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BOOK REVIEW: *TOPICS AND CONCEPTS IN LITERARY TRANSLATION*

1. INTRODUCTION

The book consists of 10 chapters, a preface, an introduction by the editor and an index (173 pages). It presents research in literary translation from North America, Europe and Asia. The chapters are written by experienced scholars reporting on studies involving a variety of languages. The aim of the book is to "expand on existing debates on translation and translation studies as a discipline" (preface by editor).

The chapters in this book first appeared as articles in a special issue of *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, 2018, 26(4). When citing the chapters, authors are therefore advised to cite as in the original publication. The editor is commended for sharing such information to caution researchers. All chapters have notes with additional information, and disclaimers.

The chapters are listed as follows:

Introduction: Topics and concepts in literary translation

Valdeón, R. A. (ed.) (2018). Introduction. Topics and concepts in literary translation. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 459–462.

Chapter 1:

Chang, N. F. (2018). Voices from the periphery: further reflections on relativism in translation studies. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 463–477.

Chapter 2:

Ploix, C. (2018). Reterritorization and aesthetic transformations: the case of Tony Harrison's *Phaedra Britannica* and *Misanthrope. Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 478–494.

Chapter 3:

D'hulst, L. & Van Gerwen, H. (2018). Translation space in the nineteenth-century Belgium: Rethinking translation and transfer directions. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4) 495–508.

Chapter 4:

Brems, E. (2018). Separated by the same language: Intralingual translation between Dutch and Dutch. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4) 509–525.

Chapter 5:

Schwartz, C. (2018). From Nuoro to Nobel: the impact of multiple mediatorship on Grazia Deledda's movement within the literary semi-periphery. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 526–542.

Chapter 6:

Solum, K. (2018). The tacit influence of the copy-editor in literary translation. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 543–559.

Chapter 7:

Hadley, J. (2018). The beginnings of literary translation in Japan: An overview. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 560–575.

Chapter 8:

Zhang, H. & Ma, H. (2018). Intertextuality in retranslation. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 576–592.

Chapter 9:

Luo, T. & Zhang, M. (2018). Reconstructing cultural identity via paratext: A case study on Lionel Giles' translation of *The Art of War. Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 593-611.

Chapter 10:

Pérez-Carbonell, M. (2018). Who said what? Translated messages and language interpreters in three texts by Javier Marias and Almudena Grandes. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 612–623

The editor provides information about all contributors, which will not be discussed here. It suffices to note that the authors are established researchers at their institutions.

Even though literary translation is an attractive topic in translation studies, it has its challenges. Thus, the title of the book *Topics in Literary Translation* becomes appealing, since researchers are generally eager to read about new ideas. That is why, I presume, the editor, Roberto A. Valdeón, saw the need to republish the articles as book chapters. Ethical issues related to doing so may be debatable, but he makes a disclaimer to that effect. As we know, theories in translation studies began with criticism levelled at literary translation. After the emergence of functionalism, descriptive translation studies and the cultural turn (Bassnette & Lefevere 1990), literary translation was viewed differently. Thus, the aim of this edition, which is to expand on existing debates in translation, is justifiable. Although not all chapters deal with literary translation, the reader will still benefit. Valdeón mentions thought-provoking topics

and concepts, such as transfictional approaches to translation, intralingual translation and intertextuality and retranslation, which the reviewer found particularly interesting.

The purpose of this review is to evaluate the contribution of the book to South African scholarly translation work in this era of decolonialisation and/or Africanisation of theories.

2. DISCUSSION

Valdeón starts by taking us back to the very beginning of translation criticism, when literary translations were evaluated according to how close they mirrored the source text, and where the comparison was based on linguistic equivalence. He then reminds the reader about the realization that the target text serves in a different context than the source text, which needs to be acknowledged – a perspective introduced to literary translation and translation in general by the cultural turn. Each chapter is then discussed, highlighting the contribution of the research to the field.

In the first chapter, "Voices from the periphery: Further reflections on relativism in translation studies", Nam Fung Chang challenges the view that non-visibility or 'under-representation' of minority cultures is based on Eurocentric biases. Chang purports that scholars who promote this view seem to be unaware that translation theories are universal; they are also unaware that scholars from these minority cultures operate under difficult circumstances, which make them less visible. She illustrates her point by quoting an example from the People's Republic of China, where lack of academic freedom is one reason that contributes to minority cultures being on the periphery. She also quotes Guo Yangsheng (2009, p. 245), a scholar working in China, who observes that "[r]esearch on politically sensitive issues – or just political issues – is avoided … Research results of studies not officially endorsed do not stand much chance of getting published". Another contributing reason cited in this article is the "cultural press toward uniformity and conformity" (Cheng 1998, p. 18). For members of these minorities to speak out and challenge the system is foreign – it is a practice guided by Western values. Chang cites numerous examples in defence of this allegation. She warns against the mindset of scholars who look to other disciplines for theories, rather than introducing their own theories, because by doing so they contribute to the "perpetuation of peripheral position". This stance is encouraging for researchers living in Africa who have been using Western theories for a long time. Although translation theory is universal, the contexts in which they apply differ. Viewing translation theory and practice from an African perspective may result in new, enriching discoveries.

"Reterritorialization and aesthetic transformations: The case of Tony Harrison's *Phaedra Britannica* and *The Misanthrope"* by Cédric Ploix is another thought-provoking chapter. Ploix explains that classic works can be adapted to a target culture. In his introduction he refers to the conceptualization of adaptations as "violence" in translation; using metaphors such as "gentle violence" and "abusive violence", which I found fascinating, though unfair to the translator. Why is translation conceptualised as war, when the translator's aim is to build bridges? In fact, to me, even the use of the concept *reterritorialization* suggests war, fighting and politics. Ploix challenges this stance, by stating the paradox that classics "belong to a defined territory, but they also belong to no territory" (p. 22). He discusses the translation of two classic plays, *Phaedra Britannica* and *The Misanthrope,* to illustrate this point. Change or adaptation is inevitable, because "anchoring a play into a new time frame cannot function without linguistic domestication". It is the duty of the translator/mediator to facilitate

cross-cultural communication between the two cultures (Katan 2004, 2016; Liddicoat 2016). Ploix's study reveals that "reterritorialization cannot take place without a profound stylistic recast". From this study, we also learn that translations can become classics themselves.

It was refreshing and illuminating to read that translation issues were found to have penetrated the core of social, political and cultural life, and address questions of representative democracy, language standardization, language equality, cultural identity and citizenship. I found this chapter relevant to our South African/African context, where all these issues are relevant. Lieven D'hurst and Heleen van Gerwen, in their article "Translation space in nineteenth-century Belgium: rethinking translation and transfer directions", address these issues. The authors also discuss the issue of directionality – whether translators are translating into or from their native languages. The authors distinguish between translation and transfer in their discussion of legal and administrative texts. Their findings reveal a Frenchification of Belgian law. After reading this article, scholars may think seriously about directionality, landscape and space, and consider where they are situated. In the South African context, for example, directionality is mostly from language B to language A. There is relatively little research done the other way round.

"Separated by the same language: Intralingual translation between Dutch and Dutch" by Elke Brems is another enlightening read. Brems debates intralingual translation, between Flemish Dutch and Netherlandic Dutch. The study shows that intralingual translation occurs between varieties of the same language. The study sought to discover what light intralingual translation can shed on the relationship between Flanders and the Netherlands. Brems purports that there are eight factors relevant to the study of intralingual translation: (1) The orientation of the translation; (2) The field in which translingual translation takes place; (3) The medium (verbal or written); (4) Involved stakeholders; (5) The elements of the source text/source language to be translated; (6) Paratexts; (7) Reception; and (8) Function. Intralingual translation is a cultural-political issue. Considering the South African landscape, translation researchers can learn a great deal from this study, for example, the current debate among AmaXhosa, challenging 'the standardised' isiXhosa versus the other 'varieties'. Questions being asked are, who standardised the language and on what basis? [anecdotal]. Such questions touch on the politics of existence and language development, in which translation plays a part. Although, to my knowledge, no research has been conducted to study translation into the varieties of African languages, this is fertile ground for further research, starting by translating from the 'standardised' language into other varieties. Interesting studies involving the relationship between language variants could be undertaken.

In "From Nuoro to Nobel: The impact of multiple mediatorship on Grazia Deledda's movement within the literary semi-periphery", Cecilia Schwartz highlights the impact of multiple mediatorship. She defines multiple mediatorship as "the combined contributions of several mediators as members of interconnected networks". Multiple mediatorship highlights the collaborative nature of translation. In this study, Schwartz traces the works of Grazia Deledda that appeared in Swedish, German, French and English. Using Sapiro's model (2006) she analyses the three intercultural networks that contributed to the spreading of Deledda's works. Deledda's story is intriguing in that she only became famous after winning the Nobel Prize. She was not connected with important or influential mediators but was connected to individuals who had strong connections. The study highlights the impact of powerful intercultural networks on promoting one's work and reputation. Some South African translators, especially those

working with indigenous languages, and who tend to work in silos, can learn from and about intercultural networks to promote their visibility.

Related to multiple mediatorship is the influence of the copy-editor in literary translation. In the chapter about "The tacit influence of the copy-editor in literary translation", Kristina Solum studies the changes proposed by copy-editors to translators in the Norwegian publishing context. She investigates the degree of the copy-editor's intervention and the translator's negotiation strategy when dealing with the proposed suggestions. Copy-editing involves stylistic matters related to a target language and correspondence between the source and target texts. Comments and suggestions from copy-editors are, thus, generally welcomed by translators. In analysing the editing process, Solum assumes the sociological approach underpinned by "Latour's ANT and Bourdieu's notions of habitus, field and symbolic capital". The study adopted a mixed method approach to examine 13 documents submitted to copy-editors. The results reveal that translators accepted 75–99% of changes suggested by copy-editors, which implies the trust translators have in copy-editors. An enlightening finding was that translators of Romance languages were more resistant to changes proposed by editors than their English-language counterparts. What is even more interesting, is the finding that translators are open to suggestions proposed by copy-editors, especially, when knowing that they are free to choose to accept or reject. This increases their loyalty to the copy-editors.

In "The beginnings of literary translation in Japan: An overview", James Hadley investigates the history of translation in Japan during Meiji's era (1868–1912). He applies a quantitative approach to compare bibliographical information involving literary translators. The study is replicable in the South African context, for example, by tracing the nature of literary or Bible translation into the various languages.

The concept of intertextuality is elaborated upon by Huanyao Zhang and Huijuan Ma. Previously, studies on intertextuality involved challenging the notion of equivalence between a source text and its target text. Others have investigated intertextual relations between source texts and other texts, and how these relations are preserved in translation. Zhang and Ma's study is unique because it involves intertextuality between translations of the same source text and focuses on the similarities and differences. They refer to these similarities and differences as "filiation and dissidence". The concept of filiation refers to instances where the translations make the same changes linguistically, stylistically and culturally. Conversely, dissidence occurs when the translations display differences where similarities were more likely to be expected. The article illustrates how comparison of the retranslations is carried out. This is an area that could attract researchers.

Tian Luo and Meifang Zhang's chapter, "Reconstructing cultural identity via paratexts: A case study on Lionel Giles' translation of *The Art of War"*, deals with the reconstruction of cultural identity in the translation of classical work. Reconstructing cultural identity is another way of preserving the culture embodied in a text. The study explains how paratexts can be used as tools for reconstructing cultural identity. Using supplementation, comparison and evaluation as analytical framework, Luo and Zhang compare the Chinese text of *The Art of War* and its English translation by Giles. A study like this one can be replicated in a multilingual context such as South Africa with classical works available and translated into English. The value of or role played by paratexts is highlighted in this chapter. Meier (2020) also emphasises the importance of paratexts in translation practice and invites further studies on this concept.

The last article, by Marta Pérez-Carbonell, examines transgressions of the code of ethics by interpreters. They analyse the level of faithfulness to the source text, and the study refers to the autonomy and performative function of languages, of which language practitioners must always be aware. Ethics in translation and interpreting is another fertile ground for further research.

3. CONCLUSION

Translation studies is ever developing, and it is encouraging to learn about new research topics and concepts. *Topics and Concepts in Literary Translation* provides researchers, emerging and proven, with fresh ideas to conduct further research. Although the articles portray the landscape of research in North America, Europe and Asia, the topics are replicable anywhere. The authors have created a space for new and similar kinds of research. Reviewing this book exposed interesting concepts, such as reterritorialization, intertextuality in retranslation, intralingual translation and transfiction. Overall, the book is recommended for translation scholars and students, as it contributes to translation theories and research.

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