POSTMODERN ENCOUNTER

BETWEEN TRANSLATION AND FICTION

MEHTAP IŞIK
111667011

İSTANBUL BİLGİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
KARŞILAŞTIRMALI EDEBİYAT YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI

PROF. DR. JALE PARLA
2012

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ÇEVİRİ VE KURMACANIN POSTMODERN BULUŞMASI

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih : 25 Aralık 2012

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı: 70

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)
1) Postmodern edebiyat
2) Kurmaca çevirmen
3) Çeviri
4) Çeviribilim
5) Üst Kurmaca

Anahtar Kelimeler(İngilizce)
1) Postmodern Fiction
2) Fictional Translator
3) Translation
4) Translation Studies
5) Metafiction

To my dear Tanju,

ABSTRACT

The present thesis had a twofold overarching aim: on the one hand to investigate and exemplify the use of translation as a theme and of translator as a character in postmodern fiction; on the other hand to argue that the fictionalization of translation and translator in postmodern times may be a prolific source for theorization on translation. In accordance with this purpose, the works of representative figures of postmodern fiction have been explored and the implication of these fictions for translation studies has been identified through the individual statements and the analyses of translation scholars.

The metafictional works of Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino and Nicole Brossard exemplify the metafictional staging where authors use translators to discuss the fictionality of fictions and of realities. The analyses of Rosemary Arrojo, Adriana S. Pagano and Edwin Gentzler on these fictions illustrate the potential of postmodern metafictions to offer productive theories on translation.

The major conclusion drawn from this study is that translation and postmodern fiction has entered into a phase of symbiotic life which nourishes and advances both fields and just needs to be recognized. The aim of the present thesis is to take the first step for this recognition both on the part of postmodern fiction and of translation studies. The direction of the relationship between postmodern fiction and translation seems to have taken a different turn other than reading fiction in translation.

Key Words: postmodern fiction, fictional translator, translation, translation studies, metafiction

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın iki yönlü bir amacı vardır. Bir yandan postmodern kurmacada çevirinin bir tema, çevirmenin de bir karakter olarak kullanılmasını örneklerle derinlemesine incelemek; bir yandan da postmodern dönemde sıkça karşımıza çıkan kurgusal çeviri ve çevirmenlerin Çeviribilim alanı için bir kuram kaynağı olarak görülmesini tartışmaktır. Bu amaçlar doğrultusunda postmodern edebiyatın önemli isimlerinden üç tanesinin eserleri incelendi ve bu tip eserleri kendilerine odak noktası alarak çalışan çeviri kuramcılarının analizleri çeviribilimin bir çalışma alanı olarak geçirdiği gelişim süreci çerçevesinde değerlendirildi.

Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino ve Nicole Brossard'ın üst-kurmaca olarak nitelenen eserlerinde çevirmen karakterler kurmacanın ve gerçekliğin kurgusallığını irdelemek için uygun birer araç olarak görülürken, yazarlar yazma, okuma ve çevirme eylemlerine dair kendi söylemlerini çevirmenler üzerinden vermeyi tercih ediyor. Buna mukabil, Rosemary Arrojo, Adriana S. Pagano ve Edwin Gentzler gibi çeviri kuramcıları üst-kurmacalarda yer alan kurgusal çevirmenleri konu aldıkları incelemelerinde çeviriye dair önemli kuramlar öne sürüyorlar.

Bu çalışma sonucunda ortaya çıkan tablo, postmodern kurmaca ve çevirinin her iki alanı da besleyen ve büyüten bir ortak yaşam sürecine girdiğini göstermektedir. Çalışmanın amacı ise postmodern edebiyat ve çeviribilim adına bu ortak yaşamın varlığı ve öneminin tanınması için bir adım teşkil etmektir. Postmodern kurmaca ve çeviri arasındaki ilişkinin yönü, kurmacayı çeviri yoluyla okumanın ötesinde bir yöne doğru kaymış gibi görünüyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: postmodern edebiyat, kurmaca çevirmen, çeviri, çeviribilim, üst-kurmaca

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I am deeply grateful to my advisor Prof. Dr. Jale Parla for always encouraging me and providing critical comments during the entire course of my graduate study. I also wish to thank Prof. Dr. Nazan Aksoy and Prof. Dr. Murat Belge for accepting to be in the Examining Committee and for their invaluable support, critical views and suggestions.

I wish also to thank Ayşenaz Koş for devoting her time generously and showing support without reservation during my undergraduate and graduate education.

My gratitude also goes to my grandparents for their unconditional love and support. Lastly, I would like to thank my husband Tanju whose belief in me showed what I can do.

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between literature and translation has never been amicable. In the history and theory of literature, translation has long been relegated to the margins as a derivative and hence inferior form of text production. The reasons why translation is necessarily associated not only with the marginal, but also with the corrupt can be traced back to the nineteenth century when individual and creative authorship was valued very highly and the formation of nation states was seen to depend on the national writers using national languages. Thus, almost any discussion about translation inevitably ends in assessing the losses effected by translation. Fortunately for translation, the general notion of meaning as a stable essence in words and texts, of authors as rightful owners of this meaning has been challenged by the recent developments in literary theory. The political and the intellectual context of the postwar period heightened the internationalization of literature, which was favorable to the recognition of the importance of translation. The promising visibility of translation as a professional activity and as a theoretical field in recent times is closely related to the spreading of a poetics labeled as "postmodern". With the postmodern challenge of traditional textual theories, it is recognized that translation is not something that merely happens after literature as an extension of it. In fact, it is embedded within the literary text as a theme or as a narrative strategy, which has multiple implications both for literature and translation studies. Thus, the present study has a twofold argument. On the one hand, the aim is to investigate and exemplify the use of fictionalizing translation and translator in postmodern fiction with an underlying argument that translation is key to understanding fiction itself. On

the other hand, the study intends to show how translation studies can enter into a symbiotic relationship with the postmodern fiction and incorporate the fictional theoretical parameters.

Before outlining the scope and the method of the present study, it is better to clarify the titles of the chapters both of which include the term "turn". The concept of the "turn" may comprise associations varying with each individual user. However, it should not be misunderstood as an ambiguous term. The "turn" as understood here is a paradigmatic distinct change in direction of the field concerned. This does not mean that every change is a turn. The concept of the "turn" refers to a dynamic change by which the shift in direction of the field is markedly visible and striking and may lead to a redefinition of the subject in question.

In Chapter 1 titled as "Translation Turn in Postmodern Fiction", the use of translation as a theme and translator as a fictional character in postmodern fiction will be analyzed. Although the use of translation in fiction is not a new phenomenon, the boom in fictional translations and fictionalized translators in postmodern fiction needs an explanation. Firstly, it is better to clarify what is meant by postmodernism and postmodern fiction. As it is frequently acknowledged, the term "postmodern" is a notoriously slippery notion due to its multifaceted and encompassing nature that results in a complex web of theoretical and aesthetic discourses. Thus, its usage in different disciplines results in a plethora of definitions and conceptions that are mostly contradictory and usually inadequately theorized. In his book *Postmodernist Fiction*, Brian McHale points out that every critic constructs postmodernism in his/her own way from different perspectives, none of which is more right than the others since all are finally fictions (4). Thus, we can talk about:

> John Barth's postmodernism, the literature of replenishment; Charles Newman's postmodernism, the literature of an inflationary economy; Jean-François Lyotard's postmodernism, a general condition of knowledge in the contemporary informational régime; Ihab Hassan's postmodernism, a stage on the road to the spiritual unification of humankind; and so on. (4)

From among all these valuable and valid constructs of postmodernism, I prefer to choose the one advanced by Linda Hutcheon in *A Poetics of Postmodernism* which defines postmodernism "as a cultural activity that can be discerned in most art forms and many currents of thought today, […] postmodernism is fundamentally contradictory, resolutely historical, and inescapably political" (4). Postmodern fiction may be considered as a response to the kind of socio-historical changes emanated by postmodernism. Therefore, within the context of the present thesis, the adjective 'postmodern' applies to a range of aesthetic styles and principles that are shaped by postmodernism, and distinguish literary production in this period.

I will touch upon three important writers who draw on the manifold meanings of translation to reflect on the notions of writing, reading and translating. First of all, Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) is undoubtedly a crucial name whose ideas on translation have contributed much to the developments in the perception of translation in literature. An established and successful fabulist, poet, essayist, editor, anthologist, and specialist of English and Argentine literature, Borges has a preeminent position as the translator of Franz Kafka, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, and Henri Michaux. Therefore, Borges' works are everywhere concerned with translation. His two seminal essays on translation, "The Homeric Versions" and "The Translators of *The Thousand and One Nights*", will comprise the theoretical

framework underlying the subsequent analyses of three postmodern texts, including his own short story "Pierre Menard". Secondly, Italo Calvino (1923-1985), translator of Raymond Queneau, presents a similar textual world in *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, which investigates the properties of writing and reading through a translator character. Lastly, Nicole Brossard (1943), a French Canadian poet and novelist known as one of leaders of a movement called *réécriture au féminin* (rewriting in/of feminine), looks at literary translation from the gender viewpoint in *Mauve Desert*. I will focus on the way in which these writers use translation as a theme or as a narrative strategy to challenge the essentialist notions of language, meaning and the subject as author and translator. Therefore, such a method may exclude other possible readings which approach the texts in question from different angles and which may not serve the purposes of the study.

Having examined the use of translation as a theme and of translator as a character in postmodern fiction in the first chapter, I will turn to the other side of the argument, the postmodern fiction's input to translation studies in the second chapter titled as "The Postmodern Turn in Translation Studies". I will particularly focus on the implications of a fictional turn in translation studies by drawing on the arguments of three scholars, namely Rosemary Arrojo, Adriana Pagano and Edwin Gentzler who are the representatives of this trend. In order to better emphasize the possible distinguishing contributions of taking a fictional turn in translation studies, I will first outline the inadequacy of the previous turns in the field. Since an overall survey of the existing turns and theories in translation studies exceed the scope of this study, I will limit myself to two broad categories, i.e. the linguistically and the culturally oriented approaches. The linguistically oriented approaches encompass the equivalence theories of Eugene Nida, Wolfram Wilss, Joseph Graham and of Mona

Baker, and the skopos theory of Hans Vermeer. The culturally oriented approaches include the polysystem theory of Even-Zohar, the norm theory of Gideon Toury, the more culture and ideology based approaches of André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett. I will particularly focus on the statements of the prominent names of the theories in question so as to show the essentialist sides of the linguistic and cultural turns of translation studies. Here, my aim is not to dismiss their overall validity, rather to show the incongruity between the claims of these theories and the individual statements of the theorists. In order to define essentialism/anti-essentialism, Arrojo's following quotation from Richard Rotry in "The Revision of the Traditional Gap between Theory and Practice and the Empowerment of Translation in Postmodern Times" may be helpful:

> There are two ways of thinking about various things. The first thinks of truth as a vertical relationship between representations and what is represented. The second thinks of truth horizontally –as the culminating reinterpretation of our predecessors' reinterpretation of their predecessors' reinterpretation. It is the difference between regarding truth […] as eternal objects which we try to locate and reveal, and regarding them as artifacts whose fundamental design we often have to alter". (45)

This essentialism has paralyzed the field at least for two thousand years. As it is frequently said, translation is as old as the tower of Babel. It is possible to trace the first essentialist theories of translation back to the Roman times when Cicero and Horace (first century BCE) discussed translation within the wider context of the two main functions of the poet: the universal human duty of acquiring and disseminating wisdom and the special art of making and shaping a poem. The important distinction

made by Cicero and Horace between *word for word* and *sense for sense* translation has had great effect on successive generations of translators. After Cicero and Horace, St. Jerome (late fourth century CE) perpetuated the *sense for sense* rendition within the context of Bible translation. In St. Jerome's case, following so closely the source text would produce an absurd translation, cloaking the sense of the original. The "literal" and the "free" poles of translation surface once again in the context of religious texts by Martin Luther who followed St. Jerome in rejecting *word for word* translation strategy since it would be impossible to convey the same meaning as the source text. By the early fifteenth century, *sense for sense* translation was accepted as the only orthodox approach to a foreign text; the Renaissance saw the growth of theoretical treatise on translation which encouraged the infusion of this principle. Meanwhile, literalism just went underground in order to surface in the works of German Romantics who did not call the method they preferred literal. For August von Schlegel (1767-1803), Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1767-1835), translation became a matter of problematics of interpreting texts across cultural boundaries. The translator either appropriates the foreign text and produces a version palatable to the target language reader (like *sense for sense* translation) or s/he surrenders to the attractions of the foreign text, takes the target language reader abroad and engage him/her in the textual atmosphere of the source culture (like *word for word* translation). This new conception of the old dualism was picked up and passed on by successive theorists. Like most of their Romantic precursors, these later theorists typically dualize translation and openly assign moral charges to the translator, which manifests the traditional theoretical views on language and the subject. After pinpointing the essentialist arguments of linguistically and the culturally oriented translation approaches, I will try to show

how scholars, Rosemary Arrojo, Adriana Pagano and Edwin Gentzler as the representatives of the fictional turn in translation studies, use fiction to produce ideas that does not cherish an essentialist view towards language, culture and the subject and in this way open a space for translation studies to incorporate the fictional-theoretical parameters as a source of theorization on translation.

CHAPTER ONE

TRANSLATION TURN IN POSTMODERN FICTION: TRANSLATION INSPIRES FICTION

The fictional treatment of translation and translator is not totally a new phenomenon. It is enough to remember Cervantes's great work *Don Quixote* where translation is integrated in the plot as the allegedly actual text of the novel. However, the frequent appearance of fictional translators and fictionalized translations in the second half of the twentieth century, especially in postmodern fiction, calls for an explanation. In *Fictional Representations of Multilingualism and Translation*, Delabastita and Grutman attributes this boom to an increased awareness that "translation […] as a device in fictional texts does more than just draw the reader's attention to their texture and techniques […] also provides a comment about our socio-cultural values and the state of the world we live in" ("Introduction" 14). Similarly, Pagano notes in "Translation as Testimony" that thematizing translation is a way of expressing new cultural configurations, "a way to describe the movement of displacement that characterizes the in-betweenness of the woman, the translator, and the migrant" (81). Other possible causes for the increase in the fictional representations, for Jon Thiem, are first the internationalization of literature in the post-world period when "the extensive migrations of writers and their texts across language boundaries has drawn attention to the necessity and difficulty of literary translation" and then the widespread feeling that "as postmoderns we are epigones"

("The Translator as Hero" 209). Thiem explains that "[t]he translator's secondary position with respect to the primary text makes him or her a personification of belatedness, and translation itself a model for all forms of belated cultural endeavor" (209). Conversely, while acknowledging in "The Translator in Fiction" that the increasing internationalization makes the translator more necessary and the translating experience more common, Strümper-Krobb also cites the recent development in the perception of translation in literary theory which now recognizes that translation is more than a secondary activity (116).

Though all valid, such reasons overlook the prominent feature of postmodern fiction, i.e. its metafictional nature. Postmodern fiction has a growing fascination with self-conscious and self-reflexive fictions which highlight and question their own artificiality as representations of reality. In his book *The Cambridge Introduction to Postmodern Fiction*, Brian Nicol offers three important features found in postmodern fiction: a self-reflexive acknowledgement of a text's own status as constructed aesthetic artefact; an implicit (sometimes explicit) critique of realist approaches to narrative and to representing a fictional "world"; and a tendency to draw the reader's attention to his/her own process of interpretation as s/he reads the text (xvi). These are central to the most characteristic practice in postmodern fiction, to "metafiction" that is a technique by which a text highlights its own status as a fictional construct by referring to itself. As Nicol puts it, postmodern fiction objects to two key assumptions of the realist text: that the fictional world exists in its entirety, is analogous to the real world and writing is referential; and that the story told in the text is natural and singular, which means that the narrator simply meditates an existing story (24). Firstly, the notion of referentiality was most powerfully challenged by Saussurian structuralism which accepts that language is a structure of

signifying relations between concepts and words, not between things and words. Thus, the referent is not a part of this system, which is further elaborated by Derrida who contends that there is nothing preceding and outside the text. Secondly, the foregrounding feature of postmodern fiction, as Waugh argues in *Metafiction*, is a preoccupation with "fictionality" which refers to the condition of being constructed, narrated and mediated (14). Thus, all narrative includes artifice which means that telling a story is not an innocent act. The effect of postmodern fiction, especially metafiction, is to draw attention to the frames involved in fiction, which are usually concealed by realism. Postmodern fiction tries to foreground and problematize the act of framing in both fiction and the real world. Postmodern fiction, without abandoning or denying the referential function, keeps it ironically so as to show that while reality may exist, it is unavoidably conditioned by the concepts and categories of our human understanding. Thus, it is both referential and self-reflexive in that it constantly questions the complex nature of the represented world and the narrative in fiction.

The crisis of (textual) representation has enabled metafictional narrative modes to occupy an increasingly central position in the literary system. These circumstances have also provided a perfect stage for narratives foregrounding translation and its consequent questions of fidelity, originality, manipulation and dependence. Besides, translation completes the postmodern questioning of traditional narrative conventions since it presents, in Arrojo's words, "a paradigmatic scenario for the underlying struggle for the control over meaning that constitutes both writing and interpretation as it involves the actual production of another text: the writing of the translator's reading of someone else's text in another language, time and cultural environment" ("Writing, Interpreting and the Power Struggle for the Control of

Meaning" 73). Thus, translation has a key role in understanding fiction itself. Therefore, it is not surprising that translation continues to be the object of speculation in the metafictional works by Borges, Calvino and Brossard, among others.

1.1. Jorge Luis Borges: Intertexuality and Translation

The discussion of the translation turn in postmodern fiction must begin with Jorge Luis Borges, whose fiction is everywhere concerned with the theme of translation and in fact overlaps in many ways with the deconstructionist and poststructuralist rethinking of translation which, as will be explained in the next chapter, give rise to an understanding of translation as a creative activity on a par with original writing. Furthermore, his conception of translation will inform the subsequent analyses of three postmodern texts, including his seminal fiction, in terms of the interplay between translation and metafictional questioning of traditional conventions of textuality.

Borges started his literary career at the age of nine with the publication of the translation of Oscar Wilde's "The Happy Prince" in *El País* (Arrojo, "Translation, Transference and The Attraction to Otherness: Borges, Menard, Whitman" 26). This early interest in translation grew into a life-long preoccupation with the challenges of translation, which had a great role in shaping his literary career and inspired his writings. Borges' writing consists of short, sometimes very short (only a paragraph) "fictions" to use the title of his influential volume of texts published in 1944. His fictions are quite different from the established genre of short story. Although there is generally a clear narrative in them, his main concern is not to recount this

narrative. Instead, he tends to work on the idea of how fiction creates an imagined world quite independent from the real one, though it may be parallel to it. His works demand "the creative complicity of his readers---not merely their suspension of disbelief---to produce the sense that a window has been opened onto singular worlds of fiction with a logic of their own" (Kristal, *Invisible Work* xi). Many of these stories are presented as imagined translations whose translators are mostly the principal characters of his fictional worlds: Jaromir Hladík who was offered to finish a play that no one will ever read; the protagonist of "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" who translates a Spanish version of Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn Burial*; and Tzinacan who deciphers the mystery of his religion and chooses to let it die with him. Especially, in "The Homeric Versions" (1932) and "The Translators of *The Thousand and One Nights*" (1936), and more openly in "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*" (1944), Borges has offered the most original and insightful ideas on the implications of translation for literature and the established relations between authors and translators.

Although Borges did not write a full-fledged treatise on translation, it is still possible to extract an approach on the basis of his general observations. For Borges, translation is more than a metaphor for the cultural conditions of the twentieth century; it is the decisive characteristic of all writing from antiquity to the present. Indeed, he once says: "To translate is to produce literature, just as the writing of one's own work is- and it is more difficult, more rare. In the end all literature is translation" (Kristal 32). Borges started to address the question of translation in his first major essay on translation "The Homeric Versions" published in 1932. Here Borges talks about translation in terms of his conception of the labyrinthian nature of all literature. With the first sentence, he resituates translation at the center of literary

discussion and regards the notion of the inferiority of translation a superstition rather than fact. Here, Borges compares six versions of a passage from *The Odyssey*, which include literal versions by Buckley and by Cowper, an archaic rendition by Butcher and Lang, an oratorical version by Pope, a lyrical rendition by Chapman and lastly a factual rendition by Butler. The translations are characterized by the specific strategies and methods favored by the translators. For example, while Pope uses luxurious dialects and spectacular discourse, Chapman prefers passionate, lyrical verses as opposed to Butler's aversion to the visual and his emphasis on facts. In the end, Borges does not ask which translation is the most faithful; rather he questions the appropriateness of the fidelity notion in a discussion on translation and writing, since all of them have represented Homer in time. In this way, while his notion of translation precedes translation studies in terms of questioning the established notions of fidelity and equivalence, Borges also destabilizes certain notions of literary tradition such as origins, originality, authorship and language.

Borges continues his contemplation on translation in "The Translators of *The Thousand and One Nights*" which is his most extended essay on translation. The importance of this essay stems from the fact that it presents some of Borges' views on translation which were not articulated before. As explained in the previous paragraph, Borges maintains in other essays that an original and its translation are variations on a theme and that an original is not a priori superior to its translation. In this essay, Borges claims that a translator translates against another. The idiosyncrasy of *The Nights* is due to its obscurity as a source text which has been derived from various oral tales of different cultures and historical periods. Interestingly, it is not the Arabic version that is the source for many European translators. Rather, the source text has come to be a translation, actually a series of

translations. Jean Antoine Galland, a French Arabist, translated *The Nights* into French in the early eighteenth century and published it in twelve volumes from 1707 to 1717, which became the canonical text for many translators to come. According to Borges, Galland's translation includes both translations from the Arabic text and some supplementary tales by a Maronite called Hanna who added stories not present in the original one. In his essay, Borges compares the translations of four translators: Edward Lane, a British translator who lived five years in Cairo and produced an erudite and puritanical version of the text in the 1840s; Richard Francis Burton, the legendary English adventurer who offered a quite eccentric rendition in 1885; J.C. Mardrus, a French translator, who did not translate the words of the text, but its scenes in 1899; and lastly Enno Litmann, a German translator's 1923-1924 translation. Borges attributes differences, digressions or omissions he detected in these four translations not to mistakes of the translators, but to the very literary traditions from which these translators come and to which they contribute. For instance, Borges finds Burton's translation inconceivable without "John Donne's hard obscenity, the gigantic vocabularies of Shakespeare and Cyril Tourneur, Swinburne's affinity for the archaic, the crass erudition of the authors of 17th-century chapbooks, the energy and imprecision, the love of tempests and magics" (108). In his opinion, the more poetic versions of Galland, Burton and Mardrus transform the mysterious and suspense in the original since they enter into a dialogue with the literary traditions fashioned by others before them. However, the translations of Lane and Litmann lack the creative imagination since they resort to literal equivalences, sidestepping literary considerations. Borges seems to prefer translations that intensify the magical and the fantastic, that enhance the language of the target and the source culture and that reveal the personality of the translator as well as that of the original

author. For Borges, authors and translators are indistinguishable and translation is as creative as original writing.

"Pierre Menard, The Author of *Quixote*", one of the exemplary Borgesian fiction, may be the most examined text since it offers ample opportunities to discuss the implications of translation for literature; thus it deserves George Steiner's most quoted statement in *After Babel*: "The most acute, the most concentrated commentary anyone has offered on the business of translation" (70). The story itself is quite simple and well known. An unnamed academic, writer or librarian pens an introduction to a forgotten great writer, scholar and translator of the early twentieth century, Pierre Menard. The narrator begins by listing the items in Menard's body of work, which is divided between "visible" and "invisible" ones. The former consists of nineteen works including poems, translations, monographs etc. Menard's ambitious invisible project is to rewrite word by word a few excerpts from Cervantes's *Don Quixote* —the ninth and thirty-eighth chapters of Part I and a fragment of Chapter XXII" (90). Menard devoted his "scruples and sleepless nights to repeating in a foreign tongue a book that already existed" (95); he wants to translate the *Quixote*, but not a contemporary version, not a mechanical translation, not a copy of it. He wants to compose the *Quixote* itself. His intention is to compose a few pages that would coincide word for word and line for line with those of Cervantes. In order to achieve his goal, Menard devised a "method" that "was to be relatively simple": "know Spanish, become Catholic, fight against Moors or Turks and forget the entire history of Europe between the years 1602 and 1918, be Miguel de Cervantes" (91). However, Menard discards this plan on the grounds that it was "too easy" and "the least interesting". Besides, "to be, in the twentieth century, a popular novelist of the seventeenth seemed to him a diminution. To be, in some way,

Cervantes and reach the *Quixote* seemed less arduous to him--and, consequently, less interesting-- than to go on being Pierre Menard and reach the *Quixote* through the experiences of Pierre Menard" (91). This is obviously an ironic criticism of notions like originality, fidelity and invisibility to illustrate how absurd to expect from a translator to be absolutely faithful to someone else's text, as for that matter, to incorporate perfectly the intentions of the author.

The parody deepens towards the end when the narrator makes an analysis of the two identical texts and argues that "Cervantes's text and Menard's are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer", which satirizes the idea that the original is always superior to the translation. He goes on to prove this point by comparing passages from the two:

> Cervantes, for example, wrote the following (Part I, Chapter IX):
>
> …truth, whose mother is history, rival of time, depository of deeds, witness of the past, exemplar and adviser to the present, and the future's counselor. (92)

The narrator claims that this excerpt is "a mere rhetorical praise of history" since it was written by the "lay genius" Cervantes in the seventeenth century. Menard, on the other hand, writes:

> ... truth, whose mother is history, rival of time, depository of deeds, witness of the past, exemplar and adviser to the present, and the future's counselor. (92)

The narrator praises Menard's version since history, the *mother* of truth becomes "not what has happened", but "what we judge to have happened", which reminds the status of history as a human construction.

The effect of this seemingly paradoxical analysis is to question values taken for granted such as originality and to emphasize in a new way the significance of intertextuality, historical context and the relationship between the author, the text and the reader. It may be helpful here to recall Kristeva's notion of "intertexuality". Kristeva's reworking of the Bakhtinian notions of polyphony, dialogism and heteroglossia allowed her to develop a more formalist theory of the plurality of texts within and behind any given text in *Desire in Language*. Thus, the critical focus was turned from the notion of subject (the author) to the idea of textual productivity. In this way, Kristeva and the group at *Tel Quel* attacked on the humanist notion of subject (author) as the original and originating source of fixed meaning in the text, suggesting that every text derives from any preceding text and affects any succeeding text. Therefore, It is interesting as Arrojo points out in "Translation, Transference…" that chapter nine, the first one that Menard tries to reproduce, is about the vague origin of *Don Quixote*, which may be purposefully chosen to underline the blurred limits between the translation and the original, the translator and the author (36). The text of *Don Quixote* is allegedly the Spanish translation of a manuscript by an Arabic historian that was originally found in some old notebooks bought in Toledo. Therefore, within the narrative created by Cervantes, *The Quixote* is not his, but in fact a translation which is not totally reliable. Thus, it is possible to speculate that Menard chooses to reproduce such a plot in order to imply that if the original text is already an unreliable translation, his version should not be inferior to Cervantes's and they both should be considered "authors" of *The Quixote*. In this way, Borges, while deconstructing traditional notions related to originality and authorship, also anticipates postmodern notion of intertexuality.

For Borges, the lack of original ideas is no reason to despair since it is always possible to rewrite, which he frankly admits:

> "I do not write, I rewrite. My memory produces my sentences. I have read so much and I have heard so much. I admit it: I repeat myself. I confirm it: I plagiarize. We are all the heirs of millions of scribes who have already written down all that is essential a long time before us. We are all copyists, and all the stories we invent have already been told. There are no longer any original ideas" (Kristal 135).

Borges surmounts the problem of exhaustion, to use John Barth's terminology in "Literature of Exhaustion", by making this exhaustion the very subject of his work. Barth admires Borges since "he writes a remarkable and original work of literature, the implicit theme of which is the difficulty, perhaps the unnecessity, of writing original works of literature" (69). Aware of this fact, Borges integrates a real historical figure, Cervantes, with a fictional figure, Menard, which results in the dissolution of the boundaries between fiction and history, which in turn leads readers to question the authenticity of the notions linked with the authorial persona of Cervantes and with the originality of *Don Quixote*. However, Menard's text turns out to be inevitably different since it reflects his own writing and interpretation. Borges shows that every translation, even in its fidelity, is always different just as every reading of a text by different readers gives a unique interpretation conditioned by the historical and cultural context which both refers to the context of the text and of the reader.

One last point deserves to be mentioned: the unreliability of the narrator. It is obvious that Menard's narrator has an absolute control over his narrative throughout which he demonstrates some religious and literary prejudices. First of all, he

attributes certain additions and omissions in Madame Bachelier's catalogue of Menard's works to her religious beliefs and claims that her readers must be "few and Calvinists, if not Masonic and circumcised (88), which is also a parody of Cervantes' shadow narrator that comments on the unreliability of the translation of Cide Hamete Benengeli's text by the Moor. Then, the narrator denies in one of the story's footnotes that Menard has ever written a work in the same spirit of his *Quixote*: "Madame Henri Bachelier also lists a literal translation of Quevedo's literal translation of the Introduction a la vie devote of St. Francis of Sales. There are no traces of such a work in Menard's library. It must have been a jest of our friend, misunderstood by the lady" (89). There is no reason for this denial other than the narrator's blatant dislike for Madame Bachelier. By refusing to consider the significance of writing another extant book, the narrator undermines his own reliability since Menard's *Quixote* is also lost like Quevedo's translation. In fact, readers are forced to rely on the narrator since Menard "did not let anyone examine these drafts and took care they should not survive him. In vain I have tried to reconstruct them" (93). It becomes obvious at the end of the story that readers cannot be certain to what extent the narrator might have examined or read Menard's manuscripts. In this way, Borges does not authorize anyone to hold a stable opinion. He destabilizes the internal hierarchy of the text and questions the legitimacy of all discourses, especially his own, just as Cervantes did in his strategic undermining of authority in *Don Quixote*.

Consequently, it is enough to add that Menard becomes a novelist not through his visible works, but through his translation. This radical revision of the relationship between the original and the translation may be better explained with Borges's own experience with *Don Quixote*. As he tells us, when he was a small

child, he first became acquainted with Cervantes's great work through an English translation. Borges believes that if "all we are able to rehearse are some moderate, very modest variations on what has already been written" (Kristal 138), then translation is the only point to appreciate a literary practice.

1.2 Italo Calvino: The Death of Author and Translation

Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* (1981) presents another complex Borgesian situation which investigates the properties of writing and reading with cunning references to major ideas from Plato to Derrida. If briefly summarized, the novel revolves around the investigation of the male protagonist simply referred to as "Reader" for a seemingly erroneous binding of a new book. He returns to the bookstore and discovers that all the remaining copies have the same "mistake". In his search for the rest of the book, he meets a female reader, Ludmilla, referred to as the Other Reader, who has rushed to the bookstore for the same reason. From then on, the plot revolves around the Reader's quest for the true "original" and his pursuit of Ludmilla. In his search, he is faced with books that are interrupted and misplaced, other readers and particularly with references to a mysterious "swindler", a translator called Ermes Marana, founder of Apocryphal power and a representative of the OEPHLW of New York (Organization for the Electronic Production of Homogenized Literary Works). The Reader, an author named Silas Flannery and the translator Ermes Marana are all in pursuit of Ludmilla. Yet, in the end, the Reader and Ludmilla get married.

At first reading, Calvino seems to present a novel where he confirms the importance of the role of the reader. For example, Calvino's technique of opening and closing the book with reference to itself being read implies that it is the reader

who makes the story possible and determines its beginning and end. Such a reader-friendly approach is also strengthened by his incorporation of poststructuralist textual theories. One of the characters who is also drawn to Ludmilla is Silas Flannery, an Irish novelist who can only write a personal diary. Flannery is actually the embodiment of the "dead" author declared by Barthes in his seminal essay "The Death of the Author": "The writer can only imitate what is anterior, never original". Barthes argues that the idea of the author as the stable guarantor of meaning is no longer valid; instead of the author, the reader functions as "co-writer" of a text, which illustrates how fiction is altered by the context since it depends on the way it is read. Thus, Flannery, as an author figure, is reduced to a shadow under the control of powerful readers. Moreover, Flanner's inability to write is paralleled to his inability to approach the female reader, Ludmilla, whom he desires. As a paper author, Flannery can only watch her through a telescope and "suffer at the thought", "feel the jealousy of" his books, "which would like to be read the way she reads" (126).

Ludmilla is also the reason of Ermes Marana's misplacing texts and their translations in the novel. As we learn, "the secret spring that set [his machinations] in motion was his jealousy of the invisible rival [any author she may read] who came constantly between him and Ludmilla" (158-159). Unlike Flannery, Marana is the deceitful translator who does not hide from his authorial desire. "Ermes" is obviously associated with the Greek god Hermes, who is usually linked with interpretation and mediation. Arrojo's citation of Paul Friedrich's explanation of Hermes' most prominent attributes in "The Gendering of Translation…" may be useful in delineating appropriate associations with Calvino's translator:

> 2. [Hermes] is the master of cunning and deceit, the marginality of illusions and tricks; […] 4. He is the patron of all occupations that

> occupy margins or involve mediation: traders, thieves, shepherds, and heralds; 5. His mobility makes him a creature betwixt and between; […] 7. Even his eroticism is not oriented to fertility or maintaining the family, but is basically aphroditic- stealthy, sly, and amoral, a love gained by theft without moral concern for consequences; and finally 8. Hermes is a guide across boundaries, including the boundary between earth and Hades, that is, life and death. (1978, 205; 88)

Therefore, the very name "Ermes" functions a signification of the features attributed to the translator character: a cunning, deceitful, greedy manipulator of authors and texts, who could never be faithful to anybody or anything.

Calvino portrays different reader characters throughout the novel. While the male reader actively attempts to construct his reading out of fragments he finds, Ludmilla, on the contrary, prefers to remain as a simple reader. As she explains, she does not want to cross the "boundary line" that separates "those who make books" from "those who read them". She wants to remain "one of those who read them", remain on her side of the line (93). She thinks that otherwise "the unsullied pleasure of reading ends is transformed into something else" (93) which is not something she wants. Actually, what attracts Calvino's male characters to her is her unaggressive way of reading, which also distinguishes her from her sister Lotaria. As a reader, Lotaria exemplifies a reductive, computer-assisted way of reading usually associated with the academic world "where books are analyzed according to all Codes, Conscious, and Unconscious, and in which all Taboos are eliminated, the ones imposed by the dominant Sex, Class, and Culture" (45). In a way, Lotaria's aggressive and assertive way of reading sterilizes authors and books. Out of these reader figures, the ideal one in Calvino's plot is not the male reader, but the passive,

attractive female reader, Ludmilla, who refuses the Reader's invitation to join him in finding "the thread [of the narrative] that has been lost" since she wants to remain simply a "reader" who is happy to be guided by the narrator (93). In fact, as the author marries both readers at the end, Calvino seems to suggest that these two ways of reading could be reconciled. Significantly, in the end, both readers, "now man and wife", are together in their "great double bed" reading "If on a Winter's Night a Traveler" (260).

Throughout the novel, Calvino seems to acknowledge the postmodern notions of writing and reading, suggesting that the myth of the author's absolute paternal authority has been overthrown. Yet, one point needs to be clarified. If the author is really dead and Calvino's novel is truly celebrating the pleasure of productive reading, why does his interfering translator character have such a bad reputation? To answer this question requires probing beneath the surface where, as Fink states in "The Power behind the Pronoun", "we find that this is the gambit of an intricate game, a game that cannot be played without the reader but is set up to trick him/her into realizing that it is always [he], Calvino, who is in control of the situation" (94). Apparently, although the novel's author character, Silas Flannery, is a caricatured embodiment of the dead author, the actual author behind the plot, Calvino's narrator (or Calvino himself) perpetuates the traditional role of storyteller as the controlling voice of the novel. For example, in the very first paragraph of the novel, Calvino's Reader character, and consequently the real readers outside the text who inevitably identify with the "You" that opens the novel, start to get instructions how to turn this reading into the very center of his life:

> You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino's new novel, If on a winter's Night a Traveler. Relax. Concentrate. Dispel every other

> thought. Let the world around you fade. Best to close the door; the TV is always on in the next room. Tell the others right away, "No, I don't want to watch TV!" Raise your voice- they won't hear you otherwise- "I'm reading! I don't want to be disturbed! (3)

Calvino's narrator continues to indicate "the most comfortable position" and circumstances in which his own book should be read, informally chatting with the reader about the purchase of the book and his/her intentions to read it. Here, one point should be specified. The author introduces himself with the name on the book cover and apparently makes authentic assumptions about familiar details about the bookstore or the general preparations for reading, which creates an illusion for the real readers outside the text that the voice speaking through the text is that of the real Calvino and can be trusted. However, the author who calls himself Calvino is actually the first character in the plot and the pronoun "you" that the readers may identify with is his first creation. The narrator frequently interrupts the narrative to let the Reader know that he is in control of the plot, which is probably ignored due to the illusion created in the first place. As Fink points out, "there is no freedom for the Reader-character because he can only seemingly escape the grasp of the author, who makes up the rules of the game" (99). Calvino's narrator even warns the Reader against his controlling strategies in more than one passage. For example, he tells:

> For a couple of pages now you have been reading on, and this would be the time to tell you clearly whether this station where I have got off is a station of the past or a station of today; instead the sentences continue to move in vagueness, grayness, in a kind of no man's land of experience reduced to the lowest common denominator. Watch out:

> it is surely a method of involving you gradually, capturing you in the story before you realize it– a trap. (12)

In an interview, Calvino makes it clear that his game playing in the novel is not accidental: "I constantly play cat and mouse with the reader, letting the reader briefly enjoy the illusion that he is free for a little while, that he's in control. And then I quickly take the rug out from under him; he realizes with a shock that he is not in control, that it is always I, Calvino, who is in total control of the situation" (Arrojo, "The Gendering of Translation…" 91).

The author's omnipotent position on the discourse is even more obvious when he addresses the pronoun "you" to Ludmilla who is "the Third Person necessary for the novel to be a novel, for something to happen between that male Second Person and the female Third" (141). By shifting the pronouns, the author-narrator demonstrates his power to decide the existential fate of the characters. After the shift, the male Reader has temporarily vanished from the narrative until he is called up again: "Reader, prick up your ears" (147): "Don't believe that the book is losing sight of you, Reader. The you that was shifted to the Other Reader can, at any sentence, be addressed to you again. You are always a possible you" (147). As a result, as Fink aptly asserts, "the author's voyeuristic presence in the relationship of his characters elevates him to the position of a god, the ultimate divine I/eye of the discourse" (100).

If closely examined, Ermes Marana offers a similar authorial intervention in the narrative, which explains why Marana is at the same time an authorial figure and a "swindler". As a result of his direct interventions, the Reader ends up with ten incipit novels, which actually constitute most of the novel. It means that the very text of the novel is actually the result of an unwanted intervention attributed to the

translator character who is "a serpent who injects his malice into the paradise of reading" (125). It is especially revealing that Calvino's strategy in the novel is also the strategy devised by Marana in the Sultana's episode. As it is told, in a sultanate of the Persian Gulf, the Sultan's wife "must never remain without books that please her: a clause in the marriage contract is involved, a condition the bride imposed on her august suitor before agreeing to the wedding" (123). Since the Sultan fears "apparently with reason, a revolutionary plot" as well as his wife's betrayal, he hires Marana to translate all the books the Sultana will read. "If a coded message were hidden in the succession of words or letters of the original, it would be irretrievable" after translation (124). Therefore, Marana proposes to the sultan a "stratagem prompted by the literary tradition of the Orient":

> He will break off this translation at the moment of greatest suspense and will start translating another novel, inserting it into the first through some rudimentary expedient; for example, a character in the first novel opens a book and starts reading. The second novel will also break off to yield to a third, which will not proceed very far before opening into a fourth, and so on. (125)

This strategy obviously repeats Scheherazade, one of the greatest authorial figures, who is able to change her fate and postpone death through her ability to tell a story. Marana is here presented as a translator who takes on a truly authorial role. However, he is not only visible and powerful, but also morally objectionable since he cannot help stealing and faking original manuscripts. It is possible to conclude that if Marana's authorial strategy is Calvino's, and if Marana is a manipulative thief for faking originals and for misguiding readers, then the author himself also carries the similar attributes. They are, so to speak, doubles; and doubles are never seen to like

each other. So, Calvino is playing around not only with the conventional authorial role and function, but also with the figural conventions of literary study on doubles and alter-egos. In this way, Calvino's novel offers a revealing example of the feelings of rivalry that seem to haunt the relationship established between authors and translators. It also shows that it is difficult to draw distinct lines that could separate them in categories. Although the novel presents only parodied portraits of authors, translators and readers, it still makes it possible to reflect on the author's desire to control his characters and readers, on his refusal to become only a shadow in the postmodern textual theories and on an explicit recognition of the translator's authorial power no matter how negatively his repudiation is portrayed. Consequently, Calvino's novel benefits from the translator's traditionally established repudiation as the incorrigible traitor and recently acknowledged status as an equally authorial figure to portray the complex web of relations surrounding authors, translators and readers.

1.3. Nicole Brossard: Différance and Translation

Like Italo Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, from which Nicole Brossard draws her epigraph ("Reading is going toward something that is about to be, and no one yet knows what it will be"), *Mauve Desert* is about the complex network of writing, reading and translating which create the life of a book. Both fictions foreground the active role the translator takes on in this process. However, unlike Calvino's Marana, Brossard's translator undertakes her task not for gaining control over the text (and the female reader), but for the passionate life of the word itself. Here, Brossard's approach to translation becomes crucial. Generally associated

with the *réécriture au féminin* (rewriting in/of feminine) trend of Quebec feminist writers who emphasize difference without hierarchizing and creativity both in originals and translations, Brossard regards translation as an allegory for women writing. For Brossard, translation's transformative power is crucial to enlarge the space attributed to women and others whose voices have been covered up by the dominant language/discourse/culture in a given society. Thus, Brossard uses translation both as theme and as a narrative strategy in her novel to explore the divergence of language from reality as revealed by the translation process.

The novel has an unusual three-part form, physically separated in the volume. The first forty-seven pages constitute a novella titled as "Mauve Desert (Le Désert mauve)" which is ostensibly written by Laure Angstelle. The subject of the novella is the writing process of a teenager named Mélanie who lives with her mother Kathy Kerouac and her mother's lover Lorna Myher. In the second part of the book, titled as "A Book to Translate", this first novel written by Angstelle is found by a translator named Maude Laures who becomes fascinated by the novella. The second part portrays the process during which Laures discusses the story, explores its intricacies and searches for deeper meaning. The final part of the novel, entitled "Mauve, The Horizon", consists of Laures' translation of the first novella, which is actually the rewriting of the first chapter since all three sections are in French. This section is also given its own book cover complete with the title, the names of the author and translator and publishing house. Throughout the novel, Brossard addresses the issue of translation on three levels. Firstly, through Mélanie and Angela Parkins, she examines the women's problem of translating themselves into a language that has a capacity to mute them. Secondly, she explores the translation process itself through Maude Laures. Finally, the circularity of her text dissolves the

boundaries between originals and translations, which completes the arguments of the previous texts examined in the present thesis.

The first part of the novel is composed of two interwoven lines of narrative. The dominant one is narrated by Mélanie and recounts her relationship with her mother and her mother's lover, her trip to visit her cousin Grazie in Albuquerque, and her encounter with Angela Parkins, a surveyor working in the Arizona desert. The second narrative is distinguished from the first one by traditional chapter headings and narrated by a third person narrator. It tells off the mysterious "long man (homme long)" and his obsession with equations and explosions, which is clearly symbolic of the male rationality with its attendant concepts such as science, power and violence. Throughout the novella, Mélanie tries to translate herself into reality by writing. However, as a precocious girl, Mélanie is troubled by words: "I was always certain of everything. Of faces, of the time, of the sky, of distances, of the horizon. I was certain of every- thing except words. The fear of words. Slow fear. Strains to say. Strains to hear. Pain in all my veins." (13). So, she mostly drives through the desert and abandons herself during a desert storm which opens spaces for her body beyond language: "On dry storm nights I would become tremors, detonations, total discharge. Then surrender to all the illuminations, those fissures which like so many wounds lined my virtual body, linking me to the vastness. And so the body melts like a glimmer of light in the abstract of words" (20). Nevertheless, she cannot stop her impulse to write and starts to write in the maintenance journal of her car. It is also because of her mother's power of voice that Mélanie writes to become entrenched in language. Brossard, while arguing for language by positing it as the power of the women through Mélanie and her mother, undermines the same argument through Lorna Myher who exists beyond language. When Kathy wants her to learn how to

write, he responds: “You still can’t accept me as I really am. I'm a body. A body happy when in water. Have you never thought that my body would disintegrate if ever it entered the twisted stuff of words?” (74). Here Brossard problematizes the possibility of Mélanie’s writing herself into a reality within language which is already constructed with a patriarchal perspective since Myher’s “body in water” may refer to the pre-linguistic stage in the womb.

Mélanie meets Angela Parkins after when her sexual desires start to awaken. Having once been translated, Mélanie loses her indeterminable side of subjectivity associated with the desert where she can no longer find what she expects. She decides to pursue her attraction to Angela. Thus, their dance in a bar is narrated with sexual overtones. Yet, Angela is shot by a pistol held in the hands of the long man who are, unlike Mélanie, attracted to the desert to tame and manipulate it for the self-serving needs of the society. Laure Angstelle’s novella culminates with the death of Angela Parkins: “Angela is dissolving in the black and white of reality” (36). Angela is a victim of the black and white of print, or the discourse, which sees her lesbian attraction to Mélanie as a disruptive power and eliminates it.

The second part of the book is written by the translator Maude Laures who discovers “Mauve Desert*”* in a bookstore and becomes impressed by it. The chapter she writes, “A Book to Translate”, is an outgrowth of this reading and is a kind of preface to the following translation. At first obsessed with a reading strategy that aims to establish an infallible meaning in the original represented by the authorial figure of Laure Angstelle, Maude tries to translate the novella into a unitary semantic form. However, Laure Angstelle remains as a shadowy figure without any definite details about her life or her authorial persona. Maude makes inquiries about her, but in vain. Without a real, extratextual author figure, Maude has the option to construct

Laure in whatever way she likes; therefore, she totally depends on herself to uncover the significance of Laure's text. In the notes on "Mauve Desert", Maude examines the possibilities of Laure and files her notes under the section "Characters" which may also refer to the letters of the text that is being sought, thus making the author as one of the characters in the novella. In her "Laure Angstelle" file, she imagines the author as several people, progressively reducing her imagined age from fifty to thirteen, remaining undecided where she grew up and outlining possible reasons for the publication of this single work. Each imagined scenario reveals something about the relationship between Laure and her text, and about the meaning Maude attributes to Laure's words. For example, while trying to understand "mauve", Maude imagines the author's appreciation of the power of the motif: "One can believe too that Laure Angstelle knows how to anticipate that moment when the soul *is going to crack* faced with the splendor that is mauve and that all the world's abstraction is going to surge into a word" (81). Despite her efforts, Maude is unable to construct an author figure to fill the function in her head. Nevertheless, she believes that something of the author's subjectivity must be transmitted through the text. Therefore, she imagines a discussion between herself and Laure Angstelle upon the death of Angela Parkins. The specific agent of the murder remains uncertain in the text. However, Maude accuses Laure of killing Angela and asks its reasons in Angela's voice: "Why did you kill me?" (132). Laure explains: "I'll try to tell you why you died so suddenly, absurdly. You died because you forgot to look around you. You freed your- self too quickly and because you thought yourself free, you no longer wanted to look around you. You forgot about reality" (132). After watching the conversation between two for a while, Maude finds Laure's self-defense unsatisfactory; so, she directly speaks to Laure:

- 1 can reproach you for what is in your book.

- By what right?

- Reading you gives me every right.

- But as a translator you have none. You've chosen the difficult task of reading backwards in your language what in mine flows from source.

-But when I read you, I read you in your language.

-How can you understand me if you read me in one language and simultaneously transpose into another what cannot adequately find its place in it? How am I to believe for a single moment that the landscapes in you won't erase those in me? (133).

Her disagreement with Laure overwhelms Maude at this point and she decides to take the responsibility of a reader to uncover the meaning in the text. By challenging the decisions taken by the authorial perspective, Maude actually learns how to deconstruct the singularity of meaning and discovers an infinite number of possibilities and readings, which reminds Derrida's neologism "différance" (roughly corresponding to the English "to defer" and "to differ"). Derrida argues that there are only signifiers, since each signifier refers not to a signified presence outside of language, but to other signifiers: "The sign, in this sense, is deferred presence" (*Speech and Phenomena* 9). Therefore, pursuing meaning is not to reveal some hidden presence that is already there; but to track through an always-moving play of differences. Within these possible meanings, Maude finds the opportunity to inscribe her own landscape in translation and answers Laure's questions: "Because true landscapes loosen the tongue in us, flow over the edge of our thought-frame. They settle into us" (132). Maude's newly found translation strategy resonates with

Menard's translation of the *Quixote* since both attempts take place intralingually with a claim of creating an equally original piece of writing.

The third part of the novel constitutes Maude's translation of "Mauve Desert", "Mauve, The Horizon", which is practically same as the original. One point draws attention as the title shows. Mélanie's desert is not recuperated in the translation. While Laure's Mélanie recounts "small lines which like veins mapped a great tree of life in my eyes" (11), Maude's Mélanie acknowledges for the first time the presence of horizon "I was following the little fragments of life aligned in my gaze, mauve horizon" (181). Whereas Laure's Mélanie focuses on the space before her, Maude's Mélanie sees the horizon: "I was 15, with all of time and the horizon ahead of me" (175). Finally, it is the mauve horizon which attracts Mélaine's attention after Angela's death: "Then came the threatening profile of every thing. Then dawn, the desert and mauve, the horizon" (202). Thus, as a translator, Maude does not afraid to allow her subjectivity to color her translation and point new possibilities.

Brossard makes translation a mode of generation of the literary work, the means through which much of the book is generated. The three sections of the book mimic the stages of progression in the life of a book. This life begins with publication, and continues through accidental encounters with those who infuse it with meaning. Translation is also the thematic subject of the work, in that the considerations of the second section are attributed to the subjectivity of the translator and considered to accompany the translation process. As she tells, Brossard is more concerned with attempting to photograph the translation process itself:

> For me, it meant translating myself from French to French. It's the same story, written with different words and sometimes written with

> mistakes because she makes mistakes, as any translator does, by over-investing some passages, or going too fast on some others, as we all do when we read and something speaks to us, more intensely. This book is all about my fascination for translation. (Wilson, "The Fiction of the Translator 392)

To sum up, postmodern fiction abandons all kinds of closed structures and fixed meanings in favor of indeterminacy and instability. This is a matter of questioning the humanist notions of subjectivity, textuality and meaning, all of which have been defined in Western thought as having a preexisting and unchanging essence. Postmodernism highlights the decentered and open-ended nature of language, texts, and discursive practices, arguing that the totalizing and essentializing biases of humanist ideals obscure semantic and cultural heterogeneity. In a way, the emphasis on indeterminacy and instability has led to the renouncement of essentialism in many fields, including literary theory and translation studies.

While each author's fictional translators are somewhat different, these three texts raise similar issues of translation. All three authors achieve a *mise en abyme* in which their translation characters mirror themselves. This strategy suggests that writing and translation are allied literary activities and that writers and translators make similar emotional investments towards their texts. The postmodern tendency to question the representational assumptions of traditional textual theories prepares a perfect stage for authors to use translation as a theme and as a narrative strategy to discuss the fictionality of fictions and of realities. Thus, it is no accident that these fictional translators inhabit postmodern texts: the author dies and finds, in Benjaminian sense, his "afterlife" in the translator.

CHAPTER TWO

POSTMODERN TURN IN TRANSLATION STUDIES: POSTMODERN FICTION'S INPUT TO TRANSLATION STUDIES

Translation has become more visible in recent times not only as a professional activity, but also as a theoretical juncture where the most exciting reflections are taking place on language, culture and the subject. It is no longer a linguistic form that was characterized by a pursuit for some unified original meaning. Translation is now recognized as a discursive practice that is central to an extensive social and political network of languages and cultures. Thus, translation is increasingly understood to involve poetics, politics as well as aesthetics and ethics. In Bella Brodzki's words, "translation is no longer seen to involve only narrowly circumscribed technical procedures of specialized or local interest, but rather to underwrite all cultural transactions, from the most benign to the most venal" (*Can These Bones Live?* 2). Today, translation studies are at a stage where an awareness to expand the boundaries of translation makes it possible to recognize multiple spaces where translation is actively engaged. As I intend to argue, this promising visibility of translation in recent times may be closely related to the dissemination of a poetics generally labelled as "postmodern" which is first and foremost "anti-essentialist" since it, as explained in the previous chapter, rejects any possibility of intrinsically stable meaning that is fully present in texts and supposedly can be repeated

regardless of the subjects as well as the cultural, social and political circumstances involved. The aim of the present thesis is not to completely evaluate the contributions of the approaches associated with essentialism nor to dismiss their overall validity. The aim is to show that the study of translation can effectively prosper within a fictional-theoretical framework that does not cherish an essentialist view towards language and culture, and is able to merge the practice with the theory.

2.1. Linguistically Oriented Essentialist Approaches

The possibility of meaning as an immobile and recoverable essence paves the way for an understanding of translation as a form of meaning transferal without essential loss. Consequently, translation is reduced to a form of symmetrical and neutral exchange between languages and cultures, which leads theoreticians to seek for some exemplary models by which translators could find adequate equivalents and universally accepted ethical terms. Such an understanding has framed the relationship established between original and translation, which is furthered by a more systematic and more linguistic-oriented approach to the study of translation emerging in the 1960s. The now classic example of this approach includes Eugene Nida's *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) where he incorporated elements of Chomsky's generative grammar. The questions of meaning, equivalence and translatability were dealt with a new scientific approach overtly by Nida who attempted to move translation (especially Bible translation) into a more scientific era by incorporating the recent studies in linguistics.

Nida's systematic linguistic approach has been applauded as the pioneering first steps taken to systematize the study of translation and hopefully discipline the translator's task; thus has had considerable impact on many subsequent translation

scholars, such as Wolfram Wilss (1982), Joseph F. Graham (1981) and Mona Baker (1996), for whom the notion of equivalence continued to be a key issue in translation throughout the 1970s and beyond. In contrast to traditional translation theory, Wolfram Wilss offers in *The Science of Translation: Problems and Methods* the formulation of "a modern translation theory" which aims "to factor the act of translating and determine the relationships between the individual constants of the translation process as explicitly as possible" (14). In this sense, the main challenge is to develop a theory which could solve the problem of translation once and for all as well as provide a solution for the unpredictable nature of translation and translators. Accordingly, for Joseph F. Graham in "Theory for Translation", "the problem of translation is theoretical in the strict sense, being a problem in and of theory: not just the right theory but the right kind of theory, which turns out to be the only real kind" (23). Thus, he proposes a theory of translation based on the distinction between art and science, inspired mostly by the distinction made by Chomsky between competence and performance. However, at the end of his article, Graham admits that a theory of translation which should be "completely explicit […], leaving no implication, no supposition, and thus demanding no interpretation at all" and "absolutely scientific" (29) is impossible since scholars should take up "the familiar and necessary (because irreducible) task of finding grammatical equivalents across languages" (30). So, he concludes by asking "whether indeed translation really a subject for theory after all" (30).

Since the time of Nida, Graham and Wilss, there has been considerable change in the perspective of linguistically oriented approaches, which is mostly attributed to the developments in discourse analysis and critical linguistics. In her 1996 article on linguistics and cultural studies, Mona Baker argues in "Linguistics

and Cultural Studies…" that "both linguistics and linguistically oriented studies of translation have made remarkable progress in recent years", particularly in dealing with "ideological issues in language and translation" (15). However, if examined closely, the linguistically oriented approaches do not take the implications of ideology for language and translation to the final consequences. Mona Baker, for example, claims that the basic contribution of contemporary linguistics is its refusal "to theorize language and society as different entities" (15), which implies a non-essentialist conception of meaning as always historically and ideologically constructed. However, Baker criticizes culturally oriented studies of translation for their heterogeneity and multiplicity which, for her, are not positive developments for the field which "is also, unfortunately, going through a period of fragmentation: of approaches, schools, methodologies" (9). She sees as negative the fact that there is not a homogeneous agreement among these approaches (10), which share, as she claims, "both a tremendous strength and a potentially dangerous weakness" (16). The danger is that since these approaches do not have a distinct methodology of their own and tend to "reject absolute values", they may "encourage an amateurish, incoherent and less than rigorous approach to its object of study; it certainly has done in the case of translation" (16). It is clear that Baker relates the adoption of absolute values to coherence and rigor; thus she contradicts her first argument, for if meaning is recognized as socially and ideologically constructed and hence as provisional, then there is nothing as absolute.

As clearly observed, the works of Nida, Wilss, Graham and Baker intend to find definite, universal and scientific models and methods for the study of translation, which is underpinned with a conception of meaning as stable and unchangeable, thus recoverable. Their overarching argument is that it is the task of

theory to offer definitions and rules which will set the boundaries of the task of translator. Yet, the gap between their assumptions which generally include an ideal scenario and the actual practice demonstrates the fruitfulness of formulating universal and normative laws with the promises of systematization and meaning control.

With the new functionalist approach pioneered by Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer, translation theory undergoes two important shift: the shift from a source-text oriented theories to target-text oriented ones; and the shift from a purely linguistic-based theories to the ones which include cultural factors as well as linguistic aspects. As Gentzler states in *Contemporary Translation Theory*, functionalist approaches conceive of translation as an action performed by a person who has a specific communication goal referred as a text's *skopos* by Reiss and Vermeer (70). Since the *skopos* may vary within a given situation, the functionalist approaches allow translator the flexibility to decide which form of communication better suits the given condition, which marks a break with the traditional theory axis revolving around literal vs. free. The functionalist trends place the "receptor" at the center of translation theories in opposition to the key concept of equivalence. Despite the contributions of the functionalist approaches, there are still some points which they share with the linguistic-oriented trends. The functionalists insist that the received text must be coherent, fluent and natural. For Reiss and Vermeer, this coherence depends on the translator's concept of the *skopos* of the text which implies the translator's understanding of the text as unified whole. Gentzler evaluates this tendency as an invocation of the traditional concept of fidelity, for "if the derivative is consistent with the original *skopos*, it is called faithful and accepted as a good translation" (72). Thus, despite developments over the faithful vs. free debates, these

approaches still tend to hold a utopian and idealistic conception of translation since they invest the original with some kind of structured information which can be transferred by the translator in a faithful way. Gentzler concludes that these "sciences" of translation and functionalist approach are still mostly "based upon concepts rooted in religion, German idealism, archetypes, universal language, and, most recently, economic forces" (74).

2.2. Culturally Oriented Essentialist Approaches

The incorporation of sociocultural parameters as a reaction to the stagnant prescriptive models in translation studies is reinforced by the descriptive approaches whose premises are laid down by Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory (1978) and Gideon Toury's norm theory (1980). The main tenet of the descriptive approaches is that translation is part of a system operating in the larger social, literary and historical systems of the target culture. In other words, translated texts are the facts of the target culture. Drawing on the works of Russian Formalists, especially of Jurij Tynajov, Even-Zohar coins the term "polysystem" to refer to the network of related literary and extraliterary systems which are hierarchized within the society. Including translated literature into this complex conglomerate of systems, Even-Zohar explains the status of translated literature neither as primary nor secondary, but as variable, depending on the specific conditions within the literary system. Zohar's approach allows scholars to move away from the study of isolated texts towards the study of translation within the social, cultural and historical forces. However, according to Even-Zohar, texts are selected to be translated because they are compatible with the new forms necessary to form a complete, dynamic and homogenous polysystem. It means that despite its insistence on heterogeneity and multiplicity, the polysystem

theory assumes a concept of a totally integrated and meaningful "whole" (Gentzler 119). For Even-Zohar, culture is the highest organized human structure. Therefore, his theory assumes a polysystem where multiple texts correlate with other literary and extraliterary elements, forming a complex, highly stratified, yet unified structure. Even-Zohar's tendency to generalize and universalize is best exemplified in his essay "Universals of Literary Contacts" where he puts forward ten literary universals. Gentzler finds such assumptions dangerously close to traditional theories based on sameness, eternal facts and similar systems. Besides, such generalizations compromise the scope and objectivity of his approach.

This target-oriented approach to translation transformed the concept of equivalence especially through Toury's norm-based model which purports to explain the validity of the target system's norms with the terms of "adequacy" (to the source text) and "acceptability" (to the target culture). Positing translation between the theoretical poles of adequacy and acceptability, Toury argues that no translation can ever be fully adequate to the source text because of the new cultural context in which it is situated, nor can it be acceptable to the target culture because of its foreign structural and verbal elements. The goal of Toury's theory is to establish a hierarchy of cultural and linguistic contextual elements that govern the translation process and product. In his paper "The Nature and Role of Norms in Literary Translation", he outlines his conception of "translation norms" where he introduces a new theoretical premise "tertium comparationis" (i.e. invariant of comparison) "as a *hypothetical entity* constructable on the bases of a systemic (textemic) analysis of ST" (49). This invariant is not socially or historically constructed, rather, as Gentzler puts it aptly, "exists in another realm as a universal literary/linguistic form" (129). Since this entity is derived from the analysis of the source text, it is based on the source-

oriented, static theories that Toury initially opposes. Reminding that Toury's work draws on the polysystem theory, Gentzler explains his use of formal universals, of invariants of comparisons with an underlying tendency toward "pure" formalism (130). In addition, Toury, like Even-Zohar, limits his analysis to the literary realm and suggests an underlying unified, universal structural form.

Through Even-Zohar's and Toury's system theories, it is understood that translation studies need a more open theory which is less interested in determining normative definitions and more interested in raising questions. During the eighties and the nineties, the equivalence questions are abandoned in favor of a more holistic, culture-oriented theories of translation. The culturally oriented approaches are more concerned how meaning travels, rather than decoding the nature of meaning. In their introduction to the collection of essays *Translation, History, and Culture* (1990), Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere officially announced the "cultural turn" in translation studies, borrowing the term from Mary Snell-Hornby's article in the same collection. Their main argument is that translation scholars must investigate what "the exercise of power means in terms of the production of culture, of which the production of translations is a part" (5). So, they focus on the interaction between culture and translation, on how culture impacts and constraints translation and on "the larger issues of context, history and convention" (11). Despite such an innovatory theoretical framework formed by concepts such as "ideology", "manipulation" and "patronage", Lefevere's earlier and later works demonstrate contradictory tenets. In his earlier book *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*, André Lefevere attempts to describe the translations of Catullus's sixty-fourth poem with a terminology that reminds the earlier work of Nida and Wilss:

> The translator's task is precisely to render the source text, the original author's interpretation of a given theme expressed in a number of variants […] by replacing the original author's variation with their equivalents in a different language, time, place and tradition. […] the translator has to replace all the variations contained in the source text by their equivalents. (99; Gentzler 95)

In a later work *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context*, Lefevere clearly applies the traditional separation between the semantic and the pragmatic levels. The first one is related primarily to the informative level while the second one is associated with "the level of language usage on which language is used primarily for effect" and which "tends to be more concentrated in texts usually thought of as literary" (17). Thus, Lefevere considers "the information content of the original" as "generally transferable" while for "the illocutionary use of language", translators need "to ask themselves what the text as a whole and what similar or analogous illocutionary devices are at their disposal to match that instance" (19). For Lefevere, translators can nearly always render the information content, but not always its illocutionary power (19). Similarly, Susan Bassnett proposes her book *Translation Studies* (1980) as a comprehensive introduction to the translation studies. Declaring that translation studies is now an academic discipline in its own right, she claims that "there are general principles of the process of translation that can be determined and categorized, and, ultimately, utilized in the cycle of text—theory— text regardless of the languages involved" (21). Arguing that translation belongs more properly to semiotics, Bassnett defines translation as "the transfer of 'meaning' contained in one set of language signs into another set of language signs through competent use of the dictionary and grammar,

the process involves a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria also" (22). Subscribing, like Lefevere, to the distinction between the locutionary and illocutionary levels, Bassnett states that although different translators produce different translations, there will remain the "stable, basic and constant semantic elements of the source text, which are not modified by transformations or changes by the translator (35). Refusing the claims of sameness between texts and languages, Bassnett seems to apply two contradictory principles: on the one hand, she claims that there is no right way to evaluate a translation since the translations of a source text vary from each other; on the other hand, she tends to base the interpretation of the translation on the comparison of the text's function as original and as translation. The reason behind such a contradictory approach lies in Bassnett's attempt to define a systematic study of translation. Yet, despite their insistence on multiplicity, difference and heterogeneity, the culturally oriented approaches carry some of the essentialist suppositions of the traditional translation theory.

2.3. Towards Non-Essentialist Approaches

The translation theories examined so far all assume some notion of equivalence: linguistic/dynamic equivalence, equivalent literary function and corresponding formal correlation governed by social norms in the target culture. Each theory depends on a theoretical conception of the original and its representation in the receiving culture. The question whether it is possible to think about translation in other than traditional terms is answered by the deconstructionist and poststructuralist rethinking of the notions on which translation theory is founded. The reassessment of the notions of origin(ality), author and realistic representation as

exemplified in the previous chapter has led to reverberating changes in translation practice and theory. These repercussions have made the pave for translation scholars to be less interested in a unified source text and more in a long chain of multiple meanings and the plurality of languages, which reminds Borgesian labyrinth.

Such a radical redrawing of the traditional conceptions in translation theory derive mostly from Walter Benjamin's seminal essay (actually preface to Baudelaire's *Tableaux Parisiens*) "The Task of The Translator" (1923) and Derrida's reading of this essay in "Des Tours de Babel" (1985). In "The Task of The Translator", Benjamin discusses the creative potential of translation when it draws on the plurality of languages. The title of the essay, which is "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" in German, tells much about the core of its argumentation. Aufgabe means "task", "duty" or "job". It derives from the verb "aufgeben" which means to give up" or "give over". According to the poststructuralist readings, the *aufgabe* of the translator is to give up the notion of text's meaning as a unified, recoverable essence and to give oneself over to the pool of languages to which Benjamin refers as the "kinship of languages" (17). For Benjamin, this pool of languages evolving from one generation to the next involves a constant state of flux of words and sentences, which is pivotal to the nature of language. This conception also includes Benjamin's notion of "pure language": "an intention, however, which no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other" (18). This inherent, yet hidden plurality in individual languages can become visible through translation. Thus, translation has another aim apart from the mere representation of one individual text; it is also to express "central reciprocal relationship between languages" (17). The other term in Benjamin's title "übersetzen" implies a process of "carrying over". Critics (for

example Gentzler 133) examine this term in relation with other terms in the essay such as "überleben" which means "living on" or "survival", and "fortleben" which means "carrying on" or "carrying across". Thus, Benjamin links translation with development, transformation and change. He adds that "no translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove for likeness to the original. For in its afterlife—which could not be called that if it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living—the original undergoes a change" (17). In a way, he implies that the original depends on the translation for its "growth and flowering" (17).

Derrida's reassessment of the ideas of Benjamin illustrates his deconstructive mode which destabilizes the notions of unified and coherent original. He proposes his essay "Des Tours de Babel" as a "translation of another text on translation" (200). The title of the essay exemplifies the play of translation that can enlarge language. Joseph Graham mentions in a "translator's note" to the essay that "des" can mean "some", "of the", "from the" or "about the" and that "tours" can mean "towers", "tricks", "turns" or "tropes" (Gentzler 135). The two sound like "détour" which illustrates Derrida's aim of not setting one meaning or fixed translation by recalling the defer/delay connotations pivotal to his neologism "différance". In the essay, Derrida draws from the well-known story of the Babel tower which is erected by the Shem (meaning "name") tribe to reach the heavens, but is destroyed by God. The Shem tribe wants to make a name for themselves, imposing their name and their tongue upon the other tribes of Israel. Derrida reads the construction of the tower as an enforcement of one language upon the world through violence and the destruction of it by God as the condemnation of the universal language (which would eliminate the need for translation) while liberating the plurality and the polyvalence. Adopting Benjamin's argument, Derrida argues that the task of the translator is to ensure the

survival of languages and by extension the survival of life: “sur-vival gives a surplus of life, more than a surviving. The work does not simply live longer, it lives *more and better*, beyond its author’s means” (203). Thus, for both Benjamin and Derrida, the original always contains a kind of invisible structure which is incomplete to future potentials. Translation responds to the original by filling that openness of the source text which Derrida resembles to a marriage contract “with the promise to produce a child whose seed will give rise to history and growth” (213). In general, translation process ensures the rebirth, the growth and the proliferation of languages. Therefore, it is apt to claim that Derrida’s translation theory, though not a theory in the traditional sense, suggests that translation should be thought less in terms of copying or reproducing and more in terms of how languages relate to each other.

Drawing from the arguments of Benjamin and Derrida, the first point to be made for a non-essentialist approach to translation is that it no longer considers translation as an idealized form of meaning transferal from one language to another, from one culture to another without the interferences of the translator and the conditions involved. In this way, translation is no longer an insurmountable theoretical problem which demands the impossible achievement of a full-fledged scientific model. As Arrojo argues, in the context established by essentialism and supposedly universal aspirations, translation has always become an unyielding theoretical problem trapped within the futile repetition of the old discussions revolving around faithfulness and betrayal, freedom and slavery, respect and intervention (“The Revision of…” 42). The mechanisms and conditions of translation now become paradigmatic of any language exchange only within the context where difference is seen inevitable and meaningful. Thus, it is more than a mere coincidence that in the wake of anti-essentialist trends of contemporary thought

witnessed in postmodern times, the importance of the translator's authorial role and the translation's transformation power have begun to attract due attention. Such an intersection of ideas has opened fertile areas for research such as the study of the interrelationships between translation and the unconscious, translation and power, translation and gender, translation and post-colonial theory, as the recent scholarship have suggested.

2.4 Fictional Turn in Translation Studies

The empowerment of translation and the recognition of the translator's authorial role are most fruitfully manifested in postmodern fiction where, as explained in the previous chapter, has been witnessed a boom in the use of translation as a theme and the translator as a protagonist. While the first chapter explains how understanding translation is a key to understanding the fiction itself, this chapter intends to show that fiction underpinned by postmodern notions of representation, history, fiction, origin(ality) and author offers ample opportunities for translation scholars to investigate how this appreciation of translation's presence in postmodern fiction informs the translation studies and even how these fictions anticipate and complete the assumptions of various research fields flourishing in the deconstructionist and the poststructuralist thinking of translation. The Brazilian translation scholar Else Vieira was the first person to pinpoint this trend. In an essay titled "(In)visibilidades na tradução: Troca de olhares teóricos e ficcionais" [(In)visibilities in Translation: Exchanging Theoretical and Fictional Perspectives] (1995), Vieira proposes the phrase "fictional turn" in translation studies, defining it as the move that signaled "the incorporation of fictional-theoretical parameters" as a

source of theorization on translation (Pagano 81). Her theory of fictional turn, though incomplete, revolves around an analysis of the trope of mimesis in Brazilian fiction by such authors as Guimarães Rosa. Vieira examines how the images of mirror are used as metaphors for realism in fiction and for faithfulness in translation. For her, mirrors offer misguided efforts to represent reality. Drawing on the work of Borges in fiction and Haroldo de Campos in poetry, she suggests that translation is better understood as trans-position which works in two directions (Gentzler 137). Vieira claims that the exchange of ideas and the cross-fertilization through translation is necessary for the evolution of ideas and the innovation of new forms of fiction. At the end of the article, she refers to Benjamin and Derrida with a focus on the metaphors of birth and renewal, of survival and supplementation. She suggests translation, like a river, changes the past and the future, and participates in the development and flow of cultural systems.

As Pagano succinctly summarizes, the fictional turn in translation studies is characterized by a twofold movement concerning the triad fiction-theory-translation (81). On the one hand, there is the fictionalization of translation by novelists as exemplified in the first chapter within the context of postmodern fiction. On the other hand, there is a movement of critics and scholars who approach fiction as a source of translation theorization. Their reason of drawing on the fictional representations of translation is that fiction has the capacity to problematize and deconstruct translation. Pagano argues that fiction is "sensitive to relationships and movements difficult to capture through more orthodox analyses" (97). Furthermore, fiction's tendency to play with the existing ideologies of its cultural context makes it a suitable place to trace the ideology of translation. Therefore, Else Vieira's work is indicative of a new

wave of scholars investigating the fictional turn in translation with such exemplary figures as Rosemary Arrojo, Adriana Pagano and Edwin Gentzler.

In "Writing, Interpreting and the Power Struggle for the Control of Meaning", Rosemary Arrojo examines metaphors related with construction and architecture in stories by Kafka, Borges and Kostolányi. She sees authors/translators as constructers who build their text to control the meaning and reception. Arrojo begins her analysis with the story "The Burrow" (1971) where the narrator, an unspecified underground animal has completed the construction of a burrow, yet checks the passages and openings with a painful obsession to create a flawless construct totally protected from invasion and intrusion. Arrojo reads the narrator's need to be a master of his own construction as an author's need to have "total possession of truth, total control over the proliferation of meaning, and total neutralization of difference" (68). Similarly, Borges's story "Death and the Compass" (1944) continues the theme of the attempt to control meaning. The story portrays a "complex encounter between a cultivated reader and a fierce author and a labyrinth maker, both relentlessly engaged in a power struggle that entails the virtual elimination of one of them" (69). In this case, the author figure is the criminal Red Scharlach who tries to construct a deadly labyrinth around a detective named Erik Lönnrot who, as a reader/translator, attempts to solve the clues as well as anticipate the criminal's next moves. Yet, in a typical Borgesian reversal, the criminal becomes the detective, and the detective becomes the criminal with the implication that, as Arrojo argues, the author and the translator are always caught in a complex interplay. Arrojo culminates her argument through Kostolányi's story "The Kleptomaniac Translator" (1996) in which the central character Gallus is a talented writer and translator, but has a compulsion to steal. Since all he knows is how to write and since

he cannot do so under his own name, Gallus translates "trashy works" that respectable writers don't want to touch, but only with gloves on. The narrator introduces him to an editor who looks for someone to translate an English detective novel entitled *The Mysterious Castle of Earl Vitsivlav* which is immediately accepted by Gallus. Before the deadline, he delivers his manuscript which is nevertheless rejected by the editor. When the narrator investigates the case and reads Gallus' translation, he admires his work that is a much worthier text than the original. However, when he compares the original with the translation, he finds that Gallus has not controlled himself and has stolen property from the author's setting. In the end, although the translation is "fluent, artistic and at times poetic" (75), the narrator concludes that the translator, as "a slave to his criminal addiction", was not "man enough" and, consequently, "did not deserve the support of honest people" (76). Through this story, Arrojo problematizes the common contempt for translator's task that tradition implicitly and explicitly opposes to the usually uncritical, prevailing acceptance of authorial power as the exclusive prerogative of those who write originals (74). She especially focuses on the narrator's comments on Gallus' "incurable disease" which seem to foreground some of the most widespread notions about translation engrained in essentialist thinking of language and the subject. Both the views of the editor and the comments of the narrator reflect a general belief in the possibility of stable meanings stored in texts which should be related to their authors' intentions, which in turn relegates translations and originals into radically different categories. Therefore, in Kostolányi's plot, the translator's will to power is rendered as a form of criminal behavior. Arrojo acknowledges the story's efficiency in exploring some of the most important implications and consequences of the translator's interfering power. In a way, Arrojo shows that fiction writers are aware

of this power; it is translation theory's turn to deconstruct some of its own hypotheses and keep up with fiction.

Adriana S. Pagano similarly examines the relationship between fiction, translation and history in the work of Julio Cortázar in "Translation as Testimony". Pagano especially focuses on Cortázar's notion of translation as the site of tension and even of violence which results from the imposition of words and meanings to translate reality (82). As explained by Pagano, being himself a translator and a writer continuously incorporating translation into his fictions, Cortázar is an exemplary source for translation theorization. Translation may be the most recurrent theme in his fiction, which is mainly interesting since it has intricate relations with notions of exile and displacement. Being an exile in Paris from his homeland and his mother tongue, Cortázar uses the displacement signs inherent in translating and writing to find alternative ways in and out of the past and alternative means for instruction and language. His main concern is about the capacity of language to translate reality, which is closely connected with the capacity of history to record facts. He carries out these two operations adequately through fiction. Thus, Pagano asserts through these fictions that translation cannot be isolated from ideology and powerful cultural institutions involved in the production of culture. For example, Cortázar's "Blow-Up" (1967) portrays the speculations of a Franco-Chilean photographer and translator, Roberto Michel, on the difficulties he encounters in conveying the story he wishes to write. While in the middle of translating a scholarly thesis, he goes to a park where he happens upon a couple, an older woman and a young boy, and takes their photos. Upon blowing up these photos which would allow him to reenact the scene in the park, he finds out that the scene was not of love, but of prostitution. Thus, the story frames the displacement of meanings involved in all processes of

reproduction. In a similar fashion, *62: A Model Kit* (1968) tells the story of an Argentine translator named Juan who works for UNICEF in Paris. The novel begins with a description of translation error Juan makes while mentally translating into Spanish a customer's order in a restaurant. The phrase "Je voudrais un château saignant" ("I'd like a rare steak") becomes "Quisiera un Castillo sangriento" ("I'd like a bloody castle"). This mistranslation reveals an interesting displacement of signifiers. Pagano interprets the transformation of the rare steak into a castle bathed in blood as "a point of departure for the reconsideration of the colonization of America by the European world" (84). Furthermore, the use of "château" reminds the French author Chateaubriand whose poems were to become "foundational fictions" for many generations of Latin American intellectual. These unexpected associations of words portray the chain of meaning constructed by history and memory.

The novel *A Manual for Manuel* (1973), Pagano's main focus, tells the story of a group of Latin Americans who, while living in Paris, plan to kidnap a Latin American officer linked to repressive paramilitary agents working in Paris. The group meets at the home of Patricio and Susan who, alongside their political activities, prepare a scrapbook for their son Manuel, translating from French to Spanish, newspaper articles about the politically sensitive issues of the 1970s. The couple intends this scrapbook as a manual for Manuel to learn an alternative history to the official one recorded by the journalists and the government. The kidnapping takes place, but the police and the secret forces manage to find the kidnappers, kill one of them and thus put an end to the whole plot of the conspiracy. Pagano, after explicating the historical context in which the novel was written, states that the novel is an example of fictional pieces where the historical facts are inserted through pieces of news and through a dossier made up of file records of statements by political

prisoners and interviews of U.S. agents. During the translation process, the translator specifically reflects on the linguistic choices in the original that attempt to conceal, however eventually reveal the details of the process of constructing news. For example, a sudden change of verb tense or lexical item discloses a tension in the moment of writing the original piece, which is captured by the translator. Thus the urge to translate is actually an urge to reinterpret historical facts and to recover them from between the lines and silenced statements. In this way, the translation of the news turns into an annotated translation where the translator provides the missing links in the original. Cortázar thematizes translation as a practice that allows the reader to reread such subversions of history while decoding the facts recorded by the press in the news. Translation is also considered as means for political education since Manuel will gain a political awareness through the manual, a collection of texts which will constitute his cultural heritage. Another aspect of the novel concerning translation is the plot of the story. In the novel, translation is used as a strategy both by the oppositional group and their opponents to conspire against each other through messages written in code. Therefore, Pagano claims that "Cortázar clearly thematizes translation within the context of tension between opposing parties and the tension of conspiracy" (94). She concludes that his reflection on translation extends to general issues related with epistemological processes in that the novel demonstrates his concern with the ideological dimension of the meaning production. While translation is employed as a strategy for subverting texts and disclosing suppressed meaning, it paradoxically becomes also a strategy for preserving memory. Thus, Pagano argues that of particular interest to the translation scholar is the problematization of translation by Cortázar as a site of violence and tension "where meanings fight to escape suppression and oblivion" (96). The analysis of Pagano shows that the

fictional turn can introduce a political dimension into the task of rethinking translation.

In his book *Translation and Identity in the Americas* (2008), Edwin Gentzler mainly argues that translation in the Americas is constitutive of separate and different cultures. Thus, it is more than a trope. It is a condition whose history is also the history of cultural identity formation in the Americas. In line with this argument, in "The Fictional Turn in Latin America" (2008), Gentzler investigates through Borges, Márquez and Llosa how fiction engenders theories of translation that also apply to a theory of identity formation. While Borges reflects on translation in essays and short fictions, translation assumes a major role in the novel with Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1998). In many ways, Márquez's work echoes Borges'. Borges chooses ancient narratives such as the tales of Homer, Scheherazade or Cervantes, written in ur-languages of Greek, Arabic and Spanish (123). Márquez selects a gypsy who writes in Sanskrit, a kind of ur-European, ur-Spanish language. The narrator of the novel Melquíades becomes a kind of Homeric bard or Scheherazade by weaving a tale with multiple interpretations, which is rich and all-inclusive enough that it never really ends. The narrator writes the tale of the House of Buendía in his native language, which is then deciphered and translated into Spanish by Aureliano. The novel has a double narrative. The primary one is about heroic conquest and consolidation, of nation formation and patriotism written in the history books and memorials; the secondary one, including multiple international interconnections, concerns the preservation of lost lines and languages found in cryptic writings and translation. Significantly, at the end of the novel, translation presumes the primary one leading to the survival of the story and the Buendía line. Yet, the translation itself involves a double task: transcribing Sanskrit

into Spanish and then breaking Melquíades' private code. Even accomplishing this double task does not unite the novel since the translator Aureliano is inscribed in the text, imprisoned in a city of images which will be terminated when he finishes deciphering. In this way, similar to Borges, Márquez questions the traditional notions of authorship and the forms of the traditional novel. Gentzler argues that Márquez's novel shows that translation, for all its impurities and shortcomings, is one of the keys to understanding Latin America (123).

Gentzler's main focus is however on Mario Vargas Llosa's novel *The Storyteller* (1987; tr. 1990) where Llosa questions traditional translation theory as a means for accessing and understanding indigenous Amazonian culture. The novel includes two stories presented in alternating chapters. The first concerns the search by the narrator for his old friend, the storyteller who travels from village to village telling the stories, histories and myths of the Machinguenga tribe. This search is intersected with the translated oral tales comprising everything from creation myths to transformation stories. The novel begins with the fictional Peruvian narrator (presumably Vargas Llosa) in Florence, Italy where he studies Dante, Machiavelli and Renaissance paintings. In Florence, he comes across an exhibition titled "Natives of the Amazon Forest" in which a photographer describes the daily life of a tribe of Amazonian natives. Gentzler remarks that two clichés of translation are introduced at the beginning: the European artist/ethnographer traveling to the New World and translating Latin American culture to Europe, and the equation of photography to translation and its alleged objective representation of facts. The exhibition raises all sorts of questions for the narrator who is already feeling conflicts about his Latin American identity. At the exhibition, he also sees his storyteller friend with the Machinguenga tribe. The storyteller Saúl Zuratas is introduced in the second chapter

where he is shown as a talented, but frustrated law student in Lima, Peru where he befriends the narrator. Zuratas interestingly is not an indigenous, but the son of a Russian/Polish father and a Creole/Jewish mother. His hybrid ethnicity is symbolic of the hybrid nature of all translation in a postcolonial world. What is most distinguishing about him is a birthmark on the half of his face which has lent him his nickname Mascarita (Masked Face) and which is associated by Gentzler with the two-faced nature of translation, intellectual and physical hybridity as a condition of culture in the postmodern world and Latin American identity in general (125). The story revolves around the separation of these two friends over the years, juxtaposing two different ways of tracing one's identity in Latin America. The first path includes "tracing one's Spanish/European roots, Renaissance art, rational thought, Christian monotheism, urbanization and all the facets of Western civilization", as followed by the narrator. The second path involves "studying and learning indigenous cultures and languages, moving to the forest, wearing natural clothing, giving up private property, adopting polytheism and giving oneself over to the history, mythology, images and ancestral connections" (126) as followed by the storyteller. Translation is problematized in the novel in two ways. The first is the problem that Zuratas has with his chosen field of study: ethnology. On of the reasons of his refusal of the scholarship to France is his doubt about the morals and the ethics of the profession. Zuratas claims that ethnologists pry into the customs and beliefs of the tribes and introduce foreign ideas and material goods that in turn corrupt and destroy the very belief native people are trying to preserve. Furthermore, the people being presented have no idea of how they are presented. The second problematic arises from the missionary/linguistic translators who attempt with obvious imperialist intentions to convert the indigenous tribes, have them give up everything they believe in so as to

adopt the Christian religion, move to villages, and join the capitalist economy. As opposed to these two problematic forms of translation, Llosa offers an alternative one which may be called cultural immersion, embodied by Zuratas and presented through the indigenous stories interspersed throughout the novel. Although presented as authentic, they are actually semi-fictitious translations. Nevertheless, since western forms of narration are abandoned and many cultural terms, names and places remain untranslated, they have a degree of authenticity, allowing different ideas and perspectives to surface. Besides, the style of the narrative is also different from story structures in the West. The conception of time, the calendar and the construction of identities distinctly separate from those in the West. Thus, the translation strategy may be described as abandoning certain Western beliefs and structures, going over to the other side and allowing the sounds, rhythms and cultural associations to surface in the translation. In a way, Vargas Llosa "presents a translation model that develops a cultural context within the story to allow for fields of association to arise that may allow for understanding or access without assimilation" (130). Gentzler concludes that translation scholars have much to learn and gain insight into new possible and less exploitative translation strategies by reading the fiction of Latin America.

Consequently, it is apt to claim that fiction informs translation thinking from a comprehensive perspective varying from power conflict over meaning between author and translator, the socio-political dimension of translation to the role of translation in cultural identity formation. These three analyses show how fiction, postmodern fiction in this case, allows (fictional) translators to first install, then subvert the traditionally established notions, and in this way incorporate the historicity of translation with its underlying blurring between fiction and nonfiction, by extension between practice and theory. Since fiction has the potential to express

the most profound relationships with language, culture and the subject, the fictional turn in translation studies is pregnant with prolific ideas and concepts that can ultimately change the face of the field both as a professional activity in the society and as a theoretical intersection in the academic world.

CONCLUSION

The present thesis had a twofold overarching aim: on the one hand to investigate and exemplify the use of translation as a theme and of translator as a character in postmodern fiction; on the other hand to argue that the fictionalization of translation and translator in postmodern times may be a prolific source for theorization on translation. It is strikingly visible that there has been a boom in the fictional treatments of translation and translators in the second half of the twentieth century. This increase is generally attributed to the factors outside the fiction itself, such as the internalization of literature, a general opinion that translators reflect the epigone status of the postmodern authors, or an increased awareness on the part of the literary theory that translation is more than a secondary activity. This relationship between translation and fiction has been analyzed many times from the point of exploring certain themes associated with translation such as multilingualism, hybridity, cultural memory and exile. Thus, the appearance of translation in fiction is generally considered as an attempt to uncover the socio-cultural problems encountered by the individual in a globalizing world. However, these arguments have failed to notice the meaning of translation for fiction itself since the notions of writing, reading and translating are closely intertwined together and the translation process says something for fiction itself. Likewise, a myriad of translation theories have been produced in the short lifespan of the discipline with many turns. Yet, each turn with promises of bringing a completely new face to the discipline still bears the traces of the age-old essentialism that has invaded translation at least for two

thousand years and translation studies for four decades. As it unfolds even through a preliminary survey, translation and postmodern fiction has entered into a phase of symbiotic life which nourishes and advances both fields and just needs to be recognized. The aim of the present thesis was to take the first step for this recognition both on the part of postmodern fiction and of translation studies.

In this final part of the thesis, I will offer a summary of the conclusions I have reached. In the shaping of the thesis, I tried to produce a balanced view of my argument. Although translation and postmodern fiction are closely knit spheres which mutually draw from and inform each other, I tried to look each in different chapters so as to clarify my two-fold argument. As for the major figures whose novels or analyses were included in the thesis, for the first chapter, I chose the ones that more suited to my argument; for the second chapter, I chose the representative figures whose statements show clear evidence of essentialism. For the last part of the second chapter where I covered the fictional turn in translation studies, I could only refer to the names present in this study since it is a newly recognized field and there have been few names who have focused on this issue.

In the first chapter, I investigated the reason of the recent increase in fictional translators and fictionalized translations in postmodern times. My survey on the characteristics of postmodern fiction revealed that the crisis of (textual) representation has enabled metafictional narrative modes to occupy an increasingly central position in the literary system. Metafictional narratives foreground the fictionality of fictions by highlighting the frames involved in fictions and of realities by suggesting that history reaches us through textuality. Such a preoccupation with fictionality accompanies a questioning of humanist notions of originality, realist representation and the subject. These circumstances have also provided a perfect

stage for narratives foregrounding translation and its consequent questions of fidelity, originality, manipulation and dependence. Translation completes the postmodern questioning of traditional narrative conventions since it presents an exemplary scenario where the writing of the translator's reading of someone else's text in another language, time and cultural environment demonstrates the underlying struggle for the control over meaning. Therefore, translation has become and continues to be the object of speculation for many postmodern writers, including Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino and Nicole Brossard. Borges' work is everywhere concerned with translation. His ideas on translation as proposed in "The Homeric Versions" and "The Translators of *The Thousand and One* Nights" overlap in many ways with the deconstructionist and poststructuralist rethinking of translation and inform the subsequent analyses of three postmodern texts, including his seminal fiction, in terms of the interplay between translation and metafictional questioning of traditional conventions of textuality. Borges' short story "Pierre Menard, Author of *Quixote*", Italo Calvino's I*f on a Winter Night's a Traveler* and Nicole Brossard's *Mauve Desert* presents complex situations which investigate the properties of writing and reading with cunning references to the authorial power of translators. While Borges' translator Menard questions values taken for granted such as originality and emphasizes in a new way the significance of intertextuality, Calvino's translator Ermes Marana embodies the notorious qualities traditionally attributed to translators as the incorrigible traitor who challenges the authorial power of the original author. And, Nicole Brossard's translator Maude Laures explores the landscape of possible meanings opened by each reading of a text. Thus, each novel offers ample opportunities to discuss the implications of translation with its attendant notions such as originality, authorial power, fidelity and manipulation. What is common to these

texts is a *mise en abyme* in which the translator characters mirror their authors. This strategy suggests that writing and translation are allied literary activities and that writers and translators make similar emotional investments towards their texts. The postmodern tendency to question the representational assumptions of traditional textual theories prepares a perfect stage for authors to use translation as a theme and as a narrative strategy to discuss the fictionality of fictions and of realities. Thus, it is no accident that these fictional translators inhabit postmodern texts: the author dies and finds, in Benjaminian sense, his "afterlife" in the translator.

In the second chapter, I discussed the implications of these fictions for the translation studies. Today, it is acknowledged that translation is a discursive practice central to an extensive social and political network of languages and cultures. The promising visibility is closely related to the dissemination of postmodern poetics which is anti-essentialist since it rejects any possibility of intrinsically stable meaning that is fully present in texts and supposedly can be repeated regardless of the subjects and the circumstances involved. As I tried to explain through the linguistically and the culturally oriented translation approaches, translation studies has long been suffering from an essentialism towards languages and cultures, which thus relegates translation to a position as meaning transferal between languages. First of all, the linguistically oriented approaches with representative figures such as Eugene Nida, Wolfram Wilss, Joseph Graham and Mona Baker attempted to find definite, universal, and scientific models and methods relying on the notion of equivalence between languages for the study of translation. Their main argument was that it is the task of theory to offer definitions and rules that will determine the boundaries of the translation process. Yet, the analysis of the statements of these figures revealed a gap between their assumptions which include an ideal scenario and

the actual practice. In contrast to the premises of the linguistic turn in translation studies, the culturally oriented approaches tried to incorporate the socio-cultural parameters which would uncover how meaning travels from one culture to another. Despite such an innovatory theoretical framework formed by concepts such as "system", "norm", "manipulation" and "ideology", the individual statements of the representative figures such as Even-Zohar, Gideon Toury, André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett carried some of the essentialist suppositions of the traditional translation theory. It became possible to think about translation in other than traditional terms only by the deconstructive and poststructuralist rethinking of the notions of origin(ality), author and realistic representation on which the translation theory is founded. The ideas of Walter Benjamin and Derrida on translation paved the way for translation scholars to be less interested in a unified source text and more in a long chain of multiple meanings and the plurality of languages. Drawing from their arguments, I concluded that the mechanisms and conditions of translation could become paradigmatic of any language exchange only within a non-essentialist context where difference is seen inevitable and meaningful. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the importance of translator's authorial role and translation's transformation power have begun to attract attention in the wake of anti-essentialist trends of postmodern thought. In fact, as the analyses of Rosemary Arrojo, Adriana Pagano and of Edwin Gentzler on the fictionalized translators showed, fiction writers such as Borges, Kostolányi, Cortázar, Marquez and Llosa were already aware of translator's interfering power. It is translation theory's turn to deconstruct some of its own hypotheses and keep up with fiction.

The textual analyses undertaken in the first chapter and the descriptive analyses of the translation theories in the second chapter concluded that postmodern

fiction informs translation thinking from a comprehensive perspective varying from power conflict over meaning between authors and translators, the socio-political dimension of translation to the role of translation in cultural identity formation. Since fiction has the potential to express the most profound relationships with language, culture and the subject, the fictional turn in translation studies is pregnant with prolific ideas and concepts that can ultimately change the field both as a professional activity in the society and as a theoretical intersection in the academic world, which in turn can open more space for translation in fiction. Therefore, the direction of the relationship between postmodern fiction and translation seems to have generated an interactive and transformative turn in each field.

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