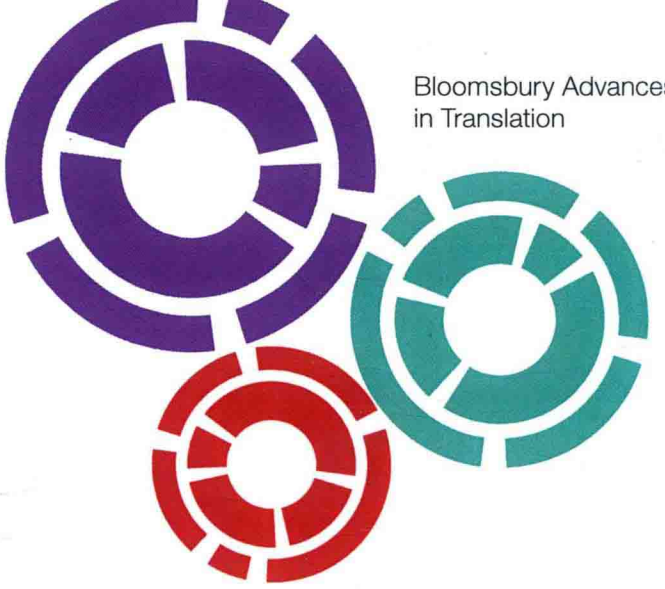

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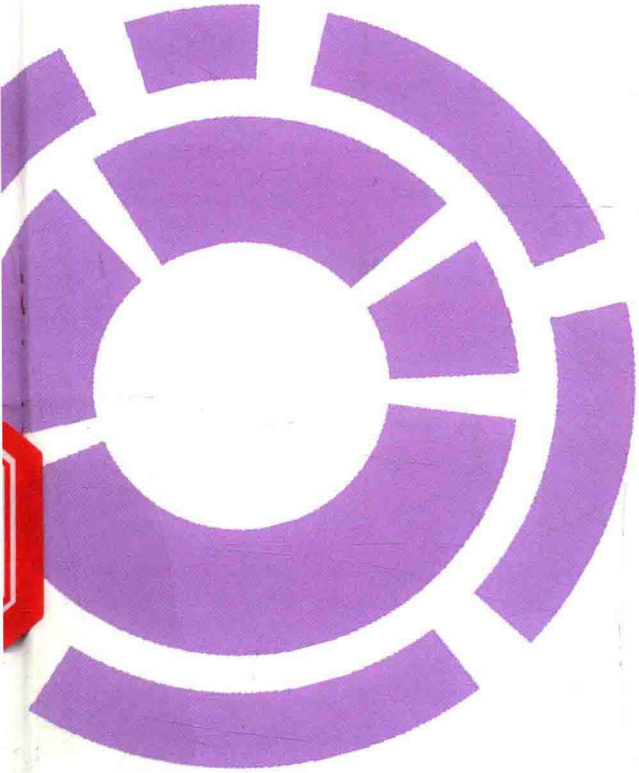
Retranslation

Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation



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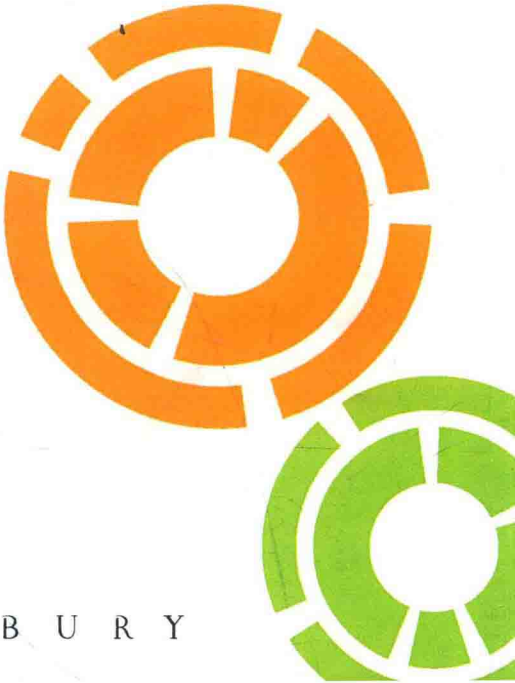

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Bloomsbury Advances in Translation Studies publishes cutting-edge research in the field of translation studies. This field has grown in importance in the modern, globalized world, with international translation between languages a daily occurrence. Research into the practices, processes and theory of translation is essential and this series aims to showcase the best in international academic and professional output.

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List of Tables

Series Editor's Preface

This series provides an outlet for advanced research in the broad interdisciplinary field of translation studies. Consisting of monographs and edited themed collections of the latest work, it is of particular interest to academics and postgraduate students researching in translation studies and related fields, and also to advanced students studying translation and interpreting modules

Translation studies has enjoyed huge international growth over recent decades in tandem with the expansion in both the practice of translation globally and in related academic programmes. The understanding of the concept of translation itself has broadened to include not only interlingual but also various forms of intralingual translation. Specialized branches or subdisciplines have developed for the study of interpreting, audio-visual translation and sign language, amongst others. Translation studies has also come to embrace a wide range of types of intercultural encounter and transfer, interfacing with disciplines as varied as applied linguistics, comparative literature, computational linguistics, creative writing, cultural studies, gender studies, philosophy, postcolonial studies, sociology and so on. Each provides a different and valid perspective on translation, and each has its place in this series.

This is an exciting time for translation studies, and the Bloomsbury Advances in Translation Studies series is an important plank in the development of the discipline. As General Editor, I look forward to overseeing the publication of more important new work that will provide insights into all aspects of the field.

Jeremy Munday
General Editor
University of Leeds, UK

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Or, how this book came to be. For this book is not the result of an individual effort; instead, it has grown out of the guidance, support, advice and patience of many inspiring people, to whom I owe a huge debt of gratitude. My unreserved thanks goes first to those who have supervised, examined, read and commented on my doctoral thesis which is at the origin of this book: Peter Dayan, Charlotte Bosseaux, Ian Mason and Marion Schmid. Also, none of this would have been possible without the assistance of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, whose Doctoral Award allowed me to pursue this work. I am further grateful to the publishers of *Essays in French Literature and Culture*, who have kindly granted me permission to reprint an article I wrote in 2012. I would particularly like to express how appreciative I am of the editorial guidance so generously and insightfully given to me by Jeremy Munday and by the rest of the team at Bloomsbury.

Above all, my wholehearted thanks go to my family for their unwavering encouragement over the years, and for all the much-needed distractions in the forms of travel, food and laughter. And a very special thanks to my husband, Simon, whose love and support never changes, and is never daunted.

List of Abbreviations

General

CF	Character Focalizer
CV	Character Vocalizer
EF	External Focalizer
EV	External Vocalizer
FIS	Free Indirect Style
RH	Retranslation Hypothesis
SFG	Systemic Functional Grammar
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TT	Target Text

Texts in Case Study

MB	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* ST
TT1 Marx-Aveling	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Marx-Aveling
TT2 Blanchamp	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Blanchamp
TT3 May	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT May
TT4 Hopkins	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Hopkins
TT5 Russell	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Russell
TT6 Wall	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Wall
TT7 Mauldon	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Mauldon
TT8 Thorpe	Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* TT Thorpe
MD	George Sand *La Mare au diable* ST
TT1 Anon	George Sand *Marie* TT Anon
TT2 Anon	George Sand *The Haunted Marsh* TT Anon
TT3 Shaw	George Sand *The Devil's Pool* TT Shaw
TT4 Sedgwick	George Sand *The Devil's Pool* TT Sedgwick
TT5 Miles	George Sand *The Devil's Pool* TT Miles
TT6 Cowan	George Sand *The Devil's Pool* TT Cowan
TT7 Brown	George Sand *The Devil's Pool* TT Brown

Contents

Introduction: A Return to Retranslation

Retranslation is very much a temporal phenomenon in the sense that its status as translation 'done again' is determined by the prior existence of an initial translation of a given work into a given language.[1] By dint of originating after this point, retranslation is generally understood as a reiterative and a multiplicative event which gives rise to a second, third, ad infinitum target language instantiation of a source text. But in another sense, retranslation resists easy delineation, marked as it is by a mercurial inconstancy with regard to frequency, behaviour and motivations. There is usually no discernible rhythm to retranslation, with intervals between the appearance of new target texts ranging from the sporadic to the periodic and the simultaneous. Nor are the unique dynamics of retranslation straightforward to unravel, for the practice yields multiples of one which relate not only to the source text but also to each other. To this already complex configuration can be added those socio-cultural factors which facilitate or obstruct retranslation in particular contexts and at particular moments.

It is against this differentiated backdrop that the paradox of retranslation as an object of enquiry emerges. Susam-Sarajeva notes in 2003 that 'although the practice itself is common, theoretical discussions on the subject are rather rare' (2003: 2), while Brisset registers her surprise 'that such a common translation phenomenon has brought about critical thinking which is, all told, rather scant' (2004: 41, my translation). Almost a decade later these appraisals still hold true, and a cogent empirical and conceptual understanding of retranslation remains elusive. However, two recent edited volumes in France, entitled *La retraduction* [*Retranslation*] (eds Kahn and Seth 2010) and *Autour de la retraduction: Perspectives littéraires européennes* [*On Retranslation: European Literary Perspectives*] (eds Monti and Schnyder 2011), have reopened the debate on retranslation behaviour, while presenting a wealth of illuminating case studies. The latter, in particular, acknowledges the enduring research lacuna as well as the established precedent for further inquiry:

> the widespread practice of retranslation within the European literary context remains a little explored area in terms of its multiple stakes. [...] However, a renewed interest in the question has come to light in recent years, in particular as a response to the call of several translation studies scholars who have engaged with the subject and who have denounced the lack of studies in this area. (Monti 2011: 10–1, my translation)

This book hopes to sustain and build on that momentum in a number of respects. First, by undertaking its own contextual and textual analyses of selected (re)translations of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Sand's *La Mare au diable*, this study aims to reveal how these literary works have been successively (re) interpreted from the outside in terms of their role in the target literary system (i.e. which socio-cultural factors have influenced their temporal and physical appearance?), and from the inside in terms of their form and content (i.e. how 'close' are they to the original?). The empirical findings derived from the case studies can then be aligned with or contrasted against existing assumptions on how, why and when retranslation operates. At the same time, these findings will also shed new light on the extent to which the fate of these two authors in Britain was contingent on retranslation. In addition, this book sets out a flexible, multi-methodological approach that draws on a diverse, but complementary, array of paradigms from narrative theory, narratology, Systemic Functional Grammar and sociology; this has been designed with future investigations in mind, and should facilitate an exploration of the capricious contours of retranslation in any number of linguistic and contextual settings. Finally, a new way of looking at the phenomenon of retranslation will be proposed which frees the researcher from the sometimes restrictive horizon offered by previous approaches, and which offers a more useful, dynamic and illuminating model for the study of retranslation in all its unpredictable permutations.

The rest of this chapter will distinguish among existing textual and contextual avenues of enquiry into retranslation, thereby establishing the conceptual background against which the case studies in this book are set. It will then finish with an overview of the main structure of the book and a brief introduction to the source and target texts at the centre of those case studies.

Time and (a)gain

While retranslation can certainly be understood as a reiterative act, it does not necessarily follow that the repetition is tautological. To say the same thing twice

(or multiple times) would appear to be a redundant enterprise, unless motivated by an alternative logic. According to Goethe, that logic is one of producing different types of translation for different phases in a target culture's reception of the source culture:

> There are three kinds of translation. The first acquaints us with the foreign country on our own terms […]. A second epoch follows, in which the translator endeavors to transport himself into the foreign situation but actually only appropriates the foreign idea and represents it as his own […]. The third epoch of translation […] is the final and highest of the three. In such periods, the goal of the translation is to achieve perfect identity with the original, so that the one does not exist instead of the other but in the other's place […]. We are led, yes, compelled as it were, back to the source text. (1992: 64–6)

These three epochs of (re)translation represent a gradual move from an initial rejection of the foreign, via a tentative but nevertheless appropriating foray into the source culture, culminating in an idealized move which privileges the source text and all its alterity. Behind these three steps is the notion of time as progress, its passage 'compelling' us to great achievements, to what is 'perfect'. And it is precisely this momentum which, in Goethe's estimation, invests retranslation with the power to reveal the true identity of the source text within a given receiving culture, thereby constituting advancement – a gain.

After Goethe, intellectual enquiry into retranslation, its motivations and machinations seems to stall until 1990 when the French journal *Palimpsestes* issues a volume dedicated to the phenomenon. One of the most pervasive (and ostensibly persuasive) theoretical approaches to retranslation is encapsulated in the writing of Antoine Berman who mirrors Goethe's rationale, claiming that 'the accomplishment of any human action demands repetition' (1990: 4). Following this claim to its conclusion, Berman argues that 'The whole path of experience must be travelled to arrive at a translation which is self-aware. Every initial translation is clumsy. It is in the wake of this blind and faltering initial translation that the possibility of an accomplished translation arises' (1990: 3–4, my translation). Such ineptitude, unawareness and incertitude are, as far as Berman is concerned, symptomatic of 'la défaillance', that is 'the shortcomings' (1990: 5) which characterize initial acts of translation and which can only be counteracted by the restorative, corrective and illuminating properties of retranslation. Or, as Bensimon puts it in his introduction to the *Palimpsestes* issue:

> After some or much time has passed since the appearance of the initial translation, the reader finds themselves capable of receiving and of perceiving

> the indomitable foreignness, the 'exoticism', of the original. A retranslation is generally more alert than a preliminary translation to the letter of the source text, to its linguistic and stylistic contours, to its singularity. (1990: ix–x, my translation)

As was the case with Goethe, Berman's 'path of experience' appears destined to lead us back towards the specificities of the source text, accompanied by the resounding conviction that retranslation alone has the power to reveal its foreign identity and that time is the necessary ally of this revelatory process.

In addition, Berman maps out the end of this path at a particular pinnacle of accomplishment: the 'grande traduction' or 'great translation'. In keeping with Goethe's teleological reasoning, the great translation 'brings the original, previously concealed by initial translations, back to light and restores its meaning' (1990: 7, my translation), while 'setting an inimitable precedent for contemporary or subsequent translation activity' (1990: 3). At this lofty point, all great translations have one thing in common in that 'they are all retranslations' (1990: 3), since only the passage of time and the accumulation of experience can supposedly pave the way to such a feat of illumination and restoration in the service of the source text.

The rationale of Goethe, and then of Berman, has since found itself condensed into the laconic Retranslation Hypothesis (RH) that 'later translations tend to be closer to the source text' (Chesterman 2004: 8). In other words, the hypothesis implicitly presupposes that the reiterative (and therefore progressively accomplished) force of retranslation will bring about a recovery of the source text and its specificities, be they linguistic or cultural. However, it should be noted that the coinage of the Retranslation Hypothesis does not have its roots in detailed, empirical analyses of retranslation behaviour, nor was it formulated as a deliberate endorsement of Goethe or Berman's idealized logic. Rather, Chesterman simply uses it as a means of illustrating different types of hypotheses and potential translation universals, accompanying it with the caveat that 'the jury is still out' (Chesterman 2004: 7) as far as its validity is concerned. It is perhaps this caveat which has stimulated further interest in the phenomenon, allowing the Retranslation Hypothesis to move beyond its humble origins in the service of illustrating descriptive research methods and become a concrete heuristic tool in its own right.

Before considering the findings of the various case studies presented next, it would be useful to first outline in broad terms to what extent the reasoning behind the Retranslation Hypothesis is flawed. If we map its

trajectory of increased closeness on to Berman's path towards the great and restorative translation, then Brisset's criticism of the latter holds in both contexts: 'This finalist stance epitomizes critical assumptions which, since the eighteenth century, have worked history into a temporal pattern characterized by *perfection*: translation, like history, is deemed to be marching towards progress' (2004: 42, original emphasis, my translation). This march is at once mechanistic and anonymous, and should therefore be regarded with some degree of suspicion. To reprise Berman's own cutting lexicon, there is a certain irony in the fact that this approach is 'blind' to the material conditions of translation production, namely to the external influences which exist beyond the confines of the text. Moreover, the idea that one (re)translation will beget a closer retranslation presumes the presence of a symbiotic link between successive versions and precludes the possibility of a move backwards. There is always the chance that a given retranslation has been carried out without a priori knowledge of an antecedent, or that actual translation choices will contradict this theoretical blueprint for advancement at any given moment; both scenarios will create a chink in the deterministic and linear chain of the Retranslation Hypothesis.

Signs of ageing

Berman also introduces an argument of ageing into his account of retranslation behaviour, one which diametrically opposes the longevity of a source text against that of a target text: 'Whereas the originals remain eternally young (whatever the degree of interest we have in them, and however near or far they are in cultural terms), translations "age"' (1990: 4, my translation). In line with the teleology of perfection, the act of retranslation is then deemed a necessary, albeit temporary, antidote to the (imperfect) impermanence of the previous translation. That is until such time as a 'grande traduction' appears, because great translations 'do not age' (1990: 2), and are therefore imbued with the power to put an indefinite halt to future reiterations. Granted, there is a brief allusion to the fact that each (re)translation 'correspond[s] to a particular linguistic, literary or cultural phase' (1990: 2) and therefore runs the risk of becoming quickly outdated. But any attempt to understand retranslation as updating from an extratextual perspective is clearly subordinate to the idea that retranslation happens because of the inherent flaws of translation itself. The notion of ageing

is another way of holding a mirror up to these flaws, of emphasizing the 'caducity and incompleteness' (1990: 2) of translation, and, consequently, of reinscribing retranslation into a paradigm of progress.

However, where Berman proposes that the original will remain untouched by the passage of time and that any translation will grow old, Topia argues in the same volume of *Palimpsestes* that such a comparison is unfair since the original and the translation 'exist in two parallel and disparate time spectrums' (Topia 1990: 46, my translation). Basing his observations on the French (re)translations of James Joyce, Topia draws attention to the fact that the original language of *Ulysses* will never be open to accusations of ageing as the source text is integrated into a literary canon which continually reframes the work in accordance with its time and space of production, and in light of new interpretations. Since a translation is generally denied any such re-evaluation, it becomes 'frozen in a relationship of dependency with the original work' (Topia 1990: 48). It is this static, derivative position which prevents the translation from evolving and which thus attracts criticism for ageing. Put succinctly, 'it is the original which changes, and the translation which does not change' (Topia 1990: 46).

From the perspective of both Berman and Topia, the lifeblood of the original is its dynamism; its enduring prestige in the face of time according to the former, and its constant re-contextualization over time according to the latter. And the fatal flaw of the translation is its dependency, on target language norms and on the original, respectively. The incongruity between the two modes of writing is further highlighted in the work of Monti, with the striking imagery that '"originals" get wrinkles which makes them all the more charming, [whereas] the age-related imperfections of translations have a definite propensity to render them grotesque' (Monti 2011: 16, my translation). But all these approaches to the question of ageing are marked by oppositional textual thinking which risks diverting attention away from any number of source and/or target culture configurations which might increase or diminish the lifespan of a given work and its (re)translations.

Retranslation on trial

The extent to which Berman's alignment of progress and retranslation has suffused even the most recent studies is apparent in the two French volumes on retranslation. In *La retraduction*, for example, Kahn's work on the German (re) translations of Proust shows that, although later versions have not necessarily