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TRANSLATION AS METAPHOR IN PSYCHOANALYSIS, ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY, POSTCOLONIAL THEORY, HISTORY AND LITERATURE

> Today the movement of peoples around the globe can be seen to mirror the very process of translation itself, for translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into another, it is now rightly seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures, a process during which all kinds of transactions take place mediated by the figure of the translator.
>
> *Susan Bassnett*

In this chapter and Chapter 5, I will consider the use of the metaphor of translation in a range of different theoretical domains in both the humanities and the natural sciences. This chapter deals with psychoanalysis (Section 3), anthropology and ethnography (Section 4), postcolonial theory (Section 5) and history and literature (Section 6). In the Conclusion, I will discuss the significance of these four examples – along with those of Chapter 5 – in view of a critical reframing of the notion of translation in translation studies. Given the scope and aim of this book, some disciplinary areas could not be considered. Among them are cybernetics, semiotics, comparative literature, feminism and gender studies. Before considering the single disciplines, I want to address two major theoretical issues.

The metaphoricity of "translation" is not stable but evolves over time in keeping with its pragmatic definition and everyday usage. The wider definition of translation in the Middle Ages was narrowed down in the course of the following centuries to a primarily linguistic definition (Section 1). This has radically changed in recent years. The metaphor of translation has spread across different disciplines. The main reason for the success of the metaphor of translation is the growing interdisciplinarity of the single theoretical domains and the general globalization of knowledge that we have witnessed over the past decades. Both developments have led to an increased visibility of the notion of translation, which has become *the* metaphor for all kinds of processes of transformation, rewriting, encoding and decoding as well as for cross-disciplinary exchanges within humanities and between the humanities and the

natural sciences. A second reason for the use of a new enlarged notion of translation could possibly be traced back to changing attitudes in translation studies. The "cultural turn" in translation studies, focusing on extra-linguistic and extra-literary factors, is undoubtedly one of the preconditions for what some translation scholars have called the "translation turn" (Section 2). These theoretical shifts have had a bearing on postcolonial theory (Section 5) and some recent considerations in historical and literary studies focusing on processes of remembrance and intergenerational transmission (Section 6).
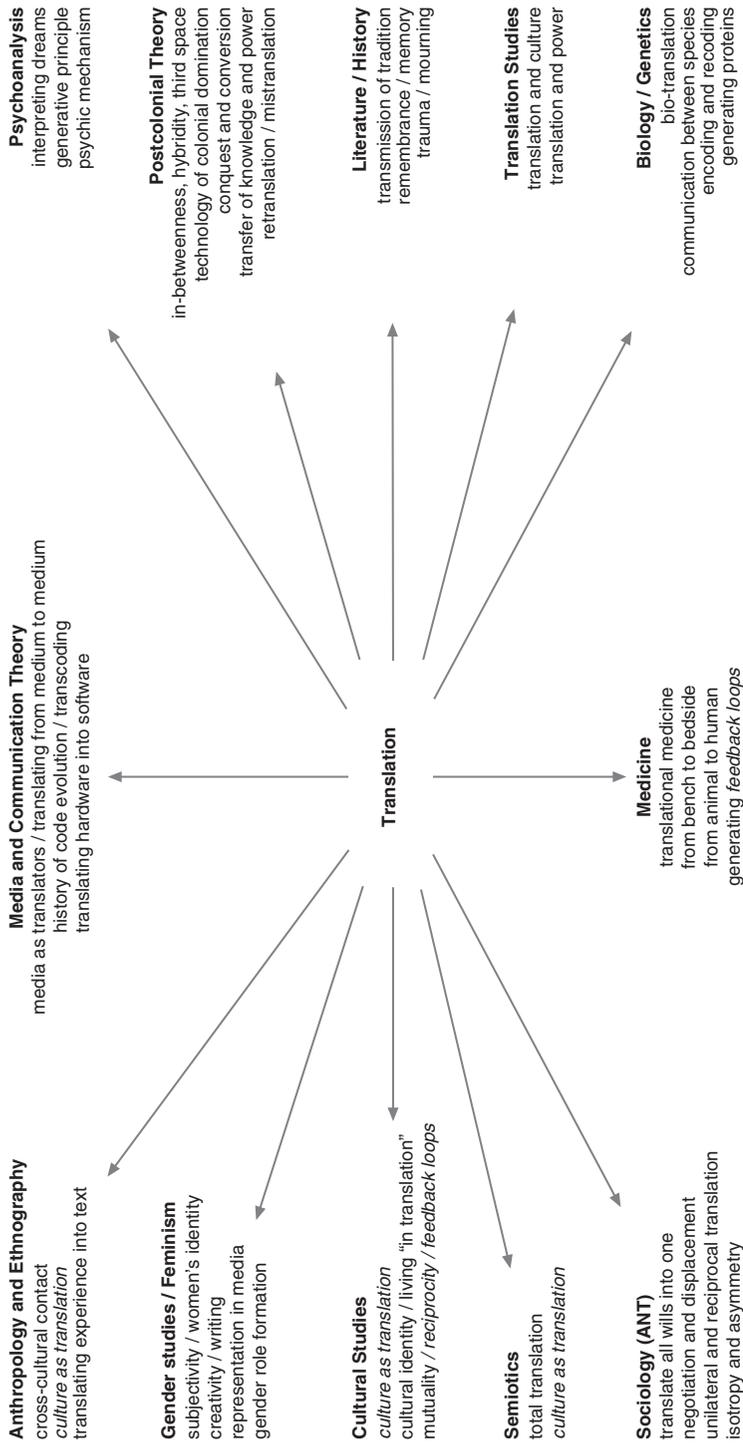
Besides these two aspects, there is a formal dimension to be considered, which plays a central role in all the instances of metaphorical uses of translation discussed in this chapter and Chapter 5: the utility and efficacy of the metaphor of translation in the theoretical framework of the relevant discipline. The metaphor of translation was used by different disciplines well before the theoretical changes initiated by the translation turn and independently from translation theory. Two instances of such early metaphorical uses of translation discussed in this chapter are psychoanalysis (Section 3) and anthropology (Section 4). Two more examples will be considered in Chapter 5: sociology (Chapter 5, Section 1) and media and communication theory (Chapter 5, Section 2).

Translation studies has recently become a source discipline. The notion of translation has been mapped onto a growing number of processes and practices. Through the common source domain, the different target domains have become comparable. This means that the widespread use of the metaphor of translation might also reveal theoretical links or convergences between disciplines that are generally not considered to be related to each other. The use of the spatial metaphor of in-betweenness in postcolonial theory, cultural studies and gender studies is an example of this development. Figure 4.1 shows the paradigmatic shift involved in the passage from translation as a target domain (see Figure 2.1) to translation as a source domain and documents most of the different uses of the metaphor of translation discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

1 The Metaphoricity of Translation

The notion of metaphor (Chapter 1), the use of specific metaphors for translation (Chapters 2 and 3) and the use of translation as a metaphor (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) can be regarded from a historical point of view. The last of these three aspects is directly linked to the metaphoricity of the English word "translation" itself.

The metaphoricity of a word depends on definitions of its predominant literal meaning, that is, its pragmatic use. However, this literal meaning is not a stable entity, but varies in time and space. In this sense, there is no fixed, literal meaning of "translation", from which to define all other improper or metaphorical uses. The relationship between the literal and the metaphoric meaning of a word constantly shifts under cultural and socio-political pressures. This has a direct bearing on the metaphorical uses of a term at a specific historical and socio-political juncture. The metaphoric field of meaning of a word can widen or narrow according to its literal

Psychoanalysis
interpreting dreams
generative principle
psychic mechanism

Postcolonial Theory
in-betweenness, hybridity, third space
technology of colonial domination
conquest and conversion
transfer of knowledge and power
retranslation / mistranslation

Literature / History
transmission of tradition
remembrance / memory
trauma / mourning

Translation Studies
translation and culture
translation and power

Biology / Genetics
bio-translation
communication between species
encoding and recoding
generating proteins

Media and Communication Theory
media as translators / translating from medium to medium
history of code evolution / transcoding
translating hardware into software

Translation

Medicine
translational medicine
from bench to bedside
from animal to human
generating *feedback loops*

Anthropology and Ethnography
cross-cultural contact
culture as translation
translating experience into text

Gender studies / Feminism
subjectivity / women's identity
creativity / writing
representation in media
gender role formation

Cultural Studies
culture as translation
cultural identity / living "in translation"
mutuality / *reciprocity / feedback loops*

Semiotics
total translation
culture as translation

Sociology (ANT)
translate all wills into one
negotiation and displacement
unilateral and reciprocal translation
isotropy and asymmetry

FIGURE 4.1 Translation as a source domain

meaning. The literal and the metaphoric entertain a fundamentally dialogic relationship, which can however be denied and severed in such a way that they congeal into fixed and opposed poles within a hierarchy of signification (Cheyfitz 1991: 61). Any paradigmatic shift in a specific discursive domain not only calls for new metaphors but also radically redefines the very metaphoricity of its key terms.

Ruth Evans (2001: 149–53) criticizes reductionist readings of "translation", which define non-linguistic, that is, metaphorical uses of the term as not touching upon the methodological concerns and the proper focus of translation studies. Such a narrow view defines translation as a practical activity turning one language into another and translation studies as a subunit of comparative literary studies and linguistics, solely interested in structures of equivalence. As the following considerations will show, in the Middle Ages "translation" possessed a much wider semantic range, from which later, linguistically oriented theories of translation had to wrest their proper meaning, developing a specific technical vocabulary. This translation of the broad concept into a much narrower linguistic term not only effaced the earlier socio-political meaning but also the political relationship between translation and figurative language (ibid.: 151).

In medieval Latin, *translatio* meant linguistic translation, as well as symbolic, physical displacement of persons, ideas, practices and objects. Despite this semantic multiplicity, the central idea was that of movement or transfer. The medieval notion of *translatio imperii et studii* implied the transfer or translation of culture, knowledge and political power or legitimacy (Cheyfitz 1991: 111–12). This transfer was seen as a movement in space, beginning in the East and ending in the West, from Athens and Rome to Paris (Robinson 1997: 52–60; Stierle 1996). In ecclesiastical usage, the physical transfer of a saint's remains or relics from one place to another, the relocation of a cleric from one office to another and the transfer of a festivity from one date to another were all forms of *translatio*. The narratives related to such events were called *translationes*. "Translation is thus (like history) at once a sequence of human acts and a narrative recounting it, both being and representation" (Asad 1995: 325). Besides *translatio,* there was a multiplicity of other words for the process of translation, because the act itself was not yet clearly differentiated from other forms of writing like imitation, recreation, adaptation or commentary. There was no clear difference between the original text and its translation and no clear-cut, stable linguistic borders associated with specific nations and national languages. Furthermore, textual delimitations were flexible, many texts plurilingual, and there existed different forms of translation according to the texts translated. Translating from Latin into a vernacular language was different from translating into Latin.

In the course of the sixteenth century, a new word for translation appeared in France (Berman 1988). The older *translation*, and all other related terms, were replaced by the new term *traduction,* which was now circumscribed to the activity of translating from one language to another. The term spread to all other Romance languages, but not to English. The earlier semantic ambivalences of the medieval term, which had migrated into the domain of the metaphorical, persisted in the English "translation", but were lost in Romance languages. The French *translation* now referred

only to the displacement of material objects or symbols incorporated in objects. The appearance of the new word marks a major event in the history of the West. The notion of *traduction* not only dispensed with the semantic complexities of the older *translatio*, reducing its original field of meaning; it also allowed the isolation of the act of translation from all other forms of writing, creating a modern concept of translation based on unity and specificity. At about the same time the notion of the translated text and the translator, a figure with its own profile and psychic constitution, appeared. Ideally, the translator lived in a world of languages separated from each other and had the task of transferring a clearly defined text from one language into another (his/her own) without endangering these natural delimitations between the single languages.

The appearance of a new regime of translation in early sixteenth-century France is linked to a parallel historical development that Pascale Casanova described as the consecration and original accumulation of literary capital (2008). The nationalist agenda of the French literary group La Pléiade around Pierre de Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay was bent on the construction of a new proto-national identity, in which translation processes played a decisive role. They developed a model of cultural appropriation that would be relevant for all subsequent attempts. While these two interlinked processes – the constitution of a single literary field and the creation of a new linguistic definition of translation – originated in France, they spread to the rest of Europe in the following centuries.

A second step in this evolution, around 1800, was the redefinition of the cultural and political role of languages by Romantic thinkers who stressed the fundamental importance of language in the constitution of national identities (Bassnett 2011: 4). National territories and national languages were analogically conceived as self-contained entities separated by distinct borders. An essential element of the nationalistically inspired monolingual paradigm was the ideological construct of the mother tongue invoking an organic link between nation, language and motherhood (Yildiz 2012: 10–12). The internal homogeneity of the single national language and the resulting radical heterogeneity of all other languages called for interlingual translation processes reaching across the imaginary divide. This ideological configuration hides the fact that languages overlap and intersect in many ways and that single languages are already plural, the site of constant intralingual translation processes.

In an essay on the genealogy of translation in the West, André Lefevere points out that from 500 BCE to around 1800 European culture at large had been consistently bilingual and in some cases even multilingual. The period of monolingual nation states reaching from the late eighteenth to the late twentieth century ended with the radical changes brought about by globalization. Consequently, the fundamental multilingualism of any culture, of culture as such, is "beginning to re-establish itself in the general consciousness of the West" (Lefevere 1990: 16). However, the new visibility of multilingualism "continues to be refracted through the monolingual paradigm" (Yildiz 2012: 3). Yildiz aptly describes the persistence of the monolingual framework inherited from Romanticism and nationalism as the "postmonolingual condition" (ibid.: 4–5). This profound ambivalence with respect

to the epistemological, cultural and political status of language and languages is reflected in a view of translation that still oscillates between a purely linguistic definition based on the notion of equivalence and a culturally enlarged definition emphasizing transformation, displacement, change and creativity.

The paradigmatic shift from a monolingual to a multilingual perspective questioning the self-contained organic nature of languages goes hand in hand with a radical redefinition of the meaning of translation, which impinges directly on the metaphoricity of the term. The narrow linguistic definition, which came into being at the end of the Middle Ages, has been slowly superseded by a much wider metaphorical understanding of the term (Bassnett 2011: 4). This process that reactivates meanings from the history of translation and introduces new aspects is linked to the cultural turn and what has been called the "translation turn".

2 The Translation Turn

Before discussing the theoretical implications of the notion of the translation turn for the present study, I will briefly sketch the genealogy of the notion and its impact in translation theory (see also Bachmann-Medick 2009, 2013).

In their co-authored introduction to *Translation, History and Culture* published in 1990, André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett register a cultural turn in translation studies based on a culturally and politically enlarged understanding of translation beyond the positivistic notion of linguistic equivalence. This new concept of translation is not about words and texts but about culture and power. It focuses on the functional side of translation, the importance of standards of acceptability and predominant forms of discourse. Finally, it questions clear-cut borders with other textual activities like rewriting. Lefevere and Bassnett's collection of essays marked a radical shift in the field of translation studies.

In her essay "The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies" published eight years later, Susan Bassnett (1998) pointed to a fundamental theoretical convergence between translation studies and cultural studies. The growing interest in cultural issues in translation studies corresponded to a growing interest in translation in the work of cultural theorists. The parallel evolution had come about in three separate steps from the 1970s to the 1990s, conveying both translation theory and cultural studies from a culturalist criticism of elitist definitions of culture to a post-structuralist recognition of cultural pluralism via a structuralist inquiry into the relationship of textuality and hegemony. This development was also possible because the two disciplines shared a common agenda from the start. Both were actively calling disciplinary borders into question and moving towards the creation of a new space for dialogue.

Bassnett draws a connection to her earlier essay, suggesting a structural complementarity between the cultural turn and the translation turn as far as their fundamental intentions are concerned. The previous text was intended as a manifesto signalling a major change of emphasis in the field of translation studies, which was moving from its "formalist phase" to "broader issues of context, history and

convention" (ibid.: 123). The translation turn in cultural studies seems to follow the same kind of logic. If Even-Zohar's literary polysystem redefined translation as a potential force for renewal at the core of social transformation processes, Homi Bhabha recasts it as "a sign of fragmentation, of cultural destabilisation and nego-tiation" (ibid.: 137). In Bassnett's view, however, the translation turn is much more than the simple use of a common culturally and politically expanded notion of translation in translation studies and cultural studies. It is a change that affects a discipline to its very roots.

In the last part of her essay, Bassnett focuses on a problem that still makes an interdisciplinary dialogue difficult: the slowness in recognizing the value of the research done in other disciplines. In this respect, cultural studies was even slower than translation studies in picking up the suggestions of the other field. There is still much to be done, but the significant overlap between the two domains and their joint evolution towards a collaborative approach are very promising. "The cultural turn in translation studies happened more than a decade ago; the translation turn in cultural studies is now well underway" (ibid.: 136).

Bassnett's early optimism has been subsequently questioned. In Chapter 3, I have already considered Harish Trivedi's harsh criticism with regard to the fundamental asymmetry between the cultural turn in translation studies and the translation turn in cultural studies. Other translation scholars have echoed Trivedi's sceptical comments. As Mary Snell-Hornby observed in a recent essay, apart from the developments sketched by Bassnett in 1998, no translation turn has actually taken place. The anticipated interdisciplinary activity is still mostly a one-sided affair. Translation studies has actively imported methods and impulses from other disciplinary areas but exported very little in the process (Snell-Hornby 2009: 48).

The idea of the translation turn was taken up, reinterpreted and critically assessed by different translation scholars. In November 2003, a symposium, bearing the same title as Bassnett's 1998 essay and setting up the same theoretical lines, was held at the Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Warwick. The conference planned to consider issues raised by the recent move towards translation studies in the field of cultural studies. However, as Snell-Hornby points out (ibid.: 47), hardly any of the speakers addressed the topic.

In *Cultural Turns*, a book on the history and role of cultural turns in the humanities in the second half of the twentieth century, Doris Bachmann-Medick dedicates a whole chapter to the translation turn (2006a: 238–83). She emphasizes that the notion of the translation turn has become of fundamental importance in social and cultural studies and attributes to translation studies a pioneering role. Bachmann-Medick argues that the culturally enlarged notion of translation was exported into other disciplines. The translation turn would not have been possible without the previous cultural turn in translation studies. Contrary to the cultural turn, however, the translation turn has not yet taken place.

Both Bachmann-Medick and Snell-Hornby question the decisive role of metaphors in theory change and the formulation of new scientific concepts. According to Bachmann-Medick, all turns display a triadic structure. The first stage is characterized

by a cross-disciplinary exploration of new common fields of inquiry and an expansion of the object or thematic field. The second phase consists in a metaphorization of the new object of inquiry. In the final stage, the object of inquiry is transformed into an analytical category. Presently, cultural studies has only entered the second stage. The decisive qualitative conceptual leap is still to come. To reach a higher level, one would have to elaborate more sophisticated perspectives that do not "stubbornly stick to the path of purely metaphorical uses" (Bachmann-Medick 2012: 25). Processes of metaphorization supply turns with the necessary "fuel". However, to ensure a safe passage to the third level, the metaphorical tendency will have to be "duly contained". Any "inflationary use" of translation would ultimately "submerge" the notion of culture (ibid.: 27). However, if the metaphorization process is successfully curbed, a concrete category of analysis can be generated. Metaphors possess imagistic power that can generate new insight as long as they are kept in check by a more balanced point of view.

Bachmann-Medick's theoretical model makes use of a whole series of highly problematic metaphors that would require closer inspection, and echoes the ambivalent appraisal of metaphor by other translation scholars discussed in Chapter 2 of this book. She points to the utility of metaphors, but is sceptical about their scientificity. Metaphors can be of great help, creating possibilities for new insights. However, the middle metaphorical stage is only a transitory phase, which the travelling concept has to leave in order to acquire the necessary conceptual clarity. Metaphors are "symptoms" of the growing porosity of disciplinary boundaries, and of genre blurring in the social sciences. Their transfer and acquisition in the target disciplines, however, is beset by considerable theoretical problems.

The terminological weakness and vagueness of metaphors becomes particularly conspicuous when they are used to interpret the emergence and the succession of cultural turns, that is, when they are used on a meta-theoretical level. The imagistic evidence of metaphors tends to make further explanation superfluous. To prove her point, Bachmann-Medick discusses a metaphor used by the German historian Karl Schlögel, who describes the "spatial turn" in terms of a disappearing and re-emerging river: turns are like bodies of water slowly seeping away, continuing their journey underground, only to resurface sooner or later, if at all. Such "rampant organicist imagery [my translation]", continues Bachmann-Medick (2006a: 24), cannot really explain how turns come about, develop or change direction. The river metaphor, however, does not simply obscure the object under discussion, or dispense with any further analysis. It opens up a specific perspective highlighting certain aspects and hiding others. In this case, it is the notion of a subterranean connection between discourses, whose appearance and disappearance is difficult to predict. Furthermore, by using this specific metaphor Schlögel is not necessarily reinterpreting history in terms of a simple natural determinism, but pointing to the specific socio-political and cultural conditions of emergence of scientific discourse.

Ultimately, Bachmann-Medick's criticism is not aimed at the use of wrong metaphors, but at the use of metaphors as such. Her choice of Schlögel's organic image is significant in that it suggests a fundamental connection between the use of

metaphors in scientific discourse and a deterministic vision of history. Tellingly enough, in her criticism of the river metaphor, Bachmann-Medick herself makes use of an organicist image. The German participle *wuchernd*, "proliferating, sprawling" used in the text with regard to the workings of metaphors (ibid.: 24) is generally employed for the unrestrained flourishing of weeds, but it is also linked to *Wucher* "usury, profiteering". Both meanings of the word are fraught with negative connotations. The term is reminiscent of Werner Koller's less problematic *üppig*, "lush", we came across in Chapter 2. The two translation scholars compare the functioning of metaphors to the exuberant growth of plants in order to underscore their pre-scientific character and their problematic tendency towards a unilateral vision of reality.

At the beginning of her essay "What's in a Turn? On Fits, Starts and Writhings in Recent Translation Studies", published in a special issue of the journal *Translation Studies* addressing the topic of the translation turn, Mary Snell-Hornby (2009) explores the different meanings of the word "to turn". She discerns three main meanings: change of direction, bend in a road and development or new tendency. A turn implies that change can be fully apprehended only in retrospect and from a distance. Before getting there, contradictions and hesitations hold sway, "fits" and "starts", as Snell-Hornby calls them. After the cultural turn some twenty years ago, tortuous debates – writhings – as to the true nature of translation still pervade the field. Despite her detailed and suggestive analysis of the implications of the word "turn" and her own use of metaphors, Snell-Hornby emphasizes the dangers of figurative language, because of its reliance "on associations based on common consensus" (ibid.: 41). Metaphors "due to their 'slippery' and 'fuzzy' nature … though they may provide extremely evocative images for book titles and slogans" are "unsuitable as technical terms in academic discourse" (ibid.: 43). I will now turn to the theoretical implications of the translation turn for this book.

Three main aspects have to be considered. First, the translation turn was developed and discussed in translation studies. These discussions focus primarily on disciplinary domains from the humanities, which are more or less directly linked to the field of translation studies (cultural and social studies, anthropology, ethnography and postcolonial theory) and cover a period from the 1970s to the present – overall a very limited area, both in terms of time and disciplinary domains. The second important aspect is the absence of a valid metaphor theory. Because of this, processes of metaphorization have been looked upon as suspect or simply ignored. This precludes a historically oriented, systematic and comparative study of the different uses of the metaphor and its role in the adopting disciplines. Consequently, the diffusion of the metaphor of translation into domains that are not directly related to translation studies, as well as its previous use, is not taken into consideration. Add to this the spatial metaphor of the "turn" itself, which maps a specific physical movement onto the development and relationship of scientific disciplines. It suggests a moment in time when things start following a completely different track focusing on the breaking point and the time that immediately precedes and follows it. Like any metaphor, it highlights some aspects and hides others. From such a point of view, emphasizing

thorough, radical change, subtler moments tend to disappear. As this chapter and Chapter 5 will show, the influence of the notion of translation has been much more pervasive than might appear at first sight. For the adopting disciplines, the first and foremost criterion for choosing the metaphor was not dictated by an active interdisciplinary interest but by the theoretical effectiveness of the metaphor and its capacity to create inner coherence by reuniting disparate contexts. This is definitely the case with Freudian psychoanalysis.

3 Psychoanalysis: Translating Dreams

Sigmund Freud is a major theoretician of translation and a great innovator in the field of translation studies. He described his early successes as triumphs of translation and explicitly compared the work of the psychoanalyst to that of the French philologist and Egyptologist Jean-François Champollion (1790–1832), who deciphered the Rosetta Stone hieroglyphs. As one of the first scholars who systematically discussed the relationship of translation to psychoanalysis pointed out, Freud gives the concept of translation "a scope, extension and depth in his work that appeared nowhere previously in history" (Mahony 1982: 65). This dimension of Freud's theoretical legacy, however, has been largely ignored until fairly recently both in the field of psychoanalysis and translation studies.

Freudian psychoanalysis contains a general theory of reading and interpretation grounded in the profound ambivalence of words. Every act of a person is a compromise between opposing and conflicting forces. There is no direct form of expression. Communication is not based on a stable and transportable meaning. The object of interpretation – a dream or a psychic symptom – is not static and not an end in itself. Interpretation is never linear or teleological, but an open-ended, endless process of becoming that constantly moves back and forth, always discovering new associations. Because of this, Freud's understanding of translation moves clearly beyond the dialectics of loss and recovery and is not committed to faithfulness to the original, equivalence of meaning or representational mimesis. In fact, as Andrew Benjamin points out, translation by the analyst involves a refusal of mimesis, disrupting the link between translation, interpretation and representation (1989: 129–46). In this sense, Freud was "the logical precursor to deconstruction" (Quinney 2004: 116).

According to Freud, to define the work of the analyst, one must critically discuss two popular modes of dream interpretation. Dreams have often been considered prophetic statements about a future still to come. In psychoanalysis, the actual latent meaning of the dream must be translated into the future to help the patient take conscious control of his or her life. The second popular means of interpreting dreams is the cipher method. Dreams are a kind of secret code, in which every sign is translated into another sign of known meaning according to an established key. Dreams, however, cannot be translated into the open by a system of simple equivalences, because of their origin and functioning. Dreams are not originals, but are already translations of deeper feelings. They are forms of unconscious wish fulfilment that operate with distortion, disguise and dissemblance. They deny, suppress and

hide that which contradicts or threatens the deepest needs and feelings of the subject.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, first published in 1900, Freud used the notion of translation to describe both the relationship of dreams to their conditions of emergence and the task of analytic reinterpretation by the psychiatrist. In the sixth chapter of his book, Freud considers the notion of dreamwork *(Traumarbeit)*. During a dream, latent dream-thoughts are translated by a psychic mechanism into manifest dream-content. The dream-content is a translation of the dream-thoughts into another mode of expression. The relation of the latent dream-thought to its manifest expression can be compared, Freud argues, to the differences between two descriptions of the same content in two different languages. To understand the meaning of the manifest dream-content the psychiatrist must learn its symbols and laws of composition. The manifest dream is the result of two forms of translation, which are almost independent of each other: it represents the latent content as a present situation and transcribes it into a visual frame. The dream-content is presented in hieroglyphics, that is, in a visual code *(Bilderschrift)*, whose symbols must be translated by the analyst in order to reach back to the original dream-thought. The constitutive elements of the manifest dream-content lack logical relation or connection and spell out a contradictory report. In the interpretation of the analyst, the initial connections severed by the dream have to be duly restored.

To explain the work of the analyst, Freud uses the example of a rebus. A rebus combines words and single letters with pictures representing words or parts of words. The analyst replaces each image of the picture puzzle by a syllable or a word. Manifest dream-content might look confusing and meaningless at first. The reconstituted string of words, however, generally results in a meaningful statement. This interpretation involves the establishment of a sequential logical narrative, which betrays the patient's dream. In the first chapter of his book *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), Freud quotes a witticism that aptly sums up the ambivalent work of the analyst. It is the Italian saying "Traduttore Traditore", the translator is a deceiver (Benjamin 1989: 142). A slight alteration – in this case, the change of a single letter – can produce a shift from one context to another. In the course of analysis, the hidden meaning of the dream has to be translated into a clear statement. This can only be done by transformation, by discarding its surface meaning and substituting it with a new one.

Translation in Freudian psychoanalysis does not work according to the classical definition of equivalence. The dream remembered by the patient cannot correspond directly to the new narrative created by the analyst. The translation expresses something different if not the very opposite of the original. If the manifest content is a feeling of hate and refusal, the latent content has to be interpreted as a feeling of love and acceptance. Translation, thus, not only possesses a transformative and revelatory power; it actually supersedes and eliminates the original. In this way, the relationship between the two poles is radically reversed. The original is a site of plurality, a lie, whose truth can only be revealed through translation (Benjamin 1989).

The work of the analyst and the dreamwork of the patient are two different but complementary forms of translation. The psychoanalyst pursues meaning in its distortion. S/he translates hysterical symptoms and dreams into a language that both analysand and analyst can understand. His/her aim is to effect a translation and transposition of what is unconscious into what is verbally conscious, because thinking in pictures is an incomplete form of becoming conscious. The translation of dream-thoughts into dream-content is characterized by inhibition and resistance. All dreamwork implies distortion, omission and condensation. The forbidden and repressed desires of a person appear in dreams in disguised form. Only a few of the elements of the dream-thoughts make their way into the dream-content. Dreams are never faithful translations, but only very incomplete and defective reproductions of the original dream-thought.

Freud exploits the semantic relationship between translation, metaphor and transference (Quinney 2004). He uses two different German words for translation that span a wide interconnected semantic field: *übersetzen* (translate, interpret, cross over) and *übertragen* (translate, transmit, convey, transfer without changing, transform, adapt, transfuse, entrust). *Übertragen* is directly linked to metaphor. *Im übertragenen Sinne* means "in a metaphoric sense". *Übertragung* is also used for the process of analytical transference, the unconscious redirection of energy and feelings from one person to another and the reproduction of emotions relating to repressed experiences. This wide understanding of translation as both *Übersetzung* and *Übertragung* allows Freud to use the metaphor of translation for the most disparate forms of interaction.

Translation is an all-pervading metaphor used throughout the work, which changes in meaning according to the context. It denotes direct transposition by substituting one item with another according to a preconceived system, but also transference and transformation. Besides dreamwork and the interpretative task of the analyst, a series of other related aspects are described in terms of translation. The unconscious strives for translation into the preconscious in order to penetrate through to consciousness. Retranslation is the effort to reproduce a dream from memory. Dreams are often untranslatable for the waking consciousness. The very movement of material in the psychic apparatus is a form of translation. Neuroses and symptoms are translations of unconscious material. Hysterical fantasies are translated into the motor sphere and into pantomime. The word becomes flesh. Mahony mentions a few telling examples from the area of hysterical and obsessional phobic symptomatology. Ideas are translated into sensations: the sentence "He gave me a piercing look" can cause actual physical pain between the eyes. Conversely, sensations can become ideas: leg pain can lead to the notion of being "on the wrong footing" (Mahony 1982: 66). Organic stimuli occurring during sleep can sometimes be translated into dream-representations. An urge to seek out a toilet can be based on the actual bodily need of urination. We can ideally translate ourselves from the past to the present. In some dreams, the transposition into childhood is expressed by the translation of time into space. One sees persons and scenes far away as if one were looking through the wrong end of a pair of opera glasses. Even the relationship between the different layers of identity is described in terms of

translation. Freud conceives of the individual as a series of consecutive transcripts of successive periods of life. A patient can be psychically represented as a "vicissitude of translations" (ibid.: 65). At the frontiers between existential periods, a translation of psychic material must take place in order to guarantee a developmental continuity. This view echoes the notion of a life "in-translation" as it has been used in postcolonial theory. According to Mahony, Freud's endopsychic semiotics of the rebus used by the manifest dream to translate verbal material of the latent dream and his intersemiotic symptomatology are the most outstanding contribution to translation theory (ibid.: 66). In this sense, Freud anticipates Jakobson's (2000) third category of intersemiotic translation.

Finally, translation also plays an important role in the mechanism of psychological repression. In a letter to Wilhelm Fließ from 6 December 1896, Freud defines repression as the denial of translation (*Versagung der Übersetzung*). Repression seems to generate a release of displeasure eliciting a mental disturbance that does not allow for translation. The German *Versagung* could also mean that the original itself refuses to surrender to translation, that is, to be made visible through the act of translation. The responsibility for the failure of translation would therefore be shifted from the translator to the original itself.

To sum up: in Freud's work, the metaphor of translation has multi-levelled and widespread meanings. It operates as a nodal word linking apparently unrelated occurrences and imposing coherence to seemingly disparate phenomena. The metaphor is mapped onto a series of inter-systemic, intra-systemic and intersemiotic interactions. It is a central generative principle in the functioning of the psyche, the mechanism of psychological repression, as well as in the emergence and interpretation of dreams. The interpreting work of the psychoanalyst is also a form of translation. Words are translated into bodily sensations and feelings into physical perceptions. The course of a lifetime can be described as a chain of successive processes of translation. Translation is conceived as an open-ended and fundamentally endless process of interpretation and reinterpretation. There is no readily accessible, stable original to fall back upon. There are only translations calling for further translations. The manifest dream-content is a translation of the latent dream-thought and its interpretation by the analyst therefore a translation of a translation.

Freud's use of the metaphor of translation contradicts the prevailing view of translation of his times and anticipates the new expanded notion that has come into being in the wake of the cultural turn in translation studies. It questions the superiority of the original, the notion of a stable transportable meaning and the importance of equivalence. Point by point translation through direct substitution of equivalent notions is a form of theoretical oversimplification. The original can be illusory and deceptive, calling for flexible translation strategies. The notions of objectivity and neutrality are given up. The translator (psychoanalyst) is always involved in what s/he translates.

In some respects, Freud moved beyond the culturally expanded notion of translation by positing intersemiotic forms of translation, which dispense with original and translator. Freud postulates translation as an unconscious psychic process without any original to get back to and without the intervention of a translator.

This echoes the technical definition of translation in media and communication theory (Chapter 5, Section 2) and the use of the metaphor in genetics (Chapter 5, Section 4). I will now turn to the use of the metaphor of translation in anthropology and ethnography.

4 Anthropology and Ethnography: Translating Cultures

As Theo Hermans (2002: 16–18) has pointed out, the way other disciplines have conceived of translation can help translation studies to become more self-reflective and self-critical by questioning its own methodological and theoretical implications. When trying to interpret and translate other cultures, ethnographers and cultural anthropologists face problems similar to those of translation scholars and professional translators. The example of ethnography can therefore help translation scholars to guard against their own ethnocentricity and to reconceptualize their modes of representation through translation.

The theoretical convergence of translation studies and cultural anthropology suggested by Hermans points to a more pervasive interdisciplinary connection between the two domains that can be traced back to a common history and a shared concern for similar theoretical issues. In fact, the debates in cultural anthropology and ethnography had a significant bearing on the development of translation studies and the formation of a new understanding of translation processes. This goes to show that the enlarged definition of translation that animates both the cultural turn in translation studies and the translation turn in the other disciplines is also a strongly interdisciplinary phenomenon. Let me now turn to the notion of "cultural translation" as it was discussed by three different ethnographers in the seminal collection of essays *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited in 1986 by James Clifford and George E. Marcus.

In "The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Social Anthropology", one of the most influential early postcolonial studies on the notion of cultural translation, Talal Asad (1986) retraces the history of cultural translation in British social anthropology, showing how power structures shape this discipline. It is one of the first attempts to draw attention to the importance of cultural inequalities in translation processes (Robinson 1997: 42–5). From the 1950s to the 1970s, the translation of cultures became increasingly the distinctive task of the social anthropologist. In 1954, Godfrey Lienhardt, a pupil and collaborator of Edward Evans-Pritchard (1902–73), one of the central figures of British social anthropology, made explicit use of the notion of translation. He used the term to refer to negotiating different "modes of thought", shifting the focus from a purely linguistic definition of translation to a much wider cultural understanding. According to Lienhardt, any description to other people of how members of a distant community think about the world can be considered an act of translation. This germinal idea was the seed that would eventually grow into postcolonial studies.

As Asad points out, the notion of cultural translation emphasizes the relevance of the social, cultural and political context in which translations are always embedded:

"the process of 'cultural translation' is inevitably enmeshed in conditions of power – professional, national, international" (Asad 1986: 163). Cultural translation is an institutionalized and historically situated practice, not an abstracted understanding. The ethnographer's translation of a particular culture is inevitably a textual construct. He or she has the power to create new meanings. The privileged position of the anthropologist can be maintained only if one supposes that translating other cultures is a matter of matching written sentences in two languages. Translating cultures, however, is not about a text communicating itself, but about meeting people, learning to live another form of life and to speak another language. Furthermore, cultural translation always takes place within relations of stronger and weaker languages that govern the flow of knowledge. It seeks to reproduce the coherence of an alien discourse and a way of life in the translator's own language. This reproduction depends on the resources of the translator's language, the interest of the translator in his/her readership as well as on specific narrative genres of ethnographic analysis. The use of a specific style is not so much determined by the interests of a single ethnographer but by institutionalized power relations. In the long run, the social and institutional authority of anthropology prevails over the personal authority of a single ethnographer. Add to this the fact that very often the stiffness of ethnographic conventions impinges upon the description of a foreign culture. The ethnographer may be writing about an illiterate population for an academic English-speaking audience. Writing also implies an unavoidable change of medium. Ethnographers not only translate the spoken into the written word; they recast rituals, dramatic dance performances, pieces of music, but also eating habits and ways of dressing into a written text. The notion of culture as text has reinforced the notion that translation is essentially a matter of verbal representation.

Ethnographers bring coherence to the practices of the foreign culture they are studying. Because of this, it is often assumed that the meaning they discover in a native culture is unavailable to the self-understanding of the population concerned. The analogy with psychoanalysis that such an understanding implies has been explicitly discussed in a text published in 1961 by David Pocock, another pupil of Evans-Pritchard's. Pocock defines the work of the social anthropologist as a highly complex act of translation (Asad 1986: 161–2). To understand how this translation comes about, especially when it comes to identifying unconscious and implicit meanings, it is better to compare the ethnographer to a psychoanalyst than to a linguist. In Pocock's view, the psychoanalyst is a scientist dealing with natural phenomena. Psychoanalysis generates a scientific representation of a private language that is translated into a public language without any major distortion. In this sense, it is similar to Evans-Pritchard's ethnographic description of the society of the Nuer, a group primarily inhabiting the Nile Valley. Evans-Pritchard's account is a scientific model that is both meaningful to the rest of the anthropological community and effective in that it can be deemed acceptable to the Nuer in an ideal situation, in which they would be interested in themselves as living in a coherent social setting.

Pocock's positivist reinterpretation of the relationship of psychoanalysis and translation contradicts Freud's much more sophisticated vision. Asad radically

questions the theoretical assumptions of Pocock's comparison, using it to focalize some of the main aspects of his critical notion of cultural translation. The anthropological translator has the same final authority as the analyst to uncover implicit meanings in the subordinate society. He actually becomes the author of the subject's meaning. Pocock's analogy constructs the native as passive and completely unaware of his/her own culture and therefore in need of an ethnographer, someone capable of translating it into visibility. In the ideal situation envisaged by Pocock, Asad adds ironically, the subject would no longer be him/herself but resemble the anthropologist. Thanks to the notion of the unconscious, the anthropologist possesses the power to create and authorize meanings for a specific subject This extremely problematic aspect of the relationship between analyst and patient is completely absent from Pocock's comparison and has received little attention from cultural anthropologists. As Asad points out, cultural anthropology differs from psychoanalysis in that it is not bent on imposing its translation on the members of the culture it studies. In this sense, ethnography is not authoritative. In a psychoanalytical relationship, the analysand looks for help in an authoritative figure. In fieldwork the ethnographer is a learner looking for information, not a guide as is the analyst. Despite this, however, the representation of the ethnographer remains a textual construct that cannot be contested by the people it concerns.

Besides exploring the importance of the academic and social context of cultural translation, Asad points to a fundamental difference between the ethnographic and the linguistic translator that Vincent Crapanzano uses in his essay "Hermes' Dilemma: The Masking of Subversion in Ethnographic Description" as a starting point. "Like translation, ethnography is also a somewhat provisional way of coming to terms with the foreignness … of cultures and societies. The ethnographer does not, however, translate texts the way the translator does. He must first produce them" (Crapanzano 1986: 51). The ethnographer has no primary, independent text as a starting point. In this specific sense, cultural translation is translation without a pre-existing original. As Bachmann-Medick points out, the final account of the ethnographer is a multiple translation (2004: 155–6). The ethnographer translates his/her experience, the oral discourses and the actions s/he witnesses, into a textual form.

In an essay on postmodern ethnography, Stephen A. Tyler pushes this critical notion even further, questioning the very possibility of representation through translation. He takes up a spatial metaphor echoing Nida's description discussed in Chapter 3.

> Translation? Not if we think of it as fording a stream that separates one text from another and changing languages in mid-stream. This is *mimesis* of language, one language copying another, which never makes a copy anyway, but a more or less contorted original.
>
> (Tyler 1986: 137)

Tyler underscores the poetical aspects of culture, suggesting that the ethnographer cannot describe but only evoke the alien cultural setting.

The writing culture debate of the 1980s had a significant impact on both ethnography at large and the emerging domain of postcolonial theory, to which I will turn in Section 5. The linguistic and rhetorical turn in ethnography redefined translation as a medium through which representational conventions and cultural authority were established. The ethnographic practice itself was reframed as a creative process of translation involving invention and synthesis.

As Bachmann-Medick (2006b) argues, cultural translation goes beyond simple cultural understanding, which generally suggests a harmonious relationship between different cultures. If cultural understanding is no longer the central issue of translation, the successes of cross-cultural exchanges seem less important. Conflict and failures come into view because of their more challenging character. Translation becomes a concept of relationship and movement, a metaphor for travel, transit and migration, generating relations rather than closing off cultures from each other. This specific understanding of translation closely resembles James Clifford's metaphorical use of the term in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Concepts like diaspora, borderland, immigration, tourism, pilgrimage, exile and migrancy are "comparative concepts" or "translation terms" (Clifford 1997: 11). They are not equivalent to each other but suggest displacement, interaction and historical contingency. A similar view is put forward by Nikos Papastergiadis, who discusses the use of the trope of translation to describe migratory processes of transculturation and hybridization (2007: 127–45).

To highlight the novelty of cultural translation developed by ethnography, Bachmann-Medick differentiates the theoretical position it implies from the traditional hermeneutic position, which is generally a single-sited, unilateral form of translation with a clearly Western bias. Cultural translation is a multi-sited, transnational globalized form of translation based on reciprocity, on translations followed by back-translations. The metaphor of cultural translation also led to a radical re-evaluation of the notion of culture. Instead of translation of and between cultures, culture itself was reconceptualized in translational terms. Cultures are not self-contained unified entities but hybrid fields for multiple translation processes. Cultures are not just translatable, but are themselves constituted in and as translations. They are the result of translation processes and at the same time continuously feed into cross-cultural translation processes. In this sense, cultural translation can act as a metaphor that questions essentialist and holistic views.

To sum up: the metaphor of cultural translation in ethnography highlights above all the importance of the context in which any translator operates. Institutional, social, political, cultural, national and international conditions of power profoundly affect the ethnographer's work. These conditions are ultimately much more significant than one's individual attitude. Like all translation, cultural translation takes place in a power setting separating weaker from stronger languages. This notion resurfaces in the writings of postcolonial theorists who define translation as a colonial device producing a hierarchy of languages. Anthropological translation, furthermore, is not based on representational mimesis and does not aim for equivalence. There is no originating text that precedes and constrains the work of the ethnographer, who creates

his/her own objects and controls their unfolding. Finally, ethnographic translation shows that there is no metalanguage available to carry out a comparison between cultures (Needham 1972). This echoes Wolfgang Iser's and Vilém Flusser's view of translation discussed in Section 6 of Chapter 3. Many aspects highlighted here have been carried over into postcolonial theory, which I will discuss in Section 5.

5 Postcolonial Theory: The Difficult Politics of Translation

In Section 5 of Chapter 3, I discussed the use of spatial metaphors of translation in the work of Homi Bhabha. In this section, I will turn to the metaphor of translation in the work of three other major postcolonial theorists: Eric Cheyfitz, Tejaswini Niranjana and Vicente L. Rafael. In *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan* (1991), Cheyfitz explores Anglo-American politics from the sixteenth century to the present. His main focus is the analysis of literary texts. Niranjana's *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism and the Colonial Context* (1992) considers Anglo-Indian relations by examining translations of Indian legal and literary texts from the eighteenth century to the present. Finally, in *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (1993) Rafael discusses the relationship between Christian conversion and translation in the early Spanish colonization of the Philippines. The three authors redefine the process of translation in terms of power relations and expand its meaning by drawing on different metaphorical uses, ranging from figuration to transportation, the transfer of power and knowledge, the construction of cultural identities and processes of Christian conversion (Evans 2001: 152–3). By doing this, they reactivate earlier, much wider definitions of translation, calling attention to the historicity of the term and challenging the underlying hierarchy of signification. Cheyfitz, Niranjana and Rafael conceive of translation as a technology of colonial domination: the colonial authorities translated the language, culture and identity of their subjects into the terms of the dominant colonial power. At the same time, even if in differing ways, they call attention to the potential for subversion, resistance and transformation inherent in processes of translation.

   In Cheyfitz's view, the political complexities of translation have been systematically ignored (Robinson 1997: 63–79). Restrictive definitions of translation in terms of linguistic equivalence have led to its idealization and depoliticization. Cheyfitz develops a comprehensive postcolonial theory of translation by reactivating some of its etymological meanings: translation as metaphor, as the transportation of proper meanings into foreign displaced territories, as the historical movement of learning and empire from Europe to the New World and as the transfer or alienation of property. He creates a dense lexical web of interrelated concepts around the central notion of imperial translation *(translatio)*.

   As already pointed out in Chapter 1, an essential aspect of Cheyfitz's political reinterpretation of translation is its etymological link to the concept of metaphor. Both terms are grounded in the division between the domestic and the foreign, creating a dualistic hierarchy of signification, which opposes the proper to the

figurative and the normal to the strange. This binary vision has both social and cultural relevance. The foreign is linked to the lower classes and the American natives, and the domestic to the upper classes and the English colonizers (Cheyfitz 1991: 95).

Cheyfitz's starting point is a primal scene of instruction based on a passage from Cicero's *De Inventione*, which describes how an eloquent leader persuades a group of naked savages to submit to culture and law. Even if Cicero is not explicitly discussing the problem of translation, the multiple transformation processes in the passage under discussion can be reinterpreted in translational terms. The hierarchical relationship between the educated orator and the uneducated savages is expressed in two different languages, one of which is superior to the other. The speaker must translate his/her thoughts into the language of his/her audience. Conversely, the savages must be transformed in body and soul in order to be relocated within the perimeter of civilization. They dress up in civilized clothes and their uncouth passions are transformed into refined rationality. A temporal aspect complements the linguistic and spatial dimension of translation. By being translated from wilderness to civilization, the savages move up along the evolutionary ladder, from childhood to adulthood, from earlier to later stages of history, from past to present. Translation is a complex violent act of power moving across time and space, which recasts the lower classes in terms of the cultural supremacy of the upper classes.

Cheyfitz applies this narrative to the colonial history of the New World. The colonizer projects political conflicts and social inequalities inherent in his/her own culture and language onto the Indians. The native Indians look similar to the people from the lower classes back home and speak a language comparable to theirs. By translating the social inequalities of the motherland into the context of the colonies, the colonizing powers recreate the original hierarchical relationship on foreign ground, hiding the social contradictions inherent in the colonial project itself and justifying the right to seize the territory of the colonized. The land of the Indians was wild unowned land, because the Indians lacked any sense of property. In order to alienate the land from the Indians it had to be transformed into the English legal understanding of property first. The Indians had to be thought of as owning the land for it to be taken away from them. In Cheyfitz's reading, both the transformation of the wild land into legal property and its subsequent alienation from the Indians are processes of translation. In the English common law of the time, "translate" referred to the transfer of real estate. Finally, the colonial project recasts the identity of the natives through a dual movement of incorporation and rejection. The savages are translated into new beings comparable to the colonists. However, the very necessity of this translation stipulates their fundamental inferiority as second-class citizens.

In Cheyfitz's interpretation, the negative critique of imperial violence through multiple forms of translation clearly prevails. The imperial translation ultimately projects the "vision of a universal empire with a universal language, the *translatio* envisions the translation of all languages into one language … the end of translation in the obliteration or complete marginalization of difference" (ibid.: 122).

However, translation is not only a technology of domination but also a liberat-ing form of dialogue. Cheyfitz defines this utopian dimension of translation in abstract terms, as the possibility of free interplay between the literal and the fig-urative, which opens up a playful dialogue between all other related conceptual pairs. The hope of dialogue does away with the fixity and rigidity of binary contraries and the smothering weight of imperial dominance.

> In this form, translation would not be a mode of repression of languages (within a language) by a master language. There would be no master language. There would be no native speakers. Rather, all speakers would exist in trans-lation between languages, which is where we all exist.
>
> *(ibid.: 134)*

Let me now turn briefly to metaphorical readings of translation in the work of Tejaswini Niranjana.

Niranjana (Robinson 1997: 79–82), who draws heavily on the work of Talal Asad, questions the traditional view of interlingual translation as a useful accom-modating bridge, redefining it as a device that subordinates the native population to the colonial power. Translation not only imprints a new character on the colo-nized; it radically transforms their identity in the image of cultural hegemony. Niranjana, however, questions Asad's concept of "cultural translation", pointing out that it "leaves too little room for the use of translation as an act of resistance" (Niranjana 1992: 85). She also criticizes the notion of a stable transportable mean-ing from a source to a target text and the apparent transparency of translated knowledge that goes with it.

In her view, translation plays an ambivalent role in colonial contexts. On the one hand, it is an instrument of colonial domination, which inserts the colonial subject into a history and culture from which he is ultimately debarred, hiding the violence done in the process. On the other hand, translational practices inscribe subversion into colonial culture. If translation is fundamentally a channel for empire and a tool of colonial dominance, retranslation is a form of resistance to colonial power. A retranslation of the Indian classics would have to work towards decolonization by breaking the colonizer's translation rules. Retranslation, how-ever, is not simply an attempt at eradicating the cultural traces of oppression but a way to transform and reframe them. The dialogic translation Niranjana envisages in her notion of retranslation works by introducing heterogeneity into the English language, subverting and disrupting the colonialist discourse and highlighting pos-sible differences. The unity imposed by colonialism through Westernized transla-tion and the stable relationships and unified meaning this entails are questioned from within. This specific reading of translation is remindful of Bhabha's ambivalent notion of the third space.

Niranjana's understanding of the relationship of metaphor and translation is based on Walter Benjamin's *The Task of the Translator* (2000) and Paul de Man's deconstructive interpretation of this text (2012). Translation, like metaphor, with

which it shares some structural traits, is a form of displacement and disturbance. It is, however, the activity of translation and not the translated text itself that can be compared to metaphor. Paul de Man suggests that the "totalizing movement" (Niranjana 1992: 90), which is always at work in metaphor can be undermined by the disruptive and fragmentary forces of allegory. In her own reading of Benjamin's notion of translation, Niranjana highlights its political and historical dimension (ibid.: 129), as well as the critique of representation (ibid.: 128), the destruction of continuity (ibid.: 111) and the privileging of heterogeneity and contamination over homogeneity and purity (ibid.: 120) translation processes always imply. Her discussion of the metaphor of translation focuses on its meta-theoretical dimension and is less interested in its use as a trope as Cheyfitz or Rafael, who is the last author I would like to discuss in this section.

A multiple metaphoric reading of translation allows Rafael to link disparate domains and to draw a tightly knit picture of the functioning of Spanish colonial rule (Robinson 1997: 82–7). In this sense, his interpretation can be compared to Cheyfitz's description of Anglo-American colonial politics. There are, however, some fundamental differences in their overall approach, which I will consider at the end.

The Spanish words conquest *(conquista)*, conversion *(conversión)* and translation *(traducción)* are semantically related. *Conquista* refers to the armed occupation of a foreign territory and to the achievement of someone's submission or the winning over of someone's love and affection. The literal meaning of *conversión* is to change something into something else. Its most common meaning, however, refers to the practice of bringing someone over to a specific religion. "Conversion, like conquest, can thus be a process of crossing over into the domain – territorial, emotional, religious, or cultural – of someone else and claiming it as one's own" (Rafael 1993: xvii). *Conversión*, furthermore, means substituting one word for another of equal meaning, and is thus directly related to translation. In the colonial project, military and political power, religion and language are intimately related. The Castilian words invade the vernacular Tagalog in the same way that the Spanish troops invaded Tagalog culture.

The essential middle term between conquest and conversion is translation. The conqueror and the conquered speak different languages. This calls for continuous multiple processes of translation. In a colonial context, however, translation cannot be a reciprocal act of mutual understanding. It helps conquering the natives by converting them into subjects of the colonizing culture. The colonial device of translation works on different interrelated levels at the same time. Since the conqueror's religion did not allow for simple economic exploitation, the natives had to be translated into Spanish subjects and converted into Christians first. This notion echoes Cheyfitz's description of the alienation of the land from the Indians.

The natives had to be colonized in both senses, that is, conquered in their bodies and converted in their souls. To achieve this, the Christian texts had to be translated into Tagalog. For this reason, the missionaries studied the native vernacular and wrote grammars and dictionaries. Tagalog was transcribed into the Roman alphabet, displacing the native syllabic script, which was considered by the Spanish colonizers

to be irrational and unusable. The subjugation of bodies and souls was thus complemented by a subjugation of language. Translation is a colonial technology leading to the emergence of a hierarchy of languages – a notion that also plays a central role in anthropology and ethnography. At the top there is Latin, followed by Castilian, with Tagalog at the bottom, a language steeped in paganism. This interpretation corresponded to "sixteenth-century Spanish notions of translation, whereby vernaculars were decoded in terms of master language and placed in a hierarchical relationship to one another" (ibid.: 27). Translation into Tagalog was conceived as a downward movement of progressive inadequacy and increasing geographical and historical distance from God. Because of this, some key words were not translated into Tagalog but deliberately left in their Spanish form, for instance, *Dios* and *Jesucristo* (ibid.: 20–1). This moment of untranslatability alerted the Tagalog to the demands of Spanish authority, but it also preserved an outside space where the Tagalog could elude the meaning and intent of Christian religion. Another form of translation can be found in the Catholic practice of confession. The converts had to reformulate their past life in a narrative of sin and repentance, translating the clash between colonizers and colonized from the interpersonal to the intrapersonal.

This forceful transformation, converting texts and translating people at the same time, never worked perfectly, as the colonized resisted colonial power in many ways. They did not simply internalize colonial conventions but evaded the totalizing grip of Spanish–Christian conventions, marking differences and working against the production of hierarchy through mistranslation (Robinson 1997: 93–100). The double translational movement from Latin and Castilian into Tagalog and from Tagalog into Spanish created multiple forms of hybridity. From the postcolonial perspective advocated by Cheyfitz, this represents a huge loss because it destroys the native culture existing before colonial conquest (ibid.: 95). For Rafael, however, who attempts to describe the complexity of the colonial encounter, hybridity creates cultural diversity and generates a whole variety of playful forms of insubordination.

To sum up: the use of the metaphor of translation in postcolonial theory has led to a reintroduction of aspects that had disappeared from the spectrum of meaning of translation. The metaphor allows for the combining of disparate levels, creating a more complex picture, which integrates language, culture, identity, religion, politics and power. Postcolonial theory highlights the profound ambivalence of translation poised between coercion and liberation.

In Section 6, the last section, I will turn to the diachronic field of the metaphor of translation. This specific aspect will also be discussed in connection with media and communication theory (Chapter 5, Section 2).

6 History and Literature: Translation as Remembrance and Mourning

As already pointed out in Chapter 2, the understanding of translation in the West has been widely dominated by spatial concerns. Translation, however, also plays an

essential role in the passage from one period of time to another, in the preservation of different forms of cultural expression for future generations, in processes of mourning and remembrance and in the overcoming of traumatic experiences. Some of these aspects have been discussed in two recent studies. In *Can These Bones Live? Translation, Survival and Cultural Memory* (2007), Bella Brodzki focuses on processes of mourning and intergenerational transmission, and in *Tradition, Translation, Trauma: The Classic and the Modern* (2011) Jan Parker and Timothy Mathews consider translation as an active force creating continuity and discontinuity over time. The two works convincingly show how a sustained study of the metaphor of translation could become the very basis for a new form of interdisciplinary research. As Jan Parker writes in the introduction, "it is time to release 'translation' from its disciplinary home into an interdisciplinary questioning … For the metaphorical power of translation embraces travel between cultures and between times; embraces personal experience and active transformation of self by text" (Parker 2011: 17).

Walter Benjamin was probably the first theorist to explicitly consider the temporal dimension of translation along with its long-term effects. In his seminal essay on the task of the translator, he suggests that in the process of translation the original undergoes a radical modification. "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" (Benjamin 2000: 17). Translation ensures the survival and the living on of an individual text or cultural narrative, even if only in a changed and revised form. Starting with Walter Benjamin's notion, Brodzki describes translation as a "redemptive mode", a form of transfusion and transfiguration, a critical organizing principle that can be found at the core of all forms of cultural transaction (Brodzki 2007: 1). Translation is seen as an expanding and enriching mode, ensuring the afterlife of texts across time and space. Translation is an "act of identification that is not imitation"; it "hearkens back to the original … and elicits what might otherwise remain recessed or unarticulated, enabling the source text to live beyond itself, to exceed its own limitations" (ibid.: 2).

Brodzki points to metaphorical aspects of translation that were part of its medieval field of meaning. To cross the threshold of life and death and from there into the afterlife is a form of translation. Translation is also about "excavating or unearthing burial sites or ruins" in order to reconstruct the past, about "resurrecting a memory or interpreting a dream" (ibid.: 4). The bones metaphor of the title of her book does not suggest the possibility of an irrefutable form of physical evidence. Even if it were possible to excavate them intact – to reach the hard incorruptible meaning of the original – "the necessarily delayed, translated context of such an excavation would be transformed in the interval between the moment of production and the moment of its translation" (ibid.: 4–5). Time dissolves and changes what seems to possess stability and durability in space. Conversely, what is dead and forgotten, hidden, buried or suppressed can overcome its dire destiny by being translated across time and space into another context where it is born anew. Memory's redemptive work of translation is achieved by collecting the fragments and remnants of the past, reconstituting a narrative that can then be recollected collectively.

Translation is about "the power and persistence of cultural memory as a challenge to the degradation of both matter and discourse" (ibid.: 6).

Brodzki focuses on significant intersections of literature, culture and history, highlighting the performance of translation metaphors as viable categories of analysis. Her first chapter considers translators as "elusive, estranged, erotic and enigmatic" characters of fictional texts (ibid.: 12). Chap. 2 charts the trajectory of American slave narratives and the way translation processes revise, challenge and enrich them. Chaps 3 and 4 turn to translation as an act of cultural memory enabling the survival of "intergenerational, interlingual, transcultural transmission of endangered knowledge" (ibid.: 13). Brodzki considers a text from a French Holocaust survivor, a postcolonial Nigerian novel and Jorge Semprun's memories of the Spanish Civil War. "Ultimately, this book endorses a view of translation as transfigurative in every aspect of human production", a "pervasive and expansive model" that belongs "not at the margins of our cultural consciousness, but at the forefront" (ibid.: 14–15).

The collection of essays edited by Parker and Mathews arose from a collaboration between different research groups joining comparative literature, literary theory and translation studies. It is an attempt to create a dialogue reaching across boundaries of time, space and discipline. In a programmatic prologue, Susan Bassnett explores some of the metaphorical dimensions of translation. The stories we tell and retell each other and ourselves in our daily lives and the ways we rework and reshape the past are forms of translation. Translation also encompasses the notions of metamorphosis and death. It can recover the past and bring the dead back to life. Translation is a form of resurrection. In the sixteenth century, it also meant

> the translation of the body into the celestial realm. The field of meaning of the word "translation" diachronically is far wider than the restricted sense of translation as the transfer of a text written in one language into another … Through translation we are enabled to peep beyond the curtain that holds back the distant past.
>
> *(Bassnett 2011: 1–2)*

The book, whose title alliteratively and metaphorically links translation to tradition and trauma, but also to transmission, consists of three parts. The first part considers the way in which the classical tradition was handed down through history, made new or openly refused. The second part discusses forms of tension between modernity and tradition and the third the way traumatic experiences are carried over into the present. The predominant notion of translation emerging from the book revolves around highly ambivalent moments of violence, dislocation, destruction and renewal, echoing an understanding of translation that can also be found in cultural studies and postcolonial theory. The pre-cultural turn notion of transference is replaced with the more ambivalent notions of transmission and displacement. Tradition is also described in terms of silencing, and translation is recast in tense metaphors: decapitation – severing the text from authority – mutilation and

cannibalistic reception (Parker 2011: 12). The metaphors associated with trauma confirm this specific vision. Trauma is an "untreated, subsuperficial wound: that which is not dealt with, cauterized, anaestheticized" (ibid.: 22). Translating lament can convey rather than exorcise pain.

The underlying historical narrative is inspired by Walter Benjamin's Angel of History rushing into the future with his face turned towards the ruins of the past. This vision precludes a rewriting of history into simplifying triumphant linear trajectories. The model of cultural transmission discussed in the book suggests the very disruption of the idea of unproblematic linear transmission. "For by disruptive, dismembering translation, Classical material can be wrenched from its original historical world and used to animate or express political discourses in cultures alien to it" (ibid.: 19). This, however, does not imply a simple rejection of a possible historical continuity. The metaphor of translation expresses a contradictory ambivalent understanding of history poised between continuity and discontinuity. Translation is both a product and a process, and tradition both challenged and perpetuated. Translation processes are both "foundational and destabilizing, both locating and disturbing temporal awareness" (ibid.: 20). In this sense, the translator can both support and subvert the expectations of the target culture with regard to the so-called deeper truths of classical texts. The main question, writes Parker, was not so much how great cultural achievements were handed down and reinvented, but what was "found – new wrought – as well as lost – new wrenched, damaged and damaging – in translation" (ibid.: 21).

To sum up: contrary to the traditional metaphor of transference, which stressed the notion of a stable transportable meaning smoothly moving across a middle space, the temporal metaphors of translation explored in these two texts emphasize multiple aspects of discontinuity and dislocation, without, however, eclipsing the moment of continuity. Translation implies both renovation and retention across time and space, but transformation and change are also looked at from their destructive and disruptive side. This implies a refusal of a theory of translation based on imitation and mimetic representation, as well as a refusal of the idea of an original per se. Brodzki, Parker and Mathews emphasize the epistemological relevance of the metaphor of translation and its fundamental role in an interdisciplinary dialogue locating differences and commonalities between various disciplines.