works, that he does not like reading *Faust* in German and finds its French translation fresh, new and spirited (cited in Damrosch 7). In Goethe’s attitude towards translation what translation “does” is stressed on the contrary to that of comparative literature, which draws on what translation “does not”. Seeing that translation is inseparably integral to world literature no matter how much it is denied, and a deep alteration in the perception is under way, it is

necessary to investigate into the growing intersections of comparative literature and translation studies during the last decade. The reason is that, if what translation does and does not can be equally treated in comparative literature, and then a fruitful cooperation can be established.

The uneasy relationship between national literatures and world literature until the seventies and also earlier definitions of comparative literature on merely linguistic or national boundaries brought about the marginalization of translation in comparative literature. And the scholars who intended to step out of the lines of this tradition were hindered by constraints. However, particularly in the postcolonial period, the need to define and reconsider the discipline not only in the light of canonized and non-canonized literatures, but also the literatures of emergent cultures and translated literature arose. In this chapter, I will question the possible reasons inducing the yet partial involvement of translated literature in the last decade, which has previously been excluded from the discussions on world literature. To begin with, as I have pointed out particularly in the second chapter, the emergence of a discipline reflecting specifically on the phenomenon of translation has the deepest and most immediate effect on the perception of translation in comparative literature in that literature scholars informed by the theoretical developments in translation studies expanded the limited place allotted for translation discussions in the discipline. The question is; considering that translations are being produced and consumed as has always been throughout the literary history, what has happened to reveal and problematize these processes?

Much as it is today a trite to state that translation is not only a linguistic but also a cultural activity and texts undergo a cultural translation as well as a linguistic one, the concept of culture has been theoretically embedded into translation studies during the last decade, after the initial introduction of Eugene Nida in the sixties. This so-called “cultural turn” in translation studies initiated the division between linguistic and cultural approaches, although a “shared ground”, as Andrew Chesterman and Rosemary Arrojo name it, is searched for by certain translation scholars. In order not to give rise to a misunderstanding, the role of the linguistic approach in translation studies needs to be stressed. This approach purports to achieve equivalence between the source and target texts. J. C. Catford (1965), one of the main contributors of this approach claims that any theory of translation theory must rely on linguistic theories and another proponent P. Fawcett (1997) argues that some phenomena in translation studies can only be explained by linguistics. Particularly during the nineties and also over the last decade various proponents of linguistic approach made significant contributions and it goes without saying that linguistic approach has expanded the possibilities of translation studies, yet is not adequate by itself. On the other hand, it is this linguistic approach that has fundamentally dominated the conception of translation in comparative literature even if the platitude of translation as a cultural phenomenon is seemingly widespread among the scholars. The pursuit of a linguistic equivalence, which is nonetheless not duly defined, prevailed until the last two decades in the discipline, leading to the condemnation of translation use. After the cultural turn in translation studies, translation was linked to various practices each of which emphasized its

political and ethical facets. For example, Lawrence Venuti, in his path-breaking book *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995) characterized translation as a “cultural political practice, constructing or critiquing ideology” (32). And for the feminist translation scholar Sherry Simon, translation is “a mode of engagement with literature” and “translators are necessarily involved in a politics of transmission, in perpetuating or contesting the values which sustain our literary culture” (ix). Identity issues, also including gender, have become central to many other influential postcolonial translation scholars such as Rosemary Arrojo, Gayatri Spivak and Tejaswini Niranjana, grounding on the fact that linguistic-oriented approaches do not disclose the political and ethical aspects of the translational phenomena. What replaced the older paradigm of equivalence were translation and power relations; language and power relations; interconnections between postcolonial theory and translation theory, and the role of translation in constructing cultures and identities, followed by the redefinition of fundamental questions. Simon claims that this cultural turn adds a new dimension to translation studies and “instead of asking the traditional question which has preoccupied translation theorists—“how should we translate, what is a correct translation?”—the emphasis is placed on a descriptive approach: “what do translations do, how do they circulate in the world and elicit response?” (7). The repercussions of these changes in theoretical perspective found their way in comparative literature. In Bernheimer Report (1993) the elitist attitude of comparative literature is criticized and the unfavorable view of translation in Levin (1965) and Greene (1975) Reports is mitigated. We see in this Report that translation was started to be regarded not as a second-order mode of discourse, but as a

completely different way of reading and approaching to literature than reading in one's native language and also reading in a foreign language. Even if the knowledge of foreign languages remained fundamental to the discipline's "raison d'être" (43), translation could "well be seen as a paradigm for larger problems of understanding and interpretation across different discursive traditions" (44). Another remarkable point is that the perspective assigning comparative literature the function of training excellent translators and explaining the losses caused by translations is still valid in this report; however, while the contributions of translations --or reading in translation-- to the interpretation process, in other words, what is gained in translation was disregarded in the previous reports, Bernheimer's report gives due consideration to translation as a distinctive mode of reading and experience in world literature. All in all, this report is a critical point in the interconnection of comparative literature and translation in that it predicts a "translation turn", as Lefevere and Bassnett term it for cultural studies, in comparative literature, after which the notion of translation will receive broader treatment in the discussions of world literature and the value of research in translation field will be acknowledged. Moreover, now that the concept of culture lies at the heart of comparative literature, as well as in social sciences, the transmission of culture --with all its implications-- across linguistic and national boundaries could be well analyzed through research in the most immediate and pervasive medium of culture transmission --translation. Reinforcing the bonds with the developing discipline of translation studies and recognizing the mutual dependency of translation and world literature will reinvigorate comparative literature. Also, in consequence of a cooperation

with other disciplines “the parameters of Western literatures and societies will be exceeded and the new comparative literature reposition itself within a planetary context”, as Spivak envisions in her *Death of a Discipline* (100). This repositioning has already started, at least in terms of its relation with translation studies, and basic issues of translation research such as ideology, identity, function, target-culture and autonomy of the translated text are now being problematized by the comparatists along with the long-debated issue of equivalence.

In this chapter, I will adopt the same methodology as in the previous chapters and analyze the perception of translation in comparative literature by referring to individual statements of the prominent scholars to shore up my argument. First of all, I will define the point of reference of contemporary discussions on translation and then contextualize my arguments within the framework of world literature and the position of translation vis-à-vis close reading and also the potential shortcomings of reading in translation will be proposed. For the purpose of defining the focus of the discussions, it would be appropriate to begin with David Damrosch, one of the contemporary comparatists signaling a major shift in the perception of translation in comparative literature, since he engages himself directly with “translation criticism” rather than mere meta-criticism or theoretical argumentations as is generally seen in other comparatists’ attitudes in recent decades.

According to Damrosch’s definition of world literature in one his recent works *What is World Literature?* (2003b), which probes the scope and purposes of world literature, a work may function as world literature only if it circulates beyond its linguistic and cultural origins either in translation or in its

original language (4). In this book which is divided into three chapters as circulation, translation and production, one of the three tenets of Damrosch's world literature paradigm is that "world literature is writing that gains in translation". His overall approach is quite a positive one; nonetheless a closer reading reveals certain contradictions and the traces of the reservation against the use of translation. Particularly in theory, he seems to have already acknowledged the cultural paradigm in translation research and carries out his discussion in this vein; however, when it comes to talking on actual translations he cannot exceed beyond the paradigm of prescriptive translation research. Above all, the definition of translation is still problematic in the philological-oriented point of view; or more precisely, the endeavors to firmly circumscribe its definition persist in the current discourse. Damrosch asks in his *How to Read World Literature* (2009) "how should the translation reflect the foreignness of the original, and how far should it adapt to the host-country's literary norms?" (75), and confirms the inherent conception in this question in *What is World Literature* by stating that "there are limits to the extent to which a translation can or even should attempt to convey the full cultural specificity of the original" (156). Enforcing predetermined limits on translation strategies hints at embracing a unified skopos that is taken for granted for each and every translational activity, which is for Damrosch, "doing justice to the original". This skopos seems to be contradicting his persistent emphasis on the fact that translations are constantly informed by the context and the translators' choices reflect and reinforce both their world view and also shifting literary and cultural climate. I hold the belief that "doing justice" is not a neutral statement, on the contrary, it bears covert

resemblances with the oldest parameter in translation criticism -accuracy. Accuracy involves, in Damrosch's perspective, both "getting the work right and conveying the force and beauty of the original" (168), which reflects the traditional conception of and functions assigned to translation. Achieving the pleasure of the source text in translation is, without doubt, readily accepted in translation studies as well, yet, as I have mentioned in the second chapter with reference of Lefevere's approach to literary translation, it is impossible to lay down rules to judge the effectiveness of translations in coming to terms with the source text's features. David Damrosch, too, recognizes this impossibility and refers to Lefevere in the same context; nevertheless, what follows his argument is the continuation of the longstanding dichotomy of literalistic and assimilative translation strategies along with certain functions assigned to each strategy:

A literalistic reproduction of the original text's syntax and vocabulary produces more of a crib to the original than an effective work in its own right. A heavily assimilated translation, on the other hand, absorbs the text so fully into the host culture that its cultural and historical differences vanish. (ibid)

This kind of a dichotomy in which the linguistic features of the text are located at one end, whereas the cultural features are at the other end is a flawed one. This spectrum on which two distinct translation strategies are located not only includes two distinct paradigms –linguistic and cultural—but also discloses the inherent misconception of a certain notion in literary studies, namely "fidelity". According to this dichotomy, a translation, at its extreme points, is either "linguistically faithful" to the source text or "culturally

assimilative”; in other words, fidelity is still taken for granted as a rather ambiguous linguistic requirement and an ethical responsibility of the translator whereas it may manifest itself at various levels including the cultural one as well. Kaisa Koskinen succinctly summarizes the perception of fidelity in contemporary translation studies as “what is required from the translator in the name of fidelity varies according to the speaker and the historical context. Fidelity is thus an ideological concept” (451). Damrosch’s perspective is indeed fundamental to comprehend the current perception of translation in comparative literature; because, although he is one of the most encouraging and insightful comparatist of the recent years, the inherent reservation, yet not reluctance, towards translation can be read in between his lines. While the former comparatists set forth the impossibility of completely surmounting the linguistic problems and conveying the linguistic-specificity of works, Damrosch and his contemporaries bring forth culture-specificity. Stylistic losses, he claims, can be offset by an expansion in depth; yet *some* works are not translatable at all without substantial loss on account of their culture-specific patterns, thus cannot achieve an effective life in world literature (289). This assertion raises a number of questions concerning the role of translation in canon formation and Damrosch’s second principle of world literature –world literature is writing that gains in translation. If the works that are replete with culture specific elements substantially lose in translation, and accordingly, stay within their national and linguistic borders never becoming works of world literature; and if only the works that *gain* in translation can be a part of world literature, then, either the notions of “translatability” or “culture specificity” or the principle itself needs modification.

Leaving the ambiguity of “losing” and “gaining” aside and taking them simply as the potential of a translation to elicit a similar response from the target audience and arousing the same pleasure as with the original text, we still cannot take each and every language pair identical in terms of their linguistic and cultural kinship, which deeply affects the process of translation; in other words, while a work may lose in translation into a certain language, it may gain in another. Whether Damrosch intimates English as the translation medium of world literature is the issue of a further debate.

Shortly, acknowledging that there is a broad movement in literary studies towards cultural context (187) and thus translations of literary works change along with their interpretations through time, and that linguistic-specificity can somehow be surmounted –he even makes insightful propositions to convey Kafka’s regional German in English— is a giant step towards embracing translation in world literature. Yet, turning back to the “default skopos” of translation for Damrosch –doing justice to the original--, which is notably a remnant of the linguistic-paradigm, is controversial, seeing that he is in effect taking culture as the new paradigm. Damrosch’s perspective towards translation, being very much akin to that of the nineteenth century cosmopolitans yet a more grounded theory, is also a significant representative of the current conceptualization of the issue in comparative literature and world literature studies. Translation is not anymore looked upon as the degeneration of the source text and a derivative discourse, but a rewriting process encouraging interpretation. David Damrosch is right that “to use translation means to accept that some texts come to us mediated by existing frameworks of reception and interpretation”

(295). This approach, nonetheless, still cannot extricate itself from the questions of accuracy and fidelity in the final analysis.

Another point that is frequently problematized is the role of translation in canon formation, particularly in the context of world literature which substantially rests on canons, classics and their preservation in various ways. Given that a great proportion of works that supposedly belong to world literature circulates in translation, the role of translation in canon formation is multifaceted, both from the point of the source and target literatures, and also the concept of world literature itself. Since an international literary canon is formed on the basis of accessibility, works that are not read outside of their linguistic borders cannot be incorporated in that canon. As Pascal Casanova remarks in her *La République Mondiale des Lettres* (1999), translation, for the authors who are located on the periphery of a literary system, is the primary road into the world of literature (150). Translations sometimes reflect the status of the originals in their native literary systems and sometimes help them gain a canonical status in world literature. The function and role of translation in canon formation and preservation has been generally questioned and discussed by literary scholars in this vein. Looking from the perspective of translation scholars, in particular those who work on literary translation, these functions attributed to translations do have various other implications for both world literature and indigenous literary systems. For example, Gideon Toury (1995) claims that translations are always initiated by the receiving culture and intended to fill a gap or meet a need in the target literary system. When considered from this respect, not only actual translations themselves but also research on translation history could make

an important tool for comparative literature. As I have mentioned briefly in the first chapter, translations can serve as an impetus for innovation in the indigenous literary systems, and these periods mark the introduction of new plots, genres, themes, movements and so on –or conversation of the existing literary tradition as well—via translation, which provides significant data for literary studies. So, comparative literature could make great use of translation and translation studies in overcoming language barriers; obtaining empirical data on literary history, and having a baseline to study the shifting literary movements or interpretations by comparing different translations of the same work.

Along with the fact that translations may alter the status of works in world literature, it should be pointed out that literary self-image of a nation may as well be indirectly influenced by means of translation. The most outstanding example is that international award-winning authors are mostly awarded on the basis of their translations, particularly if they are writing in less widely spoken languages. It is an incontestable fact that the status of an award-winning author in her native literary system rises, which immediately affects both self-image and literary tradition of a nation. Sabry Hafez illustrates the issue with an example from Arabic literature in an essay titled “Literature After Orientalism and the Enduring Lure of the Occident” (2009). He states that after an Arabic author, Naguib Mahfouz, was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1988 the number of translations into European languages from Arabic sharply increased resulting in a tendency in Arabic authors to primarily address to a western audience. These authors, according to Hafez, resort to unnecessary explanations of culture-specific items,

exoticising of the novel world, selection of appealing plots and distortion of the facts for the western reader (230). These Arabic authors are aware of the fact that translation will pave the way for them into the center of the world of letters, in Casanova's terms; hence endeavor to enhance both their chances of getting translated and the "translatability" of their works by fitting in with the reception and expectations of the western audience. Although statistical data from publishing houses is not available for the time being, a similar tendency may have occurred after Orhan Pamuk's Nobel Prize; a boom in the number of post-modern novels henceforth is possible.

As can be inferred from the statements of contemporary comparatists mentioned so far in the third chapter, world literature and comparative literature are now discussed with reference to Orientalism, globalization, or multiculturalism; all of which can be principally linked to cultural exchange. In such a framework, the low status formerly accorded to translation seems to be enhanced. Seeing that the relations have ameliorated during the last decade post-colonial translation theory and scholars can be said to have a bearing on it. Translation and power relations and translator's active intervention in the text, i.e. *visibility* of the translator, two of the central issues in post-colonial translation theory are now fundamental to world literature too. Accordingly, it is no surprise that translation scholars who mainly write on basic translation strategies are resorted especially while speaking of translation as a tool of resistance or assimilation. Although disputes over these binary oppositions, namely *foreignization* and *domestication* have existed since the nineteenth century in different guises (e.g. free versus literal translation), it is after the cultural turn in the 1970s that this opposition has

assumed social and cultural aspects other than the linguistic implications. For the sake of convenience Lawrence Venuti is taken in the present study as a point of reference, much as the relationship between translation strategies and the position they take in terms of power relations has been attended by various translation scholars. Venuti, in *The Translator's Invisibility*, criticizes contemporary Anglo-American translation tradition which judges the translators according to the extent of their visibility in their works, deeming them successful when the translation is as fluent as if the text was written in that language. As for the strategies, he defines domestication and foreignization respectively as “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language cultural values, bringing the author back home”; and “an ethnodeviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (20). On part of comparative literature, Casanova’s republic of letters rests mostly on translation and in this global literary space translation is the most powerful tool and a specific means of struggle and resistance to hegemonic cultures and languages; a way of sanctifying the literary works. Likewise, Emily Apter attempts to define comparative literature in terms of translation in her book *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature* (2006). What is common in all these works is that while literary scholars comply with these definitions they do overlook the fact that the relationship between translation strategies and functions in terms of power relations are not fixed, but context-bound. That is, the position of the source culture in the target culture; the power relations between source and target systems; and the position of the author and source text in the target system should be taken into

consideration by the comparatists, which I believe, is possible through a closer interest particularly in postcolonial translation theory.

As I have tried to illustrate, all the criticism directed towards the use of translation, more specifically, reading in translation due to language restraints, in literary studies partly stems from the fact that translation may not properly convey the linguistic specificity of texts as much as close reading in the original does. However, close reading itself as the basic tool of literary studies has been criticized by Franco Moretti. Moretti, firstly in his article entitled “Conjectures on World Literature” (2000) and then in his fascinating book *Graphs, Maps and Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (2005) called for a new approach to literary history by applying scientific models. This model is grounded on the fact that the “great unread” (Margaret Cohen, cited in Moretti 2000: 54) could not be grasped by reading actual texts closely; hence, he proposes “distant reading”, which does not involve reading actual texts, rather, relies on the works of local critics and makes use of secondary sources to obtain data. His model favors “the explanation of general structures over the interpretation of individual texts” (2005: 91). Moretti’s point here is not providing “new reading of texts”; he uses abstract models “to define the large patterns that are their necessary preconditions” (ibid). As to the function or role attributed to translation, differing aspects of reading in translation or in original language is not problematized in such a literary map in that close reading is abjured altogether for broader patterns. Given that Moretti seeks to account for, for example, the decline of a genre and emergence of a new one, one is justified to expect that imported literature, particularly translated literature, be accorded specific attention and

regarded as an object of study; nevertheless, it is invariably excluded from the model. In this context, world maps of literature and systems theories developed by translation theorists may be integrated with the approach of Franco Moretti to come up with more refined maps than the ones we already have. For example, Itamar Even Zohar developed polysystems theory, the details of which have been given in the first chapter, during the seventies. Yet his approach, as Gentzler argues, reduces explanation to languages and nations: large nations and small nations, primary literary centers and secondary literary systems (187). Even Zohar shifted his attention to culture research in the 1990s without elaborating on the details of this theory, leaving this work to other scholars. In 1985, a short-lived but influential research center was set up at the Georg-August Universität in Göttingen called Göttingen Center for the Cooperative Study of Literary Translation under the direction of Armin Paul Frank. According to Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies, this group developed tools for historical-descriptive translation studies and intended to investigate what translations really were and the roles played by translations in a literature and culture (104). They also evaluated the inner dynamics of polysystem theory and questioned its hierarchical structure consisting of systems and subsystems; coming to the conclusion that “the evolution of a literary system may be more irregular than polysystem theorists hypothesized” (cited in Gentzler 191). And lastly, another translation scholar, José Lambert worked on polysystem theory. In an article titled “In Quest of Literary World Maps” (1991) he defines his pursuit as “imagining the new literary world picture or to work it out in a scientific fashion” (141); and to that end, not the individual researcher but an

entire community transcending local research is needed. The similarities between the attempts of Moretti and translation scholars to offer a basis for literary world maps are notable, and also all the approaches are complementing each other. Much as a great number of translation scholars have a literary background –particularly in comparative literature- all the scholars working in the field of literary translation do not necessarily have a literary insight as strong as a comparatist does. In a similar vein, Moretti's map does not duly attend the question of imported literature and influence of national literature on each other whereas literature in foreign languages and translated literature, which “in some cultures and for certain types of readers accounts for more than eighty percent of their reading matter” (Lambert 137) are included in the map. Apparently, true to both Lambert's assertion, a world map of literatures needs a more comprehensive outlook than that of Moretti's proposal; and likewise, hypotheses propounded merely by theoretical explanation, uninformed by empirical data, like that of Lambert's, is not sufficient as well. Hence, an integrated approach seems to be the solution.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to explore and define how the notion of translation and translation related phenomena have been perceived by the field of comparative literature since the nineteenth century until today. This relationship has been analyzed many times from the point of comparative literature, that is, its attitude towards translation and translated literature has been studied from a literary perspective. Likewise, a myriad of translation studies-oriented researches have been made, yet they either discuss the importing process of the source text into a receptor audience or they are merely directed towards a comparison of the source and target texts and discuss the intervention of the translator. What went unnoticed is that, the notions of literature, literariness and translation are closely intertwined together and now that a discipline studying translational phenomena exists, a comparative analysis of the historical developments of both areas may reveal significant data as to the nature of this vexed and unstable relationship. As it unfolds even through a preliminary survey, the paradigms, study questions and the problematized issues of the two fields show quite a parallel pattern. And in the present thesis, my aim was to delve more into the specificities of this pattern.

In this final part of this thesis I will offer a summary of the findings and conclusions I have reached. In the shaping of the thesis, I followed a chronological order and tried to provide a balanced view of literary and

translation theories, particularly in the second and third chapters. Since literary, translational and cultural systems are closely-knit structures I included all these dimensions simultaneously to my discussion on the bonds between comparative literature and translation; rather than treating each structure in different sections. As for the major figures whose statements were included in the thesis, I chose the representative ones in order to avoid an abundance of names.

I started the thesis with a survey on the nineteenth century literary studies and presented my theoretical framework and methodology in this chapter. Although each chapter covered different time spans, figures and theories the methodology I used throughout the thesis was the same. This century is attached special importance because the nature of the relationship between comparative literature and translation and also some fundamental points, which are also major pillars of my theoretical framework, surface firstly in this period. My survey on the nineteenth century revealed that German Romantics and their hermeneutic tradition marked the era and gave shape to the conception of translation together with the nationalist movements. Since this is the time when comparative literature started to be institutionalized as a field of study cosmopolitan outlook of the first comparatists is crucial for the dominant discourse on translation. Accordingly, respect for the foreign cultures and languages was the guiding principle of translation strategies, and translation gained a pivotal position in literary and cultural enhancement of nations. Despite the cosmopolitan outlook of early comparative literary studies, a detail analysis of Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Johann Gottfried von Herder, August Wilhelm von

Schlegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Arthur Schopenhauer, Jean-Jacques Ampère and Abel François Villemain reveal that underlying motives were rather nationalist. The five-legged structure by which I set out to explore the dominant discourse laid bare an intricate net of bonds between comparative literature and translation. Considered together, the genius of the author, roots and spirit of the text/nation, translation strategies set in binary oppositions, equivalence and influence studies were the major points determining the production and reception of translations. In summary, communicating the spirit of the text, and thus the spirit of the nation that it inheres, was the guiding principal of translating. The translators were, in this case, assigned the function of creating the same impression on the receiving culture that the source text left on them. In such a model, translators were notably visible both in extratextual discourse on translation and also in the target text, possibly hinting at the fact that translation was seen as a interpretation process and the translator was not subordinate to the author. Nevertheless, the belief in the impossibility of equivalence due to linguistic specificity, while giving so much importance to translation, manifested that translation was seen only as a tool for higher purposes, such as cultural enhancement.

Another striking finding in the first chapter was that self-images of nations determine their approaches both to literature and translation. As I tried to illustrate through German, French and Czech examples, having different political and cultural structures, all the three nations perceived translation in rather distinctive ways, and attributed different functions to it. Lastly, bringing literary and translation theories together via polysystem

theory within the context of nationalist movements to give an account of these different approaches signed that comparative literature and translation studies would have fruitful bonds.

In Chapter 2, I investigated the perception of translation in the twentieth century. This is the time when comparative literature was fully institutionalized and also translation studies emerged as a discipline. The analysis of the statements of the pioneers of comparative literature on translation revealed that the reluctance of comparative literature to read in translation was at its peak in this period. This reluctance was fostered firstly by Formalism and then New Criticism, which emphasize the idiosyncrasies of literary language. Until the seventies translation was regarded as an imperfect tool resorted only as the last option. It should be noted that literary scholars paid attention only to the drawbacks of reading in translation and ignored the fact that both literary criticism and translation are interpretations of the text. Another striking conclusion I reached was that comparative literature was assigned with the duty of proper translator training. The reflections of German Romantics, who saw the author as a God-like creator, hence the ideal translator, may be accounted for this. That is, proper and adequate literary training of a translator by a comparatist would minimize the loss in translation. All these linguistic concerns indicate that until a shift – namely, target orientation- in both literary and translation theories, comparative literature continued to take translation as a merely linguistic activity, which is subordinate to close reading in the original language.

It was after the eighties that cultural dimensions of translation entered the picture and concurrent developments in translation and literary studies

started to change the relationship. I offered the transformation of the concept of equivalence as the reason underlying this dramatic change. Also, Reception Theory in literature and Skopos theory in translation simultaneously put forward that meaning of texts are connected with particular receptors, which I believe contributed to the enhancement of the bonds. As I discussed at length in Chapter 3, contemporary comparatists are now intensely informed by target-oriented translation theory, whose foundations were laid at this period.

In Chapter 3, which covers the last two decades of comparative literature and translation studies, deep changes in the perspectives of both disciplines were seen, which have immediate bearings on the bonds between. Contemporary comparatists went back to the roots of *Weltliterature* and considered Goethe's attitude towards translation. The research carried out in this chapter revealed that translation is not regarded by the comparatists as the distortion of the source text and an inferior discourse any more, but a rewriting process. The contributions of translation to interpretation, along with its drawbacks, are now visible; and the function of translation in canon formation is recognized. Although giant steps have been taken in order to reposition comparative literature in terms of its relation to translation studies and reconsider its perspective of translation use in such a favorable context, certain attitudes remained unchanged, such as the expectations of fidelity and accuracy. The problem is that these concepts are not properly defined or in comparative literature. On the surface, culture-specificity seems to have replaced linguistic-specificity as the obstacle in front of a fidelity or accuracy, yet the primary reason lying underneath this

persistence is that, as far as I inferred, linguistic orientation still dominates the perspective of translation even if translation as a cultural phenomenon is a widespread platitude among the comparatists. The last point in Chapter 3 was the intersecting approaches of translation theorists and Franco Moretti in preparing literary world maps. I believe this common ground can pave the way for promoting the relations.

All these analyses from the 19th century onwards boil down to the fact that there has always been an inherent distrust towards translation in one way or another. This distrust manifested itself as the impossibility of surmounting linguistic-specificity in the linguistic paradigm; and now it has evolved with the culture paradigm. Seeing a pattern from reluctance to reservation, I came to the conclusion that the idea of reading a translation *instead of* an original leads to a discomfort in the comparatists; however, the proposition that translation is not read instead of the original text, but involves a fundamental transformation –rewriting- of it gives a certain reassurance to literary scholars. And this is the point where literary perspective to translation is partially in cohort with that of translation studies.

The descriptive analyses of both literary and translation theories and theorists undertaken in this thesis concluded that each and every development in one of the areas either ultimately affected the other. Now that comparative literature has started problematizing the issue of translation and is keeping up with the rapidly evolving discipline of translation studies, and both fields are called for cooperation with other disciplines, more fruitful bonds may be established in the future; all in all reading *in* translation is only one aspect of this relationship. As for translation studies, the fact that it is

more open to new theories after its post-colonial turn may be the harbinger of a new paradigm shift; then, the direction of the relationship between comparative literature and translation is likely to take a new turn.

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