Chapter One

The Writerly Task of Reading

i

The Negativity of Some Poets to Translation and Some Responses

"The Triple Fool" is a poem by John Donne about what inspires a poet to write a poem and is also about the poet's response to an adaptation of the poem into a different medium. Donne refers to his inspiration as denied desire – the love of a man for a woman who denies his love for her. There is irony in the poem: the poet wants to "allay" his "pains" "In whining Poetry"; Donne calls the poet a "Triple Fool": a fool for love, a fool for thinking by writing the poem he could "allay" his "pains", and a fool for not being pleased or delighted when

> Some man, his art and voice to show,
> Doth set and sing my pain . . . (Donne (1955: 32)),

even though the song delights many others. The response of the poet in the poem to the adaptation of the poem into a song is consistent with the ironical tone of the poem. Donne implies that he was wrong to think that poetry has only personal therapeutic value: whereas a poem may have its inspiration in a personal experience, if it is to succeed as a poem, it will transcend the narrowly subjective and will have a "life" beyond the life of the poet. In "The Triple Fool", the poem to which he refers – which, in a sense, is not a real poem, but only referred to as one – has a life all of its own apart from the author when it is set to music and becomes a song: it reaches a wider audience and delights many.

Donne's poem could have relevance to the theory and practice of creative translation from one language into another: if we were to change Donne's words, "set and sing" (line 14) to "then translate" and his word "songs" (line 19) to "wrongs", we would have, without altering the metre or rhyme of the poem, transformed this part of the poem into a statement about translation:

> But when I have done so,
> Some man, his art and voice to show,
> Doth then translate my pain,
> And by delighting many, frees again

Griefe, which verse did restrain.
To Love, and Griefe tribute of Verse belongs
But not of such as pleases when 'tis read,
Both are increased by such wrongs;
For both their triumphs so are published.
And I, which was two fooles, do so grow three;
Who are a little wise, the best fooles bee.

Just as Donne in this poem ironically whines about "Some man" who sets his poem to music and sings his poem, poets have whined about translation.

John Ciardi called translation "the art of failure"[1]; Robert Frost's statement that "poetry is what is lost in translation" is well known;[2] Robert Graves said, ". . . translation is a polite lie, but nevertheless a lie"[3]; Shelley wrote of "the vanity of translation": ". . . it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as to seek to transfuse from one language to another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower – and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel."[4] Dante wrote: ". . . let all observe that nothing harmonized by the laws of the Muses can be changed from its own tongue to another one without destroying all its sweetness and harmony."[5] Pasternak wrote: ". . . translations are not realizable because the chief charm of a work of art is its unrepeatability. How can a translation be expected to repeat it?"[6]

Adverse criticism of this sort can, however, be salutary. Susan Bassnett has deconstructed Shelley's statement:

> This passage is sometimes taken as an example of the impossibility of translation . . .. But there is another way to read Shelley's very graphic description of the difficulties of the translation process. The imagery that he

[1] Ciardi's quotation is from Landers (2001: 97).
[2] Robert Frost, "Conversations on the Craft of Poetry" in *Robert Frost on Writing*, edited by Elaine Barry (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1973).
[3] Quoted by Kornei Chukovsky (1984: 152–153).
[4] Quoted by Kornei Chukovsky (1984: 152).
[5] As translated by Katherine Hillard and quoted in Douglas Robinson (2002: 48). Lauren G. Leighton (1984: 152) translates it as: "Let every man know that nought involving the aims of harmony in the musical bases of poetry can be translated from one language to another without destroying its harmony and charm."
[6] Quoted by Chukovsky (1984: 152).

> uses refers to change and new growth. It is not an imagery of loss and decay. He argues that though a poem cannot be transfused from one language to another, it can nevertheless be transplanted. The seed can be placed in new soil, for a new plant to develop. The task of the translator must then be to determine and locate the seed and to set about its transplantation. (1998: 58.)

Similarly one could say about Robert Frost's "poetry is what is lost in translation" that creative translation is recreating what is lost in translation through the creative mind of the poet-translator.

One of Robert Graves's biographers, Richard Graves provides an answer to Graves's statement: "Graves carried a number of strongly-held beliefs . . .. Among them was the belief that . . . literal truth is relatively unimportant, as an artist can tell the truth by a condensation and dramatization of the facts; and that there are areas in which intellectual thought is markedly inferior to associative or 'analeptic' thought." (1986: 3–4.) This statement suggests that creative literature is not necessarily literal truth and that therefore the "polite lie" of translation is compatible with creative writing, which is not "literal truth".

Pasternak has himself answered his statement about the "unrepeatability" of art through his translations and his statement: "Translations are conceivable because ideally even they must be works of art and in their common character as texts come up to a par with the originals in their own unrepeatability."[7]

What can one say about John Ciardi's statement that translation is "the art of failure"? Perhaps T. S. Eliot's words from "East Coker" (1955: 21–22) give a realistic answer about the difficulty of creative writing, whether original or in translation:

> Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
> Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
> Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
> For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which

[7] Quoted by Chukovsky (1984: 153).

> One is no longer disposed to say it. And so each venture
> Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
> With shabby equipment always deteriorating
> In the general mess of imprecision of feeling,
> Undisciplined squads of emotion. And what there is to conquer
> By strength and submission, has already been discovered
> Once or twice, or several times, by men whom one cannot hope
> To emulate – but there is no competition –
> There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
> And found and lost again and again: and now, under conditions
> That seem unpropitious. But perhaps neither gain nor loss.
> For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business.

Translation as the "art of failure" need not necessarily deter the poet-translator. Any creative writer knows "a different kind of failure" in "the intolerable wrestle / With words and meanings" (also from "East Coker" – (1955: 17)).

In attempting to investigate the practice of creative translation through the words of poets, translators, translation theorists, literary theorists and critics, and philosophers, practice is emphasized rather than theory. This does not mean that the theory of translation is overlooked – rather that theory is secondary to practice. The subtitle of *The Art of Translation: Voices from the Field* (Warren (ed.): 1989) emphasizes translation practice rather than theory.

ii

Translators on Translation

Eric Prenowitz writes:

> . . . the translator's task . . . means giving up the dream of an effortless and silent living transfusion, immediate and unmitigated, unmediated . . . because in the first place the thing does not belong to you and in the second it will not in any case have been handed over intact. . . . a translation maintains above all *its own fiction*, it maintains the true fiction that translation is possible. It *is* this fiction, both hopeful and frightening, promising communication where none by definition should be possible, and simultaneously eliminating the possible communication of difference itself so to speak, regarding difference, or of its incommunicability – and so effacing a vital, ineffable otherness proffered by the other idiom. . . . a translation is a going-further, going beyond the idiomatic limitations that are the very condition of linguistic expression, of signification, of anything called culture; strictly speaking it is

> quite impossible since it must at once follow behind and forge ahead." (Prenowitz (1996: 105–107).)

Any translator of Derrida or of singular poetry is faced with these daunting challenges.

Gabriel Rockhill refers to "concrete criteria that provide an overall framework for thinking about translation":

> The first of these criteria is, broadly speaking, historical. The conceptual network defining the basic elements and modalities of what is generally understood as translation is necessarily dependent on a historical situation. The very distinction between translation and adaptation, for example, has by no means remained a historical constant, and the same could be said of the relationship between original prose and plagiarism, transcription and revision, fidelity and infidelity . . .. To put this point rather succinctly, the very meaning of 'translation' – and all its corresponding parts – cannot be separated from the historical situation within which it functions. . . . The second major criterion is social. In order for a translation to be recognized as such and considered worthy of the name, it has to abide by the broad parameters operative in a particular community. These parameters need not necessarily impose a single model or method of translation, but they define the general coordinates within which translation can be distinguished from other discursive procedures . . .. Just as the translator never works in a historical vacuum, translation is never an isolated soliloquy uninformed by a community. In short, translation is neither based on universal criteria nor is it condemned to a solitary encounter with the intractable original. It is a historical practice that always takes place – implicitly or explicitly – within a social framework. . . . This means that translation, as I propose to understand it under the current circumstances, is not simply a form of mediation between two distinct languages. It is a relational reconfiguration of meaning via a logic of signification that is rendered possible by a socio-historical situation. (Rockhill (2004: vii–vii).)

This is relevant to Gadamer's concept of "fusion of horizons". (See Part vi of this chapter.)

The words of Stanley Burnshaw are relevant, especially since he is somewhat negative about creative translations: ". . . the only way one could experience the

poetry of a language one did not command was by learning to hear and pronounce (if only approximately) the sounds of the originals and 'simultaneously' reading literal translations" (1964: xi). He states that he wrote this "at a time when translators felt free to do anything: they were 'recreating originals'!" He continues: ". . . English versions of foreign writings abound, but the reader who wants to experience the poetry of other literatures must look elsewhere; the vast stock of verse translations provides no answer." (1964: xii.) Later he states that "verse translation" is "the poorest subdivision of English verse" (1964: xiv). Burnshaw's collection provides the reader with the poem in the original language with a literal reading in English and with a commentary with the aim of "enabling the reader both to *understand* the poem and to begin to *experience it as a poem*" (1964: xii). Burnshaw's book is an excellent collection of poetry, translation, and interpretation. It will, however, be part of my aim to counter Burnshaw's somewhat disparaging view of creative translation into English poetry and, at the same time, to acknowledge that much of verse translation into English has not been worthy of the original.

The last quotation in this section is by Walter Kaufmann on the "way of translating" practised by Martin Buber[8]:

> . . . Buber paid more attention to the context than previous translators and tried to teach respect for the distinctive voice of the original. Far from concentrating merely on fragmentary quotations, . . . Buber always felt a responsibility to the Hebrew Bible as a whole. He insisted that we must ask where else a word occurs. Though there may be few who have learned from this approach to translation, I am one of them and am glad to acknowledge my debt to Buber. . .. . . . it was Buber who taught me to listen to the original voice; and if he failed to impress this lesson on many others, I cannot help feeling that it was better to stand for noble principles than to adopt a more popular position and have more influence. (1979: 32.)

These words of Kaufmann's about the importance in translation of paying "attention to the context" and having "respect for the distinctive voice of the

[8] Robinson (1991: 94) described Buber's approach to translation as ". . . an infinite approach to an impossible goal. Fundamental despair and practical fortitude."

original" will be important in my evaluation of poet-translators' work, as will his remarks about responsibility to the work as a whole and asking "where else a word occurs".

iii

Models for Translation

Lefevere and Bassnett suggest three historical models for translation: the Jerome, the Horace, and the Schleiermacher models (1998: 2–8).

The Jerome model, based on what Jerome (circa 331 – circa 420 A.D.) wrote about his translation of the Vulgate, is one of linguistic equivalence and it set the standards for translation for fourteen centuries. This model uses evaluative adjectives such as authentic, definitive, accurate, equivalent, exact, literal, or their opposites, and nouns such as reproduction, copy, and imitation (in the narrow sense of the word). It places emphasis on the linguistic aspect of translation.

The Horace model, based on the words that Horace (65–8 B.C.) wrote, "nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus / interpres"[9], is one of faithfulness, not literal equivalence. This faithfulness is not faithfulness to the words alone, but to the negotiation process that translation involves, the negotiation between the source text and the target audience – faithfulness to the original writer and to the target audience so that the negotiation of translation may be successfully achieved. It has been adapted to include the whole range of cultural interaction.

The Schleiermacher model stresses the need for alterity in translation. Schleiermacher believed that the structure and the tone of the source text should be recaptured in the translation. This model emphasizes the source text as well as the target audience. Schleiermacher proposed that a translation should sound foreign; the "alterity" of the source language – or otherness or difference from the target language – should always be heard. Douglas Robinson is critical of

[9] Horace in lines 133–4 of the *Epistle to the Pisos*, commonly known as the *Art of Poetry*. Douglas Robnson (2002: 14) comments ". . . his disparagement of the 'faithful translator' is often turned on its head to support translational fidelity to the original".

Scheiermacher's "lofty ideal": "bringing the reader to the author, or training the target-language readership to accept, even to crave, translations steeped in the foreign flavour of their originals" (2002: 225).

All three models have their place in the study of translation and in the practice of poetic translation because they emphasize the importance of linguistic, cultural, and syntactic elements in translation. Lefevere and Bassnett see value in each of the three models "as long as they are not seen (and do not see each other) as mutually exclusive" (1998: 8).

About the Jerome model they consider that equivalence is no longer necessary, but it is nevertheless good to pay close attention to the source language.

On the Horace model Lefevere and Bassnett refer to translation as negotiation "among the initiators who not only want the text translated, but also want it to function in the receiving culture in a meaningful way" (1998: 4). They see value in being aware of "the textual and conceptual grids that pre-exist the text with which they are working" (1998: 8). They have reservations, however, about the

> most obvious form of negotiation between textual and conceptual texts . . . analogy; it is . . . the most superficial one, and the one that leads, inevitably, to the obliteration of differences between cultures and the texts they produce. Analogy is the easy way in negotiations between cultures, precisely because it slants the culture of origin toward the receiving culture, whose prestige is perceived to be so much greater." (1998: 7.)

Umberto Eco expands the Horace model of negotiation: in his book that is subtitled *Translation as Negotiation*; he starts with the words: "Negotiation is a process by virtue of which, in order to get something, each party renounces something else, and at the end everybody feels satisfied since one cannot have everything" (2004: 6) and he ends with

> . . . it will be a matter of negotiation between the translator, the reader and the original author, whose unique voice should remain in the text. . . . Faithfulness is not a method which results

> in an acceptable translation. It is the decision to believe that translation is possible, it is our engagement in isolating what is for us the deep sense of a text, and it is the goodwill that prods us to negotiate the best solution for every line. Among the synonyms of *faithfulness* the word *exactitude* does not exist. Instead there is loyalty, devotion, allegiance, piety. (2004: 192.)

A discussion of faithfulness through the ages would be a lengthy matter, as would a discussion of equivalence. Recently, however, there has been an interesting debate about vernacular translations of the Mass, and dynamic equivalence has been preferred to formal correspondence. This is in keeping with the influence that Eugene Nida (1964) has had on Biblical Exegesis. As Edwin Gentzler states, "Nida's theory emphasizes not formal correspondence, but functional equivalence; not literal meaning but dynamic equivalence; not 'what' language communicates, but 'how' it communicates" (1993: 54).

Lefevere and Bassnett regard the Schleiermacher model as valuable because it questions the kind of "standardization analogy produces" (1998: 7). Rosanna Warren supports the need for alterity in translation: "Translation does thrive in otherness"; she wrote that there was "a fair consensus attributing the value of a translation precisely to its celebration of otherness. . ." (1989: 5). Denis Donoghue refers to "the advice offered by Rudolf Pannwitz in *The Crisis of European Culture* that a translator should allow his own language to be powerfully affected by the foreign language of the original, rather than insist on keeping his own language in the state in which he finds it" (1989: 253).

As Lefevere and Bassnett write, each of the models has its place, and they are not mutually exclusive. What is important is not so much a particular model or theory, but rather the demands of a particular poem that is to be translated and the creative response of the poet-translator to that poem.

iv

The Tradition of Literary Translation

Lauren G. Leighton, in writing about Kornei Chukovsky and the Russian literary tradition in which translation played an important part in developing original Russian literature, states that Anglo-Americans took a long time to understand the importance of translation. He claims that the "Anglo-American world of letters, as also the European world", did not know much about "the principles, theory, and criticism of the art of translation. Indeed, translation is not generally considered an art in the Anglo-American world . . .." (1984: ix.) Leighton's comments about the "Anglo-American world of letters, as also the European world" are not altogether justified. Leighton seems to have been unaware of the German tradition in translation, from Luther in the sixteenth century to the work of Walter Benjamin on the theory of translation, which was written in 1923, and beyond. André Lefevere (1977) in his book *Translating Literature: The German Tradition: From Luther to Rosenzweig* contradicts Leighton's statement as far as "the European world" is concerned.

Walter Benjamin is an important figure in a discussion of translation, and his essay, "The Task of the Translator", has, according to Lefevere, been "much glorified in an Anglo-Saxon world ignorant of the ramifications of the German tradition in translating literature" (1977: 2). Ezra Pound in 1928 made important observations about translation, George Steiner in 1975 wrote *After Babel*, and André Lefevere wrote extensively about translation in 1975, as did James Holmes in 1976.

Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (1998) have done a great deal in the promotion of translation studies. Edwin Gentzler, in the Foreword to one of their books, regards ". . . the historic 1976 conference in Leuven (Louvaine), Belgium" as "the conference at which translation studies was founded" (1998: ix). Bassnett sees the 1976 conference and the written proceedings as "a rejection of the old evaluative position, and a refusal to locate translation studies either strictly within

literary studies or in linguistics" (1998: 125). Bassnett refers to the contributions of Augusto de Campos (1978), James Holmes (1970), Ezra Pound (1928), Robert Bly (1984), and André Lefevere (1975) on how to proceed with the translation of poetry. Bassnett, tracing the development of translation theory, comments:

> One line of thought has traditionally seen the translation as a traducement, a betrayal, an inferior copy of a prioritized original. Another line of thinking focuses on the translation, and in recent years we have seen Derrida (and others) recreating Walter Benjamin and celebrating the translation as the 'after-life' of the source text, its means of survival, its reincarnation. Indeed, Derrida suggests that effectively the translation *becomes* the original . . .. (1998: 25.)

Nevertheless, Leighton is not altogether wrong about the "Anglo-American world of letters". In 2008 the Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy, according to Litchfield (2008: 17), stated that "no contemporary American writer deserved the [2008 Nobel Prize for literature] award because United States literati were too parochial and never read foreign works in translation". To compare the Anglo-American attitude with that of German writers, we have only to read what Novalis wrote: "We Germans have been translating for a long time, and the desire to translate appears to be a national characteristic, since there is hardly a German writer of importance who has not translated, and who does not take as much pride in his translations as he does in his original works . . ."[10].

George Steiner divides the "literature on the theory, practice, and history of translation . . . into four periods", though he admits, ". . . the lines of division are in no sense absolute":

> The first period would extend from Cicero's famous precept not to translate *verbum pro verbo*, in his *Libellus de optimo genere oratorum* of 46 B.C. and Horace's reiteration of this formula in the *Ars Poetica* some twenty years later, to Hölderlin's enigmatic commentary on his own translations from Sophocles (1804). . . . The second stage is one of theory and hermeneutic inquiry. . .. The hermeneutic approach . . . was initiated by

[10] Novalis is the pseudonym of Friedrich Leopold Von Hardenberg (1772–1801). The quotation is from a letter to A. W. Schlegel as translated by André Lefevere (1977: 65).

> Schleiermacher and taken up by A. W. Schlegel and Humboldt. It gives the subject of translation a frankly philosophic aspect.

About the third period Steiner comments,

> After that we are fully in the modern current. . .. Structural linguistics and information theory are introduced into the discussion of interlingual exchange. . .. It is a period of intense, often collaborative exploration . . ..

Steiner then moves to the fourth period:

> . . . certain differences in emphasis have occurred since the early 1960s. The 'discovery' of Walter Benjamin's paper 'Die Aufgabe des Uebersetzers', originally published in 1923, together with the influence of Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, has caused a reversion to hermeneutic, almost metaphysical inquiries into translation and interpretation.
>
> (1975: 236–238.)

Probably more relevant than the four periods are the "three classes" into which Steiner divides the "theory of translation, certainly since the seventeenth century":

> The first comprises strict literalism, the word-by-word matching of the interlingual dictionary, of the foreign-language primer, of the interlinear crib. The second is the great central area of 'trans-lation' by means of faithful but autonomous restatement. The translator closely reproduces the original but composes a text which is natural to his own tongue, which can stand on its own. The third class is that of imitation, recreation, variation, interpretative parallel. It covers a large, diffuse area, extending from transportation of the original into a more accessible idiom all the way to the freest, perhaps only allusive or parodistic echoes. (1975: 253.)

There is, however, nothing original in this, as Steiner accepts. Later he writes:

> The view of translation as a hermeneutic of trust (*élancement*), of penetration, of embodiment, and of restitution, will allow us to overcome the sterile triadic model which has dominated the history and theory of the subject. The perennial distinction between literalism, paraphrase and free imitation, turns out to be wholly contingent. It has no perception or philosophic basis. It overlooks the key fact that a fourfold *hermeneia*, Aristotle's term for discourse which signifies because it interprets, is conceptually and practically inherent in even the rudiments of translation. (1975: 303.)

Denis Donoghue looks "at two theories of translation, Walter Benjamin's and Paul de Man's" (1989: 251).

Probably Benjamin's two most familiar statements about translation are what Denis Donoghue refers to as "broken fragments of a once putatively intact vessel" (1989: 253) and his statement about translation as a tangent:

> Just as the tangent touches a circle lightly and at but one point, with this touch rather than with the point setting the law according to which it is to continue on its straight path to infinity, a translation touches the original lightly and only at the infinitely small point of the sense, thereupon pursuing its own course according to the laws of fidelity in the freedom of linguistic flux.[11]

Donoghue comments, "By 'fidelity' in that passage Benjamin does not mean the conventional 'fidelity to the original'; he means fidelity to the ideal of pure language, and freedom in its pursuit" (1989: 253).

Donoghue discusses Paul de Man's criticism of Benjamin's concept of "pure language" (*reine Sprache*) and, although Donoghue defends Benjamin, he writes of de Man's "more lucid version" of Benjamin's theory of translation (1989: 257). Elsewhere Donoghue states:

> It is clear that Benjamin and, even more consistently, de Man think of translation not as a transmission of meaning but as the exposure of a text to a more explicit stage of its doom. De Man regards the afterlife of a poem as proof not of its continuance but of its death . . .. The merit de Man claims for translation, as for the deconstructive form of hermeneutics, is the removal of what is deemed to be demystification. The particular guilty form of mystification is the acquired and reiterated sentiment of unity, unity of apprehension, unity of being. (1989: 256.)

Donoghue makes an interesting reference to Derrida: ". . . my practice, if I had one, would observe what Jacques Derrida has called the 'twice once' concept of translation, 'the operation of passing from one language into another, each of

[11] Donoghue (1989: 253) quoting from Benjamin (1977: 80).

them forming an organism or a system the rigorous integrity of which remains at the level of supposition, like that of a body proper'"[12] (1989: 257).

With reference to de Man, Donoghue writes:

> Translation . . . is concerned with 'what in the original belongs to language.' It is by definition belated. . . . The categorical belatedness of a translation allows it to exist in a critical or ironic relation to the original. Like a critical theory or, presumably, like Deconstruction, translation acts precisely by not imitating or reproducing the original, and by this refusal it shows in the original 'a mobility, an instability, which at first one did not notice.' The translation can put the original 'in motion' and question its claim to canonical authority by showing that it, too, is merely an afterlife, therefore an absence, a death. (1989: 254.)

The word "After" has often been used by poets in the sense of "belatedness" or time following, as well as in the style of or following the example of the poems they have translated or adapted or interpreted. Creative translation is not necessarily the same as literal translation: it tries to recreate the essence of the original and in the recreation to introduce the original in a different language or context to a wider audience and in a way that attempts to make it meaningful and attractive to the new audience. Sometimes creative translations may be literal; sometimes they may use the same metres or rhythms; but at other times they may create different words and different metres and rhythms. Sometimes they may be better called adaptations or interpretations – or "imitations", as Robert Lowell (1961) called his book of creative translations. (In the case studies that follow and in the Conclusion these different forms of creative translation are discussed critically.) The common thread is that previous writing has inspired the translator to write creatively. In a sense translation may subvert the original when a translator attempts to communicate with the users of the language into which it is being translated, but the poet-translator should try to make a creative translation as true to, and as consistent with, the original as is necessary to recreate the original. Any dedicated artist believes, however, in the importance of his or her

[12] Donoghue cites Jacques Derrida, "Two Words for Joyce," in Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer, eds., *Post-Structuralist Joyce* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 155–156.

artistic practice, and it is the claim of this research that a poet-translator is a dedicated artist.

v

Literary Critics and Translation

Henri Meschonnic wrote, "La théorie de la traduction n'est donc pas une linguistique appliquée. Elle est un champ nouveau dans la théorie et la pratique de la littérature." This is quoted by George Steiner and translated as "The theory of translation is not, therefore, an applied linguistics. It is a new field in the theory and the practice of literature" (1975: x). Literary theory, even when it does not mention the practice of translation, can be useful in the study of translation.

The word *mimesis* occurs frequently in the history of the theory of literature. Plato used it disapprovingly mainly because he saw it as an inferior form of copying or reproduction, whereas Aristotle approvingly defined poetry as *mimesis* or imitation. Since Aristotle, many theorists have returned to the Aristotelian concept and applied it, denied it, or developed it as a theory of literature. In the Middle Ages the concept of *mimesis* was discarded, but with the translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* into Italian in 1549 the Italians developed (or minimized) it into the concept of "verisimilitude". From about 1830 the concept of "realism" and then later "naturalism", which could to a certain extent be regarded as offshoots from *mimesis* and "verisimilitude", became popular. The theory of *mimesis* is relevant to the practice of translation.

Umberto Eco links *mimesis*, interpretation, and creativity: ". . . The observer produces *imitations* (in the Aristotelian sense of *mimesis*) of experiences, thereby enjoying his own experience of interpretation and mimesis. . . . These imitations of experiences can be considered as having an aesthetic value, since they are at once *interpretations* and *creations – choices* and *compositions* . . .." (1989: 111.) Eco refers to "the search for, and the establishment of, a coherence, a unity, an order in the midst of chaotic diversity – the search for a unified whole such that 'its various incidents must be so arranged that if any of them is differently placed

or taken away the effect of wholeness will be seriously disrupted'" (1989: 43)[13]. Eco's words have relevance to the work of the poet-translator, who also imitates, interprets, creates, chooses, and composes.

Probably the best study of *mimesis* in the twentieth century is Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1953), about which Terry Eagleton writes: "Erich Auerbach's magisterial *Mimesis*, a book which records the literary triumph of the popular, plebeian and everyday over the noble, mythical and heroic" (2008: 8) and about which Harland writes: "The most impressive evolutionary hypothesis was presented in Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis,* covering the linguistic representation of reality across the whole of Western literary history" (1999: 111). Auerbach will be an important critic in the discussion of Dante's recreation of the life of Francis in Dante's *Paradiso* in Chapter Four, Part v.

The German term, *Einfühlung* ("feeling into", empathy, or, as Herder called it, living "in the spirit of the author" (1995: 184)), was a typically Romantic theme. George Steiner brought together the two concepts of *mimesis* and *Einfühlung*:

> Where the most thorough possible interpretation occurs, where our sensibility appropriates its object while, in this appropriation, guarding, quickening that object's autonomous life, the process is one of 'original repetition'. We re-enact, in the bounds of our own secondary but momentarily heightened, educated consciousness, the creation of the artist. We retrace . . . the coming into form of the poem. Ultimate connoisseurship is a kind of finite *mimesis*: through it . . . the literary text is made new – though obviously in that reflected, dependent sense in which Plato gave to the concept of imitation. The degree of re-creative immediacy varies. . . . As we shall see, two principal movements of spirit conjoin: the achievement of 'inscape' (*Einfühlung*) is both a linguistic and an emotive act. (1975: 26.)

Any kind of understanding, whether it is the understanding of speech or a written text, "is a kind of finite *mimesis"* and "is both a linguistic and an emotive act".

[13] The quotation within the quotation comes from Aristotle (1965: 43).

The statement by Samuel Taylor Coleridge about the secondary imagination that "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still, at all events, it struggles to idealize and to unify" is relevant because the creative translator of poetry must employ the same secondary imagination that Coleridge described: he or she "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate" (1956: 167); the poet-translator strives to idealize and unify. Coleridge's statement about "fancy" is also relevant: "Fancy . . . has no other counters to play with but fixities and definites. The fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space; and blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will which we express by the word *choice*. But equally with the ordinary memory it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association." (1956: 167.) The contrast between the work of the secondary imagination and that of fancy may apply to creative translation as opposed to literal translation.

Coleridge's words about the "untranslatableness" of poetry offer a challenge to creative translation: ". . . In poetry, in which every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that ultimatum which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style, namely its untranslatableness in words of the same language without injury to meaning. Be it observed, however, that I include in the meaning of a word not only its correspondent object, but likewise all the associations which it recalls." (1956: 263.) Although Coleridge refers to the "untranslatableness in words of the same language", Burnshaw uses this quotation to justify his contention that poetry cannot be adequately translated into verse of another language (1964: xiii).

In the third century Longinus made a relevant comment about how we respond to literature: he wrote that it is "just as though we had ourselves produced what we had heard" (1965: 107). The creativity of the audience, the reader, or the critic is a theme that literary theorists have developed. The critic's role became important and led on to the theory of interpretation or hermeneutics. Charles-Augustin

Sainte-Beuve writes: “Criticism is for me a metamorphosis. I try to disappear in the character I am representing” (1977: 104). Oscar Wilde writes that criticism is a form of creativity: it treats “the work of art . . . as a starting-point for a new creation”, and he goes on to state, “For when the work [of criticism] is finished it has, as it were, an independent life of its own, and may deliver a message far other than that which was put into its lips to say.” (1973: 1029.)

The greater importance of the critic or reader and the lessening importance of the author lead on to Barthes’s “death of the author” theme, which, as Susan Bassnett states, is not really “very radical”: after quoting Barthes’s words: “The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture . . .”, Bassnett asks, “Is he really saying anything so very radical, when we look at his essay today? Isn’t it obvious that all texts are a tissue of quotations, for how can anything be truly ‘original’ unless it has been created by someone who has never encountered anyone else’s work?” (1998: 27.) After Barthes, literary theory moved to Reception Aesthetics and to Derrida’s Deconstructionism. These trends also give more status to the role of the creative translator, who needs to be both a perceptive reader and critic before he or she begins to create the translation. The greater awareness of the role of the creative translator in recent times can be attributed to the trends in literary theory that give more attention to the critic and the reader. The emphasis in the twentieth century on the creativity of the audience, the reader, or the critic is an important theme that literary theorists have developed and which can be applied to the practice of creative translation.

Since this study is on Modern English poetic translations, an overview of what twentieth-century English literary critics have written – which is relevant to poetic translation – may be helpful: the following paragraphs consider statements by Richards, Empson, Kermode, Ricks, and Schad, which are considered relevant to the case studies that follow.

I. A. Richards made an important contribution to literary criticism. He emphasizes four aspects of meaning: Sense, Feeling, Tone, and Intention (1970: 181–182). He

stresses the importance of close textual analysis, which is an essential preliminary to any creative poetic translation. Richards states that the process of translation "may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos" (1953: 250). In his typical way, he invents a translation diagram (1953: 252–253), and Edwin Gentzler considers that this approach "of establishing a set of rules which subjugated the text to a limited and unified interpretation and 'complete viewing'" is misguided: "Despite all the education and proper training in the right methodologies, . . . the translated text seems to have a life of its own, responding not to the interpreter's set of rules, but to laws which are unique to the mode of translation itself" (1993: 18).

William Empson was an influential English critic of the twentieth century. His *Seven Types of Ambiguity* uses a method of close textual analysis that can help any poet-translator with the writerly task of reading. His analyses of poems' sounds and the associations of sounds and words, their metrical schemes and rhythm, their stanza forms, "the richness of the deposit of cross-reference and incidental detail" (1961: 46), double meanings, feelings, and, of course, ambiguities revolutionized the way that English poetry was read. Empson makes some interesting comments about the languages and the poetry of other cultures; he is particularly aware of Latin poems and makes relevant remarks about Dryden's translation (1961: 75). Empson's analysis of Dryden's "translation" (more like a paraphrase) of Horace's concise stanza from *Odes*, iii. 29 is generous and perceptive, but there is also an underlying criticism that the "translation" is more of an "expanded . . . imitation" than a translation. It is this kind of appreciation that Empson's words on creative translation give to the study of poet-translators' work, and one is encouraged to see the merits of different kinds of translation even if they do not achieve the synonymity of perfect translations.

In another part of *Seven Types of Ambiguity* Empson shows his awareness of the influence of another language and translation on English poets: "The study of Hebrew . . . and the existence of English Bibles with alternatives in the margin, may have had influence on the capacity of English for ambiguity; . . . the

flowering of poetry at the end of the sixteenth century corresponded with the first thorough permeation of the English language by the translated texts." (1961: 193.)

With *The Structure of Complex Words* (1951) Empson moved, according to Christopher Norris, "from a mode of verbal exegesis . . . to a socialized account of meaning and context" (1993: 125). Norris considers that Empson "develops a line of argument that goes clean against the working assumptions of just about every modern school of literary-critical thought, from the 'old' New Criticism to deconstruction" (1993: 133). Norris summarizes Empson's view in these words: ". . . the critic's main task is that of reconstructing the development of . . . words 'on historical principles', like the OED (Oxford English Dictionary), and not coming up with some abstract theory in the structural-synchronic mode" (1993: 163); and later

> . . . you cannot get any sense of how an author is using some particular 'complex word', or range of such words in context, without *first* learning as much as possible about the relevant *historico*-semantic background, and *second* attempting to fit the various period-senses into a working structure, a 'grammar' of implicit semantic equations by which to understand their argumentative force (1993: 166).

Just after Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* was published in 1930, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren played an important role in emphasizing formalism in the criticism of poetry. Their book, *Understanding Poetry*, first published in 1938 with later editions in 1950, 1960, and 1976, gave new insights into the use of images, moods, tone, metaphor, symbol, theme, metrics, and stanza form in the criticism of poetry. This greater emphasis on the text itself is relevant to the work of the poet-translator and to the criticism of poetic translation. (Despite adverse criticism of New Criticism in recent years, Robinson has high praise for the New Critics and their effect on his work as a translator (1991: 117–118).)

An admirer of William Empson's work was Frank Kermode. His analyses of literature and literary theory in his books and reviews provide useful insights into

the practice of reading poetry, an essential part of the poet-translator's task. In his critical works and reviews he has been perceptive in his reading of poetry, but some of his comments about biblical criticism and translation are perhaps more relevant.

About his work on biblical subjects Kermode says:

> . . . my interest was in biblical criticism which is, after all, older and in some ways more mature than literary criticism. . . . this interest began when I decided that I needed to read the gospels in Greek, which I did, and when I did that I saw immense puzzles, problems of all sorts, of a literary kind – not a religious kind at all. And then I read some of the great tradition of biblical commentary, which is, of course, primarily German, and I was astonished by the achievement of these people, of which I'd been totally ignorant . . .. (2003: 125–126.)

In a review article Kermode shows his interest in translation when he gives new insight into a biblical text:

> What, in the Lord's Prayer, is meant by 'our daily bread'? . . . The Greek word *epiousias*, translated as 'daily', does not mean 'daily'. It is a rare word and the sense is obscure; the most likely learned guess seems to be that it refers to a special bread that will be needed the next day if in the meantime the kingdom should happen to come overnight and the faithful be hungry. . . . The Vulgate – the Catholic Bible – offers the plausible *superstantialis* for *epiousias*. . .. On balance the Vulgate is probably nearer the mark . . . 'give us this day our supersubstantial bread'. . .. (2009: 30.)

On translation, Kermode, in his review of translations of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, refers to both translators as "established poets", O'Donoghue, "a professional medievalist as well", and Armitage, "a Northerner" who "claims the advantage of familiarity with dialect forms that linger in his part of the country" and then Kermode states,

> The first decision the translator must take is whether or not to alliterate . . .. O'Donoghue argues that the formalities of alliteration cannot be imitated in modern English without introducing anachronisms of vocabulary and word order. . . . he decided to abandon the alliterative structure, and declined to allow rhymes . . .. Armitage . . . settles for alliteration: 'to me,

> alliteration is the warp and weft of the poem, without which it is just so many fine threads. In some very elemental way, the story and the sense of the poem is [*sic*] directly located with its sound. The percussive patterning of the words serves to reinforce their meaning.' . . . We have before us two translations that are about as far apart as they could possibly be while each retaining its own fidelity to the original. Both positions are defensible; both allow for the variety of the content and for flexibility in its delivery; above all, both are continually aware that they are handling a rather beautiful object. (2009: 251–253.)

In an interview with Michael Payne, Kermode said about "problems of hermeneutics, . . . the so-called fusion of horizons":

> My view is that nobody will have any true contact with a work of art if it isn't modern; I mean that if it isn't modern then it has to be made so, and it's made so largely by commentary. What keeps things alive, as I've been saying, is what people say about them, and informed commentary is really something which makes works accessible and relevant which otherwise are very, very remote from our cultural set-up." (2003: 127.)

What Kermode says about "informed commentary" can also apply to translation.

Christopher Ricks writes: ". . . in Gower's metamorphosis of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* . . . (his) enterprise is a meta-metamorphosis" (1995: 9). Ricks considers J. A. W. Bennett's use of the words "transformation" and "renderings":

> . . . 'Transformation', a word which is right both for the plasticity within the stories and for the plasticity with which Gower treats Ovid . . . the scarcely less miraculous transformation of poetry into poetry. . . . When Bennett says with much truth that 'his (Gower's) renderings . . . show how much more he was than a mere translator', one might add that it is the congruity of such a word as 'renderings' both to the feats within Gower's poetry and to the feats of Gower's poetry that animates his art . . .. (1995: 9–10.)

Ricks contrasts Gower's transformations with Robert Lowell's "imitations" and Dryden's translations of Ovid. The comments by Ricks on metamorphosis and transformation are relevant to this study.

John Schad refers to "the unbearable heaviness of being a reader":

> . . . however, we are also alerted to the unbearable *lightness* of being a reader, for if we are persuaded – if only for a moment – by Derrida's sense of infinite responsibility, by this ethical version of Freud's conviction that 'everything is related to everything', then we might also be persuaded (or at least infected) by Barthes's sense of infinite textual play, or freedom. As usual, responsibility and freedom are related; as Derrida writes, 'There are ethics [in reading] because there is no rule. . . because I don't know what to do'; reading is weighed down with responsibility because it is so free. Reading's heaviness is also its lightness; responsibility does not stop because the text does not stop. If this is so, if every text is indeed related to every other text, then my interpretive choices are forever haunted by the possibility that they could be otherwise, that they are, in some sense, contingent or arbitrary. (2003: 182.)

What Schad says relates to the practice of translating: the "interpretative choices" of a translator in reading and translating an original "are forever haunted by the possibility that they could be otherwise".

The poet-translator must be a good reader, a good literary critic. The quality of the creative translation will depend on how sensitively the poet-translator has read the original and on how good he or she is at writing the new poem in the target language.

vi

Philosophy and Translation

Literary theory and translation theory have been greatly influenced by philosophy and theology. What Lauren G. Leighton wrote about the Anglo-American world of letters and its attitude to translation is also true about the Anglo-American world of letters and its attitude to philosophers. Anglo-American literary theory has tended to be influenced mainly by its writers or literary critics rather than by its philosophers. Coleridge could be called a philosopher who influenced Anglo-American literary theory before the twentieth century. Since then there has been Christopher Norris, but there has been nothing like the German and French philosophers' influence on their writers and literary theorists. Timothy Clark, when writing about *The Poetics of Singularity: The Counter-Culturist Turn*

(2005), chose Heidegger, Derrida, Blanchot, and Gadamer as the philosophers whose work he discussed.

Translation theory has had close links to philosophy and theology: Aristotle, Jerome, and Luther have had profound influences on translation theory, and, more recently, Schleiermacher, Benjamin, "whose early philosophical interest was theologically inspired" (Arendt (1977: 41)), and Derrida.

Creative translation into modern English poetry can be influenced by philosophy, as well as by translation theorists and literary theorists. Derrida succeeded in breaking down barriers between philosophy and literature, and I attempt to create links between philosophy and theology on the one hand and the practice of creative translation on the other. Foucault used a passage from the poet Baudelaire in discussing Kant, and Derrida used a passage from Mallarmé when discussing Plato.[14]

The theologian considered most appropriate to this research, especially because of his association with Dante's *Commedia*, is Thomas Aquinas. George Steiner has asserted, "The case for translation has its religious, mystical antecedents" (1975: 244), and the case for transforming Aquinas' thought and creating a theory of translation from it will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Linked with the greater role of the critic in literary theory and the importance of inter-cultural study is the writing of the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer writes:

> Understanding itself is not to be thought of so much as an action of subjectivity, but as the entering into an event of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated. This is what must gain validity in hermeneutical theory, which is much too dominated by the ideal of a procedure, a method. (1977: xvi.)

The notion of "an event of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated" can be applied to creative translation. Gadamer offers a relevant

[14] Michel Foucault (1986: 32–50) and Jacques Derrida (1981a: 175).

metaphor, the "fusion of horizons" and a further discussion of *mimesis*, both of which are relevant to this study of creative translation.

In Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method) he explains his "fusion of horizons" ("*Horizontverschmelzung"*):

> . . . the horizon of the present is conceived in constant formation insofar as we must all constantly test our prejudices. The encounter with the past and the understanding of the traditions out of which we have come is not the last factor in such testing. Hence the horizon of the present does not take shape at all without the past. There is just as little a horizon of the present in itself as there are historical horizons which one would have to attain. Rather, understanding is always a process of the fusing of such alleged horizons existing in themselves. . .. In the working of tradition such fusion occurs constantly. For there old and new grow together again and again in living value without the one or the other ever being removed explicitly. (1977: 290.)

If we look at the German synonym for *Horizont*, *Gesichtskreis*, which can be translated "mental range" or literally "circle of sight", and then at the colloquial *"seinen Gesichtskreis erweiten"*, "enlarge the range of one's ideas", perhaps we are coming closer to an understanding of the "fusion of horizons". With reference to the translation of poetry there is the horizon of the past, the original text; there is the horizon of tradition or history that has tried to interpret (translate) the text; there is the horizon of the present, the translator's immediate understanding or prejudices or creative translation; and there is the horizon of the future, the readers of the translation. All these have to be fused into a "mental range" or "circle of sight"; the translator has to enlarge the range of his ideas.

Gadamer refers to the work of the translator:

> . . . The task of the translator . . . must never be to copy what is said, but to place himself in the direction of what is said (i.e. in its meaning) in order to carry over what is to be said into the direction of his own saying. . . . What he has to reproduce is not what is said in exact terms, but rather what the other person wanted to say and said in that he left much unsaid. (1977: xvi.)

Elsewhere, Gadamer writes about "the many-layered problem of translation … the model for the linguisticality of all human behavior in the world":

> From the structure of translation was indicated the general problem of making what is alien our own. . . . in translation one finds the tension and release that structure all understanding and understandability. . .. (1977: 290.)

David Linge, writing on Gadamer, states:

> The concept of understanding as a 'fusion of horizons' provides a more accurate picture of what happens in every transmission of meaning. By revising our conception of the function of the interpreter's present horizons, Gadamer also succeeds in transforming our view of of the nature of the past, which now appears as an inexhaustible *source of possibilities of meaning* rather than a passive object of investigation. (1977: xix.)
>
> Understanding is essentially linguistic, but this statement does not mean – as every form of relativism assumes – that understanding is frozen into one static language in such fashion that translation from one language to another is impossible (1977: xxxi).
>
> . . . the conversation with the text is . . . resumed anew by each succeeding horizon that takes it up, applying it and bringing it to language within the present situation (1977: xxxiii).

Applied to creative translation this means the poet-translator regards the original text, not as "a passive object of investigation" that is "frozen into one static language", but as an "inexhaustible source of possibilities of meaning". The translator of the text can be as creative as the original writer was. Gadamer makes this clear:

> Every time will have to understand a text handed down to it in its own way, for it is subject to the whole of the tradition in which it has a material interest and in which it has to understand itself. The real meaning of the text as it addresses the interpreter does not just depend on the occasional factors which characterize the author and his original public. For it is also always co-determined by the historical situation of the interpreter and thus by the whole of the objective course of history. . .. The meaning of a text surpasses its author not occasionally, but always. Thus understanding is not a reproductive procedure, but rather always also a productive one. (1977: xxv.)

A creative translator does not reproduce; rather he produces a new work.

Another contribution that Gadamer makes to this discussion of creative translation is what Warnke calls “an appropriation of Aristotle’s account of mimesis” (1978: 48). Gadamer applies his image of fusion of horizons to his discussion of representation: a work of art represents reality not as a copy or as a reproduction, but as a fusion of the past, present, and future horizons. As such it cannot be merely a copy because it brings the artist’s or the writer’s perspectives, prejudices, and insights about what he or she is painting or writing about. Understanding of a work of art is “always interpretive and retrospective; it is rooted in both the greater breadth of our experience in comparison to the events we study and the narrowness of our perspective in comparison to future points of view” – Warnke (1978: 56). Gadamer distinguishes between representation of something as it is “absolutely” – Warnke (1978: 57)– and “the appearance of what is there” – (Gadamer (1975: 121) – in the work of art. Gadamer states, “‘Reality’ is defined as what is untransformed and art as the raising up of this reality into its truth” (1977: 101). Gadamer’s appropriation of *mimesis* may be applied to creative translation: the translator does not reproduce the original; he or she raises up the original into a further statement of its truth.

Christopher Norris is a philosopher who has criticised many of the trends in literary theory, especially those of postmodernism. What Norris has written with reference to Derrida about *mimesis* and *aletheia* can be applied to translation. Payne, in discussing Norris's work, refers to "what happens when philosophical texts are read anti-mimetically, as Derrida does in The Double Session" (2004: 80). Norris writes:

> ... it would involve the most scrupulous attention to those moments of stress in the philosophic texts where writing perceptibly exceeds and disturbs the order of *mimesis*, of presence and origins. . . . (1989: 52–53.)

> . . . we need to distinguish the two main concepts of truth (or *mimesis*) that have governed philosophical enquiry. One is the strictly *referential* idea of truth as an adequate matching-up, a correspondence between words and the things they can properly be used to represent. . . . It is this

> correspondence-theory of truth – taken in its least sophisticated form, as a simple *adequation* between words and things – that is chiefly under attack from post-structuralism. But there is another concept of *mimesis*, equally entrenched in Western philosophical tradition, which can always be appealed to in cases where language resists or evades such referential treatment. This is the Platonic doctrine of truth as a form of inward revelation, as a 'writing in the soul' that makes itself visible to the mind in a state of receptive wisdom. . . . This is the concept of truth as *aletheia,* as the moment of epiphany or inward 'unveiling', vouchsafed to the soul through an exercise of reason transcending all forms of sensory perception. (1989: 54–55.)

> . . . Derrida is far more concerned with this second, distinctively Platonic notion of *mimesis* as revealed truth. ... (1989: 55).

Payne comments:

> As Chris Norris proceeds to read this way, he is exploring that subtle, but inescapable and fundamental distinction between truth as mimesis, and truth as *aletheia.* The first, mimesis, is the distinctly referential idea of truth as an adequate matching-up, a correspondence between words and the things they can properly be used to represent. . . . The neglect of this distinction between truth as mimesis and truth as *aletheia* has led to serious problems in teaching and writing about theory. Indeed, it may give rise to a fundamental distinction between postmodernism and postsructuralism." (2003: 81.)

The concept of *aletheia* has relevance to the task of translation: the poet translator needs "*aletheia*, … the moment of epiphany, or inward 'unveiling', vouchsafed to the soul through an exercise of reason transcending all forms of sensory perception" and not just "an adequate matching-up, a correspondence between words and the things they can properly be used to represent". Translation involves more than a correspondence between words in the original and the things they represent in the other language; the translator needs the poetic inspiration, the moment of epiphany, to unveil the full meaning of the original poetic text; this is

part of what I mean by the word "creative" in referring to creative poetic translation.

Jacques Derrida is probably the philosopher who has had most to say directly and with approval about the role of translation. Here, briefly, are two of his statements: “Nothing is more serious than a translation” (2001: 118) and “To refuse translation is to refuse life” (1979a: 89). These are high words of praise from a philosopher who is fully aware of the challenge of translatability and untranslatability: “A text lives on only if it lives on, and it lives *on* only if it is *at once* translatable *and* untranslatable. . . . Totally translatable, it disappears as a text, as writing, as a body of language. Totally untranslatable, even within what is believed to be one language, it dies immediately.” (1979b: 102–103.) Derrida’s practice of deconstruction is useful in the writerly task of reading that faces the translator before he translates.

vii

Poets on Creative Translation

Ezra Pound in 1928 wrote about the translation of poetry and referred to three kinds of poetry: *melopoeia, phanopoeia,* and *logopoeia.* The first refers to the music of the poems; the second to the images of the poem; and the third to the meaning and the “play” of the word in the context of the original poem. Pound considered that the first was almost impossible to translate, whereas the second, the images, could be translated, and the third, although “you cannot translate it ‘locally’, . . . having determined the original author’s state of mind, you may or may not be able to find a derivative or an equivalent. . .” (1937: 170–171). Gentzler writes:

> In order to understand the *logopoeia* of a text, the translator must understand the time, place and ideological restrictions of the text being translated. Pound asks translators to allow themselves to be subjected by the mood, atmosphere, and thought processes of the text in time. Simultaneously, the mood and sensibility in time and place is to be transported to the present culture for the translation to become a contemporary text. The only way for this to happen without falling into

> ‘translatorese’ is to create new connections in the present, to draw attention to the translator as a living and creating subject.” (1993: 25–26.)

James Holmes gives strategies: “mimetic form”, “analogical form”, “content-derivative” or “organic form”, and “deviant or extraneous form”. In using mimetic form the translator attempts to keep the same form as that of the original poem. But Holmes warns: “. . . the mimetic form tends to come to the fore among translators in a period when genre concepts are weak, literary norms are being called into question and the target culture as a whole stands open to outside impulses . . .” (1988: 23–33). In using analogical form the translator first considers what the purpose of the original form is and then chooses an analogous form, but not the same form, from the language into which he is translating the poem. The organic form strategy is adopted when a translator concentrates on the organic meaning or content of the poem and chooses his or her own form. And the last strategy is to deviate from both the form and content and to choose a form extraneous to both the form and content of the original. Bassnett states that Holmes was of the opinion that the organic strategy was the one most used in the twentieth century (1998: 63).

Octavio Paz, in a short piece on translating poetry (1992: 152–162.), writes:

> The poet, immersed in the movement of language, in constant verbal preoccupation, chooses a few words – or is chosen by them. As he combines them, he constructs his poem: a verbal object made of irreplaceable and immovable characters. The translator’s starting point is not the language in movement that provides the poet’s raw material, but the fixed language of the poem. A language congealed, yet living. His procedure is the inverse of the poet’s: he is not constructing an unalterable text from mobile characters; instead he is dismantling the elements of the text, freeing the signs into circulation, then returning them to language.

Susan Bassnett responds to this paragraph:

> The poet plays with language and comes to create a poem by fixing language in such a way that it cannot be altered. But the translator has a completely different task, that involves a different kind of play. The translator starts with the language

> that the poet has fixed, and then has to set about dismantling it and reassembling the parts in another language altogether. Paz argues that this process of freeing the signs into circulation parallels the original creative process invertedly. The task of the translator is to compose an analogous text in another language, and the translator is therefore not firstly a writer and then a reader, but firstly a reader who becomes a writer. What happens, says Paz, is that the original poem comes to exist inside another poem: 'less a copy than a transmutation'. This is a very helpful way of looking at the translation process, a very liberating way. It is, in terms of theory, related to Walter Benjamin's idea of the translation providing the life-hereafter of a text, enabling it to survive and sometimes even resurrecting it. It is a liberationist view of translating, because it never enters into the vexed question of whether a translation is or is not an inferior copy of an original. The task of the translator is simply a different kind of writerly task, and it follows on from the primary task of reading." (1998: 66.)

The "writerly task" of reading the original text sensitively and recreating it into a poem in the other language is the task of the creative translator of poetry.

Bassnett considers that original writers should also have the qualities that have been mentioned as those specific to a poet-translator: "We can trace literary echoes in the works of all writers. In the same way, no two translations are going to be alike, as we all know, because fragments of our individualistic readings will drift through our reading and our translating. Difference is built into the translation process, both on the levels of the readerly and the writerly." (1998: 27.) The readerly and writerly tasks of poets and poet translators could, perhaps, be the same.

Rosanna Warren (1989) uses the voices of well-known poets, critics of poetry, and poet-translators to tell their experiences of poetic translations. Perhaps the field of practising poet-translators is the best place for learning about poetic translations – from practice rather than theory.

Seamus Heaney refers to literary translation as having to do "with form feeling as much as with sense giving, and unless the practitioner has the almost muscular sensation that rewards successful original composition, it is unlikely that the

results of the text-labor will have life of their own" (1989: 20). The "almost muscular sensation that rewards original composition" is one of the qualities that the poet-translator must have, and without it the task of poetic translation will be a sterile exercise.

Christopher Middleton writes: ". . . the work of translation, as a kind of sensitive passion, unfolds through two successive moments of *Einfühlung*." The first moment is when ". . . you enter into a relationship with the writer as a presence which pervades the original text – a presence, that is, rather than a personality". The second is when ". . . the writer as a presence is released into the place in which you worked – he steps out into it, that presence". Middleton goes on to say that the act of translation ". . . restores to presence the writer and to that writer's signs a glow of immediacy" and that ". . . the translation is not a copy in another idiom but a creative transcription which has ensued upon a deep assimilation of the so-called 'spirit' of the original text." (1989: 23–24.) Middleton's "sensitive passion", *Einfühlung,* "glow of immediacy", and the "'spirit' of the original text" are relevant terms in the discussion of the practice of creative poetic translation, which is "not a copy in another idiom but a creative transcription".

Middleton continues: "It seems to me that quarrels about equivalence in theory of translation, not to mention arguments about possible varieties of literary translation, are inclined to be stymied by a failure to pass from notions of imitation to notions of mime." Whereas "imitation copies appearances" and "reproduces the self-evident, it takes a cast of the statue, it tries to replicate", mime "formalizes a profound – and rebellious – need of the central nervous system, a need of which imitation is no more than a passing shadow". With mime there is "a need to become one with that which is not-self, that which is utterly beyond what self is or was". When he continues, "Mime actualizes a desire for union with the 'other.' It embodies more than contact with the other, more than inclination toward it", he makes an important contribution to how one can respond to what translation should achieve. Middleton returns to the difference between translation as "imitation" and translation as "mime": ". . . with imitation

you recognize the original through its representation and judge whether the imitation is good or poor by measuring it against the original. The original is what you are reminded of. With mime, certain traces of the original may be implied in the act, but the act itself is originative. If the act is powerfully originative, the traces may be reduced to a mere ghostly scaffolding." (1989: 25–26.) The emphasis on the "powerfully originative" task that the creative poetic translation should be is relevant to the study of the process of poetic translation. A superficial reading of what Middleton writes about the translation not being judged or measured "against the original" (1989: 25) may suggest that the method to be used in the case studies is inappropriate, but his earlier statement that "the translation is not a copy in another idiom but a creative transcription which has ensued upon a deep assimilation of the so-called 'spirit' of the original text" suggests that a critic of a translation has to be very mindful of the original text. Middleton ends: "The spirit a translator hopes to have voiced is never more than one that has been there and probably got away. It is fugitive, it is afterward." (1989: 28–29.)

Besides or beside Middleton's words about translation as mime, one could consider Mallarmé's prose poem "Mimique", which has been brought alive by Derrida's deconstruction of the poem. It has a great deal to say about the role of mime in literature or in translation.

> Le silence, seul luxe après les rimes, un orchestre ne faisant avec son or, ses frôlements de pensée et de soir, qu'en détailler la signification à l'égal d'une ode tue et que c'est au poëte, suscité par un défi, de traduire ! le silence aux après-midi de musique ; je le trouve, avec contentement, aussi, devant la réapparition toujours inédite de Pierrot ou du poignant et élégant mime Paul Margueritte.
>
> Ainsi ce PIERROT ASSASSIN DE SA FEMME composé et rédigé par lui-même, soliloque muet que, tout du long à son âme tient et du visage et des gestes le fantôme blanc comme une page pas encore écrite. Un tourbillon de raisons naïves ou neuves émane, qu'il plairait de saisir avec sûreté : l'esthétique du genre situé plus près de principes qu'aucun ! rien en cette région du caprice ne contrariant l'instinct simplificateur direct… Voici - << La scène n'illustre que l'idée, pas une action

> effective, dans un hymen (d'où procède le Rêve,) vicieux mais sacré, entre le désir et l'accomplissement, la perpétration et son souvenir : ici devançant, là remémorant, au future, au passé, *sous une apparence fausse de présent.* Tel opère le Mime, dont le jeu se borne à une allusion perpétuelle sans briser la glace : il installe, ainsi, un milieu, pur, de fiction. >> Moins qu'un millier de lignes, le rôle, qui le lit, tout de suite comprend les règles comme placé devant un tréteau, leur dépositaire humble. Surprise, accompagnant l'artifice d'une notation de sentiments par phrases point proférées – que, dans le seul cas, peutêtre, avec authenticité, entre les feuillets et le regard règne un silence encore, condition et délice de la lecture. (Mallarmé (1957: 182).)

(Silence, sole luxury after rhymes, an orchestra only marking with its gold, its brushes with thought and dusk, the detail of its signification on a par with a stilled ode and which it is up to the poet, roused by a dare, to translate! The silence of an afternoon of music; I find it, with contentment, also before the ever original reappearance of Pierrot or of the poignant and elegant mime Paul Margueritte.

Such is this PIERROT MURDERER OF HIS WIFE composed and set down by himself, a mute soliloquy that the phantom, white as yet unwritten page, holds in both face and gesture at full length to his soul. A whirlwind of naïve or new reasons emanates, which it would be pleasing to seize upon with security: the esthetics of the genre situated closer to principles than any! (no)thing in this region of caprice foiling the direct simplifying instinct. . . This – "The scene illustrates but the idea, not any actual action, in a hymen (out of which flows Dream), tainted with vice yet sacred, between desire and fulfillment, perpetration and remembrance: here anticipating, there recalling, in the future, in the past, *under the false appearance of a present.* That is how the Mime operates, whose act is confined to a perpetual allusion without breaking the ice or the mirror: he thus sets up a medium, a pure medium, of fiction." Less than a thousand lines, the role, the one that reads, will instantly comprehend the rules as if placed before the stageboards, their humble depository. Surprise, accompanying the artifice of a notation of sentiments by unproffered sentences – that, in the sole case, perhaps, with authenticity, between the sheets and the eye there reigns a silence still, the condition and delight of reading.

(Translation by Barbara Johnson in Derrida (1981a: 175).)

Jacques Derrida describes this prose poem as "a sort of handbook of literature" (1981a: 223). It brings together the silence, the performance, and the responsiveness of creativity, which "c'est au poëte, suscité par un défi, de traduire!" ("it is up to the poet, roused by a dare, to translate!"). Just as Mallarmé is roused by a dare to translate the silence and "la réapparition toujours inédite" ("the ever original reappearance") of Pierrot or of the Mime, so the translator is also roused by a dare, by "Un tourbillon de raisons naïves ou neuves …, qu'il plairait de saisir avec sûreté ("A whirlwind of naïve or new reasons…, which it

would be pleasing to seize upon with security"). Mallarmé's words, "entre le désir et l'accomplissement, la perpétration et son souvenir : ici devançant, là remémorant, au future, au passé, *sous une apparence fausse de present"* ("between desire and fulfillment, perpetration and remembrance: here anticipating, there recalling, in the future, in the past, *under the false appearance of a present*") are also relevant to the practice of translation, for the translator experiences, like the Mime, the state of "betweenness" in his or her task.

In order to fuse the horizons of past and present, a poem by Mark Doty, a living poet from the United States, may be relevant:

Apparition (Favourite Poem)

The old words are dying,
everyone forgets them,
pages falling into sleep and dust,

dust and sleep, burning so slowly
you wouldn't even know there's a fire.
Or that's what I think half the time.

Then, at the bookstore, a young man reciting,
slight for fourteen, blond, without irony
but not self-important either;

his loping East Texas vowels threaten
to escape the fence of pentameter,
his voice seems to have just arrived here,

but the old cadence inhabits anyway.
He makes the poem his own
even as he becomes a vessel

for its reluctance to disappear.
All right, maybe they perish,
but the boy has the look of someone

repeating a crucial instruction
that must be delivered word for word,
as he has learnt it:

My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings,
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair.

(Doty (2008a: 7).)

The title "Apparition (Favourite Poem)" suggests that the poet is surprised by the reappearance of a favourite poem from the long-dead past. The first two stanzas refer to the death of the "old words", "pages falling into sleep and dust" that are "burning so slowly / you wouldn't even know there's a fire". Doty comments, "The book is haunted by a suite of 'apparitions', . . . poets of the past intruding into the present moment, often in unexpected ways; Shelley, Whitman, Berryman, Homer, . . . all show up here" (2008b: 5). The apparitions of the past are in the form of poetry – "everyone forgets them" – "Or that's what I think half the time." Doty is not writing directly of translation, but he is recreating from the past. Doty's poem has captured the "dying", the "falling into sleep and dust, // dust and sleep", the almost extinguished "fire" of the original, yet a comparatively insignificant "young man" has, despite all obstacles, become "a vessel // for its reluctance to disappear" and has recreated its power in a new way. Doty, in his poem, has played his part too in this process. The poem states the importance of the creative spirit in recreating the original, despite the potential despair of the re-creator.

viii
Fusion of Cultural Horizons through Translation

A few examples from a broader context than the Greek, Latin, and Italian examples to be used in the case studies may help to emphasize the fusion of horizons that translation may accomplish.

The first example is from a South African translator. The practice of translation is discussed by Michiel Heyns:

> A close comparison of the Afrikaans text with this translation will reveal many minor deviations from the original. . . . in a text as multifarious and unconventional as this, strict accuracy could at times be sacrificed to considerations of sound, rhythm, syntax and general readability, while yet attempting to preserve something of the sense of strangeness of the original. As Christopher Prendergast says in his preface to the recent translation of *À la recherche du temps perdu*: 'How to manage Proust's extraordinary syntactic structures in English is a very difficult issue. They are often strange even to French ears, and

> there may well be a respectable argument to the effect that oddly unEnglish shapes are sometimes the best way to preserve their estranging force.' (2011: 452–453.)

These are some of the issues to be discussed in the case studies: sound, rhythm, syntax, and general readability, the strangeness of the original, and preserving the original's estranging force. The creative translation of a novel presents the translator with some of the problems that a poet-translator has to face, but there are more specific challenges that a poet-translator faces.

Suko Watanabe raises some interesting points about translation:

> . . . is it really possible to translate Tagore's poems, especially the one like the religious poems of *Gitanjali*? . . . I read this collection out of love and published a few translations on experimental basis and this became the starting point and finally it took the shape of this book. First of all *Gitanjali* should be recited sung. I had to choose the literally (*sic*) style to see that it can be sung even in Japanese, as it is in the original poem, and in order to do so, I tried my best to retain the shape of the original poem, keeping the length of each line almost the same as the original one and, of course, the number of lines. I wonder which style will correspond to the Japanese language, if one is talking about a language, which is classical, and at the same time well understood by the common people? (2011: 286.)

Watanabe mentions his attempt to keep "the character of the original poem intact" and the printing of his translation "positioning the starting of each line considering the effect of the impression towards the vision/look of his poem." (Ibid.) Although this is a poor translation into English of the original Japanese and suggests that Watanabe is a rather immature poet-translator, there are interesting points for discussion: the question of religious poetry and how it is to be translated for a different religious culture; the question of "perfect foreign language translation"; reading the original "out of love"; the point about the original poem being "recited, sung"; "the shape of the original poem, keeping the length of each line almost the same as the original and . . . the number of lines"; "which style will correspond to . . . a language which is classical and at the same time well understood by the common people"; "keeping the original poem intact";

the printing "positioning the starting of each line considering the effect of the impression towards the vision/look of (the) poem". The question of religious poetry and how it is to be translated for a different religious culture is relevant : one wonders how Dante's *Commedia* can be effectively translated for a non-Christian culture, when a modern-day Christian finds some of Dante's ideas difficult to understand. Or does the poetic force of the original overcome such difficulty?

In 1937 when William Butler Yeats translated *The Ten Principal Upanishads* into English with Shree Purohit Swāmi, he wrote in his Preface:

> Shree Purohit Swāmi has asked me to introduce what is twice so much his as mine, for he knows Sanskrit and English, I but English. . . .
>
> For some forty years my friend George Russell (A.E.) has quoted me passages from some Upanishad. . .. More than once I asked him the name of some translator and even bought the book, but the most eminent scholars left me incredulous. Could latinised words, hyphenated words; could polyglot phrases, sedentary distortions of unnatural English: - 'However many Gods in Thee, All-Knower, adversely slay desires of a person' – could muddles, muddied by 'Lo! Verily' and 'Forsooth', represent what grass farmers sang thousands of years ago, what their descendants sing today? So when I met Shree Purohit Swāmi I proposed that we should . . . make a translation that would read as though the original had been written in common English: 'To write well,' said Aristotle, 'express yourself like the common people, but think like a wise man'. . .. I have escaped that polyglot, hyphenated, latinised, muddied muddle of distortion that froze belief. Can we believe or disbelieve until we have put our thought into a language wherein we are accustomed to express love and hate and all the shades between? . . .
>
> . . . Shree Purohit Swāmi and I offer to some young man seeking, like Shakespeare, Dante, Milton, vast sentiments and generalizations, the oldest philosophical compositions of the world, compositions, not writings, for they were sung long before they were written down. (1971: 7–8, 10–11.)

Yeats here raises relevant points: the collaboration of translators – one who knows both languages, the other who does not, but who is a poet; the inability of eminent scholars to translate in common English; the "polyglot, hyphenated, latinised,

muddied muddle of distortion that froze belief"; "Can we believe or disbelieve until we have put our thought into a language wherein we are accustomed to express love and hate and all the shades between?" Although he does not say so in these words, is Yeats not implying that a good poetic translation of a religious poem will overcome the problems of religious belief of a person from another culture when he reads a foreign religious poem?

In 1979 Peter Avery, a Reader in Persian at King's College, Cambridge, and John Heath-Stubbs, a poet and critic, published their translation of *The Ruba'iyat of Omar Khayyam*. They state that their intention is "to give as literal an English version of the Persian originals as readability and intelligibility permit" and "to try and convey the baldness of the originals". They consider that past translations "often tended to blur and soften the hard directness of the Persian, allowing a sentimentality quite absent from the original to intrude". Referring to Edward Fitzgerald's translation, they write,

> . . . His work is more in the nature of a fantasia than a translation. It is often very free and occasionally not precisely accurate. But Fitzgerald's poetic intuition guided him aright in divining the essentially skeptical and unorthodox nature of the Persian poet's thought. He gave to the ruba'is a Victorian richness and lushness of sentiment which was alien to them, but he was also a champion of such Augustan poets as Dryden and Crabbe at a period when their merits were often under-valued. His study of them gave to his work on Persian originals a concision and wit which were entirely appropriate, and which his imitators have completely failed to emulate.

Then they return to their translation in which "the intervention of the diction and convention of English verse has been eschewed, because such an intervention is felt to widen the distance between the English reader and the content and spirit of the original Persian text by interposing an extraneous poetical mode". They justify this by saying,

> . . . Experience shows that where the original is of a high order and faithfully translated into plain English, the quality of the Persian poem raises the English prose above the level of the merely prosaic. Conversely, when the original is not of the best, and the selections used offer a variety of standards, faithful

> rendering into English reveals the weakness of the Persian poem. Differences in quality would be less apparent in translations put into the mould of English verse. (1979: 32.)

These comments show that "the intervention of the diction and convention of English verse" may be detrimental to "the content and spirit of the original . . . by interposing an extraneous poetical mode"; the analysis of the poetic translations in the case studies will show that this is often true and that the prose translations have often been better than the verse ones.

Ezra Pound, when translating or transforming "The Seafarer", decided to omit all religious references. Whether he was influenced by "older, now disproven theories"[15] that the religious references were later additions by "a Christian reviser"[16] or whether he deliberately turned the poem into something secular, his translation is, as Raffel stated, "magnificent". Raffel comments: "Do not . . . go to Ezra Pound's translation for an accurate portrayal of the Old English soul or of the Old English mind. The heart probably beats harder in his translation." In his next paragraph Raffel concludes that Pound's translation was "responsible" and that he (Raffel) has "not been discussing error . . . talking solely about translation choices, and about the balancing between and among competing claims which underlies and dictates those choices." (1988: 165.) It would appear that Pound deliberately chose to transform the cultural and religious emphasis of the original to a secular emphasis more closely aligned to his world view.

In this part we have considered comments on translations of works from cultures different from the Greek, Latin, and Italian; through them, the concept of fusion of horizons and the intercultural aspects of translation have been emphasized.

ix

Conclusion: Translation or Transformation?

This chapter has attempted to gather together views about or relevant to translation from poets, translators, translation theorists, and literary critics so that,

[15] Burton Raffel (1988: 161).
[16] I. L. Gordon (ed.): *The Seafarer* (London: Methuen, 1960) as quoted by Burton Raffel (1988: 161).

where appropriate, they may contribute to the case studies in the following chapters. A crucial question that is particularly relevant to the tradition of English poetic translation is whether translation or transformation is the more appropriate approach.

Modern translation studies have moved away from "the concept of a 'correct' translation": Edwin Gentzler, writing about Gideon Toury's *In Search of a Theory of Translation*, states:

> Toury successfully pushes the concept of a theory of translation beyond the margins of a model restricted to faithfulness to the original, or of single, unified relationships between the source and target texts. Translation becomes a relative term, dependent upon the forces of history and the semiotic web called culture. The role of translation theory is correspondingly altered, ceasing its search for a system from which to judge the product and now focusing on the development of a model to help explain the process which determines the final version. (1993: 129.)

Later Gentzler writes, "'Right' and 'wrong' have ceased to be productive theoretical terms for Translation Studies scholars as well as deconstructionists" (1993: 177).

This is a far cry from the views of literary critics such as I. A. Richards' "perfect understanding" (1970: 332)). Nevertheless, Gentzler has to admit, "In the field of the science of Translation, unusual approaches are being suggested; subjective factors are being incorporated into the objective science, including such unscientific rationale as 'it sounds better' as a possible category. . ." (1993: 182). It is a difficult task for the literary or the translation critic to remain objective or not to evaluate. Both Susan Bassnett and James Holmes, respected translation critics, use "evaluative standards": about Bassnett and Holmes, Gentzler states:

> Whereas Bassnett used Translation Studies to support her own translation strategy, one which implicitly retains evaluative standards based upon the prevailing norms characteristic of modernism, James Holmes proceeded in a different fashion, one less functionally and more 'materially' oriented. He wanted to reveal first the process of translation in order to understand why certain decisions were made, before judging the result as

> good/bad, true/untrue, understood/misunderstood. (1993: 100–101.)

The Descriptive Translation Studies (often referred to as the DTS) approach introduced by James S. Holmes has changed the focus of translation studies to a more practical and less prescriptive approach. Its three focuses – (1) product-oriented DTS, "that area of research which describes existing translations . . . text-focused translation description" or "comparative translation description", (2) function-oriented DTS, "a study of contexts rather than texts", the function of translations "in the recipient socio-cultural situation", and (3) process-oriented DTS that "concerns itself with the process or act of translation" (2005: 71–72) – are all relevant to the case studies that follow.

It is not the aim of the case studies to adopt any one abstract translation theory; it is rather, to use Hermans' words, to practise "a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies" (1985:10–11). It will use the accepted Translation Studies practice of case studies that will focus on the original text and on a number of translations of that text into modern English poetic translations. The case studies will attempt to evaluate the translations in the continuing English literary tradition of translation as creative works in their own right. Gentzler states that Douglas Robinson argues that "the literary translator embodies an integration of feeling and thought, of intuition and systematization" and "allows for the translator to intervene, subvert, divert, even entertain, emphasizing the creative aspect of literary translation" (1993: 182)[17]. It is the "creative aspect of literary translation" on which the case studies will focus, although Robinson's notion of creativity will be contested because it allows too much latitude.

One usually associates the "creative aspect" with original writing, but there is a sense in which the "creative aspect" works the other way – from translation to original writing. Stephen Burt makes the point about Paul Celan and Anne Carson:

[17] Gentzler is referring to Douglas Robinson: *The Translator's Turn* (1991).

> Carson wrote in *Economy of the Unlost* that Paul Celan 'uses language *as if he were always translating*': we could say the same thing about her. Her translations usually sound like the rest of her poems, obtrusively contemporary but studiedly idiosyncratic, plainly weird (they may reflect their weird originals). You could also say that her poems sound like Carsonian translations, swiveling between the credible replication of complex syntactic patterns and the sound of conversation today. . .. (2011:19.)

Willis Barnstone has a different view:

> . . . many of the better-known translator poets tend to impose their own style so thoroughly on the translation that all poems in translation, whoever the original poet, resemble poems by the translator. The poet translator should allow the original poet to show through. He or she should remain in service to the first creator and convert us to an appreciation of the qualities of that poet. Let the translator write his or her own poems at some other time. W. S. Merwin and Robert Bly tend to make all their poems in translation resemble poems by W. S. Merwin and Robert Bly. (1984: 50.)

Again, is it translation or transformation? In Physics and Mathematics the concept "translation" refers to a movement of a body in which every part moves without change. In Mathematics and Logic the concept "transformation" is the process which allows a figure or an idea to be changed into another one that has similarity but is not identical. The concept "transmutation" is also used by Octavio Paz when referring to poetic translation and by Roman Jakobson, as mentioned in my Introduction[18]; in Chemistry this refers to the changing of an element into a different one. All these terms have relevance to translation practice**.** As Steiner writes: "There is between 'translation proper' and 'transmutation' a vast terrain of 'partial transformation'" (1975: 415). Another term used in describing poetic translation is "metamorphosis" used by Tomlinson[19] and Ricks[20]; in Zoology this concept "metamorphosis" refers to a movement from an immature to a more mature form and in general it refers to a clear change in form, even into another

[18] See Introduction, p. xi.
[19] Tomlinson's use of "metamorphosis" may be found in his book *Metamorphoses: Poetry and Translation* (2003).
[20] See p. 22 of this Chapter.

being. Whether poetic translation is "translation proper" or "transformation" or "transmutation" or "metamorphosis" will be discussed in the following chapters.

Derrida writes: ". . . for the notion of translation we would have to substitute a notion of *transformation*: a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another." He continues, "We will never have, and in fact have never had, to do with some 'transport' of pure signifieds from one language to another, or within one and the same language, that the signifying instrument would leave virgin and untouched" (1981a: 20). Gentzler approves of Derrida's stance and states, "By transgressing the limits of the target language, by transforming original texts in the source language, the translator extends, enlarges, or makes languages grow" (1993: 165).

Despite this belief that "regulated transformation" is a better substitute for what is called translation, Steiner's concept of the "'perfect' act of translation" as "one of total synonymity" (1975: 407) will be considered as offering another challenge in the process of translation.

The case studies will analyse, first, the original poem or extract in conjunction with others' textual criticism of the original and will try to reveal the characteristics of the original from literary, historical, linguistic, and creative perspectives. Gentzler writes: "The demands on the translator are enormous; they include competence as literary critic, historical scholar, linguistic technician, and creative artist" (1993: 89). The demands on the translation critic are much the same. The case studies will analyse the attempts of modern English poet-translators to translate the original into creative poetry, bearing in mind what Gentzler writes: ". . . translations are subjected to at least two semiotic systems (source and target languages), but are nevertheless capable of changing those very structures" (1993: 193). As he admits, ". . . something is changing now. Translation Studies seems to focus not solely on the source text, nor on the target text, but look instead at how different discourses and semiotic practices are mediated through translation" (1993: 191). The approach in the next four chapters will be what Armin Paul Frank calls "transfer-oriented" (1990: 54) rather than

target-oriented. Through the study of the original text and others' translations of that text, a new translation of the text will, from time to time, be attempted.

Chapter Two

On Translating Homer's *Odyssey*

i

Some Characteristics of Homer's Poetry

Charles Tomlinson writes, "I have sometimes dreamed of being asked 'What is the *greatest* English poem of the eighteenth century?' and of replying, 'Homer's *Iliad* in the translation of Alexander Pope'" (1989: 258). Matthew Arnold was not as complimentary about Pope's translation. He stated categorically: "I consider that when Bentley said of Pope's translation, 'It was a pretty poem, but must not be called Homer,' the work, in spite of all its power and attractiveness, was judged" (1905: 36).

In his *On Translating Homer* Matthew Arnold writes that, in translating Homer, the translator has to choose "the ten-syllable couplet, blank verse," (1905: 96) or ". . . the metre which seems to me to give the translator the best chance of preserving the general effect of Homer, – . . . the hexameter" and he comments,

> I know all that is said against the use of hexameters in English poetry; but it comes only to this, that among us, they have not yet been used on any considerable scale with success . . .. Applied to Homer, this metre affords to the translator the immense support of keeping him more nearly than any other metre to Homer's movement; and, since a poet's movement makes so large a part of his general effect, and to reproduce this general effect is at once the translator's indispensable business and so difficult for him, it is a great thing to have this part of your model's general effect already given you in your metre, instead of having to get to it entirely for yourself."
>
> (1905: 102-103.)

What are some of the other considerations in translating Homer? Stanley Burnshaw considers it is important to publish "Bilingual editions" (1964: xi), in which the original is printed alongside the translation. Because Homer's poems are so long, this has not been the practice. This is unfortunate because any serious scholar or critic of translation should be able to refer easily to the original as well as to the translation. In reading translations of Homer, it is difficult for the reader

to find the original lines that are being translated. Lattimore (1991) keeps close to the line numbers of the original, but Fagles (1996) and Fitzgerald (2007) do not. Robert Fitzgerald writes about his translation of *The Odyssey*: "There are two sets of line numbers throughout this book. Those in the margins refer to the English text; those at the top of the page refer to the Greek text." (2007: 463.) There is little correlation between the lines of the original and the lines of Fitzgerald's translation. With Robert Fagles' translation the line numbers of the original are given at the top of each page, but again there is little correlation. The reason is that free verse (or prose) is the most-used form for the translation of Homer.

Technical characteristics of Homer's poetry are the "formulaic element"[1] (the repeated use of lines or words), the use of alliteration and assonance, the extended similes, and the dactylic hexameter. More important, however, are the underlying themes of *The Odyssey*: these are emphasized by the repetition of crucial words – proper names and their equivalent nouns, adjectives, and verbs – in order to underline the themes of the poem. The modern poet-translator needs to understand the themes Homer underlines in this way and to try to reproduce the translated words to bring out the same themes in the modern English translation.

ii

The Name of Pain

George E. Dimock, Jr refers to ll. 395–412 in the nineteenth book of Homer's *Odyssey* in which Odysseus is given his name by Autolycus. Lines 407–409 are translated by Dimock as "I have odysseused many in my time, up and down the wide world, men and women both; therefore let his name be Odysseus" (1962: 106). Dimock writes: "'To odysseus' (*odyssasthai* in Greek) is usually said to mean 'be wroth against,' 'hate,' and to be connected with Latin *odisse*. Historically speaking, this may be true. For the *Odyssey*'s poetical purposes, however, the verb denotes a more general feeling of hostility, which Homer is at pains to define." (1962: 106.) Dimock comes to the conclusion that ". . . in the *Odyssey odyssasthai* means essentially 'to cause pain (*odynē*), and to be willing to

[1] Bernard Knox in his "Introduction to Homer" in Homer (1996: 17).

do so'" (1962: 107). He states, "One must odysseus and be odysseused. . ." (1962: 111). Elsewhere, Dimock translates the name Odysseus as Trouble: "'So let his name be Trouble' (*to d' Odysseus onom' estin epōnymon*), Autolycus will say in the nineteenth book" (1962: 116). Dimock discusses "three modes of pain: first, pain administered. . .. Second, . . . the pain of the resisted impulse. . .. Third, . . . to introduce the idea of trouble to those who, like the Phaeacians, are not sufficiently aware of it. In establishing his identity, Odysseus must use these three modes of pain." (1962: 117–118.)

Dimock's discussion of the name of Odysseus calls us not only to re-translate the names Odysseus and Odyssey, but also to re-interpret the whole of Homer's *Odyssey*. The usual English interpretation of the word "odyssey" is a long, adventurous journey. Our traditional interpretation of the word (and, in fact, of Homer's *Odyssey* as a whole) overlooks the essential meaning of the word (and of the poem) because it has not included the core meaning of pain or trouble, both the necessary infliction of pain on others and the necessary bearing of pain oneself.

How have the modern poet-translators dealt with the problem of translating the name of Odysseus, the name of the poem, and the uses of the verb *odyssasthai* or similar words in the poem?

The verb ὀδύσσομαι is used often in *The Odyssey*.[2] In l. 62 (Book 1) Athene asks, "τί νύ οἱ τόσον ὠδύσαο, Ζεῦ;" ("Why do you trouble him (cause him pain) so much, Zeus?") Richard Lattimore translates this as "Why, Zeus, are you so harsh with him?" (1991: 28), Fagles as "Why, Zeus, why so dead set against Odysseus?" (1996: 79), and Robert Fitzgerald as "O Zeus, what do you hold against him now?" (2007: 3).

In ll. 339–340 (Book 5), Ino asks,

[2] The Greek texts used in Chapter 2 are that used by Stanford (1961) for Books I–XII and that used by Munro (1901) for Books XIII–XXIV.

Κάμμορε, τίπτε τοι ὧδε Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων
ὠδύσατ᾽ ἐκπάγλως, ὅτι τοι κακὰ πολλὰ φυτεύει;

(Literally: "Ill-fated one, why in truth does Poseidon the earthshaker so exceedingly/ trouble you (cause you pain) terribly, that he plants many evils for you?")

Lattimore: Poor man, why is Poseidon the shaker of the earth so bitterly
cankered against you, to give you such a harvest of evils? (1991: 97.)
Fagles: . . . Ah poor man,
why is the god of earthquakes so dead set against you?
strewing your way with such a crop of troubles. . . (1996: 163).
Fitzgerald: O forlorn man, I wonder
why the Earthshaker, Lord Poseidon, holds
this fearful grudge – father of all your woes. (2007: 90.)

In l. 415 (Book 9), two words fairly similar are used, ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι, to refer to the Cyclops who is in pain like the pain of childbirth when Odysseus has inflicted the pain. Lattimore translates the two words: "groaning aloud and in the pain of his agony" (1991: 148), Fagles: "groaning, racked with agony" (1996: 224), and Fitzgerald: "wheezing as the pain came on him" (2007: 157).

The most important use of the word ὀδυσσάμενος is the one where it is directly linked with the name Odysseus: Autolycus, Odysseus' grandfather, is speaking (Book 19, ll. 407–409):

πολλοῖσιν γὰρ ἔγωγε ὀδυσσάμενος τόδ᾽ ἱκάνω,
ἀνδράσιν ἠδὲ γυναιξὶν ἀνὰ χθόνα πουλυβότειραν·
τῷ δ᾽ Ὀδυσεὺς ὄνομ᾽ ἔστω ἐπώνυμον.

Lattimore: . . . since I have come to this place distasteful to many, women
and men alike on the prospering earth, so let him be given
the name Odysseus, that is distasteful. (1991: 292.)
Fagles: Just as I
have come from afar, creating pain for many –
men and women across the good green earth –
so let his name be Odysseus . . .
the Son of Pain, a name he'll earn in full. (1996: 403.)
Fitzgerald: Well you know, my hand
has been against the world of men and women;
odium and distrust I've won. Odysseus
should be his given name. (2007: 366.)

Lattimore and Fagles attempt to repeat the meaning of ὀδυσσάμενος and Ὀδυσευς: Lattimore by the repetition of the word "distasteful" and Fagles by the repetition of "pain". Fitzgerald, in his translation, does not seem to be aware of the play on the words. (E.V. Rieu translates these lines: "In the course of my lifetime I have made many enemies of many a man and woman up and down the world. So let this child be called Odysseus, 'the victim of enmity'." (1948: 308.) Like Lattimore and Fagles, he tries to capture the significance of the two words by repeating the meaning of "enemies" and "enmity".) But none has achieved what Dimock's essay has in bringing out the significance of the words in the original. This gives credence to Stanley Burnshaw's contention that ". . . the only way one could experience the poetry of a language one did not command was by learning to hear and pronounce (if only approximately) the sounds of the originals and 'simultaneously' reading literal translations" (1964: xi).

Dimock, as stated earlier, suggests this as a translation of ll. 407–409 (Book 19): "I have odysseused many in my time, up and down the wide world, men and women alike, therefore let his name be Odysseus" (1962: 106). Although it achieves the alterity of the original, Dimock's translation does not sound like creative poetic translation. One of the problems about verse translation is that it rarely captures the emphasis or the metre of the original. None of the translations above attempts to capture the word order or the metre. One of the characteristics of the Homeric hexameter is the long syllable in the first syllable of each line. Although it is difficult to repeat the exact metre, a translator can attempt a hexameter recreation. Literally, the Greek words mean in English:

> Since with many, for my part, I have been angered and since I came here
> - with men and women upon the much-nourishing earth –
> therefore then Odysseus let the name be for him to be given in
> remembrance.[3]

Perhaps some such translation as the following would be more in line with the original Greek:

> Just as with many, for my part, I have endured pain, I here –

[3] The words, ὄνομ ἐπώνυμον, mean a name given in commemoration or remembrance of something.

troubled by women and men in a world that nourishes much life –
so then Odysseus let his name be, honouring much pain.

The Odyssey is about the name Odysseus, the name of pain, both self-inflicted and inflicted on others, and about the bearing of pain. If this is to be emphasized in a translation, there should be repetition of the English words used to translate any form of the Greek word, ὀδύσσομαι, or a similar sounding word.

The title – ὈΔΥΣΣΕΙΑΣ – is usually translated as *The Odyssey,* but, to make its meaning and its emphasis clearer and to distinguish it from the traditional long, adventurous journey, perhaps a subtitle in English should be used, such as "Pain and Suffering". For it is the nature of pain and suffering that is the main theme of the poem. All three of the main characters, Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemachus (as well as some of the minor characters), suffer the pain of loneliness, deprivation, threats, danger, in every sense of the word pain: physical, emotional, and spiritual. All these, but mainly Odysseus, have to inflict pain, and they have to test and stretch the narrow confines of honesty and truth that conventional society imposes in order that they may develop and maintain their identities. *The Odyssey* depicts Odysseus as being identified by his name-giving as a man of pain, who must live up to this identity given him by his grandfather.

A comparison of how the three modern English poet-translators translate the key words connected with the naming of Odysseus will show a lack of consistency in the translations. Lattimore, in l. 62 (Book 1), translates ὠδύσαο as "harsh"; in l. 340 (Book 5), ὠδυσατ' as "cankered" ; in l. 415 (Book 9), the words ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι as "groaning aloud and in the pain of his agony"; and in the crucial l. 19 (Book 19), ὀδυσσάμενος as "distasteful". There is no consistency in the translation of these words, and therefore Homer's emphasis and theme are largely lost. Fagles, in l. 62 (Book 1), translates ὠδύσαο as "dead set against"; in l. 340 (Book 5), ὠδυσατ' as "dead set against"; in l. 415 (Book 9), the words ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι as "groaning, racked with agony"; and in l. 407 (Book 19), ὀδυσσάμενος as "creating pain". Although there is more consistency here, does Dimock's emphasis come

across? Fitzgerald, in l. 62 (Book 1), translates ὠδύσαο as "hold against"; in l. 340 (Book 5), ὠδυσατ' as "holds this fearful grudge"; in l. 415 (Book 9), the words ὠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι as "wheezing as the pain came"; and in l. 407 (Book 19), ὀδυσσάμενος as "odium and distrust". The repetition of sound is lost, even though the separate translations may have merit.

This analysis raises the question whether the repetition of the same or similar sounding words is needed in order to convey Homer's original emphasis, which is important in highlighting his theme. This need may also apply to other key words in the poem. Kaufmann's words[4] about translation suggest a need to pay "attention to the context", to have "respect for the distinctive voice of the original", to be responsible to the work as a whole, and to ask "where else a word occurs".

In l. 4 (Book 1), the theme of pain is introduced with the words πολλὰ … πάθεν ἄλγεα ("he suffered many pains or troubles"). These or similar words are repeated often in the poem. Zeus in line 34 speaks of the ἄλγε' of mankind; Athene in line 49 says, πήματα πάσχει ("he suffers woes"). By the time we read the first play on Odysseus' name in l. 62 (Book 1), ὠδύσαο, we are well acquainted with pain.

Although it is only in Book 5 that Odysseus appears in the poem, there are many references to him in Books 1–4 as Telemachus, Penelope, and others grieve over his long absence. In l. 23 (Book 2), Homer uses the word ὀδυρόμενος to refer to Aegyptius, an old Ithacan hero, who is mourning his son: the word is closely associated with ὀδύσσομαι, the verb associated with the name of Odysseus in Book 19, and links with δάκρυ (Book 2, l. 24), another often-used word in the poem. It is the fate of Odysseus and many others to mourn and to shed tears. In *The Odyssey* weeping is not seen as unmanly, but as part of the noble endurance of pain and trouble. In l. 95 (Book 3), Telemachus, referring to Odysseus, tells Nestor, πέρι γάρ μιν ὀϊζυρὸν τέκε μήτηρ, which Fagles translates, "More than all

[4] See Chapter 1, p. 6 for Kaufmann's "way of translating".

other men, that man was born for pain" (1996: 110). This suggests that Telemachus is well aware of his great grandfather's name-giving. The letter ζ, being a compound of the sounds s and d, gives the word ὀϊζυρὸν just a hint of the sound of Odysseus's name, and the word means literally "painful, miserable". Fagles perceptively sees this connection. Telemachus repeats these words in l. 325 (Book 4). In l. 105 (Book 5), Hermes reports that Zeus referred to Odysseus as ὀϊζυρώτατον ἄλλων ("the most pained or wretched of all"). Fagles, rather inconsistently, translates this as "a most unlucky man, / most harried of all" (1996: 155).

Other words that are repeated often in the poem and link with pain are κήδος and κάκον. In l. 5 (Book 5), Athene is moved by the κήδεα πόλλ' Ὀδυσῆος ("the many sorrows of Odysseus"). Even Poseidon acknowledges the pains or evils Odysseus has suffered: κακὰ πολλὰ παθὼν (Book 5, l. 377). One could quote more references to these words, but perhaps the point has been made: *The Odyssey* is about pain and suffering.

This is why Odysseus is referred to as Κάμμορε ("ill-fated") many times in the poem. Another epithet that is often used to describe him is πολύτλας ("much-enduring"). Whereas he is a man who is ill fated to suffer pain, he is heroic in his endurance. He certainly lives up to the name Autolycus gave him.

The importance of one's name or identity is stressed many times in the poem. Besides the important words ὄνομ . . . ἐπώνυμον in the passage analysed, there are continual questions raised about a person's identity: when Telemachus meets Athene in disguise as Mentes, he asks who she is: τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆες; (Book 1, l. 170). These words are repeated in various forms: by Nestor when Telemachus goes in search of his father (Book 3, l. 71); by Menelaus (Book 4, ll. 61–2); by Helen (Book 4, ll. 250–1); by Queen Arete (Book 7, l. 238), and in many other places. But the incident with the Cyclops when he orders Odysseus to tell his name, καί μοι τεὸν οὔνομα εἰπὲ / αὐτίκα νῦν (Book 9, ll. 355–6),

is probably the most significant; for it is here that Odysseus lies to the Cyclops: Οὖτις ἐμοί γ' ὄνομα· (l. 366). Calling himself "Nobody" is not only a clever stratagem, but also a denial of his identity, which he is quick to rectify rather recklessly when he shouts to the blinded Cyclops,

> Κύκλωψ, αἴ κέν τίς σε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων
> ὀφθαλμοῦ εἴρηται ἀεικελίην ἀλαωτύν,
> φάσθαι Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον ἐξαλαῶσαι,
> υἱὸν Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκῃ ἔνι οἰκί' ἔχοντα. (Book 9, ll. 502–5)

Fagles: "Cyclops –
if any man on the face of the earth should ask you
who blinded you, shamed you so – say Odysseus,
raider of cities, *he* gouged out your eye,
Laertes' son who makes his home in Ithaca!" (1996: 227.)

Fitzgerald: "Kyklops,
if ever mortal man enquire
how you were put to shame and blinded, tell them
Odysseus, raider of cities, took your eye:
Laertes' son, whose home's in Ithaca." (2007: 160.)

Lattimore: "Cyclops, if any mortal man ever asks you who it was
that inflicted upon your eye this shameful blinding,
tell him that you were blinded by Odysseus, sacker of cities,
Laertes is his father, and he makes his home in Ithaka." (1991: 150.)

These translations give the gist of the meaning of the words, but do not reproduce the spitting, angry sounds of the original words. Homer uses the repeated κ, τ, θ, λ, φ, σ, π consonant sounds and the ψ, ξ, and χ consonants, along with repeated vowel sounds, to make Odysseus's words scorch the Cyclops with more pain.

It is a difficult task to reproduce the sound and rhythm of the original into the translation, but, especially with crucial passages such as this one, some attempt should be made to reproduce some of the sound and the rhythm without disrupting the meaning:

> Kyklops, say men question you, then tell all men the truth, own
> up that your eye was attacked, lanced, blinded in shame and with gross rheum,
> face them, it was Odysseus, predator, famed, cruel, cut out
> your eye, son of Laertes, the King of Ithaca, who rules there.

This attempts to maintain the contempt for Polyphemus, son of Poseidon, and the risky arrogance of Odysseus as he attacks him again, this time with his words. In

translating Homer, one has, as Seamus Heaney says about other translators, "to try to carry the tone of (the original) across the linguistic divide" (1989: 33) and to get "the verve and immediacy of the (poem's) occasions" across (1989: 79).

The name itself, Ὀδυσσῆα, is the name of pain, pain that is to be borne and to be inflicted on others. It is the name Odysseus was given at birth: he was born to pain: πέρι γάρ μιν ὀϊζυρὸν τέκε μήτηρ, as Telemachus says about his father in l. 95 (Book 3), and as he repeats in l. 325 (Book 4).

One's name and one's identity are important in *The Odyssey*. It is not only the name Odysseus that is significant. Almost every character has a name that is significant: Telemachus means "fighting from far"; Penelope means "weaving the web" both literally and figuratively. Dimock gives attention to the significance of the names, Autolycus, Eileithuia, Calypso, Polyphemus, Antiphates, Tiresias, Anticleia, and Eurycleia. Dimock is especially perceptive about Calypso and the significance of her name in the poem as a whole and especially in Book 5:

> Trouble is difficult and dangerous, but it can lead to identity. Security, on the other hand, is inevitable oblivion. . . . Calypso is oblivion. Her name suggests cover and concealment, or engulfing; she lives 'in the midst of the sea' . . . – and the whole struggle of the fifth book, indeed of the entire poem, is not to be engulfed by that sea. When the third great wave of Book V breaks over Odysseus' head, Homer's words are: *ton de mega kyma kalypsen* – 'and the great wave engulfed him.' If this wave had drowned him, it would have been a 'vile death,' surely, as Odysseus remarks at the beginning of the storm. Much better to have died where 'the spears flew thickest' at Troy; then he would have had 'recognition,' *kleos*. People would know about him and his death. Odysseus does not wish to be back with Calypso. Though she offered immortality, not death – and immortality of security and satisfaction in a charming cave – it is still an immortality of oblivion, of no *kleos*, of nonentity. . . . Nonentity and identity are in fact the poles between which the actors in the poem move. . . . One must odysseus and be odysseused, or else be calypsoed. (1962: 111.)

Dimock refers to another use of the word καλύπτω or καλύψω:

> . . . As the winds sped Odysseus out of sight of Ithaca, 'I debated,' he says, 'whether to leap from my ship and end it all

> in the sea' (embracing thus the 'vile death' of the Calypso episode), 'or whether to bear my misery and remain among the living.' He adopts a sort of compromise: 'I endured and I remained; *kalypsamenos* I lay in my ship,' he puts it, meaning that he had wrapped his head in his cloak. (1962: 112.)

This refers to l. 53 (Book 10), but the word has been used previously: in l. 85 (Book 8), Odysseus, listening to the song about the dispute between Odysseus and Achilles and not wanting to reveal his identity to Alcinous, κάλυψε ("hid"); and later in l. 179 (Book 10), when Odysseus urges ἀχνύμενοί ("grieving" – l. 174) men, they, ἐκ δὲ καλυψάμενοι ("uncovering their heads"), took heart.

These uses of the verb associated with Calypso's name are relevant to the theme of identity, especially to the identity of Odysseus as the man of pain. Yet it is almost impossible in English translation to match the names of Odysseus and Calypso with pain and nonentity respectively, as Dimock has done in his interpretation of the words. Nevertheless, the translator must do his or her best.

iii
Deception and Oaths

The account of the giving of the name of Odysseus comes unexpectedly in the middle of the explanation of how Odysseus received the scar that allowed Eurycleia to recognize him, despite his disguise. This unexpectedness emphasizes its importance in the poem as a whole.

In ll. 395–396 (Book 19), we are told that Autolycus ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο / κλεπτοσύνῃ θ' ὅρκῳ τε ("had surpassed men in deception and in swearing oaths also"). Dimock paraphrases these words as "he was the foremost liar and thief of his day" (1962: 107) and depends largely on Rieu's translation (1948: 308). Fagles translates the words: "one who excelled / the world at thievery, that and subtle, shifty oaths" (1996: 403), and Fitzgerald: "a great thief and swindler" (2007: 366). But, again, is there not a deeper significance in these words than these translations bring out? Odysseus, like Autolycus, surpassed others in deception (or disguise, as Sheila Murnaghan (1987) calls it) and in keeping his

oath to the gods and to men. These two qualities – deception and oath-taking – seem to be incompatible qualities, but in Odysseus and Autolycus they come together. Odysseus uses these two gifts when he is suffering pain or when he inflicts pain, and through them he maintains his identity, his fame (κλέος, which is first mentioned in l. 95 (Book 1), and his survival. (The best example of this combination of deception and oath-taking is the Cyclops episode, which has already been discussed.)

Is Autolycus "a great thief and swindler"? Or is he, like Odysseus, πολυμήχανός ("inventive", or, as Fagles translates the word, "he's never at a loss" (1996: 84))? Literally the word means "much-contriving". Autolycus and Odysseus are both inventive people. The word πολυμήχανός is first used in l. 205 (Book 1), when Athene, disguised as Mentes, speaks with Telemachus about Odysseus, but it is used often in the poem as one of the main epithets to describe him. Another epithet, this time used by Nestor to describe Odysseus in l. 163 (Book 3), is ποικιλομήτην; Fagles translates it as "the flexible wily king" (1996: 112); literally it means "full of various wiles". Another epithet, which is frequently used, is πολύμητις (e.g. Book 7, l. 207); literally, it means "of many counsels or expedients, ever-ready". It is the wiliness of Autolycus and Odysseus, men of many expedients, that Homer wishes to bring out, not the thieving, the swindling, or the lying.

The theme of necessary deception (or disguise) in *The Odyssey* has been analysed previously, but perhaps its relevance to Odysseus' name or identity, as given him by his grandfather, has not been analysed sufficiently.

Odysseus – both in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* – is a deceiver: he uses the stratagem of building the wooden horse; he uses deception to outwit the Cyclops. Murnaghan elaborates:

> In Phaeacia, where he arrives without any emblem of his proper status, knows no one, and has no means of returning to his home (where his power is based), he chooses to suppress his name and to remain anonymous until he has again attained a position

> commensurable with that name. On Ithaca, he responds to the usurpation of his home by younger and more numerous rivals by adopting the powerless persona of an old and homeless wanderer, and he remains unprovoked by the aggressive dishonor offered by his enemies. (1987: 8.)

It is one of the ironies of *The Odyssey* that his concealment of his identity reinforces his identity.

The theme of necessary deception is introduced in the first line of the poem: the word πολύτροπον ("the man of twists and turns", as Fagles translates it (1996: 77)) refers to the as-yet-unnamed Odysseus. (Fitzgerald, less successfully, translates it as "that man skilled in all ways of contending" (2007: 1).) The word means literally "much turned", i.e. "much travelled" or "wandering", but it also means "turning many ways, versatile, ingenious, or changeful"; a third meaning is "manifold or many-sided". Dimock translates the word as "crafty" (1962: 107), and Rieu as "resourceful" (1948: 21). In l. 511 (Book 17), the same ambiguity of meaning is to be found in Penelope's use of the word πολυπλάγκτος, meaning "much-wandering" or "beguiling, delusive"; Fagles opts to translate this as "one who's roved around the world" (1996: 371), which is probably correct since it refers to the stranger who is Odysseus in disguise, but Homer would have expected the reader to understand the ambiguity.

The ambiguity in the whole approach to the character of Odysseus (and, to a lesser extent, of Autolycus) is intended by Homer to be experienced by all the other characters in the poem and by all its readers. The question of honesty and dishonesty is crucial to the poem, its interpretation, and its translation.

George Steiner makes the following relevant comments:

> . . . the question of the nature and history of falsity is of crucial importance to an understanding of language and of culture. Falsity is not, except in the most formal or internally systematic sense, a mere miscorrespondence with a fact. It is itself an active, creative agent. The human capacity to utter falsehood, to lie, to negate what is the case, stands at the heart of speech and of the reciprocities between words and world. (1975: 214.)

He discusses the "Greek view" of deception: he refers to "the enchanted exchange between Athene and Odysseus in the *Odyssey* (XIII)" and states:

> . . . the mutual deception, the swift sayings of 'things which are not' need to be neither evil nor a bare tactical restraint. Gods and chosen mortals can be virtuosos of mendacity, contrivers of elaborate untruths for the sake of verbal craft (a key, slippery term) and intellectual energy involved. The classical world was only too ready to document the fact that Greeks took an aesthetic or sporting view of lying. . . . the man who utters falsehood intentionally is to be preferred to the one who lies inadvertently or involuntarily.

Then Steiner returns to Homer and compares Achilles' statement, "For I hate like the gates of death who thinks one thing and says another" with the identity of Odysseus as "master deceiver among mortals" and concludes, "In the balance of the myth it is Odysseus who prevails. . .." (1975: 219–220.)

In applying what he has said about falsity to language and translation, Steiner writes:

> . . . Ambiguity, polysemy, opaqueness, the violation of grammatical and logical sequence, reciprocal incomprehensions, the capacity to lie – these are not pathologies of language but the roots of its genius. Without them the individual and the species would have withered. . . .The craft of the translator is . . . deeply ambivalent: it is exercised in a radical tension between impulse to facsimile and impulses to appropriate recreation.
>
> (1975: 235.)

Ambiguity and polysemy abound in *The Odyssey*, and there is in the translator's task "a radical tension between impulse to facsimile and impulses to appropriate recreation", between the Jerome model and the Horace model[5], with all the reverberations of what equivalence (formal correspondence? dynamic equivalence?[6]) means and what it means to be faithful in translation. Perhaps in a sense the translator has to be another Odysseus – inventive, much-contriving, flexible and wily, deceptive, but convincing. Part of the translator's inventiveness, wiliness, and deceptiveness in translating *The Odyssey* should include sensitivity

[5] See Chapter One, pp. 7–9 for a discussion of models for translation.
[6] See Chapter One, p. 9 on "formal correspondence" and "dynamic equivalence".

to the theme of deception that is made evident in the original through the emphasis of repeated key words.

Athene, the personification of wisdom, is the goddess of necessary deception. She adopts more disguises than anyone in *The Odyssey*. She disguises herself as Mentes when she speaks with Telemachus; she disguises herself as κούρῃ ναυσικλειτοῖο Δύμαντος (Book 6, l. 22) ("the daughter of Dymas, a famous sailor") to speak with Nausicaa; after Odysseus has entered Phaeacia and avoided Poseidon's anger, Athene appears to Odysseus as a young girl; and she disguises herself in many other ways. She is not the only immortal to use disguise: Hermes does as well. (Deception and disguise are common elements of Biblical myth too.)

The English language has an interesting word that links with this discussion – equivocation. Its origin is the Latin word *aequivocare*, which means "to call something by the same name", but the Latin usage of the adjective *aequivocus* changed to mean "ambiguous". In English the word equivocation has kept this derogatory meaning of using a word in more than one sense in rather a deceptive way. Empson has given the word ambiguity a new significance in the study of literature, and perhaps the word equivocation can be given a new significance in translation practice. The translator looks for words that will give the original the same meaning, but often the word in another language will be more ambiguous than in the original, and the translator has to be aware of this and to play with the word's ambiguity to give it perhaps a deeper meaning than the literal. In order to keep the identity of the original it may be necessary, as with Odysseus, to practise a type of deception in order to reinforce the identity of the original.

The point that Homer makes in *The Odyssey* is that if gods use disguise to achieve their ends, why should their chosen mortals not also? Necessary deception and disguise are part of the strategy used by Odysseus and Athene, and so is the telling of untruths when they are necessary to achieve a purpose. As Nestor says to Telemachus in ll.120–122 (Book 3):

ἔνθ' οὔ τίς ποτε μῆτιν ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην

ἤθελ’, ἐπεὶ μάλα πολλὸν ἐνίκα δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
παντοίοισι δόλοισι, …

(Fagles: And no one there could hope to rival Odysseus,
not for sheer cunning –
at every twist of strategy he excelled us all. (1996: 111.)

This translation, though it does not capture the metre or sound of the original, gives the gist of its meaning.)

Another quotation relevant to the theme of necessary deception is the one about withholding the whole truth — this time from the Ἄΐδαο δόμους (“the house of the Dead”– Book 10, l. 564):

τῷ νῦν μή ποτε καὶ σὺ γυναικί περ ἤπιος εἶναι
μηδ’ οἱ μῦθον ἅπαντα πιφαυσκέμεν, ὅν κ΄ ἐὺ εἰδῇς,
ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν φάσθαι, τὸ δὲ καὶ κεκρυμμένον εἶναι.
(Lines 441–443 (Book 11).)

(Fagles: ‘True, true,’ …
‘so even your own wife – never indulge her too far.
Never reveal the whole truth, whatever you may know;
Just tell her a part of it, be sure to hide the rest… .’ (1996: 263.))

These are the words of Agamemnon’s ghost to Odysseus, words which Odysseus heeds. The maxim, “The whole truth and nothing but the truth”, does not apply in the real world of pain and necessary deception.

The theme of necessary deception or disguise in *The Odyssey* has been analysed well, especially by Sheila Murnaghan, but not the theme of oath-taking, which is part of the legacy of Autolycus to Odysseus. The relevant word ὅρκον first appears in l. 377 (Book 2), when Eurycleia obeys Telemachus’ command to swear she will not tell Penelope he is going to Sparta and Pylos. Eurycleia eventually tells Penelope of her μέγαν ὅρκον in l. 746 (Book 4). In line 178 (Book 5), Odysseus makes Calypso swear a μέγαν ὅρκον to reassure him before he sets sail from her island. In ll. 299, 343, 346, and 381 (Book 10), the word ὅρκον appears repeatedly when Hermes advises Odysseus to make Circe swear an oath not to harm him, and Odysseus takes his advice. In ll. 298 and 304 (Book 12), the word appears again; the first usage is καρτερὸν ὅρκον (“binding oath”). This time

Odysseus compels his men to swear not to kill the cattle or sheep of the god of the sun, but they do not keep their oath – with disastrous consequences. In l. 151 (Book 14), Odysseus in disguise swears an oath to Eumaios that Odysseus will return, but Eumaios rejects the taking of an oath (l. 171).

These uses of the word ὅρκον show the important role of oath-taking prior to the mention of Autolycus' giving of the name of pain to Odysseus. When, then, Autolycus is introduced as ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο / κλεπτοσύνῃ θ' ὅρκῳ τε (Book 19, ll. 395–6), the taking of oaths should be recognized as a sacred and tactical act, not as an act of a "swindler" (Fitzgerald (2007: 366)) or of a "liar" (Dimock (1962: 107) and Rieu (1948: 308)). Lattimore is probably closer to the mark when he translates it as "the art of the oath" (1991: 292), Shewring, when he translates it as "subtlety of oaths" (2008: 237), and Fagles as "subtle, shifty oaths" (1996: 403). Perhaps Homer intends there to be ambiguity: the word κλεπτοσύνῃ has a pejorative sense of "thievishness or knavery", but the verb from which it comes has the nature of polysemy and can mean to steal, to deceive, to disguise, or to do something secretly; but the word ὅρκῳ does not have this ambiguity: it means an oath, a pledge, or a security and it originates from the word ἕρκος, which means an enclosure, hedge, fence, wall, a defence, or a bulwark. Homer makes it clear in the very next words, θεὸς δέ οἱ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν / Ἑρμείας ("the god Hermes gave it to him"); this is not a negative gift: it is a gift from a god who, as we have seen so far in the poem, is a positive influence, as are most of the oaths that have been taken so far in the poem.

It is true that translators and interpreters of Homer have allegorised *The Odyssey*, as Shewring has pointed out (2008: 330). *The Odyssey* has indeed a strong spiritual meaning: as early as l. 48 (Book 3), Nestor's son Pisistratus says: "πάντες δὲ θεῶν χατέουσ' ἄνθρωποι" ("all men have need of the gods"); and in l. 502 (Book 19), Odysseus advises Anticleia "ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεοῖσιν" ("leave the matter

to the gods"). Odysseus believes in Athene's guidance, although realistically he doubts from time to time because his life is one of pain and trouble.

With this strong emphasis on spiritual need and guidance, oath-taking is a serious, not a shifty, swindling activity. Autolycus and Odysseus are lonely persons who inflict pain and receive pain. The challenge to any translator of *The Odyssey* is to signal or mark in his or her translation the family of words that Homer has emphasized in the original Greek through his important themes and through repetition of important words.

iv

Hospitality to Strangers

Sheila Murnaghan writes about "a positive connection between recognition and the observance of hospitality": "Both in Phaeacia and on Ithaca, Odysseus' hospitable reception leads to his recognition" (1987: 91). Later she states: "Accepting or rejecting the stranger as a guest becomes tantamount to accepting or rejecting Odysseus" (1987: 105). She traces the culture of hospitality in great depth.

In a sense Odysseus in *The Odyssey* becomes synonymous with the practice of hospitality. Wherever Odysseus goes on his travels or on his return to Ithaca, the way he is received as a stranger is crucial to the Homeric assessment of the character of the person or of the god who offers or does not offer him hospitality.

The word ξεινος is first used in l. 105 (Book 1), and then again in ll. 123 and 133, and it is another of the most repeated words in the poem. It is a word closely associated with the theme of necessary deception or disguise, as the first use of it makes clear: εἰδομένη ξείνῳ ("she appeared like a stranger") (Book 1, l. 105).

In looking at the translations of this word in the first three uses in Book One by Fagles, Lattimore, Fitzgerald. Shewring, and Rieu, we see that none of the translators uses the same word to translate ξεινος in the three first appearances of the word. Fagles translates it as "stranger" in ll. 105 and 123, but then as "guest"

in line 1. (1996: 81); Lattimore translates it as "friend" in l. 105, as "stranger" in l. 123, and as "guest" in l. 133 (1991: 30); Fitzgerald translates it as "family friend", "visitor", and "stranger" respectively (2007: 4–5); Shewring translates it as "friend of the house", "guest", and "friend" (2008: 3-4); and Rieu as "visitor", "stranger", and "sir" (1948: 24).

The word ξείνος has all these meanings. As M. I. Finley has stated, the word has many meanings: "'Guest-friend', it is understood, is the conventional, admittedly clumsy, English rendition of the Greek *xenos* in one of its senses. The same Greek word also meant 'stranger', 'foreigner', and sometimes 'host', a semantic range symbolic of the ambivalence which characterized all dealings with the stranger in that archaic world." (1972: 100.) If, however, the theme of hospitality to strangers needs to be emphasized, the translation as "stranger" is appropriate. Even when Athene tells Telemachus in l. 187 (Book 1), ξεῖνοι δ' ἀλλήλων πατρώϊοι εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι[7] (Lattimore: "Your father and I claim to be guest-friends by heredity / from far back" (1991: 32)), the word ξεῖνοι could be translated as "hospitable towards each other" to sress the theme of hospitality to strangers. Since Athene is always appearing in a new disguise, this would be relevant.

Telemachus offers hospitality to Athene and later to Theoklymenos, and he in turn is offered hospitality by Nestor and by Menelaus and Helen. The Cylcopes and Laestrygons show no hospitality. Odysseus is offered hospitality by Calypso and in different ways by Aeolos, Circe, and, to a certain extent, by the Phaeacians[8]. Odysseus' hospitality to others is frequently mentioned. When he

[7] W. B. Stanford has an interesting note on this line: he states that the word means "one with whom one has exchanged hospitality" and he goes on, "In an age before inns and consulates such arrangements were necessities of travel, together with strict observance of the laws of Ζεὺς Ξένιος" (1961: 224).

[8] There is, however, an interesting comment by Athene about the Phaeacians (Book 7, ll. 32–3):

οὐ γὰρ ξείνους οἵδε μάλ' ἀνθρώπους ἀνέχονται,
οὐδ' ἀγαπαζόμενοι φιλέουσ' ὅς κ' ἄλλοθεν ἔλθῃ.

(Fagles: "The men here never suffer strangers gladly, / have no love for hosting a man from foreign lands" (1996: 180).) This comes as a surprise because one's first impression is that the Phaeacians are very hospitable. Yet they really want Odysseus to leave. And they rather easily take a vow not to help any other stranger after they have helped Odysseus.

returns to Ithaca, he is offered hospitality as a stranger by Eumaios, Telemachus, and Penelope. Odysseus' men abuse the hospitality of the sun god, and in Ithaca the suitors abuse Penelope's hospitality. The theme of hospitality to strangers is a complex one: Calypso at first abuses her hospitality towards Odysseus by trying to keep him captive, whereas the hospitality of the Phaeacians is temporary as they help him on his way home. There are different levels and approaches to hospitality in the poem, and the poem includes many discussions about it.

The gods also play their part in the theme of hospitality to strangers. In Book 17, after Antinous has hurt Odysseus by throwing a stool at him, an unnamed suitor warns (l. 485): καί τε θεοὶ ξείνοισιν ἐοικότες ἀλλοδαποῖσι (Fagles: "And the gods do take on the look of strangers / dropping in from abroad" (1996: 370)). Earlier, twice in as few as 17 lines – l. 165 and l. 181 (Book 7) – Zeus is mentioned as one who ἱκέτῃσιν ἅμ' αἰδοίοισιν ὀπηδεῖ ("watches over suppliants that deserve respect" – Rieu (1948: 116–117); "patron of venerable suppliants" – Shewring (2008: 80); "goes together with suppliants, whose rights are sacred" – Lattimore (1991: 115 and 116); "advocate of honorable petitioners" – Fitzgerald (2007: 116); "champion of suppliants — suppliants' rights are sacred" – Fagles (1996: 185)). Although there is a difference between an ἱκέτης and a ξένος, the two are directly linked in Echenaus' speech. A "stranger" and a "suppliant" are more closely linked than are a "guest" or a "friend" and a "suppliant". Later in Book 9, when Odysseus recounts his encounter with the Cyclops, he quotes his words to the Cyclops:

> … ἡμεῖς δ' αὖτε κιχανόμενοι τὰ σὰ γοῦνα
> ἱκόμεθ', εἴ τι πόροις ξεινήϊον ἠὲ καὶ ἄλλως
> δοίης δωτίνην, ἥ τε ξείνων θέμις ἐστίν·
> ἀλλ' αἰδεῖο, φέριστε, θεούς· ἱκέται δέ τοί εἰμεν.
> Ζεὺς δ' ἐπιτιμήτωρ ἱκετάων τε ξείνων τε
> ξείνιος, ὃς ξείνοισιν ἅμ' αἰδοίοισιν ὀπηδεῖ.
>
> (Book 9, ll. 266–271)

(Fagles: "… But since we've chanced on you, we're at your knees
in hopes of a warm welcome, even a guest-gift,
the sort that hosts give strangers. That's the custom.
Respect the gods, my friend. We're suppliants — at your mercy!

Zeus of the strangers guards all guests and suppliants:
Strangers are sacred — Zeus will avenge their rights!" (1996: 219–220.))

The repetition of the same idea in ἱκόμεθ', ἱκέται, and ἱκετάων (all referring to supplication) and the repetition of what Rieu called "the laws of hospitality" (1948: 148) in ξεινήϊον, ξείνων, ξείνιος, and ξείνοισιν, as well as the further repetition of αἰδοίοισιν ὀπηδει from Book 7, ll. 165 and 181, highlight the importance of the theme of hospitality to strangers and suppliants. And the barbarity and profanity of Polyphemus' response in ll. 273–278 serve to excuse Odysseus' cruel punishment of the Cyclops. The theme of avenging in ἐπιτιμήτωρ is linked with the gods themselves in both Odysseus' vengeance against the Cyclops and against the suitors later. If anyone is inhospitable to a stranger or a suppliant, or if anyone abuses the hospitality shown by a host, then vengeance will follow.

The theme of hospitality is linked with the theme of deception in the poem: it is through Odysseus' creative use of deception or disguise and oath-taking that he is able to test the hospitality of those he encounters. Homer has very skilfully woven the themes to form a unified poem.

Eumaeus, the loyal swineherd, who has his reservations about oath-taking and hospitality, nevertheless says in Book 14, ll. 56–58:

ξεῖν', οὔ μοι θέμις ἔστ', οὐδ' εἰ κακίων σέθεν ἔλθοι,
ξεῖνον ἀτιμῆσαι· πρὸς γὰρ Διός εἰσιν ἅπαντες
ξεῖνοί τε πτωχοί τε·

(Fagles: "It's wrong, my friend, to send any stranger packing –
even one who arrives in worse shape than you.
Every stranger and beggar comes from Zeus. . ." (1996: 303).)

It seems a pity that Fagles did not use the word "stranger" three times as Homer does in the original. Is it because he is constrained by the conventions of translation that a word in the original may have different meanings in the target language and therefore must be represented by different words? Or is it that he is not a sufficiently creative poet-translator or a sufficiently aware critic of the original?)

In his next speech (in ll. 122–5) Eumaeus says he knows all about the lies that wanderers tell, and later (in ll. 387–389) he tells Odysseus to stop lying: he is being hospitable to him, a stranger, because he fears Δία ξένιον (Fagles: "Zeus, the god of guests" (1996: 313)) and pities Odysseus.

In ll. 54–55 (Book 15), Nestor's son Pisistratus comments on the theme of hospitality towards strangers:

τοῦ γάρ τε ξεῖνος μιμνήσκεται ἤματα πάντα
ἀνδρὸς ξεινοδόκου, ὅς κεν φιλότητα παρ ἀσχῃ.

(Fagles: "That's a man a guest will remember all his days:
the lavish host who showers him with kindness" (1996: 321).
Fitzgerald: "A guest remembers all his days
that host who makes provision for him kindly" (2007: 269).
Lattimore: "For a guest remembers all his days the man who received him
as a host receives a guest, and gave him the gifts of friendship."
(1991: 226.))

Lattimore tries to bring out the repetition of the word ξεῖνος in the later word ξεινοδόκου when he repeated the word "guest" in his translation and also the word "receive". None of the others does. If the translator is to bear in mind the theme of hospitality to strangers and to try to achieve the often-repeated word ξεῖνος as "stranger", perhaps some such translation as this would be appropriate:

"Truly a stranger remembers throughout his life the man who
gave him, stranger that he was, kind and hospitable friendship.")

Shortly after this, Menelaus, in ll. 69–74, offers other words about hospitality towards strangers:

. . . νεμεσσῶμαι δὲ καὶ ἄλλῳ
ἀνδρὶ ξεινοδόκῳ, ὅς κ' ἔξοχα μὲν φιλέῃσιν,
ἔξοχα δ' ἐχθαίρῃσιν· ἀμείνω δ' αἴσιμα πάντα.
ἶσόν τοι κακόν ἐσθ', ὅς τ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντα νέεσθαι
ξεῖνον ἐποτρύνει καὶ ὃς ἐσσύμενον κατερύκει.
χρὴ ξεῖνον παρεόντα φιλεῖν, ἐθέλοντα δὲ πέμπειν.

(Lattimore: ". . . I would disapprove of another
hospitable man who was excessive in friendship,
as of one excessive in hate. In all things balance is better.
It is equally bad when one speeds on the guest unwilling
to go, and when he holds back one who is hastening. Rather

one should befriend the guest who is there, but speed him when he wishes." (1991: 227.))

Again the absence of the repetition of the concept of ξεῖνος ("stranger") in the translation of ll. 70 and 74 could be criticised, but the point is made: the law of hospitality includes the wishes of the stranger to whom hospitality is offered. This point is relevant to Calypso's holding Odysseus against his wishes until Zeus compels her to let him go. Calypso is "excessive in friendship", while Polyphemus the Cyclops is "excessive in hate". In the closing Books of the poem, Telemachus and Penelope show the correct practice of hospitality to strangers, and in this way the "balance" of tactful hospitality is linked to the theme of recognition, as Sheila Murnaghan has shown.

The question that is pertinent to this research is whether the poet-translators have been successful in their translations of this theme, with all its diverse implications. Have they been sufficiently inventive in highlighting the connections or links among the crucial terms that are related thematically, etymologically, or phonologically? And the answer is again: only partially.

v

The Poet-Translator as Critic

Dimock, in his book, *The Unity of the **Odyssey***, translates and analyses important passages from *The Odyssey*. When he quotes from Homer, he does not use the Greek script but changes it into a more familiar script to help his English readers to understand the sound of the original:

> Andra moi ennepe, Mousa, polutropon, hos mala polla
> plankhthē, epei Troiēs hieron ptoliethron epersen;
> pollōn d'anthrōpōn iden astea kai noon egnō,
> polla d'ho g' en pontōi pathen algea hon kata thumon,
> amumenos hēn te psukhēn kai noston hetairōn.
> All' oud' hōs hetarous, errusato, hiemenos per;
> autōn gar spheterēisin atasthaliēisin olonto,
> nēpioi, hoi kata bous Huperionos Ēelioio
> ēsthion; autar ho toisin apheileto nostimon ēmar. (1990: 11.)

An examination of the way Dimock analyses these first nine lines of the poem offers pertinent insights into his criticism of the proem and how this kind of criticism can affect the poet-translator's craft: he first offers a literal translation that "shows us the effect achieved by the physical arrangement of the grammatical members" (1990: 9):

> The man sing, Muse, crafty-shifty, who very much
> w*as-buffeted-abroad*, after of Troy the holy citadel he sacked:
> many men he saw the towns of, and the mind knew;
> many on the sea were the woes he suffered in his heart,
> trying to win his own life and the homecoming of his companions.
> But not even so his companions did he save, eager though he was;
> of their own recklessness they perished,
> childishly innocent, who did the cattle of Hyperion's son the Sun
> *eat-up*; and he from them took away their homecoming day.

There is no doubt that Dimock's analysis (1990: 9–12) helps one to "experience the poetry" of the first nine lines of *The Odyssey*. A poet-translator can learn from Dimock's analysis that the important aspects of these nine lines are: (1) the strong verbs at the start of lines 2 and 9, which "receive, metrically and grammatically speaking, the chief emphasis of their respective halves of the passage"; (2) the alliteration of the *p* sounds in the first four-and-a-half lines (linked to the key verb *plankhthē*) and the recurring *s* sounds in the second half of the passage (linked to the key verb *ēsthion*); (3) the contrasted images of "the man" and "his companions", both with their epithets and *who* clauses; (4) the importance of the words *amumenos hēn te psukhēn* at the end of the first half of the proem; and (5) the relationship between the metrical positions and sounds of the words *nēpioi* and *ēsthion* in the second half.

Studying the translations of our modern poet-translators in comparison with Dimock's analysis will help to assess the merit of the poetic translations.

Robert Fitzgerald translates ll. 1–9 (Book 1) as

> Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story
> of that man skilled in all ways of contending,
> the wanderer, harried for years on end,
> after he plundered the stronghold

on the proud height of Troy.
He saw the townlands
and learned the minds of many distant men,
and weathered many bitter nights and days
in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only
to save his life, to bring his shipmates home.
But not by will nor valor could he save them,
for their recklessness destroyed them all –
children and fools, they killed and feasted on
the cattle of Lord Hêlios, the Sun,
and he who moves all day through heaven
took from their eyes the dawn of their return. (2007: 1.)

One cannot help observing that, whereas Homer's original is nine lines long, Fitzgerald's is fifteen lines. Fitzgerald for some reason makes a sentence break and a metrical break between "the proud height of Troy" and "He saw the townlands" – a break not in the original – and one that shows Fitzgerald has little idea of the "physical organization of the *Odyssey's* first nine lines" that Dimock (1990: 12) has. The key words in Dimock's analysis, *plankhthē* and *ēsthion*, are respectively translated as "the wanderer, harried for years on end" and "killed and feasted on"; they do not receive the force of the original's metrical positions, and in the translation a reader does not recognize the emphasis that Dimock sees in their original positions. A poet-translator cannot be expected to achieve the same alliteration as in the original: it would be difficult to copy the repeated *p* sounds in the first four-and-a-half lines; but some attempt at alliteration through the repetition of sounds, even if not the same sound as the original, can be attempted. In Fitzgerald's translation there is some alliteration with "me, Muse, … me…/ man" in his first two lines and then "minds … many… men / …many" in his lines 6 and 7, but it is not as effective as the original's; the translation is far too wordy as compared with the concision of the original, and the force of the alliteration is minimized. The grammatical constructions of the epithets and the *who* clauses after the two "contrasted images" of "the man" and "his companions" are also lost in Fitzgerald's translation. The translation of *amumenos hēn te psukhēn* as "to save his life" is rather bland in comparison with Dimock's "striving to win his life". And there is no relationship between the metrical positions and sounds of

the words *nēpioi* and *ēsthion* in the translation, where the words "children and fools" and "killed and feasted on" appear in the same line.

Robert Fagles translates the first nine lines in this way:

> Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns
> driven time and again off course, once he had plundered
> the hallowed heights of Troy.
> Many cities of men he saw and learned their minds,
> many pains he suffered, heartsick on the open sea,
> fighting to save his life and bring his comrades home.
> But he could not save them from disaster, hard as he strove –
> the recklessness of their own ways destroyed them all,
> the blind fools, they devoured the cattle of the Sun
> and the Sungod blotted out the day of their return. (1996: 77.)

In comparison with Fitzgerald's translation, Robert Fagles' translation is much more concise, translating in ten lines what was nine lines in the original. In his first five lines he achieves alliteration of *m* and *t* sounds comparable with the original, if not as emphatic. Similarly, in the second half of the proem, he has many *s* and *z* sounds to contrast with the *m* and *t* sounds of the first half. Whereas he places "driven time and again off course" at the beginning of his line 2, he does not, however, balance it with the verb "devoured" at the beginning of the second-last line, as Dimock would have wanted him to, and, like Fitzgerald, Fagles places "the blind fools" in the same line as "devoured" and misses Dimock's point about where Homer places them. Similarly, Fagles does not capture the significance of the two grammatical constructions of the nouns each followed by an epithet and a *who* clause. He translates the first words of line 5 of the original as "fighting to save his life", not "to win his life".

Is it fair to criticise a translation by comparing it with a critic's analysis? Probably not, but it does suggest that these poet-translators have not analysed the original as well as Dimock does and it does suggest that this is one of the requirements of a good translator – to analyse the original in terms of close examination of the "physical organization" – the metrical and grammatical organisation – of the poem.

Even such matters as the word order in the original are relevant to a good translation: as far as possible, the word order should be similar to, or at least recognizable in relation to, the original. It plays a large part in creating an effect of strangeness and alienation, even an exotic effect. Many translators, in trying to naturalize the original into a more readable English of their day, lose the poetry and do not stress the otherness of the original.

Fagles maintains the word order of the original far more successfully than Fitzgerald does; a line-for-line comparison of the Fagles translation with Dimock's literal translation shows a great deal of similarity:

Dimock's Literal Translation	**Fagles' Translation**
The man sing, Muse, crafty-shifty, who very much	Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns
w*as-buffeted-abroad*, after of Troy the holy citadel he sacked:	driven time and again off course, once he had plundered the hallowed heights of Troy.
many men he saw the towns of, and the mind knew;	Many cities of men he saw and learned their minds,
many on the sea were the woes he suffered in his heart,	many pains he suffered, heartsick on the open sea,
trying to win his own life and the homecoming of his companions.	fighting to save his life and bring his comrades home.
But not even so his companions did he save, eager though he was;	But he could not save them from disaster, hard as he strove -
of their own recklessness they perished,	the recklessness of their own ways destroyed them all,
childishly innocent, who did the cattle of Hyperion's son the Sun	the blind fools, they devoured the cattle of the Sun
eat-up; and he from them took away their homecoming day.	and the Sungod blotted out the day of their return.

Despite the criticisms of Fagles' translation made earlier, this comparison shows a remarkable similarity between the two. Reading Fagles' translation alongside the original Greek would be a comparatively satisfying task.

Richmond Lattimore translates these lines:

> Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways, who was driven
> far journeys, after he had sacked Troy's sacred citadel.
> Many were they whose cities he saw, whose minds he learned of,
> many the pains he suffered in his spirit on the wide sea,
> struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his companions.
> Even so he could not save his companions, hard though
> he strove to; they were destroyed by their own wild recklessness,
> fools, who devoured the oxen of Helios, the Sun God,
> and he took away the day of their homecoming. (1991: 27.)

This is the most concise of the three translations and keeps to the nine-line format of the original. Lattimore achieves much of the *m* alliteration of the first line and uses the alliteration of *m* and *s* sounds in lines 2–6, which, although he does not use the same sounds as the original, shows a desire to emulate the original. The translation of *polutropon* as "man of many ways" is not as good as Fagles' "man of twists and turns", and the positioning of "was driven" at the end of the line, instead of at the beginning of the next line, differs from the original; similarly, Lattimore places the key word "devoured" (in Dimock's analysis) as part of the second-last line instead of at the beginning of the last line of the extract. Dimock's "contrasted images . . . 'the man . . . , crafty-shifty, who . . . *was-buffeted-abroad*' and 'his companions . . . , childishly innocent, who did . . . *eat-up*'" are almost lost in Lattimore's translation. Lattimore, like Fagles, finds it necessary to start a new sentence after the reference to Troy. Although Lattimore's "struggling for his own life" does not have the force of Dimock's "trying to win his own life" with his emphasis on *psukhēn* as "the pivot of the whole passage", Lattimore's line "struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his companions" achieves the repetition of "homecoming" and "companions" as does the original in lines 5 and 6 and lines 5 and 9 respectively. Lattimore retains the two "who" clauses that Dimock considered important.

It would appear that Lattimore was influenced by Dimock's reading, as can be seen by comparing Dimock's and Lattimore's translations:

Dimock's Literal Translation	**Lattimore's Translation**
The man sing, Muse, crafty-shifty, who very much	Tell me, Muse of the man of many ways, who was
w*as-buffeted-abroad*, after of Troy the holy citadel he sacked:	driven far journeys, after he had sacked Troy's sacred citadel.
many men he saw the towns of, and the mind knew;	Many were those whose cities he saw, whose minds he
many on the sea were the woes he suffered in his heart,	learned of, many the pains he suffered in his spirit on the wide sea,
trying to win his own life and the homecoming of his companions.	struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his
But not even so his companions did he save, eager though he was;	companions. Even so he could not save his companions, hard though
of their own recklessness they perished,	he strove to; they were destroyed by their own
childishly innocent, who did the cattle of Hyperion's son the Sun	recklessness, fools, who devoured the oxen of Helios, the Sun God,
eat-up; and he from them took away their homecoming day.	and he took away the day of their homecoming.

Reading Lattimore's translation alongside the original Greek would be satisfying.

Repetition of words or of similar-sounding words is important in Homer's *Odyssey*, and it should be reflected in translation. In the first nine lines, the word *noston* is used in l. 5 and the word *nostimon* in l. 9. Dimock and Lattimore translate both as "homecoming", whereas Fagles translates the first as "home" and the second as "return". Fagles, in l. 9, translates it as "home" and, in l. 10, as "return". The Greek word, νόστος is an important word in *The Odyssey* and is repeated often: e.g. l. 326 (Book1), ll. 132, 160, and 233 (Book 3), as well as the verb form, νέεσθαι, in l. 336 (Book 3). In Book 4 the word is part of a line that is repeated almost word for word:

> νόστον θ', ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσεαι ἰχθυόεντα (l. 424)
> νόστον θ', ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσομαι ἰχθυόεντα (l. 470)

Such lines play an important part in Homer's work and attain the importance of formulae; they need to be repeated in translation so that they stand out as the original intended them to. A word like νόστος or a derivative from the word needs to be translated by the same word so that its significance in the original comes out in the translation. Dimock, in seeing the importance of the word νόστος, goes further: he sees Nestor as meaning "home-goer" and sees significance in the meaning of the proper noun. He writes about *nostos* as the noun, *neesthai* as the verb, "and the agent noun 'home-goer,' for Homer's purposes at least, is *nestōr*" and he continues:

> Nestor, then, by name is a home-goer. Temperament, too, inclines him to this choice. The mention of Odysseus' name reminds him, as it does so many others in the poem, of pain – in this case, the pain they all suffered together at Troy (3. 103–4) – and the word he uses for this pain, *oïzdus*, just as typically echoes Odysseus's painful name. In the grip of these memories he begins his answer to Telemachos by dwelling at length on the miseries of the Trojan War (3. 103–17). Clearly, for Nestor, Troy was a place to get away from as quickly as possible, just as the pain associated with Odysseus's name was something to be avoided. (1990: 38–39.)

A poet-translator must either use the services of a good critic who draws attention to the sound patterns and the physical organization of the poetry or be a good critic in order to translate the original poetry adequately.

vi

Conclusion: A Translation of the Calypso Episode

What follows in this part is my translation of Lines 1–296 of Book 5:

Ἠὼς δ’ ἐκ λεχέων παρ’ ἀγαυοῦ Τιθωνοῖο
ὄρνυθ’, ἵν’ ἀθανάτοισι φόως φέροι ἠδὲ βροτοῖσιν·
οἱ δὲ θεοὶ θῶκόνδε καθίζανον, ἐν δ’ ἄρα τοῖσι
Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης, οὗ τε κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον.
τοῖσι δ’ Ἀθηναίη λέγε κήδεα πόλλ’ Ὀδυσῆος
μνησαμένη· μέλε γάρ οἱ ἐὼν ἐν δώμασι νύμφης·
“Ζεῦ πάτερ ἠδ’ ἄλλοι μάκαρες θεοὶ αἰὲν ἐόντες,
μή τις ἔτι πρόφρων ἀγανὸς καὶ ἤπιος ἔστω
σκηπτοῦχος βασιλεύς, μηδὲ φρεσὶν αἴσιμα εἰδώς,
ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ χαλεπός τ’ εἴη καὶ αἴσυλα ῥέζοι·
ὡς οὔ τις μέμνηται Ὀδυσσῆος θείοω
λαῶν οἷσιν ἄνασσε, πατὴρ δ’ ὡς ἤπιος ἦεν.
ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν ἐν νήσῳ κεῖται κρατέρ’ ἄλγεα πάσχων,
νύμφης ἐν μεγάροισι Καλυψοῦς, ἥ μιν ἀνάγκῃ
ἴσχει· ὁ δ’ οὐ δύναται ἣν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἱκέσθαι·
οὐ γάρ οἱ πάρα νῆες ἐπήρετμοι καὶ ἑταῖροι,
οἵ κέν μιν πέμποιεν ἐπ’ εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης.
νῦν αὖ παῖδ’ ἀγαπητὸν ἀποκτεῖναι μεμάασιν
οἴκαδε νισόμενον· ὁ δ’ ἔβη μετὰ πατρὸς ἀκουὴν
ἐς Πύλον ἠγαθέην ἠδ’ ἐς Λακεδαίμονα δῖαν.”

Now from the bed of her noble Tithonus, a man and a god at the same time,
Dawn rose, bringing hospitable light to the gods and to mankind.
These gods sat at a council discussing the law, and among them
Zeus in the chair, high-thundering god Zeus, greatest of all gods.
Goddess Athene was speaking, bewailing the woes of Odysseus:
vexed she was that he was held captive in the nymph's house:

"Zeus, sir, all you, members of council, undying and wise gods,
never allow one who is kind, good, gentle, to be made
king with the power a sceptre can give or administer justice.
Rather a leader should be one who is harsh and commits wrong.
No one remembers the god-like hero, courageous Odysseus,
none of the people he ruled, though he was father to them all.
He on an island is lying and suffering terrible woes, pain;
he is in her house, that of Calypso, the nymph; as a kept slave,
she holds him there, cruelly by force. He cannot return home.
He has no ships, no oars, no comrades to assist him
carry the hero across the extremes and the perils of rough seas.
Also his son's death they are conspiring, the death of his dear son,
homeward returning from journeys in search of his father's forlorn fate,
visiting Pylos the holy and good Lacedaemon to seek help."

Notes:

Line 1: "Tithonus, a man and a god at the same time": the original refers merely to Tithonus, whom the original audience or readership would have known. The words, "a man and a god at the same time", are relevant to Odysseus' potential identity if he stayed with Calypso.

Line 2: "hospitable light": the original "φόως" means not only "light" but also "help" or "safety". The word "hospitable" is chosen to link with the theme of hospitality.

Line 11: "courageous Odysseus": there is no epithet in the original, but the use of epithets is part of the Homeric style, and the addition of this word helps to maintain the hexameter.

Line 13: "suffering terrible woes, pain" ("κρατέρ' ἄλγεα πάσχων") links with the name Odysseus, the name of pain. Homer has already in line 5 referred to "κήδεα πολλ' Ὀδυσῆος".

Line 15: "cruelly, by force" ("ἀνάγκῃ" at the end of line 14 in the original means "by compulsion or constraint"). Athene is being cruel or harsh towards Calypso, who is in many ways the epitome of hospitality.

Line 17 of the original "ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης" is one of the often repeated phrases in the poem.

Τὴν δ’ ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεύς·
“τέκνον ἐμόν, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων·
οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοῦτον μὲν ἐβούλευσας νόον αὐτή,
ὡς ἦ τοι κείνους Ὀδυσεὺς ἀποτίσεται ἐλθών;
Τηλέμαχον δὲ σὺ πέμψον ἐπισταμένως, δύνασαι γάρ,
ὥς κε μάλ’ ἀσκηθὴς ἣν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἵκηται,
μνηστῆρες δ’ ἐν νηῒ παλιμπετὲς ἀπονέωνται.”
Ἦ ῥα, καὶ Ἑρμείαν, υἱὸν φίλον, ἀντίον ηὔδα·
“Ἑρμεία· σὺ γὰρ αὖτε τά τ’ ἄλλα περ ἄγγελός ἐσσι·
ηύμφῃ ἐϋπλοκάμῳ εἰπεῖν νημτέα βουλήν,
νόστον Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος, ὥς κε νέηται
οὔτε θεῶν πομπῇ οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων·
ἀλλ’ ὅ γ’ ἐπι σχεδίης πολυδέσμου πήματα πάσχων
ἤματι εἰκοστῷ Σχερίην ἐρίβωλον ἵκοιτο,
φαιήκων ἐς γαῖαν , οἳ ἀγχίθεοι γεγάασιν,
οἵ κέν μιν περὶ κῆρι θεὸν ὡς τιμήσουσι,
πέμψουσιν δ’ ἐν νηῒ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
χαλκόν τε χρυσόν τε ἄλις ἐσθῆτά τε δόντες,
πόλλ’, ὅς ἂν οὐδέ ποτε Τροίης ἐξήρατ’ Ὀδυσσεύς,
εἴ περ ἀπήμων ἦλθε, λαχὼν ἀπὸ ληΐδος αἶσαν.
ὣς γάρ οἱ μοῖρ’ ἐστὶ φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐς ὑψόροφον καὶ ἐὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.”

Notes:

Line 21: “Gathering clouds in the sky”: the epithet “νεφεληγερέτα” (“cloud-gatherer”) shows that Zeus is angry about what Athene has said. The addition of the words “with brows of concerned pride” compensates for the six-syllable epithet.

Gathering clouds in the sky, Zeus answered with brows of concerned pride,
"My child, I am surprised at your words that have slipped from your hedged lips:
did you not work all this out yourself, all in a wise plan?
Your scheme is clear: won't he, Odysseus, returning, be avenged?
As for Telemachus, you are capable: act in your own way:
save him, get him back to his fatherland safely and unscathed.
As for the suitors, return them destitute home with unfilled ships."

His eyes turned to Hermes, his much loved son, and addressed him:
"Hermes, a son you are, but also our messenger: go now,
tell the fair-haired nymph what our decision is, what we have laid down:
he, the courageous Odysseus, must leave her, but he will come back
neither with help from the gods nor any from mortals on his way.
He must build his own raft, set sail on the seas, and endure woes.
Yet on the twentieth day on the isle of Scheria arriving –
land of Phaeacians, the gods' own relatives – he will be welcomed
heartily, honoured as though he were a superior to us all.
They will, at last, send him in a ship to the fatherland he loves,
giving to him, brass, much gold, beautiful clothing, and much more –
more than Odysseus from Troy would have taken, supposing that unharmed
he had returned with his share of the booty from Priam's usurped wealth.
We have ordained both that he see his compatriots again
and that he get back to his high roofed house and his own land."

Notes:

Line 22: "your hedged teeth": literally "ἕρκος" is a fence or a wall, but it can also mean teeth, lips, or mouth. The translation brings out both meanings to show Zeus' criticism of Athene's clipped words.
Line 27: This suggests that at this time Zeus does not wish the suitors to be punished unduly.
Line 33: Zeus is all in favour of Odysseus living up to his identity as the man of pain and suffering: Odysseus must endure or suffer "πήματα".
Line 36: The translation tries to bring out the excessive honour in Zeus's words: "οἵ κέν μιν περὶ κῆρι θεὸν ὡς τιμήσουσι". Although Zeus ordains pain and suffering for Odysseus, he also ordains great honour. This fits in with the idea of "κλέος" mentioned earlier.
Line 41: "We have ordained": the idea of "μοῖρα" ("fate") plays a large role in the poem.
Lines 41–2 are repeated almost word for word by Hermes in lines 114–5.

Ὣς ἔφατ’, οὐδ’ ἀπίθησε διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης.
αὐτίκ’ ἔπειθ’ ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ’ ὑγρὴν
ἠδ’ ἐπ’ ἀπειρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇς ἀνέμοιο.
εἵλετο δὲ ῥάβδον, τῇ τ’ ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει
ὧν ἐθέλει τοὺς δ’ αὖτε καὶ ὑπνώοντος ἐγείρει.
τὴν μετὰ χερσίν ἔχων πέτετο κρατὺς ἀργειφόντης.
Πιερίην δ’ ἐπιβὰς ἐξ αἰθέρος ἔμπεσε πόντῳ·
σεύατ’ ἔπειτ’ ἐπὶ κῦμα λάρῳ ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς,
ὅς τε κατὰ δεινοὺς κόλπους ἁλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο
ἰχθῦς ἀγρώσσων πυκινὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἅλμῃ·
τῷ ἴκελος πολέεσσιν ὀχήσατο κύμασιν Ἑρμῆς.
ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ τὴν νῆσον ἀφίκετο τηλόθ’ ἐοῦσαν,
ἔνθ’ ἐκ πόντου βὰς ἰοειδέος ἤπειρόνδε
ἤϊεν, ὄφρα μέγα σπέος· ἵκετο, τῷ ἔνι νύμφη
ναῖεν ἐϋπλόκαμος· τὴν δ’ ἔνδοθι τέτμεν ἐοῦσαν.
πῦρ μὲν ἐπ’ ἐσχαρόφιν μέγα καίετο, τηλόθι δ’ ὀδμὴ
κέδρου τ’ εὐκεάτοιο θύου τ’ ἀνὰ νῆσον ὀδώδει
δαιομένων· ἡ δ’ ἔνδον ἀοιδιάουσ’ ὀπὶ καλῇ
ἱστὸν ἐπιχομένη χρυσείῃ κερκίδ’ ὕφαινεν.
ὕλη δὲ σπέος ἀμφὶ πεφύκει τηλεθόωσα,
κλήθρη τ’ αἴγειρός τε καὶ εὐώδης κυπάρισσος.

He had obeyed the instructions of Zeus when he had before killed
Argus, and Hermes obeyed this time too: put on his sandals,
beautiful, golden, ambrosial. Over the sea he was carried and over
wide and continuous stretches of earth with the speed of the winds' gusts.
His hand held his wand with which he cast spells on a man's eyes
either to blind them or wake them, depending entirely on his choice.
Hermes, the killer of Argus, the strong one, wand in his hand, flew
over Pieria and plummeted onto the sea from the sky's heights,
then sped over the waves like a bird, like the cormorant sea gull,
which flies over the ominous gulfs of the desert-like sea waves,
hunting for fish, skimming, dipping, wetting its agile wings.
Like that bird he rode on the many interminable wave crests
till he finally came to the island remote from the known world.
There from the bluish, at times wine-red, sea onto the mainland
he walked till he came to the great cave where the fair-haired nymph
lived. He found her there in her mansion of rock, a unique home.
There he saw a hospitable great fire burning, and sweet scents
wafted from well-cleft cedar and citron, the surprising fragrance
Hermes had smelt on arrival ashore. She was in her large room
singing a beautiful song while she moved backwards and forwards
weaving her web on her shuttle of gold. A luxuriant wood grew,
circling the cave with its alder and poplar and cypress with sweet scents.

Notes:

Lines 43–44: The epithet applied to Hermes, "ἀργειφόντες" ("the slayer of Argos" or, as some interpret it, "the swift appearer") needs some explanation for modern readers. This translation tries to link it with obeying Zeus' commands. The epithet is repeated in line 49 and elsewhere in the poem when Hermes comes on the scene.
Lines 49–55 intend to show that even for a god the journey was a difficult one.
Lines 57–74 intend to show the splendour and beauty of Calypso's home.
Line 59: "hospitable" is not in the original, but it is introduced in the translation to emphasize the comfort of Calypso's home.

ἔνθα δέ τ᾽ ὄρνιθες τανυσίπτεροι εὐνάζοντο,
σκῶπές τ᾽ ἴρηκές τε τανύγλωσσοί τε κορῶναι
εἰνάλιαι, τῇσίν τε θαλάσσια ἔργα μέμηλεν.
ἡ δ᾽ αὐτοῦ τετάνυστο περὶ σπείους γλαφυροῖο
ἡμερὶς ἠβώωσα, τεθήλει δὲ σταφυλῇσι·
κρῆναι δ᾽ ἐξείης πίσυρες ῥέον ὕδατι λευκῷ,
πλησίαι ἀλλήλων τετραμμέναι ἄλλυδις ἄλλη.
ἀμφὶ δὲ λειμῶνες μαλακοὶ ἴου ἠδὲ σελίνου
θήλεον· ἔνθα κ᾽ ἔπειτα καὶ ἀθάνατός περ ἐπελθὼν
θηήσαιτο ἰδὼν καὶ τερφθείη φρεσὶν ᾗσιν.
ἔνθα στὰς θηεῖτο διάκτορος ἀργειφόντος.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντα ἐῷ θηήσατο θυμῷ,
αὐτίκ᾽ ἄρ᾽ εἰς εὐρὺ σπέος ἤλυθεν· οὐδέ μιν ἄντην
ἠγνοίησεν ἰδοῦσα Καλυψὼ, δῖα θεάων,
οὐ γάρ τ᾽ ἀγνῶτες θεοὶ ἀλλήλοισι πέλονται
ἀθάνατοι, οὐδ᾽ εἴ τις ἀπόπροθι δώματα ναίει.
οὐδ᾽ ἄρ᾽ Ὀδυσσῆα μεγαλήτορα ἔνδον ἔτετμεν,
ἀλλ᾽ ὅ γ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀκτῆς κλαῖε καθήμενος, ἔνθα πάρος περ,
δάκρυσι καὶ στοναχῇσι καὶ ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ἐρέχθων.
πόντον ἐπ᾽ ἀτρύγετον δερκέσκετο δάκρυα λείβων.
Ἑρμείαν δ᾽ ἐρέεινε Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων,
ἐν θρόνῳ ἱδούσασα φαεινῷ σιγαλόεντι·

There in the branches were birds with their broad wings, nesting and noisy –
owls, long-tongued hawks, crows of the sea, who were resting from sea-toil
after their hard day's work on the waves in their search for their fish food.
Round the impressively manicured cave spread flourishing vineyards
full of the heaviest grapes in their thousands in clusters of deep red.
And in a row four fountains of water, continuous, flowed, each
brilliant, and though near each other, in different directions, could run free.
Whichever way he looked, soft meadows of violets and parsley
bloomed. If anyone arrived there, a god or a man would without doubt
wonder on seeing its splendour and praise and rejoice with his whole heart.
Hermes, the messenger, killer of Argus, transfixed in his wonder,
stood there, but when he had absorbed to the full its delightful
aspect, the messenger entered the wide cave. Seeing before her
Hermes, Calypso, the lovely goddess, knew who he was at once.
(For gods know each other instinctively, even if deathless
ones set up their homes, as Calypso had, far from the others.)
He looked but did not find in the cave the great-hearted Odysseus:
he on the shore sat weeping where he usually could be located,
his breast heaving with tears, lamentations, and sorrows as he gazed
desperate towards the relentless and desert-like prospect of cruel seas.
Always gracious, Calypso, lovely goddess, seated her divine
guest on a polished and glittering chair and enquired with her soft charm:

Notes:
Lines 73–77 emphasize the wonderful pleasure that comes from being with Calypso.
Lines 78–9 are relevant to the theme of disguise and recognition. Gods recognize each other immediately, unlike mortals.
Line 81: "great-hearted" ("μεγαλήτορα"), another of Odysseus' epithets.
Lines 83–84 are repeated in lines 157–8 in the original and therefore should be repeated in translation.
Lines 85–6: the words "Always gracious" and "with her soft charm" are not in the original, but are intended to bring out Calypso's gracious charm – something that Homer surely intended. She has been characterized as a particularly gracious hostess towards Hermes and Odysseus. Athene's harsh words about Calypso holding Odysseus captive in Book One do not contradict her charm and grace towards Hermes and Odysseus.

“Τίπτε μοι, Ἑρμεία χρυσόρραπι, εἰλήλουθας
αἰδοῖός τε φίλος τε; πάρος γε μὲν οὔ τι θαμίζεις.
αὔδα ὅ τι φονέεις· τελέσαι δέ με θυμὸς ἄνωγεν,
εἰ δύναμαι τελέσαι γε καὶ εἰ τετελεσμένον ἐστίν.
ἀλλ’ ἕπεο τροτέρω, ἵνα τοι πὰρ ξείνια θείω.”

Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασα θεὰ παρέθηκε τράπεζαν
ἀμβροσίης πλήσασα, κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν.
αὐτὰρ ὁ πῖνε καὶ ἧσθε διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δείπνησε καὶ ἤραρε θυμὸν ἐδωδῇ,
καὶ τότε δή μιν ἔπεσσιν ἀμειβόμενος προσέειπεν·

“Εἰρωτᾷς μ’ ἐλθόντα θεὰ θεόν· αὐτὰρ ἐγώ τοι
νημερτέως τὸν μῦθον ἐνισπήσω· κέλεαι γάρ.
Ζεὺς ἐμέ γ’ ἠνώγει δεῦρ’ ἐλθέμεν οὐκ ἐθέλοντα·
τίς δ’ ἂν ἐκὼν τοσσόνδε διαδράμοι ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ
ἄσπετον; οὐδέ τις ἄγχι βροτῶν πόλις, οἵ τε θεοῖσιν
ἱερά τε ῥέζουσι καὶ ἐξαίτους ἑκατόμβας.
ἀλλὰ μάλ’ οὔ πως ἔστι Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο
οὔτε παρεξελθεῖν ἄλλον θεὸν οὔθ’ ἁλιῶσαι.

"Hermes, with your gold wand, why, pray tell me, have you come here?
You are a welcome and honoured surprise. This is your first time.
Say what is on your mind. My heart prompts me to assist you
if I can, and if it is possible, I shall assist you.
But first follow me further inside and let me be your hostess."

Then with these words, the goddess set food on a table for Hermes,
bringing generous helpings – ambrosia and nectar – to please him.
Hermes, the killer of Argus, obeyed: he drank and he ate till
he had refreshed himself to the full with this food that the gods crave.
Then he answered Calypso's enquiry with alacrity saying,
"You, a goddess, asked me, god that I am, to explain my
visit, and since you command me, I'll tell you the complete truth:
Zeus sent me to your island against my volition or strong wish.

Who would willingly travel across such stretches of salt sea,
which no one can describe, with no city of man on the journey,
where an immortal can find no sustenance or sacrifice, no rest?
But it is not in a god's power either the will of the storm clouds,
I mean, Zeus, to transgress or to nullify, as you in truth know.

Notes:
Line 88 brings out Calypso's hospitality, as do lines 91–93, where the word "ξείνια" ("hostess") brings out her hospitality to strangers, the theme discussed previously in this chapter.
Line 96: "with alacrity": Homer uses "ἔπεσσιν", which means "to hasten to the point", a characteristic act of the speedy Hermes.
Line 98: "the complete truth" ("μῦθον": "the matter", as Cunliffe translates it (1988: 274)).
Lines 100–3 emphasize again the unpleasantness of the journey to and from Calypso's island.

φησί τοι ἄνδρα παρεῖναι ὀϊζυρώτατον ἄλλων,
τῶν ἀνδρῶν οἳ ἄστυ πέρι Πριάμοιο μάχοντο
εἰνάετες, δεκάτῳ δὲ πολιν πέρσαντες ἔβησαν
οἴκαδ᾽· ἀτὰρ ἐν νόστῳ Ἀθηναίην ἀλίτοντο,
ἥ σφιν ἐπῶρσ᾽ ἄνεμόν τε κακὸν καὶ κύματα μακρά.
ἔνθ᾽ ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἀπὲφθιθεν ἐσθλοὶ ἑταῖροι,
τὸν δ᾽ ἄρα δεῦρ᾽ ἄνεμός τε φέρων καὶ κῦμα πέλασσε.
τὸν νῦν σ᾽ ἠνώγειν ἀποπεμπέμεν ὅττι τάχιστα·
οὐ γάρ οἱ τῇδ᾽ αἶσα φίλων ἀπονόσφιν ὀλέσθαι,
ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι οἱ μοῖρ᾽ ἐστὶ φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐς ὑψόροφον καὶ ἐὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.”
Ὣς φάτο, ῥίγησεν δὲ Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων,
καί μιν φωνήσασ᾽ ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
“Σχέτλιοί ἐστε, θεοί, ζηλήμονες ἔξοχον ἄλλων,
οἵ τε θεαῖς ἀγάασθε παρ᾽ ἀνδράσιν εὐνάζεσθαι
ἀμφαδίην, ἥν τίς τε φίλον ποιήσετ᾽ ἀκοίτην.
ὡς μὲν ὅτ᾽ Ὠρίων᾽ ἔλετα ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς,
τόφρα οἱ ἠγάασθε θεοὶ ῥεῖα ζώοντες,
ἦος ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ χρυσόθρονος Ἄρτεμις ἁγνὴ
οἷς ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν ἐποιχομένη κατέπεφνεν.

Notes:
Line 105: “unluckiest” (“ὀϊζυρώτατον”, “most miserable”) links with the theme of pain and suffering. The original word sounds like Odysseus’ name.
Lines 114–5 are repeated almost word for word from Zeus’ words in lines 41–2 and therefore they must be translated the same.
Lines 116–7: Calypso’s change from being hospitable to being dismayed and angry is indicative of her shock (“shuddered”) at being forced to let Odysseus go.
Line 117: “with winged words”: The word “πτερόεντα” is used to describe birds, arrows, and words spoken quickly and with passion.

He says that with you is the unluckiest man among all men,
he who fought in the battle for Priam's illustrious town, Troy,
nine years, then in the tenth, as the victor, returned on his way home,
but on the way home the men in the ship disobeyed her instructions,
those of Athene, the wise, who raised winds, evil, and waves, huge,
causing his companions, all of the others on board, to be drowned.
But to your island, to this place, she brought him on the rough waves.
He now, Zeus that is, orders that you must immediately release
him: his fate is not death here, far from his compatriots. Instead
Zeus has ordained both that he see his compatriots again
and that he get back to his high-roofed home and his own land."

Hermes had finished. Calypso, the lovely goddess, in dismay heard,
shuddered, and answered him, not as before, but with winged words:

"Cruel you are, you gods; your jealousy equals no other;
you are jealous if any goddess makes love with a mere man
openly, if she should make a beloved her husband or lover.
Similarly, when Dawn, rosy-fingered Dawn, chose mortal Orion,
you gods, living in luxury, always at ease, were yet jealous
till chaste Artemis, sitting on her gold throne in Ortygia, cruelly
killed him, shooting at him with her gentle but scorpion-like darts.

Notes:

Line 118: Homer's original is full of harsh consonants: "Σχέτλωί έστε, θεοί, ζηλήμονες ἔξοχον ἄλλων". It is again virtually impossible to imitate these sounds. The translation attempts something like this with the repeated harsh k sounds in "Cruel" and "equal", the repeated "you" and your" sounds, and the repetition of "jealous" in the next line and in line 129. In the lines that follow Calypso's anger is almost spat out.

Lines 121–128 offer apt examples of the harsh anger or jealousy of the gods at goddesses who have had love relationships with mortal men. As Stanford states, "This is an early criticism of that *Masculine Bias* which pervades Greek literature" (1961: 296–297).

Line 122 makes a valid criticism about "living in luxury, always at ease" because this is precisely what Odysseus is not allowed to do. It is, however, ironical because this is what Calypso wants him to do.

Lines 123 and 124: There is further irony in the similar sounding "ἀγνὴ" and "ἀγανοῖς" ("chaste" and "gentle"). The translation attempts to capture the irony by inserting "scorpion-like".

ὣς δ’ ὁπότ’ Ἰασίωνι ἐϋπλόκαμος Δημήτηρ,
ᾧ θυμῷ εἴξασα, μίγη φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ
νειῷ ἔνι τριπόλῳ· οὐδὲ δὴν ᾔεν ἄπυστος
Ζεύς, ὅς μιν κατέπεφνε βαλὼν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῷ.
ὣς δ’ αὖ νῦν μοι ἄγασθε, θεοὶ, βροτὸν ἄνδρα παρεῖναι.
τὸν μὲν ἐγὼν ἐσάωσα περὶ τρόπιος βεβαῶτα
οἷον, ἐπεί οἱ νῆα θοὴν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῷ
Ζεὺς ἔλσας ἐκέασσε μέσῳ ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ.
ἔνθ’ ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἀπέφθιθεν ἐσθλοὶ ἑταῖροι,
τὸν δ’ ἄρα δεῦρ’ ἄνεμός τε φέρων καὶ κῦμα πέλασσε.
τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ φίλεόν τε καὶ ἔτρεφον, ἠδὲ ἔφασκον
θήσειν ἀθάνατον καὶ ἀγήρων ἤματα πάντα.
ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ οὔ πως ἔστι Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο
οὔτε παρεξελθεῖν ἄλλον θεὸν οὔθ’ ἁλιῶσαι,
ἐρρέτω, εἴ μιν κεῖνος ἐποτρύνει καὶ ἀνώγει,
πόντον ἐπ’ ἀτρύγετον. πέμψω δέ μιν οὔ πῃ ἐγώ γε·
οὐ γάρ μοι πάρα νῆες ἐπήρετμοι καὶ ἑταῖροι,
οἵ κέν μιν πέμποιεν ἐπ’ εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης.
αὐτάρ οἱ πρόφρων ὑποθήσομαι, οὐδ’ ἐπικεύσω,
ὥς κε μάλ’ ἀσκηθὴς ἣν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἵκηται.”

Furthermore, there were Demeter with beautiful hair and Jasion:
she, the immortal one, yielded her heart to the mortal one. They made
love in a field for a bed, in a fallow, thrice furrowed, and Zeus soon
knew and immediately killed him, Jasion, with bolts of white lightning.
Now it's the same: you're jealous, you gods, that a mortal is with me.
I saved his life. He was alone on the keel of his wrecked ship –
drifting – because in his wrath Zeus struck with his lightning the swift ship,
crushing it, leaving it there in the middle of the sea, the wine-dark sea.
All of the others, his noble companions, indeed disappeared, killed,
but strong waves and tempestuous winds drove him to this island.
I loved him, I nursed him till he was healthy, and I vowed
he would not die, would not age, would be an immortal.
But since, as you said, it is not in our power to transgress or
nullify Zeus's (the storm clouds') will, he'll have to depart if
that is what Zeus orders and rules, that he, empty, alone, must
set off over the desert-like seas. I'll definitely not help
him on his way. I have not one ship fitted with oars. No
crew that will carry him across the extremes and the perils of rough seas.
I am prepared, however, to intimate, not to conceal, that
finally he will return to his fatherland safely and unscathed."

Notes:

Line 127: There have been various explanations of "νειῷ ἔνι τριπόλῳ", but perhaps in the context of Calypso's speech it has connotations of sexual prowess.

Line 129: This is the third time in Calypso's speech that she has used the word "jealous": "ἄγάασθε" (line 119), "ἠγάασθε" (line 122), and "ἄγάσθε" (line 129). She is an admirably forthright and passionate woman.

Lines 130–6: Calypso is similarly passionate about her love for Odysseus. She not only "saved" ("ἐσάωσα") him, but she also "loved" ("φίλεόν") him, "nursed" ("ἔτρεφον") him, and "vowed / he would not die, would not age, would be an immortal". What more could be expected of a woman towards a man?

Lines 137–144 show Calypso's acceptance of Zeus' command.

Line 143: the word "πρόφρων" expresses her willingness or commitment to convey Zeus' pledge that Odysseus will "return to his fatherland safely and unscathed". She repeats Zeus' words in line 26, even though Hermes did not use them. This may suggest she has knowledge of Zeus' will.

Line 143: The words "οὐδ' ἐπικεύσω" show her commitment not to conceal anything. In lines 160–170 she does not, however, give details of Hermes' visit or Zeus' command and leaves it rather conditional and vague about the gods' decisions about fate. This is relevant to the theme of necessary deception that has been discussed previously.

Τὴν δ’ αὖτε προσέειπε διάκτορος ἀργειφόντες·
“οὕτω νῦν ἀπόπεμπε, Διὸς δ’ ἐποπίζεο μῆνιν,
μή πώς τοι μετόπισθε κοτεσσάμενος χαλεπήνῃ.”
Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσας ἀπέβη κρατὺς ἀργειφόντης·
ἡ δ’ ἐπ’ Ὀδυσσῆα μεγαλήτορα πότνια νύμφη
ἤϊ’, ἐπεὶ δὴ Ζηνὸς ἐπέκλυεν ἀγγελιάων.
τὸν δ’ ἄρ’ ἐπ’ ἀκτῆς εὗρε καθήμενον· οὐδέ ποτ’ ὄσσε
δακρυόφιν τέρσοντο, κατείβετο δὲ γλυκὺς αἰὼν
νόστον ὀδυρομένῳ, ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι ἤνδανε νύμφη.
ἀλλ’ ἦ τοι νύκτας μὲν ἰαύεσκεν καὶ ἀνάγκῃ
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι παρ’ οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούσῃ·
ἤματα δ’ ἂμ πέτρῃσι καὶ ἠϊόνεσσι καθίζων
δάκρυσι καὶ σ τοναχῇσι καὶ ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ἐρέχθων
πόντον ἐπ’ ἀτρύγετον δερκέσκετο δάκρυα λείβων.
ἀγχοῦ δ’ ἱσταμένη προσεφώνεε δῖα θεάων·

Hermes, the messenger, killer of Argus, addressed her with stern words:
"Send him away then. Reverence Zeus's resentment, or else he
afterwards will deal harshly with you and with malice confront you."

When he had finished, the strong one, killer of Argus, departed.
She, the majestic Calypso, then went to great-hearted Odysseus.
She had indeed heard Zeus's commands and had got the message.
She found him on the shore, where not for a moment were his eyes
dry as he sat there crying. The sweetness of life, like the tide, had
ebbed. He yearned to return home since no longer the nymph pleased
him. But nights he would sleep with her, out of necessity, of course,
deep in the cave; he slept, an unwilling, Calypso, a willing
partner. The days he spent on the rocks of the shore in forlorn gloom,
his breast heaving with tears, lamentations, and sorrows as he gazed
desperate towards the relentless and desert-like prospect of cruel seas.
Fairest of all the goddesses, Calypso approached and addressed him:

Notes:
Lines: 146–7: Hermes's words are "stern" and threatening.
Line 150: These rather colloquial words emphasize Calypso's acceptance that she could do nothing else.
Lines 152–3: "The sweetness of life, like the tide, had / ebbed" ("κατείβετο … γλυκὺς αἰὼν" – Stanford: "his sweet life was flowing away" (1961: 298)). This was what life with Calypso was: a denial of his identity.
Line 153: "no longer the nymph pleased": the word "οὐκέτι" ("no longer") suggests that the relationship has had its pleasures, but is not a lasting relationship. Line 227 suggests that it still had momentary pleasures.
Line 154: "out of necessity, of course" ("ἀνάγκη").
Lines 155–6: "he slept, an unwilling, Calypso, a willing / partner" ("οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούσῃ"). The first two words have been used before by Hermes in line 99: "οὐκ ἐθέλοντα" to show Hermes' unwillingness to travel to Calypso's island.
Lines 157–8: These words are repeated from lines 83–4.

“Κάμμορε, μή μοι ἔτ’ ἐνθάδ’ ὀδύρεο, μηδέ τοι αἰὼν
θινέτω· ἤδη γάρ σε μάλα πρόφρασσ’ ἀποπέμψω.
ἀλλ’ ἄγε δούρατα μακρὰ ταμὼν ἁρμόζεο χαλκῷ
εὐρεῖαν σχεδίην· ἀτὰρ ἴκρια πῆξαι ἐπ’ αὐτῆς
ὑψοῦ, ὥς σε φέρῃσιν ἐπ’ ἠεροειδέα πόντον.
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ σῖτον καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ οἶνον ἐρυθρὸν
ἐνθήσω μενοεικέ’, ἄ κέν τοι λιμὸν ἐρύκοι,
εἵματά τ’ ἀμφιέσω, πέμψω δέ τοι οὖρον ὄπισθεν,
ὥς κε μάλ’ ἀσκηθὴς σὴν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἵκηαι,
αἴ κε θεοί γ’ ἐθέλωσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,
οἵ μεν φέρτεροί εἰσι νοῆσαί τε κρῆναί τε.”
Ὣς φάτο, ῥίγησεν δὲ πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
“Ἄλλο τι δὴ σύ, θεά, τόδε μήδεαι οὐδέ τι πομπήν,
ἥ με κέλεαι σχεδίῃ περάαν μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης,
δεινόν τ’ ἀργαλέον τε· τὸ δ’ οὐδ’ ἐπὶ νῆες ἐΐσαι
ὠκύποροι περόωσιν, ἀγαλλόμεναι Διὸς οὔρῳ.
οὐδ’ ἂν ἐγὼν ἀέκητι σέθεν σχεδίης ἐπιβαίην,
εἰ μή μοι τλαίης γε, θεά, μέγαν ὅρκον ὀμόσσαι
μή τί μοι αὐτῷ πῆμα κακὸν βουλευσέμεν ἄλλο.”

Notes:
Line 160: “I know you have experienced the gods’ wrath.” These words are not in the original, but are included to try to express the connection between “ὀδύρεο” and Odysseus’ name and identity as a man of pain and suffering.
Line 161: “Don’t let your precious existence expire”: Calypso’s sensitivity and compassion are shown in these words. It is as if she knew all about “his sweet life . . . flowing away”.
Lines 161–2: The words “no / grudge on my side” are not in the original, but emphasize the empathy with Odysseus.

"Don't mourn, poor man, I know you have experienced the gods' wrath.
Don't let your precious existence expire. I've thought it through, no
grudge on my side. I'll let you go. Come, cut long planks, construct
your broad raft. You'll need tools for your work . . . and a half-deck
that is sufficiently high to protect you across overcast seas.
I'll place food on the raft – bread, red wine, water – enough to
ward off hunger and thirst on your journey to family and homeland.
I'll give you clothes. I'll send you a continuous strong wind
so that you will return to your fatherland safely and unscathed,
if – it's not in my power – the immortals, the guardians of heaven,
destine it: they, not I, have power: they plan and decide fate."

She stopped. Then long-suffering Odysseus, dismayed at her words, heard,
shuddered, and answered her, as she Hermes before, with his winged words:

"Something else you have on your mind, my goddess, and it's not to
send me home: you bid me cross on a raft the great sea gulf,
which is so ghastly and painful, and yet not even a trim ship
can pass over this great gulf, even with Zeus's delightful
gale. I'll not set foot on a raft, not till I am assured
I have your goodwill, an avowed great oath from you, goddess,
that you are not plotting another misfortune against me."

Notes:
Lines 162–168: Calypso's obedience to Zeus and her hospitality to Odysseus are evident.
Line 168 is repeated from lines 144 and 26.
Lines 169–170 suggest Calypso's helplessness against the gods' wishes and perhaps some doubt about Odysseus' fate.
Line 171: "long-suffering" ("πολύτλας"): another of Odysseus's epithets.
Line 172 repeats line 117 in the original: just as Calypso was threatened by Hermes's words, so Odysseus is threatened by Calypso's words. The translation attempts to bring out the similarity.
Lines 173–7 show Odysseus' wary suspicion, which has stood him in good stead previously.
Line 178: Odysseus, like his grandfather Autolycus, relies on a "μέγαν ὅρκον" ("an avowed great oath") from Calypso.
Line 179: "you are plotting another misfortune against me" ("μή τί μοι αὐτῷ πῆμα κακὸν βουλευσέμεν ἄλλο"). Odysseus, as we know, has faced many misfortunes. He does not imply that Calypso has plotted misfortune against him before, but that he has suffered many misfortunes in the past.

Ὣς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων,
χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξεν ἔπος τ᾽ ἔφατ᾽ ἔκ τ᾽ ὀνόμαζεν·
“Ἦ δὴ ἀλιτρός γ᾽ ἐσσὶ καὶ οὐκ ἀποφώλια εἰδώς,
οἷον δὴ τὸν μῦθον ἐπεφράσθης ἀγορεῦσαι.
ἴστω νῦν τόδε γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὕπερθε
καὶ τὸ κατειβόμενον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ, ὅς τε μέγιστος
ὅρκος δεινότατός τε πέλει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι,
μή τί σοι αὐτῷ πῆμα κακὸν βουλευσέμεν ἄλλο.
ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν νοέω καὶ φράσσομαι, ἅσσ᾽ ἂν ἐμοί περ
αὐτῇ μηδοίμην, ὅτε με χρειὼ τόσον ἵκοι·
καὶ γὰρ ἐμοὶ νόος ἐστὶν ἐναίσιμος, οὐδέ μοι αὐτῇ
θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι σιδήρεος, ἀλλ᾽ ἐλεήμων.”
Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασ᾽ ἡγήσατο δῖα θεάων
καρπαλίμως· ὁ δ᾽ ἔπειτα μετ᾽ ἴχνια βαῖνε θεοῖο.
ἷξον δὲ σπεῖος γλαφυρὸν θεὸς ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνήρ,
καί ῥ᾽ ὁ μὲν ἔνθα καθέζετ᾽ ἐπὶ θρόνου ἔνθεν ἀνέστη
Ἑρμείας, νύμφη δ᾽ ἐτίθει πάρα πᾶσαν ἐδωδήν,
ἔσθειν καὶ πίνειν, οἷα βροτοὶ ἄνδρες ἔδουσιν·
αὐτὴ δ᾽ ἀντίον ἷζεν Ὀδυσσῆος θείοιο,
τῇ δὲ παρ᾽ ἀμβροσίην δμῳαὶ καὶ νέκταρ ἔθηκαν.
οἱ δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ὀνείαθ᾽ ἑτοῖμα προκείμενα χεῖρας ἴαλλον.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τάρπησαν ἐδητύος ἠδὲ ποτῆτος,
τοῖς ἄρα μύθων ἦρχε Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων·

Notes:
Lines 181–2: Here we see Calypso, sympathetic, loving, yet “arch”. And her words bring these qualities out, as well.
Line 182: literally “you are playful and not sagacious in mind”.

He stopped talking. Calypso, the lovely goddess, with a sad smile,
stroking him tenderly, fondly with her hand, said in her arch voice:

"You are cunning, aren't you, with no knowledge of trivial things like
love? How could you possibly think such thoughts of your loved one?
Know now, heaven and earth, know now, you waters of Stygian
darkness, the downward flowing calamities – greatest of all oaths,
even inspiring the gods themselves with anxiety – know you
that I am not plotting another misfortune against you.
It is my only intention to plan what I'd do myself
if I found myself in the same need as you're in right now.
You should know I have understanding of how to behave and
I am compassionate, having a heart that is merciful, not cruel."

Having convinced the courageous Odysseus, she, the lovely goddess,
walked to the cave at a quick pace. He went after her. They went
into the deep cave, man and goddess, their differences settled.
He sat down at the same seat from which previously Hermes
rose, and the nymph placed all her delectable food on the table
(but for Odysseus the kind of refreshment a mortal would prefer).
She sat facing Odysseus, whom she hoped would be immortal,
but she had to be served the ambrosia-nectar (the gods') meal.
They partook of the food that was lying before them with pleasure,
but when they had enjoyed themselves with their food and their drinking,
fairest of all goddesses, Calypso, attempted a new tack:

Notes:
Line 183: Stanford: "as is shown by your having thought of speaking that word" (1961: 298).
Lines 184–7: Calypso gives her oath.
Line 187: she uses Odysseus' exact words. See line 179.
Lines 188–191: these words are the epitome of hospitality.
Lines 194–201: these lines emphasize the difference between Odysseus ("man" and "mortal") and Calypso ("goddess"), but there is some irony in the fact that Odysseus sat at the same seat as Hermes had. Odysseus is so close to being an immortal. The lines also show again her gracious hospitality.
Line 200: Stanford: "200 is a Formula: 3 times in *Il.*, 11 times in *Od*." (1961: 299). See Book 1, line 149.
Line 202: "attempted a new tack": this is an attempt to translate the original "ἄρα μύθον ἦρχε" (literally "resuming she began her speech").

"Διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,
οὕτω δὴ οἰκόνδε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν
αὐτίκα νῦν ἐθέλεις ἰέναι; σὺ δὲ χαῖρε καὶ ἔμπης.
εἴ γε μὲν εἰδείης σῇσι φρεσὶν ὅσσα τοι αἶσα
κήδε' ἀναπλῆσαι, πρὶν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἱκέσθαι,
ἐνθάδε κ' αὖθι μένων σὺν ἐμοὶ τόδε δῶμα φυλάσσοις
ἀθάνατός τ' εἴης, ἱμειρόμενός περ ἰδέσθαι
σὴν ἄλοχον, τῆς αἰὲν ἐὲλδεαι ἤματα πάντα.
οὐ μέν θην κείνης γε χερείων εὔχομαι εἶναι,
οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἐπεὶ οὔ πως οὐδὲ ἔοικε
θνητὰς ἀθανάτῃσι δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἐρίζειν."
Τὴν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς·
"πότνα θεά, μή μοι τόδε χώεο· οἶδα καὶ αὐτὸς
πάντα μάλ', οὕνεκα σεῖο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια
εἶδος ἀκιδνοτέρη μέγεθός τ' εἰσάντα ἰδέσθαι·
ἡ μὲν γὰρ βροτός ἐστι, σὺ δ' ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως.
ἀλλὰ καὶ ὣς ἐθέλω καὶ ἐέλδομαι ἤματα πάντα
οἴκαδέ τ' ἐλθέμεναι καὶ νόστιμον ἦμαρ ἰδέσθαι.
εἰ δ' αὖ τις ῥαίῃσι θεῶν ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ,
τλήσομαι ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔχων ταλαπενθέα θυμόν·
ἤδη γὰρ μάλα πολλὰ πάθον καὶ πολλὰ μόγησα
κύμασι καὶ πολέμῳ· μετὰ καὶ τόδε τοῖσι γενέσθω."

Notes:
Line 203: the original has the epithet "πολυμήχαν" ("resourceful"), but the translation suggests Calypso means "be resourceful".
Line 205: "If you do, fare well." This curt form of dismissal conveys the hurt in the original: "σὺ δὲ χαῖρε καὶ ἔμπης". Stanford: "'Well goodbye to you and may you have joy in spite of all.' The force of **ἔμπης** … is 'though you are slighting me by your eagerness to leave me'." (1961: 299.)

"Zeus-born son of Laertes, Odysseus, consider your options:
do you now wish homewards to go to your Ithaca, homeland
held dear? Are you going immediately? If you do, fare well.
If, though, you knew, if you could comprehend, your fate,
what pain you'll have to suffer until you come to your own land,
you would remain here, here with me, you'd live here in my homestead,
you'd be immortal. Instead you want to return to your dear wife.
You sat out there pining for her, your wife, the whole day through.
But in my shape, in my figure, am I less beautiful than she?
I think not. It makes no sense that a mortal, a woman,
rivals a goddess either in shape or appearance – it's absurd."

He did consider his options. Odysseus replied to the goddess:
"Powerful goddess, don't be incensed by me. What you have said, I
know to be true: my prudent Penelope isn't as beautiful; your shape,
your fair appearance, is wondrous to contemplate, I know.
She is a mortal and you are immortal and ageless, it is true.
Even so I cannot stop wishing and pining the whole day
through to arrive back home and experience the day of my return.
If the vindictive and cruel gods crush me again on the wine-dark
sea, I'll have to endure all their pain. I can endure pain.
Many disasters I've suffered before and already I've endured
hardships on waves and in wars. What next may befall me, let it be."

Notes:
Lines 206–7: "fate" ("φρεσὶν") and "pain" or "trouble" ("κήδε"), important words in the poem.
Lines 211–3: Calypso cannot understand the logic of Odysseus' choice. Stanford: "These are Calypso's last recorded words to O., though he does not leave till five days later. . .. They contain something of Juno's indignation at *spretae iniuria formae*, as in **ἔμπης** above." (1961: 299.) (See note on line 205.)
Line 214: the original includes the epithet "πολύμητις" ("of many devices"), one of the many key words beginning with πολύ in the poem. "He did consider his options" implies he, not only she, could be crafty.
Line 218 again emphasizes the difference between mortality and immortality.
Line 219: Odysseus quotes Calypso's own words "ἐέλδεαι ἤματα πάντα" (line 210), another important echo in the poem.
Lines 221–4 show Odysseus' determination to endure "μάλα πολλὰ . . . πολλὰ μόγησα" ("many evils . . . many hardships").

Ὣς ἔφατ', ἠέλιος δ' ἄρ' ἔδυ καὶ ἐπὶ κνέφας ἦλθεν·
ἐλθόντες δ' ἄρα τώ γε μυχῷ σπείους γλαφυροῖο
τερπέσθην φιλότητι, παρ' ἀλλήλοισι μένοντες.
Ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς,
αὐτίχ ὁ μὲν χλαῖνάν τε χιτῶνά τε ἕννυτ' Ὀδυσσεύς,
αὐτὴ δ' ἀργύφεον φᾶρος μέγα ἕννυτο νύμφη,
λεπτὸν καὶ χαρίεν, περὶ δὲ ζώνην βάλετ' ἰξυῖ
καλὴν χρυσείην, κεφαλῇ δ' ἐφύπερθε καλύπτρην·
καὶ τότ' Ὀδυσσῆϊ μεγαλήτορι μήδετο πομπήν.
δῶκέν οἱ πέλεκυν μέγαν, ἄρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσι,
χάλκεον, ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἀκαχμένον· αὐτὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ
στειλειὸν περικαλλὲς ἐλάϊνον, εὖ ἐναρηρός·
δῶκε δ' ἔπειτα σκέπαρνον ἐΰξοον· ἄρχε δ' ὁδοῖο
νήσου ἐπ' ἐσχατιῆς, ὅθι δένδρεα μακρὰ πεφύκει,
κλήθρη τ' αἴγειρός τ', ἐλάτη τ' ἦν οὐρανομήκης,
αὖα πάλαι, περίκηλα, τά οἱ πλώοιεν ἐλαφρῶς.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ δεῖξ' ὅθι δένδρεα μακρὰ πεφύκει,
ἡ μὲν ἔβη πρὸς δῶμα Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων,
αὐτὰρ ὁ τάμνετο δοῦρα· θοῶς δέ οἱ ἤνυτο ἔργον.
εἴκοσι δ' ἔκβαλε πάντα, πελέκκησεν δ' ἄρα χαλκῷ,
ξέσσε δ' ἐπισταμένως καὶ ἐπὶ στάθμην ἴθυνεν.

As he finished, the sun set. Darkness enfolded the island.
They went into the innermost part of Calypso's deep cave where
they lay clinging together delighting themselves in their shared love.

But when Dawn came spreading her rose-red fingers of morning,
quickly Odysseus awoke and began to get dressed, and Calypso
too in her glittering loose robe, silver-white, delicate, graceful;
round her thin waist she threw an ornate belt made of the purest
gold, and on her head over her hair and her eyes, a demure veil.
Then she considered her pledge to return the great-hearted Odysseus:
she gave him a big axe that would fit in his hands, a big bronze axe
sharpened on both sides, but it was special because of its olive
handle, a beautiful handle that fitted the axe to perfection.
Then she gave him also an adze, well polished, and led him
out of the cave to the edge of the island where grew a plantation:
there tall trees grew, alder and poplar and fir, up to heaven,
ideal for buoyancy, having been seasoned and dried for a long time.
When she had finished her task and had shown him where the tall trees grew,
sadly Calypso, the fair goddess, went back to her mansion;
but he began with his work, cut down the tall trees, and completed
quickly his work: felled twenty in all, with his axe hewed,
smoothed them deftly, and shaped them till they were equal in measure.

Notes:
Lines 225–7 in their simplicity and understatement convey the reality of the delight Calypso and Odysseus shared in their lovemaking. This shows what he is sacrificing in his resolve to leave Calypso and return to Penelope. Odysseus is faithful to Penelope, but not in the usual sense of the word, faithful, which implies no relations with other women. The same applies to his relationship with Circe.
Line 228 is another formula and should be translated the same way each time.
Lines 230–2 emphasize again Calypso's graceful beauty.
Lines 233, 234, and 237 show Calypso's helpfulness.
Line 242: the word "sadly" is not in the original, but it is relevant to how Calypso would prefer him to stay with her.

τόφρα δ’ ἔνεικε τερετρα Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων·
τέτρηνεν δ’ ἄρα πάντα καὶ ἤρμοσεν ἀλλήλοισι,
γόμφοισιν δ’ ἄρα τήν γε καὶ ἁρμονίῃσιν ἄρασσεν.
ὅσσον τίς τ’ ἔδαφος νηὸς τορνώσεται ἀνὴρ
φορτίδος εὐρείης, εὖ εἰδὼς τεκτοσυνάων, 250
τόσσον ἔπ’ εὐρεῖαν σχεδίην ποιήσατ’ Ὀδυσσεύς.
ἴκρια δὲ στήσας, ἀραρὼν θαμέσι σταμίνεσσι,
ποίει· ἀτὰρ μακρῇσιν ἐπηγκενίδεσσι τελεύτα.
ἐν δ’ ἱστὸν ποίει καὶ ἐπίκριον ἄρμενον αὐτῷ·
πρὸς δ’ ἄρα πηδάλιον ποιήσατο, ὄφρ’ ἰθύνοι. 255
φράξε δέ μιν ῥίπεσσι διαμπερὲς οἰσυΐνῃσι
κύματος εἶλαρ ἔμεν· πολλὴν δ’ ἐπεχεύατο ὕλην.
τόφρα δὲ φάρε’ ἔνεικε Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων,
ἱστία ποιήσασθαι· ὁ δ’ εὖ τεχνήσατο καὶ τά.
ἐν δ’ ὑπέρας τε κάλους τε πόδας τ’ ἐνέδησεν ἐν αὐτῇ, 260
μοχλοῖσιν δ’ ἄρα τήν γε κατείρυσεν εἰς ἅλα δῖαν.

Helpful Calypso, the fair goddess, brought drills for Odysseus.
He drilled all of the planks and positioned them next to each other.
Then he fastened together the planks with some pegs and with firm joints.
Just as carpenters skilled in their trade can construct a large framework
when they build a broad freight ship, just so large did Odysseus
make his broad raft, using his natural talents and sea skills.
He placed decks on the raft, fixed ribs to them, many to hold them
fast, he worked at a great speed till he had finished the long side-
planks, he set a tall mast on the raft, and then fitted a yard-arm.
He next made at the stern a large rudder to steer with on rough seas.
All round he placed willow and osier rushes to protect
him from the waves, and below he threw brushwood in as flooring.
Ever the helper, Calypso, the fair goddess, in addition,
brought him cloth, and with skill he made sails out of it, fastened
braces and cables and stays in the sails, and with levers and great strain
carefully drew the large craft down into the glittering waters.

Notes:
Lines 246 and 258–9 again show Calypso's helpfulness.
Lines 229–261 demonstrate Odysseus' energy and determination.

Τέτρατον ἦμαρ ἔην, καὶ τῷ τετέλεστο ἅπαντα·
τῷ δ' ἄρα πέμπτῳ πέμπ' ἀπὸ νήσου δῖα Καλυψώ,
εἵματά τ' ἀμφιέσασα θυώδεα καὶ λούσασα.
ἐν δέ οἱ ἀσκὸν ἔθηκε θεὰ μέλανος οἴνοιο
τὸν ἕτερον, ἕτερον δ' ὕδατος μέγαν, ἐν δὲ καὶ ᾖα
κωρύκῳ· ἐν δέ οἱ ὄψα τίθει μενοεικέα πολλά·
οὖρον δὲ προέηκεν ἀπήμονά τε λιαρόν τε.
γηθόσυνος δ' οὔρῳ πέτασ' ἱστία δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.
αὐτὰρ ὁ πηδαλίῳ ἰθύνετο τεχνηέντως
ἥμενος· οὐδέ οἱ ὕπνος ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἔπιπτε
Πληϊάδας τ' ἐσορῶντι καὶ ὀψὲ δύοντα Βοώτην
Ἄρκτον θ', ἣν καὶ ἅμαξαν ἐπίκλησιν καλέουσιν,
ἥ τ' αὐτοῦ στρέφεται καί τ' Ὠρίωνα δοκεύει,
οἴη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν Ὠκεανοῖο·
τὴν γὰρ δή μιν ἄνωγε Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων,
ποντοπορευέμεναι ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ χειρὸς ἔχοντα.
ἑπτὰ δὲ καὶ δέκα μὲν πλέεν ἤματα ποντοπορεύων,
ὀκτωκαιδεκάτῃ δ' ἐφάνη ὄρεα σκιόεντα
γαίης φαιήκων, ὅθι τ' ἄγχιστον πέλεν αὐτῷ·
εἴσατο δ' ὡς ὅτε ῥινὸν ἐν ἠεροειδέϊ πόντῳ.

Notes:
Line 264 shows a further act of hospitality: the washing of the guest or stranger is a common act of hospitality and is repeated often in the poem.
Lines 265–8 give further evidence of her generosity and helpfulness. Line 281: "like a shield that is held high": Stanford: "The best sense and metre is given by reading **ὥς τε ῥινὸν** 'like a shield', referring, perhaps, to a flat coast with mountains rising like a boss in the centre; or else to a shield-shaped promontory. . ." (1961: 302). The reference to the shield is ominous.
Line 269: "Odysseus rejoiced": "γηθόσυνος". Although Odysseus knows he has an almost impossible task ahead of him, he rejoices at the opportunity to try to get back to Ithaca.

Four days' work it had taken to finish the raft. On the fifth day
she set him on his way from the island, the fairest Calypso,
but first she washed, then dressed him in new clothes with her sweet scent.
Also the goddess placed two skins in his boat (in the first, black
wine, in the other, a larger one, water) as well as a leather
wallet with food in it, portions of meat that would please and sustain him.
Finally she sent forth for his voyage a gentle and warm wind.
God-like Odysseus rejoiced as he, spreading his sail to the good wind,
skilfully steered with the rudder he'd made at the back of the raft where
he now sat. His eyes stayed open, and he did not once sleep,
watching the Pleiades, also the Ploughman, descending without haste,
also the Great Bear, nicknamed Wagon or Wain by other folk,
circling about in the same place watching Orion the Hunter,
never allowed, like others, to wash in the baths of the Ocean.
He had been warned by Calypso, the fair goddess, at their parting
that he should keep this star on his left as he sailed on the broad sea.
Seventeen days he continued to sail on the sea. On the eighteenth
shadowy mountains appeared. He recognized them as Phaeacian
mountains. The land of Phaeacia lay so near to Odysseus,
but it arose on the mist-covered sea like a shield that is held high.

Notes:

Line 270: "skilfully": "τεχνηέντως". Homer wishes the reader to admire Odysseus' skill at sailing alone without help.

Line 271: "His eyes stayed open, and he did not sleep." Sleep had been his downfall when his "γλυκὺς ὕπνος" allowed his men to open the sack of winds Aeolus had given him (Book 10, line 31). At that time they had been so close to Ithaca they could see the fires on the island of their homeland.

Lines 272–6: the slow dwelling on the names of the stars helps the reader to experience something of the long drawn-out journey ("Seventeen days" – line 278) and the spacious star-lit sky. In the translation of these lines the slow mention of the names with present and past participles telling the reader something about each suggests the way Odysseus spent his time alone in a meditative mood.

Line 276: Calypso's warning and her sending "a gentle and warm wind" (line 268) suggest that, for the time being, Calypso is the goddess who guides Odysseus. Athene is strangely absent in Book 5 after line 20.

Lines 279–280: "He recognized them as Phaeacian / mountains": Phaeacia was close to Ithaca, hence his recognition of the mountains.

Τὸν δ’ ἐξ Αἰθιόπων ἀνιὼν κρείων ἐνοσίχθων
τηλόθεν ἐκ Σολύμων ὀρέων ἴδεν· εἴσατο γάρ οἱ
πόντον ἐπιπλώων· ὁ δ’ ἐχώσατο κηρόθι μᾶλλον,
κινήσας δὲ κάρη προτὶ ὃν μυθήσατο θυμόν·
”“Ὤ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ μετεβούλευσαν θεοὶ ἄλλως
ἀμφ’ Ὀδυσῆϊ ἐμεῖο μετ’ Αἰθιόπεσσιν ἐόντος,
καὶ δὴ φαιήκων γαίης σχεδόν, ἔνθα οἱ αἶσα
ἐκφυγέειν μέγα πεῖραρ ὀϊζύος, ἥ μιν ἱκάνει·
ἀλλ’ ἔτι μέν μίν φημι ἄδην ἐλάαν κακότητος.”
Ὣς εἰπὼν σύναγεν νεφέλας, ἐτάραξε δὲ πόντον
χερσὶ τρίαιναν ἑλών· πάσας δ’ ὀρόθυνεν ἀέλλας
παντοίων ἀνέμων, σὺν δὲ νεφέεσσι κάλυψε
γαῖαν ὁμοῦ καὶ πόντον· ὀρώρει δ’ οὐρανόθεν νύξ.
σὺν δ’ Εὖρός τε Νότος τ’ ἔπεσον Ζέφυρός τε δυσαὴς
καὶ Βορέης αἰθρηγενέτης, μέγα κῦμα κυλίνδων.

Now, at that moment, however, Poseidon, the Lord of the Earthquake,
noticed Odysseus from Solymoi mountains. Poseidon had started
home from remote Ethiopia when he noticed Odysseus
sailing. Incensed, he shook his head, and his innermost wrath seethed:

"O gods! Truly the contrary gods have colluded to alter
policy over Odysseus while I Ethopian friends saw.
Now he is near Phaeacia, where fate destines an escape,
but I'll see to it that the great sufferings allotted to him then
must be experienced: I'll drive troubles enough on his sea path."

These thoughts he spoke, gathered the clouds, and disturbed the becalmed sea,
taking his three-pronged spear and arousing the power of every
current of every tempestuous wind. Then shield-like land and
sea the avenging Poseidon eclipsed with a blanket of cloud. Night rose
after a short sleep, East wind battled with South, West wind blew,
North wind struggled to clear dark skies, and an ominous wave rolled.

Notes

Lines 282–4: Stanford: "Bothe suggests that the repeated **-ω-** sounds in the next three lines are intended to represent his thunderous journey . . ." (1961: 302). These sounds are repeated in the translation with "Now", "however", "Odysseus", "home", "remote", "Ethiopia", "noticed", and "Odysseus" used again. There is also use of the shorter "o" sounds in "moment", "Poseidon", "Lord of", "Solymoi", "Poseidon" repeated, "from", and "noticed"; there is again something of the sound in "mountains". These sounds are repeated in the translation of lines 286 and 287.

Lines 287–8: "the contrary gods have colluded to alter / policy" ("μετεβούλευσαν θεοὶ ἄλλως" – "the gods have reversed a previous decision"). The gods do, at times, seem to be contrary.

Lines 288–9: "where fate destines an escape" ("αἶσα / ἐκφυγέειν"): "αἶσα", like "μοῖρα" in lines 41 and 114, means fate. There is a fine line between one's fate or destiny and one's identity. It is both Odysseus's fate to suffer great hardship ("μέγα πεῖραρ ὀϊζύος") and his calling to live up to his name or identity as the man of pain and suffering.

Line 290: "troubles enough" ("κακότητς"): Odysseus' name is trouble.

Line 291: "gathered the clouds" ("σύναγεν νεφέλας"): Poseidon, like Zeus ("νεφεληγερέτα"), is a "cloud-gatherer".

Line 294: "eclipsed" ("κάλυψε"): the closest one can get to the sound of the Greek word and also to Calypso's name. Our word "eclipsed" comes from the Greek "ἔκλεψε" (3rd person singular aorist of κλέπτω, which means "take away by stealth". What Calypso wanted to do to Odysseus was just a more gentle form of eclipsing his identity than Poseidon is trying to do.

Lines 295–6 show the night and the winds in total confusion, and the last three words "μέγα κῦμα κυλίνδων" have an ominous sound.

As the Conclusion to this chapter the translation of the Calypso episode has attempted to achieve the following:

- the placing of the original text alongside the translation in an easily accessible form;
- a faithful *mimesis* of the original that bears in mind both the original text and the modern reader;
- equivalence with the original line content;
- the recognition of alliteration and assonance in the original and the striving for some kind of similarity in the translation;
- an awareness on the part of the translator of formulae and repetitions in the original and the need to reproduce these in the translation;
- a transference of relevant themes from the original to the translation with explanation in the notes;
- an awareness on the part of the translator that it is not always possible or desirable to achieve literal equivalence and that at times it is necessary to add words not in the original for purposes of metre and readability or, in some cases, for purposes of extending and emphazising the themes;
- the inclusion of notes to highlight characteristics of the original that the translator has tried to achieve in the translation;
- a study of and a commentary on the process of translation;
- and a practical application of some of the aims of poetic translation discussed earlier in this chapter.

Chapter Three

Modern English Poetic Translations of Latin Poetry by Catullus, Horace, and Ovid

i

A Historical Perspective on Translation into English Poetry

In the eighteenth century English poets gave a great deal of attention to the translation and the imitation of the classics. The best example is Alexander Pope, who translated *The Iliad* (1720) and *The Odyssey* (1726) and wrote *Satires and Epistles of Horace Imitated* (1733–8). Many poets and writers of this century tried writing in Latin or translating from or imitating Latin authors: these included Joseph Addison, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Gray, William Cowper, Oliver Goldsmith, and Christopher Smart. William Blake, despite his lack of formal education, had a working knowledge of French, Italian, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. The eighteenth century followed the earlier tradition of translation or imitation of the classics.

In the nineteenth century, Coleridge, Swinburne, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and William Morris contributed to the tradition. It would be wrong to say that in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century the classical influence was not strong, but the practice of translation attracted new interest among English poets in the second half of the twentieth century.

According to Anne Stevenson,

> . . . the rich vein of foreign influence. . ., in the late 1950s, had been opened up by such poets as Robert Bly and Merwin in the United States and Michael Hamburger in Britain. Robert Lowell, too, became interested in translation, publishing *Imitations* in 1961. This general interest in the poetry of other languages . . . gave rise to such magazines as *Modern Poetry in Translation*, edited by Daniel Weissbort, founded in 1965 with Ted Hughes as co-editor. Ted (Hughes) and Sylvia (Plath) collected all they could of this sort of material, including sheafs of Merwin's translations – some of his superb Neruda translations among others – and they occasionally made their

> own from French, Italian, and Spanish. A. Alvarez brought back first translations of various Eastern European poets in 1962, among them Zbigniew Herbert. Ted Hughes contends that by 1962 Sylvia regarded Rilke and Herbert much more as her 'fellow countrymen' than other English-language poets. She revered Rilke and used poems of his in her efforts to learn German. (1998: 183.)

Charles Tomlinson detected a new interest among poets in creative translation at about the same time: he refers to "Hughes' interest in translation" and claims that since the time of Sir Thomas Wyatt "many English poets have given us in their translations work which equals or even surpasses their original verse" and that the "post-war phase is no exception". Tomlinson mentions Michael Hamburger, "for years one of our most prolific translators of German poetry", and gives special praise to his *Paul Celan: Selected Poems* (1972), which "contains altogether exceptional evidence of Hamburger's ability to excel himself and shows that translation can call forth inventiveness and new linguistic power". Tomlinson refers also to the poetry and translations of Elaine Feinstein: "Feinstein illustrates uncannily Roscommon's contention that the translator in identifying himself with his original must become 'No longer his interpreter, but He.'" About her translation of Marina Tsvetayeva's poems in 1971, he writes of "a degree of identification . . . once more permitting the poet to surpass herself and to challenge contemporary British poetry by confronting it with this very unEnglish sensibility that has found for itself at last a style in English" and he asks the question, "Is not this kind of confrontation far more important than the so-called 'original work' of poets resolutely and impeccably minor?" Tomlinson argues: "To say that a poet has done some of his best work as translator is not to demote him; after all, one can say this of Dryden's Ovid and Pope's Homer." He refers to *War Music* (1981) by Christopher Logue, "a series of adaptations from Homer's *Iliad* – translation in a much looser sense than Hamburger's or Feinstein's", which "contains some of his most striking contribution to contemporary verse. . . . Logue succeeds (to adopt his own words) in making the voices of the protagonists come alive and to keep the action on the move. He quotes in his own defence Johnson's words to Boswell: 'We must try its effect as an English poem, that is

the way to judge the merit of a translation.'" Tomlinson asserts: "A continuous tradition of excellent translations has rounded out the work of a number of poets over the past few years" and he mentions Christopher Middleton and Michael Hamburger in their "presentation of modern German poetry", Peter Whigham, "who has finally given us a readable Catullus (1966)", and Edwin Morgan. (1984: 464–465.) Later he mentions C.H. Sisson, who "has also given much thought to translation – including Horace, Heine and Virgil, besides a complete *De Rerum Natura* of Lucretius (1976) and Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1980)" (1984: 468).

Stevenson and Tomlinson show that English poet-translators had rediscovered the importance of translation at least as early as the 1960s. They emphasize how important translation is to poets in their original work, and Tomlinson calls for greater recognition of the contribution of translation to the English poetic tradition.

Who are the major modern English poet-translators? Ezra Pound, Robert Graves, Robert Lowell, Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, Thomas Kinsella, Christopher Middleton, Michael Hamburger, and Charles Tomlinson, to name a few. Unfortunately, most of these poets' creative translations fall outside the scope of my case studies. But an examination of the creative translations made by poet-translators, whether they have been recognised as major poets or not, may be more pertinent to original research uninfluenced by the poets' reputation as "major" poets.

ii

Catullus (a Translator) Translated

Ezra Pound wrote: **". . .** the Greeks might be hard put to find a better poet among themselves than in their disciple, Catullus" (1968: 41).

George Steiner quotes an unusual translation of Catullus' Poem 58A:

> Caeli, Lesbia nostra, Lesbia illa,
> illa Lesbia, quam Catullus unam
> plus quam se atque suos amavit omnes,

nunc in quadriviis et angiportis
glubit magnanimi Remi nepotes.[1]

It is the version by Celia and Louis Zukofsky:

Caelius, Lesbia new star, Lesbia a light,
all light, Lesbia, whom Catullus (o name
loss) whom his eyes caught so as avid of none,
none else – slunk in the driveways, the dingy parts
glut magnanimous Remus, his knee-high pots.

Steiner writes: ". . . they are, at one level, spinning off puerile acrostics, but they are, at another, abusing their source with strategic intent. They are trying to instance possible procedures for American poetry now and tomorrow and hinting, confusedly, at a theory of immediate universal understanding." (1975: 352.)

Celia and Louis Zukofsky attempt in their translation what Ezra Pound calls "*melopoeia*":

> . . . the words are charged, over and above their plain meaning, with some musical property, which directs the bearing or trend of that meaning. . . . The *melopoeia* can be appreciated by a foreigner with a sensitive ear, even though he be ignorant of the language in which the poem is written. It is practically impossible to transfer or translate it from one language to another, save perhaps by divine accident, and for half a line at a time." (1937: 170–171.)

The problem is that the Zukofsky translation sacrifices sense for sound.

How have Peter Whigham, Charles Martin, and Peter Green translated this poem?

Whigham: Lesbia, our Lesbia, the same old Lesbia,
Caelius, she whom Catullus loved once
more than himself and more than all his own,
loiters at the crossroads
and in the backstreets
ready to toss-off the 'magnanimous' sons of Rome. (1966: 118.)

Martin: Lesbia, Caelius – yes, our darling,
yes, *Lesbia*, the Lesbia Catullus

[1] This is the Latin version quoted by Steiner (1975: 352). There are different versions of the last line, where *magnanimi* (genitive singular referring to Remus, as in the Zukofsky and Martin translations) and *magnanimis* and *magnanimos* (accusative plural referring to *nepotes*, as in the Whigham, Green, and Quinn translations) are used.

once loved uniquely, more than any other!
– now on streetcorners & in wretched alleys
she shucks the offspring of greathearted Remus. (1990: 59.)

Green: Caelius, Lesbia – *our* dear Lesbia, *that* one,
that Lesbia whom alone Catullus worshipped
more than himself, far more than all his kinsfolk –
now on backstreet corners and down alleys
jacks off Remus's generous descendants. (2007: 105.)

Whigham and Martin move the vocative Caelius to the second line and the second word respectively; they think that since the main topic of the poem is Lesbia, they are justified in doing so, but they lose the sound of the anguished cry *Caeli*, which is not just a vocative but a cry of pain also. The word *Caeli*, besides being the vocative of Caelius's name (presumably the name of one of Lesbia's lovers who ironically has also lost Lesbia's love), has the ambiguity of *caelum* (heavens) and *Caelus* (god). In starting the poem with the word *Caeli*, Catullus relies on the sound of anguish, as well as the ambiguity of "O God" or something like our "Good heavens!" This cannot come across in a translation into English, but at least the anguished sound can be kept at the beginning of the poem, as Peter Green does, even though the added syllable in "Caelius" loses some of the force of the cry.

Jeffrey Wills refers to "chiastic combinations" (1996: 181) in the first two lines: *Lesbia illa, / illa Lesbia*, but none of the translations is able to keep the chiasmus (the inversion in a second phrase of the order of words in the first). Similarly, none of the translations attempt to capture the metre of the original.

In the second line the word *unam* is placed at the end of the line; it can mean "one" or "sole" or "only" or "the outstanding one". Whigham translates it as "once" and places it at the end of his line. Martin also translates it as "once" and places it at the beginning of his third line. Green translates it as "alone" and places it in the middle of line two in his poem. The meaning and the force of the word are somewhat lost.

The third line *plus quam se atque suos amavit omnes* gives emphasis to the word *omnes* at the end of the line, but the translations lose this emphasis, although Martin has attempted to achieve some emphasis with the exclamation mark.

With the fourth line Whigham, rather unnecessarily, adds a verb and makes the original one line two lines: "loiters at the cross-roads / and in the back streets"; while Martin adds the adjective "wretched".

All three translate the word *glubit* of the last line in accordance with Catullus' deliberately obscene original, but Whigham loses the force of the verb at the beginning of the line by adding "ready to" before the verb, probably because he inserted "loiters" in the previous line; he also places "magnanimous" in inverted commas to try to make sure the reader does not miss the irony. He fears that modern readers will not understand the meaning of Remus and translates it as "Rome".

The last line *glubit magnanimos Remi nepotes* is one of those typically vicious lines of Catullus, a line where he holds nothing back and is prepared to be explicitly obscene. (There are many such lines in Catullus' poems. As Josephine Balmer writes: ". . . without J. N. Adams's seminal 2002 work *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*, I could not have understood, let alone translated, many of Catullus's innuendos, puns or downright obscenities" (2007: 189).[2]) Each of the words in this line of Poem 58A has been chosen for maximum effect. The word *glubit* is chosen as much for its sound as for its meaning; it means "peel", but obviously had a scatological meaning to suggest fellatio. The word *magnanimos* means "brave" or "great-hearted" (as Martin translates it), not "magnanimous" or "generous"; it is used ironically, as Whigham realizes by putting his word in quotation marks, but he mistranslates it. The word *Remi* refers to Remus, twin brother of Romulus, but why does Catullus use this reference? Peter Green in his

[2] The reference for the book to which Josephine Balmer refers is J. N. Adams: *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (London: Duckworth, 2002).

"Explanatory Notes" on Romulus and Remus states blandly: "Catullus uses both names as a shorthand for noble Roman ancestry" (2007: 307).

If, however, we look at the way Catullus uses Romulus and Remus in other poems, the word *Remi* is not to be taken quite so blandly. Catullus refers to Romulus and/or Remus in poems 28, 29, 34, 49, and 58, most of which are poems of invective. Poem 49 appears to be in praise of Cicero, but it is considered to be ironical. Poem 34 is considered by T. P. Wiseman to have been a commissioned poem written shortly after Catullus had written Poem 58A (1985: 95–101). It is a poem written to celebrate Diana and was probably appreciated in Catullus' time as such, but there are so many ironic statements – *puellae et pueri integri* (line 2 and repeated in lines 3–4), *tu potens Trivia et notho es / dicta lumine Luna* (lines 15–16), and *sis quocumque tibi placet* (line 21)[3] – that one cannot resist thinking of this poem as fulfilling a commission or writing what the public or the commissioners wanted, but with hidden meanings – in a sense like Poem 49, which Cicero could not object to but about which he must have wondered.[4]

This kind of thinking makes us come back to line 5 of Poem 58A *glubit magnanimos Remi nepotes.* Perhaps we need to look again at the last two words: the reference to *Remi* may not be "shorthand for noble Roman ancestry". After all, Romulus in Poem 29 is referred to as *cinaedus* ("immoral" or "shameless" or, as Whigham translates, "pederast", or, in the translation of Martin, as "faggot", or as "fag" (Peter Green)). This is not "shorthand for noble Roman ancestry"; rather it is very explicit longhand for disapproval. Almost every word of Catullus' poems has to be weighed for hidden meaning: even when he calls the praetor *irrumator* (Poem 10 line 12) or says to Memmius *irrumasti* (Poem 28 line 10),

[3] In the light of Poem 58A, does the reader not wonder about Catullus' reference to Romans as *puellae et pueri integri*? The reference to Diana as *tu potens Trivia* is loaded with double meaning: Trivia is not only one of the names used to refer to Diana, but has a hint of triviality and can also mean "at the crossroads": when one remembers Poem 58A's *in quadriviis et angiportis* and what goes on there, *potens Trivia* can take on another meaning. The word *notho* means "bastard" or "counterfeit". And line 21 and the whole of the last stanza, with its reference to *Romuli ...gentem*, draws attention to the diverse (and perhaps "shady") titles by which Diana and the Romans are known.

[4] Aubrey Burl refers to Poem 49 as "sarcastic" (2004: 137 and 187).

Catullus may or may not have meant it literally: he could be using it as colloquial abuse as in Poem 16 line 1. But Catullus does not use words blandly or as shorthand. Why does he use the word *Remi* in the last line? Perhaps it is a form of criticism of Roman culture, as in Poem 29 lines 5 and 9: *cinaede Romule*? Perhaps the word in Catullus' time had another suggestion that is lost to us? (The Latin word *remus* means "oar": could it have had a scatological meaning in Catullus' time?) Perhaps it was not only the name for Romulus' brother but also the name or nickname of one of Catullus' contemporaries whom he wishes to mock? The answers to these questions cannot be given, but, in asking them, we come closer to what Catullus may be saying. There is no doubt that Catullus does not look kindly on *magnanimos Remi nepotes*. The word *nepotes* means not only "descendants" but also "spendthrifts", and the word *glubit* makes it clear what they are spending their money on. This last line is packed with meaning, perhaps explicitly obscene or ironical, or deliberately puzzling, or ambiguous.

Peter Green has some harsh words about Kenneth Quinn's "nice waffling examples" of the meaning of *glubit* (2007: 231). Nevertheless Quinn has done a great service to readers of Catullus with his interpretation of Catullus' work. Quinn states that he "had chiefly in mind those who will want to read the Latin but may need help where the original is unfamiliar" , but his "versions are intended at the same time as an interpretation of the Latin". He adds:

> My aim has been to express the original in English as colloquial as is appropriate. Here and there I have simplified a detail where literal translation was likely to do the reader a disservice by denying him the clue he needed. In a few places, where differences in idiom or the connotations of words would have meant a literal translation that misrepresented the original, I have allowed myself . . . liberty . . .. These cases are not numerous and I do not think the reader with little or no Latin will be seriously misled – certainly less so than if he consults the majority of published translations at present available; and he will find it more possible, I think, to sense what the original is like. (1972: vi.)

This modest explanation of his "versions" as interpretations rather than translations underplays the insight that his "versions" often give. Here is his "version" of Poem 58A:

> Caelius, Lesbia, this Lesbia of ours,
> this Lesbia, no one else, whom Catullus loved
> more than self, more than all to whom he owed love,
> now on street corners and in back alleys
> peels Remus' generous descendants bare.

Whether or not the whole of his "version" succeeds, Quinn has come closest (of the translations we have studied) to capturing the force of lines 1 and 2.

Analysing others' translations of a particular piece is a stimulus to try one's own translation or version. If one bears in mind all the considerations above, perhaps some such version or translation as the following attempt of mine would be worth considering:

> Caelie, Lesbia our one, Lesbia that one,
> that one Lesbia, whom Catullus – only
> her – loved more than himself, his own, than them all,
> now at crossroads and narrow alleyways she
> glubes with macho male members, Remus' offshoot.

This translation attempts the diminutive vocative, "Caelie" to keep the metre of the original in the first line and uses the non-existent word "glubes" to try to capture the sound of *glubit* and to keep the reader guessing, as the original does, about what the word means. It tries to capture the strangeness of the original's emphases, the end-of-line importance of "only" and "all", and the suggestive meaning of the last line. The colloquial "macho" and the alliteration in the line attempt to recreate the tone and ridicule in the original.

Catullus often uses this epigrammatic format. Quinn refers to the influence Catullus' epigrams have had on Auden and Pound (1972: 25–26), but the modern poet most influenced was Yeats, who uses the epigrammatic format often. Catullus' influence can be seen not only in the translations of his work, but also in original poems that recapture Catullus' style, his "ribaldry", his "irony", and "his passionate commitment to the twin ideals of craftsmanship and erudition in

poetry" – Quinn (1972: 8). A translator has to be aware of these characteristics when translating Catullus.

Catullus was a creative translator: he translated at least two poems from the Greek, Poems 51 (from Sappho) and 66 (from Callimachus). Rosanna Warren presents the Greek poem by Sappho in the same accessible form as Dimock did with the Homeric Greek:

> Phainetai moi keinos isos theoisin
> emmen oner ottis enantios toi
> izanei kai plasion adu phonei-
> sas upakouei
>
> kai gelaisas imeroen, to m'ei man
> kardian en stethesin eptoasen;
> os gar es t'ido, broke', os me phonas
> ouden et' ikei
>
> all' akan men glossa eage, lepton
> d'autika kroi pur upadedromaken,
> oppatessi d'oud' en oreimm', epirrom-
> beisi d'akouai,
>
> kad de m'idros psukros ekei, tromos de
> paisan agrei, klorotera de poias
> emmi, tethnakein d'oligo pideueis
> phainomai . . .[5]

[5] A Greek original and a translation by F. L. Lucas may be found in Catullus (1971: 86–87). The translation reads:

> Him I hold as happy as God in Heaven,
> Who can sit and gaze on your face before him,
> Who can sit and hear from your lips that sweetest
> Music you utter–
>
> Hear your lovely laughter, that sets a-tremble
> All my heart with flutterings wild as terror.
> Ah, when I behold you an instant, straightway
> All words fail me,
>
> Helpless halts my tongue, a devouring fever
> Runs like fire through every vein within me,
> Darkness veils my vision, my ears are deafened,
> Beating like hammers;
>
> Cold the sweat runs down me; a sudden trembling
> Leaves my limbs a-quiver; my face grows paler
> Than the summer-grasses; I see beside me
> Death stand, and madness.

She comments on "the haunting shape" of the the poem:

> In Sappho's hands it plays release against restraint with unrivaled cunning: the poem runs from stanza to stanza like water pouring from basin to basin down a trout stream, twisting and flashing, unfurled and checked. As Charles Segal has observed, its very motion is the erotic persuasion, *peitho*, of which Sappho so often writes. Within each hendecasyllabic line the opening trochaic feet give way to the impulse which throbs forward in the choriamb, to be teasingly checked by the concluding bacchiac: ¯ ˘ ¯ × / ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ / ˘ ¯ ¯. The halt teases because more often than not the sentence's propulsion launches us into the next line, sometimes through enjambment within a word: *phonei- / sas* (ll. 3-4), *epirrom- / beisi* (ll. 11–12). After three such hendecasyllables the adonic seems to dam up the current with its wedgelike, truncated shape and final pair of long syllables, but Sappho admits no such resolution, and spills her poem over barrier after barrier. Within this flow, the eddies of assonance and consonance complete the work of hypnotic enchantment. In its expansions and contractions this is a stanza fatally gauged to register the pulse of desire. (1989: 204–205.)

This shows Warren's perceptive criticism of the original, the type of analysis this research considers relevant to poetic translation, as was noted in Chapter Two.

Warren is not complimentary about Catullus' "transposition from Greek to Latin"[6]:

> . . . we can observe right from the start that Catullus has 'lost it' (to use current parlance) with the very first word. *Phainetai*, from *phaino* (to appear), shares a root with *phaios* (light), and with the verb *phao* (to give light, to shine). The 'appearance' Sappho indicates is no mere seeming or being seen, but something more on the order of our 'epiphany,' an English cognate of *phaino*. It is used of the apparitions of deities. The man in Sappho's poem, *keinos*, that one, whoever he is who sits next to the beloved girl, blazes in the first stanza with a radiance reflected from Aphrodite, through the girl. It is an epiphany of Love, working upon the man and, beyond him, upon Sappho observing. We are confronted here not simply with a relative

[6] Aubrey Burl comments about Catullus' "seemingly innocent recital of a translation of Sappho, a rendering that was almost faithful but containing secretive undertones of desire": "It was a declaration of love that was close to the original, but one that contained hints. If Clodia understood and approved then it was a success. If not, then it was just a good translation cleverly written in exactly the same difficult metre." (2004: 140.) Quinn considers Poem 51 to be "the first poem Catullus sent, or showed, his mistress" (1972: 57).

> poverty in Latin and English verbs of seeming, but with an entirely different conception of the manifestation of the divine.
>
> Another detail: Sappho's *imeroen* (l. 5). A long-drawn-out, caressing neuter adjective used adverbially ("and listens to you laughing *enticingly*"), it contains the word *eros*, and is charged with desire, with the dread and sacred power of love, to a degree that annihilates most dippy English substitutes and far outstrips Catullus' merely sensory *dulce* (sweetly). As if *imeroen* had not sufficient voltage, Sappho renews the charge in a phonetic echo, completing the line *kai gelaisas imeroen*, to *m'ei man*, whose sensuous alliteration and assonance can be savored even by the Greekless reader. A few final points: Catullus inserts a legalistic clause into line 2: *si fas est, superare divos* (if it is permitted, [he seems] to surpass the gods). It testifies to a peculiarly Roman attitude about men and gods, but it also slows up the poem, and a good deal is lost in line 6 in the replacement of Sappho's heart shuddering in her breast by the abstract *sensus* (general powers of apprehension). (1989: 207–208.)

Rosanna Warren's translation (1989: 199) of Catullus' translation reads:

> *Ille mi par . . .*
>
> He's like a god, that man, he seems
> (if this can be) to shine beyond
> the gods, who nestling near you sees
> you and hears you
>
> laughing low in your throat. It tears me
> apart. For when I glimpse you,
> Lesbia, look – I'm helpless:
> tongue a frozen
>
> lump, and palest fire
> pouring through all my limbs; my ears
> deafened in ringing, each eye
> shuttered in night. . . .
>
> You're wasting your time, Catullus,
> laying waste to your life. You love it.
> Whole kingdoms and blissful cities
> have wasted away, like you.

Judged by her standards, this poem achieves the meaning of *Phainetai* with her use of "shine" in the second line, but it does not have the force of Sappho's first word. Warren does not, however, attempt to capture the Sapphic metre and misses some of the emphasis on certain words that Catullus intends: for example, the

repetition of *ille* at the start of the second line and the repetition of *otium* as the first word of the last three lines. In the last stanza she does, however, give an interesting translation of *otium* as "waste" and she uses repetition to enforce this meaning. The translation of *dulce ridentem* as "laughing low in your throat" distorts the original, and the sound of *tintinant* is not conveyed by "deafened in ringing". Nevertheless she has succeeded in keeping the word "Lesbia" at the beginning of her line 7 where it deserves to be, and her next word, "look" is well used and in keeping with Catullus' *aspexi*, though not exactly translated.

Commenting on her own writing, Warren makes comments that are relevant to translation:

> . . . The so-called original poems in my book are, in their own way, translations of several lyric traditions into personal experience and idiom, and are possible only because of strenuous acts of reading, one form of which we know, conventionally, as translation. I am convinced here with the way in which the individual poet inherits poetry, or, in Eliot's formulation, is catalyzed by it; and I take translation as a specific and especially focused instance of the reception and transformation of literary tradition."

Warren makes an important connection between her "so-called original" writing and "translations of . . . lyric traditions into personal experience and idiom" through "strenuous acts of reading", which she connects with "translation". A poet "inherits poetry", and translation is an important part "of the reception and transformation of literary tradition". She has provided a very strong case for the importance of translation in the tradition of poetry. She then applies this to what drew her to Catullus' poem 51: "I was drawn to Catullus 51 ('*Ille mi par* . . .') . . . because I was touched by the pathos of its being a translation and not 'the real thing'." Warren moves from "Catullus' forging of a new poetry from his still rather primitive native traditions and Greek models" to "the situation of any poet in the strain of self-creation through confrontation with the foreign and the past, the choosing of a parentage". She saw in "that situation" "an analogy for the self-creation of a whole literature which develops by exposure to the 'other,' as English literature, also barbaric in its early stages, has done in burst after burst,

and as American literature, given its colonial inception, could not avoid doing." (1989: 200.) These words remind us that poets "in the strain of self-creation" confront "the foreign and the past". Translation is also a means of creativity in the recreated translation and the poets' original writing.

Catullus' original, in the version used by Peter Green (2007: 98) and alongside Charles Martin's translation (1990: 51), is:

Ille mi par esse deo uidetur, *ille, si fas est, superare diuos,* *qui sedens aduersus identidem te* *spectat et audit*	To me that man seems like a god in heaven, seems – may I say it? – greater than all gods are, who sits by you & without interruption watches you, listens
dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis *eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,* *Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi* *< vocis in ore;>*	to your light laughter, which casts such confusion onto my senses, Lesbia, that when I gaze at you merely, all of my well-chosen words are forgotten
lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus *flamma demanat, sonitu suopte* *tintinant aures, gemina teguntur* *lumina nocte.*	as my tongue thickens & a subtle fire runs through my body while my ears are deafened by their own ringing & at once my eyes are covered in darkness!
otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est; *otio exsultas nimiumque gestis;* *otium et reges prius et beatas* *perdidit urbes.*	Leisure, Catullus. More than just a nuisance, leisure: you riot, overmuch enthusing. Fabulous cities & their sometime kings have Died of such leisure.

Martin uses an eleven-syllable line in each of the first three lines and a five-syllable line for the last line of each stanza in imitation of the lines of Catullus, but he does not attempt the Sapphic metre; it is difficult to capture the central Sapphic choriamb in English. Again the repetition of *ille* at the beginning of the first two lines is lost, and he does not place Lesbia at the beginning of line 7 as in the original. The word "merely" in line 7 of the translation is in a strange position: the word order "when I / merely gaze at you" would have better expressed what Martin wanted to say. He translates *sonitu suopte* / *tintinant aures* (lines 10–11) almost the same as Warren did, "my ears are deafened / by their own ringing", but keeps the meaning of *suopte*, whereas Warren does not. In his last stanza Martin keeps the repetition of *otium* by using the word "leisure" three times, but Warren's "waste" is perhaps more relevant to Catullus' poem.

Quinn probably offers the best translation of *sonitu suopte / tintinant aures*: "my ears resound / with their own din" in his "version". He describes Poem 51 as a

"very literary, very exaggerated description of passionate feeling" and detects "a note of irony" – "only a translation". (1972: 57.) It is nevertheless a relevant poem to study since it allows an examination of creative translation in English from a creative translation in Latin from an original in Greek.

There is controversy about whether Catullus' last stanza is part of Poem 51 or a fragment that was added (perhaps by mistake) to this poem. Whigham, in his free translation of Poem 51 (1966: 110), calls it a Coda and attempts to link it more effectively with the rest of the poem:

Coda
Her ease is your sloth, Catullus
you itch and role in her ease:

former kings and cities
lost in the valley of her arm.

Although Whigham's version is not an accurate translation of Catullus' "coda" or fragment, it does try to make sense of the last stanza as part of Poem 51.

Catullus' *gemina teguntur / lumina nocte* (lines 11–12) can be related to a line from an early poem, "The Habit of Perfection", by Gerard Manley Hopkins: "Be shellèd, eyes, with double dark" (line 9) (1953: 6). In his typical way, Hopkins uses the unusual verb "shellèd" to mean covered. Hopkins was a classical scholar and is likely to have known Sappho's and Catullus' work. The interesting connection (if there is one) between Catullus' words and Hopkins' is the use of "double dark": The adjective *gemina* ("twin, double, both, or similar") can describe either *lumina* (neuter plural nominative), which can mean "lights, torches, days, eyes, life, glory, or clarity" or *nocte* (feminine singular ablative), which can mean "night, darkness, or obscurity"; whereas the obvious description is with *lumina*, it is rather an unpoetic one ("both eyes"), and the more poetic description is with *nocte* ("double dark"). The range of meaning in *lumina* and *nocte* was probably intended by Catullus and cannot be translated adequately in English. This is part of Catullus' creativity because this range of meaning is not to be found in Sappho's original. What Catullus suggests is that the state of unfulfilled desire is like all forms of light, day, life itself, glory, and clarity being

covered, hidden, buried (*teguntur*) by night, darkness, and obscurity in double measure. Only Micaela Janan and Reney Myers and Robert J. Ormsby (besides Hopkins perhaps) pick this up: Janan translates these words: "eyes are covered with double night" (1994: 72–73), and Myers and Ormsby "a double night confounds / My eyes in dizziness" (1972: 49).

Warren makes the point that Catullus in his translation "seems to have omitted her (Sappho's) remarkable fourth stanza" (1989: 208):

> kad de m'idros psukros ekei, tromos de
> paisan agrei, klorotera de poias
> emmi, tethnakein d'oligo pideueis
> phainomai . . .

This is a "remarkable" stanza, and it is a pity that Catullus did not translate it (or perhaps he did, but his translation has been lost). Warren observes that Catullus "misses the ring structure in her poem that linked the apparition (*phainetai*) of the rival man in line 1 through the sundering of her own body to a reunification of self in the strongly enjambed verb 'to be' (*emmi*, l. 15) and felt apparition of self 'I seem' (*phainomai*, l. 16)" (1989: 208). The verb "κακχέεται" in Janan's Greek[7] (a verb which Warren replaces with the rather weak "ekei") sounds like a torrent or a waterfall; the image of "χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας / ἔμμι", by contrast, suggests a wan peace; and the closing words of the stanza "τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω 'πιδεύης / φαίνομ' ἔμ' αὔται" ("tethnakein d'oligo pideueis / phainomai . . .") – whichever version is used – depicts the image of death as the "epiphany" (as Warren calls it) of unfulfilled desire. One can only guess that Catullus' translation has been lost, because he would undoubtedly have responded to Sappho's poetic imagery, as we know he did later when in Poem 11, lines 22–4, he depicts his own unfulfilled desire as

> *velut prati*
> *ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam*
> *tactus aratro est*

(Peter Green: like some flower
at the field's edge, after the passing ploughshare's

[7] See Micaela Janan's version of Sappho's poem (1994: 72–73).

cut a path through it (2007: 57).)

or as in Poem 62, lines 39–41,

> *ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis,*
> *ignotus pecori, nullo conuolsos aratro,*
> *quem mulcent aurae, firmat sol, educat imber*

(Green:

> Like a flower that blossoms unseen in some high-fenced garden,
> unknown to the flock, not ripped up by the ploughshare,
> caressed by the breeze, sun-strengthened and shower-nurtured, …
> (2007: 127))

(There is an interesting echo of these words of Catullus in Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" when he writes "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen, / And waste its sweetness on the desert air." Gray was a classical scholar and would probably have known both the works of Sappho and Catullus. This is just another example of "the way in which the individual poet inherits poetry, or, in Eliot's formulation, is catalyzed by it" (Warren (1989: 200).)

One of the best-known poems by Catullus is Poem 85:

> *Odi et amo. quare id faciam, fortasse requiris?*
> *nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.*

(Literally, as in the Loeb Classical Library version, "I hate and love. Why I do so, perhaps you ask. I know not, but I feel it and am in torment.")

Stephen Burt, in reviewing Disart's 2008 book of poems, *Watching the Spring Festival*, and after quoting Frank Disart's three versions of Catullus's Poem 85, as well as the above Loeb Classical Library version, refers to Catullus' Poem 85 as "a poem of helpless self-scrutiny and self-laceration" (2008: 31).

Quinn refers to Poem 85 as a poem "remarkable for its utter simplicity, its dispassionate precision of statement, the icy detachment with which Catullus was able to put on paper an emotional conflict that affected him intensely". About the opening words *Odi et amo* Quinn writes:

> Catullus did not write 'I love her and I hate her' as we often carelessly translate. . . . Everything is concentrated on the conflicting emotions Catullus feels within himself. . . . *odi* is something more like 'despise', 'loathe' (to feel the opposite of

> affection, to be repelled by) than 'hate'. . . . Catullus is less concerned with affection gone than with what has taken its place. Hence the order of the words – 'despise' first, not 'love': 'despise' is almost taken for granted; the elision of the second syllable of *odi* throws all the emphasis on *amo*. And 'and', not 'but': 'but' is too obvious; 'and' shows the subtler rhetorician – it adds instead of opposing; it does nothing to prepare us for the surprise of *amo*; it avoids separating emotions which are indissolubly mixed. . . . the question – simply put, on a deliberately casual note (*fortasse*), as though he's not sure the matter is of interest to others. The answer also is casual: *nescio* – the last syllable slurred, so that the word counts as a dactyl; the metricians call this 'iambic shortening', but pretty certainly the word was so pronounced in ordinary conversation – 'I don't know', rather than the deliberate, measured 'I do not know'.

Quinn pays a great deal of attention to the word *excrucior*:

> . . . *fieri* picks up the casual sounding *faciam*, only to reject it; it's not something Catullus does, it's something done to him. The last word is *excrucior*, the longest word in the couplet, and the only one that catches the eye. Literally it means 'I am put on the rack' (i.e., tortured, like a slave). But the word is one of those striking words that are overworked in colloquial speech; the sort of overstatement there is in our 'I go through hell' – an overstatement nobody gives a second thought to in ordinary speech; at the same time the expression never quite loses its power to mean what it means, in the right context. Catullus provides the right context for *excrucior*, not by rhetorical fireworks, but by leading up to it quietly: the effect is extraordinarily powerful." (1972: 108–109.)

This enthusiastic response to Poem 85 will help us to analyse some of the translations into English poetry:

Whigham: I hate and I love. And if you ask me how,
I do not know: I only feel it, and I'm torn in two. (1966: 197.)

Martin: I hate & love. And if you should ask how I can do both,
I couldn't say; but I feel it, and it shivers me. (1990: 122.)

Green: I hate and love. You wonder, perhaps, why I'd do that?
I have no idea. I just feel it. I am crucified. (2007: 191.)

Ezra Pound: I hate and love. Why? You may ask but
It beats me. I feel it done to me, and ache. (1963: 33.)

When one compares these with Quinn's "versions",

> I hate and I love. You ask perhaps the reason?
> I don't know. But I feel it happen and go through hell. (1972: 55.)

> I hate and I love. You ask perhaps the reason?
> I don't know. But I feel it happen, and am tortured. (1972: 125.)

one cannot help feeling that the advantages of Quinn's "interpretation" or literary criticism of the poem are telling. Whigham does not take cognizance of Catullus' *fortasse*, and his "I am torn in two" is a cliché. Martin's "it shivers me" does not capture the effect of the original *excrucior*. In Green's translation the last line is broken by the three sentences, where Catullus has one, and "I am crucified" has too many other connotations in the target language. Ezra Pound's translation, which consists only of single-syllable words, shortens each of the lines, uses a colloquial expression "It beats me" that captures *nescio* well, and with his last sentence "I feel it done to me, and ache" comes very close to the original statement; yet he has completely transformed the original into his poem that is so different in many ways from the original. Quinn's first version with its "go through hell" is too colloquial, but his second "and am tortured" conveys the meaning of *excrucior* well. Green's and Quinn's scholarship, which is evident in Green's elaborate Introduction and Notes and in Quinn's interpretative methods, seems to have contributed towards their English versions of Catullus' poem.

There is no doubt that a classical background helped the creative translators in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Pope, who did not have the classical background, sought the help of scholars to assist him. In the twentieth century James Wright and Robert Bly collaborated in their translations, and Bly relied on assistance for many of his translations of foreign poems. Nevertheless the lack of scholarship on the part of poet-translators and the lack of creative skill on the part of scholars have caused deficiencies. It is a rare feat for a poet to be able to translate well or for a scholar to produce good creative translations.

The poems analysed so far are about the trauma of the relationship with Lesbia. There are other "Lesbia" poems that celebrate love. One of the best is 107. Here is the original with Quinn's English "version".

Catullus 107	**Quinn's "Version"**
Si quoi quid cupido optantique optigit umquam	Whenever a man gets something he wants, desires, but
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.	doesn't hope for, he feels truly grateful for it.
quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque carius auro,	And so I too am grateful, it is more than gold to me,
quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido.	that you restore yourself to me who wanted you.
restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te	Restore yourself to me desiring but not hoping, bring
nobis, o lucem candidiore nota!	yourself back to me. O red-letter day!
quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis ab dis	What man alive is happier than I? Who can say there's
optandum in uita dicere quis poterit?[8]	more to hope for in life than this?

Quinn comments: "The words almost stumble over one another, so great is Catullus' excitement . . ." (1972: 199). Green provides a note on the poem: "The Latin stutters with emotional excitement: elisions pile up, line 3 (if the text is not corrupt) contains a nice asyndeton in *carius auro*, Catullus' incredulous delight at Lesbia's return after estrangement is beautifully conveyed" (2007: 267).

Green's translation is:

Catullus 107	**Green's Translation (2007: 205)**
Si quoi quid cupido optantique optigit umquam	If anything ever came through for one who so lovingly
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.	yearned for it, yet without hope – that's balm for the soul.
quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque carius auro,	So, there's balm for us too, than gold more precious,
quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido.	Lesbia, in this: that you've brought yourself back to me
restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te	and my yearning for you: yes, back to my hopeless yearning,
nobis, o lucem candidiore nota!	to me, by your own choice. O brighter than white
quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis ab dis	day! Who lives happier than I do? Who can argue
optandum in uita dicere quis poterit?	that life holds any more desirable bliss?

[8] This is the version from *Catulli Carmina*, ed. Robinson Ellis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946). It can be compared with the following two:

Peter Green:	*Kenneth Quinn:*
Si quicquam cupidoque optantique optigit umquam	*Si quicquam cupido optantique optigit umquam*
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.	*insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.*
quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque, carius auro,	*quare hoc est gratum, nobis quoque, carius auro,*
quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido.	*quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido;*
restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te 5	*restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te* 5
nobis, o lucem candidiore nota!	*nobis. o lucem candidiore nota!*
quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis hace	*quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis hac est*
optandam uita dicere quis poterit?	*optandus uita dicere quis poterit?*

Green's "came through", whereas it may be an accurate translation of *optigit*, is placed before his translation of *cupido optantique*, and the translation loses the emphasis of the original. His word "balm" for *gratum* does not seem appropriate for a love poem, and, although "soul" is a justifiable translation of *animo*, it has connotations that do not fit the original. The unusual word order of "than gold more precious, / Lesbia, in this" causes his translation to stumble somewhat, and his line 4 does not capture the excitement of *quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido*. The addition of "by your own choice" seems unnecessary and delays the emphasis of *o lucem candidiore nota!* The translation of these last words as "O brighter than white / day!" (which Green explains in his explanatory note: "The white mark for a lucky day was a commonplace cliché … putting a white or black stone daily in pot or quiver to indicate that day's happiness or unhappiness" (2007: 267)) seems rather commonplace, much like Quinn's "O red-letter day!". Green uses "desirable" in the last line and, although this is an accurate translation, he has not captured the repetition of *optanti* in line 1 in Catullus' use of *optandam* in the last line. The word "bliss", like "balm" and "soul" earlier, appears rather old-fashioned for a modern creative translator.

Martin's translation (1990: 144) also does not quite capture the original's excitement:

Si quoi quid cupido optantique optigit umquam	If ever anything which someone with no expectation
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.	desired should happen, we are rightly delighted!
quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque carius auro,	And so this news is delightful – it's dearer than gold is:
quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido.	You have returned to me, Lesbia, my desired!
restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te	Desired, yet never expected – but you *have* come back
nobis, o lucem candidiore nota!	to me! A holiday, a day of celebration!
quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis ab dis	What living man is luckier than I am? Or able
optandum in uita dicere quis poterit?	to say that anything could possibly be better?

Martin's first two lines do not recreate the excitement of the elided original and are awkward, and his "rightly delighted!" with its assonance and the unnecessary exclamation mark does not have the force of *hoc est gratum animo proprie*. The addition of the word "news" seems inappropriate and lessens the force of the repeated *hoc est gratum*. The weak and unnecessary word, "is", at the end of the

line lessens the excitement also. Martin succeeds with the repeated "desired" in lines 4 and 5, but, by using different words for the repeated *restituis* in lines 6 and 7 of the original, he loses the emphasis of the word, which is probably the most important word in the poem. It appears that he is aware of this and attempts to make amends by using italics for "*have*" and by using another exclamation mark. His words "A holiday, a day of celebration!" capture the emotion of *o lucem candidiore nota!* but they lose the imagery in the original. By changing the verb *uiuit* to an adjective "living" he reduces its meaning, and in the last line of his translation he seems to have been unaware of the repetition of the idea of *uiuit* in *uita*, and he misses out on the intended repetition in *optandum* or *optandam* or *optandus* (whichever original is being used) because it must be connected with the *optanti* of the first line.

Whigham does not try to keep to the format of the original:

Si quoi quid cupido optantique optigit umquam	If ever anyone anywhere, Lesbia, is looking
	for what he knows will not happen
	and then unexpectedly it happens –
	the soul is astonished,
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.	as we are now in each other,
quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque carius auro,	an event dearer than gold,
quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido.	for you have restored yourself, Lesbia, desired
restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te	restored yourself, longed for, unlooked for,
	brought yourself back
nobis, o lucem candidiore nota!	to me. White day in the calendar!
quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis ab dis	Who happier than I?
	What more can life offer
optandum in uita dicere quis poterit?	than the longed for unlooked for event when it happens? (1966: 219)

The first four words "If ever anyone anywhere" capture the excitement of the original, even if they are not exact translations. Although the inclusion of Lesbia in the first line is not in keeping with the original, it does not hinder the translation: Whigham's first three lines are an expansion of the first line of the original but are true to the original's excitement. In Whigham's next two lines, "the soul is astonished, / as we are now in each other", there is, however, nothing

like the force of Catullus' repetition in lines 2 and 3 of the original. Whigham uses the repetition in lines 4 and 5 of the original with his repeated "restored yourself" (as in Quinn's version) in his lines 7 and 8, though "restored" sounds somewhat awkward and "returned" seems better to the English ear. Whigham does not, however, consistently recreate the repetitions in the original: he does not use the same word in his translation for *cupido* in line 1 of the original, though he does for lines 4 and 5; the absence of the repetition in lines 2 and 3 has already been noted; he does not translate *optanti* in line 1 in the same way as its equivalent in the last line of the original; he does not seem to realize there is repetition in the words *uiuit* and *uita*, which could have been kept in the translation. Yet Whigham does use repetition in his translation: "looking" (line 1) and "unlooked for" (lines 8 and 13); "happen" (line 2) and "happens" (line 3 and line 13); "event" in lines 6 and 13; "restored yourself" (lines 7 and 8); "longed for" (lines 8 and 13). Like Quinn, Green, and Martin, Whigham, in translating *o lucem candidiore nota!* as "White day in the calendar!" (line 10), has missed the imagery of the original. Nevertheless, Whigham's is perhaps the most creative of the four translations given.

It no doubt helps the reader who has the original on one page and the translation on the opposite page if the lines in the translation are roughly the same as the lines in the original. No doubt that is what Quinn, Green, and Martin have in mind (although Martin does not include the Latin original in his book of translations). Sometimes, however, the creative translation may not keep to this rule, and especially with a short poem in the original it may not matter much if the number of lines in the translation differs from the number of lines in the original. This is obviously what Whigham thought, though it is interesting to note that in his two published translations of *The Poems of Catullus* – the Penguin edition of 1966 and the University of California Press edition of 1983 – he does not provide the translation alongside the original: the Penguin edition does not contain the original, only the translation, and the other, though it is subtitled *A Bilingual*

Edition, contains the translations on pages 49–228 (178 pages) and the original poems on pages 249–330 (82 pages).

What follows is my translation; it does not keep the equivalence between the lines of the original and the lines of the translation but attempts nevertheless an easy comparison.

Si quoi quid cupido optantique optigit umquam	If relief comes ever
	to someone longing and desiring,
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.	not expecting,
	it's a celebration special.
quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque carius auro,	And now it's celebration time for us,
	better than a gift of gold,
quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido.	because you have returned, Lesbia,
	the one I've longed for.
restituis cupido atque insperanti, ipsa refers te	You've returned to the one
	longing and not expecting,
	you are back
nobis, o lucem candidiore nota!	with us. O light of more
	dazzling beauty
	than ever known before!
quis me uno uiuit felicior, aut magis ab dis	Who lives happier than I?
	What from heaven more
optandum in uita dicere quis poterit?	desirable in life
	could anyone imagine?

iii

Horace Lost in Translation

Catullus wrote in the age of Julius Caesar and Cicero. The great poets of the Augustan Age were Virgil, Horace, and Ovid. Virgil has had a great influence on English poets, especially the poets of the so-called "Augustan age" in English poetry, "from Dryden to the beginning of the Georgian period"[9]. Dryden translated Virgil, as well as other Latin authors, towards the end of his life. Ezra Pound turned the tide against the adulation of Virgil in English literature with his witty chapter, "Homer or Virgil?" (1962: 17–18) in which he refers to the "gulf between Homer and Virgil". Robert Graves called the age of Dryden and Pope "The Age of Obsequiousness" (1959: 37–58). Despite this twentieth-century turn against Virgil and Dryden (reputedly the greatest translator of Virgil into

[9] Michael Stapleton calls the term "Augustan age . . . rather a silly one . . ." (1983: 37).

English), Robert Fitzgerald and Robert Fagles have both translated *The Aeneid*.[10] Some attention will be given to Virgil in the chapters on Dante's *Commedia*, and Fitzgerald's and Fagles' translations of Homer have already been examined.

The reception of Horace in ancient times, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and in the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries has been well documented in *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*[11]. It refers to translations of Horace by Abraham Cowley, John Dryden, Christopher Smart, and the young Gerard Manley Hopkins, to mention a few well-known poets. Among "the Moderns", "versions" by Robert Lowell, J. V. Cunningham, and C. H. Sisson are mentioned, while the translations by living poets, David Ferry and Charles Tomlinson, are praised. The attention given to Horace's influence on English poets shows Horace's importance in the tradition of English poetry and translation.

The translation of Horace's poetry by Dryden has been widely acclaimed. David Armstrong refers to Dryden's "version" of Ode 3. 29 as "the greatest Horatian translation in the English language" (1989: 110). Both Armstrong and Steiner quote Dryden's eighth stanza, but Steiner is more controlled in his assessment of Dryden's translation (1975: 426–429) with his words "rewording", "recasting", and "rewrite". Steiner states that Dryden's version ". . . illustrates a crucial mechanism of formal-cultural rewording" and he continues:

> The changes of tonal value, of prosodic technique and prosodic identification implicit in the recasting of Alcaic strophes into Pindaric stanzas already create a complex field of innovation in constancy. So does the implied equation of the Earl of Rochester with Maecenas, an equation which allows a wide latitude of literal, neutral, or ironic resolution. But the fundamental 'rewrite rule' is one of agrandizement (sic), a fact subtly underscored and, it may be, faintly mocked by the notorious elevation of Pindaric verse. (1975: 426–427.)

Steiner then quotes "Dryden's eighth and ninth stanzas", which "run to twenty-three lines" and "are founded on Horace 41–56" (1975: 427):

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[10] Denis Feeney writes: "Fagles's powerful and moving translation will allow modern Latin-less readers to find their own Virgil, for poems like the *Aeneid* never rest" (2007: 37–38).
[11] Stephen Harrison (2007: 277–346).

Happy the Man, and happy he alone,
He, who can call to-day his own;
He who, secure within, can say,
To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.
Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
The joys I have possest, in spight of fate, are mine.
Not Heav'n it self upon the past has pow'r;
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

Fortune, that with malicious joy
Does Man her slave oppress,
Proud of her Office to destroy,
Is seldome pleas'd to bless:
Still various, and unconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill,
Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
And makes a Lottery of life.
I can enjoy her while she's kind;
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes the wings, and will not stay,
I puff the Prostitute away:
The little or the much she gave, is quietly resign'd:
Content with poverty, my Soul I arm;
And Vertue, tho' in rags, will keep me warm.

On these lines Steiner comments: "Our analytic means are meagre. We sense plainly enough but cannot tabulate the agencies of visual contrast and correspondence, of what can fairly be called 'iconographic relations' as between Dryden's text and the Latin." He then quotes Horace's "original strophes", which "are visibly trim":

Fortuna saevo laeta negotio et
ludum insolentem ludere pertinax
transmutat incertos honores,
nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna. . . .

Steiner makes a brief comment on the Horatian passage: "The extra syllable (anacrusis) at the beginning of the first three lines of each strophe seems to accentuate the loaded tautness of the measure." By way of contrast "Dryden's stanzas have an arboreal undulation and luxuriance." Yet Steiner appreciates what Dryden had done in his "rewording": "Their punctuation is musical in its regard to pause and lift, to *presto* and ornament." He discusses Dryden's "capitalizations", which "did not, of course, figure in Horace" but which create "the Masque-like procession of *Man, Heav'n, Fortune, Office, Lottery, Prostitute,*

Soul and *Vertue*" – the words capitalized. Steiner refers to "the intention and complexity of these transformations" and states, ". . . it is not the liberty of Dryden's paraphrase which seems to matter so much as it is the sense of confidence, of agreed definition within variation." Although he admits, "Dryden's arguments are no doubt excessive", he concedes, ". . . the Horatian fabric, the logic and segmentation of feeling in the original are central and obvious in Dryden's inflation. The organizing contiguities and orientations have held." Steiner refers to the "note" of "domestic stoicism, of equability insured by remembrance and disenchantment" in Dryden's interpretation and he acknowledges, "It is one of the principal options in Western behaviour and self-representation. Horace's statement of it in the *Odes* is canonic and we have no difficulty in recognizing its authority and economy even where Dryden is freest." Steiner concludes,

> . . . it is emphatically to the Horatian idiom that we owe the correlation, again canonic in Western sensibility, between the 'fugitive hour' and the assumption of joy. Thus the 'rewrite rules' and procedures of transformation exhibit both constraint and innovation. To use J. B. Leishman's illuminating phrase, Dryden finds in Horace an 'indefinitely expandable formula'[12]. It is on this 'indefinite expansion' of a fairly limited set of 'formulas' that our culture, our capacities for verifiable recollection and response appear to depend almost completely. Translation, in the wider senses which we are now considering, is the primary instrument of formulaic expansion. It transforms the 'deep structures' of inheritance – verbal, thematic, iconographic – into the 'surface structures' of social reference and currency." (1975: 428–429.)

Steiner's analysis of Dryden's "rewrite" suggests that Dryden's translation is part of "the wider senses" of translation; in other words it is not what Steiner prefers as "synonymity". He uses words such as "agrandizement" (sic), "notorious elevation", "luxuriance", "liberty", "excessive", "freest", "inflation", and "indefinite expansion", which suggest criticism of Dryden's translation in not achieving the ideal or near-perfect translation. Nevertheless, Steiner recognizes

[12] Steiner, in a note on this quotation, writes: "Leishman's long prefatory essay to *Translating Horace* (Oxford, 1956) is a masterly introduction to the whole problem of the authority and transmission of classic forms in Western literature and feeling" (1975: 429).

that a “rewrite” such as Dryden’s can be a “crucial mechanism of formal-cultural rewording”: the suggestion is that the rewording, if it has an acceptable literary structure, can play an important part in the English literary tradition of translation.

The translator, in using this type of translation, may change tone and prosody and may create a different kind of music “in its regard to pause and lift, to *presto* and ornament”, but, in order to be of literary merit, the poetic translation should “create a complex field of innovation in constancy”: the creative ability of the translator is challenged by the complicated and difficult task of balancing his new creation with a degree of fidelity or “equation” with the original. The translation can adopt “a wide latitude of literal, neutral, or ironic resolution”: again Steiner balances the “latitude” – the innovation or freedom with which the translator uses words, characteristics, and tone different from the original – with “resolution” – the formal, unwavering poetic purpose. Throughout Steiner’s statements there is the emphasis on the translator’s need to balance opposites: “innovation in constancy”, “equation which allows a wide latitude of . . . resolution”, “agreed definition within variation”, “constraint and innovation”, “recollection and resposes”, and “deep structures” and “surface structures”.

Steiner emphasizes also the need on the part of the translator to pay close attention to the original. There should be “iconographic relations” between the original and the translation: the translation should show the relationship between its images and symbols on the one hand and those of the original or “canonic” work on the other hand. The translator should recognize the “authority” and “economy” of the original. The “fabric, the logic and segmentation of feeling in the original” should be “central and obvious” in the translation. The “agencies of visual contrast and correspondence” should be sensed by the reader. In translation the “verifiable recollection” of and “response” to the original plays an important part. The contrapuntal nature of translation can give “social reference and currency” to the original’s “canonic” stature.

Steiner uses the idea of transformation three times in his discussion of Dryden's work. In the first he writes about "the intention and complexity of the transformations": the transformations must show a definite and consistent intention on the part of the translator, and the intricacies of the transformation process have to be appreciated. The second use of the idea is that ". . . the 'rewrite rules' and procedures of transformation exhibit both constraint and innovation": there are "rules and procedures": the translator must be disciplined in attempting to change the original and to create a new poem. The third use of the idea of transformation is in many ways Steiner's conclusion: "Translation, in the wider senses which we are now considering, . . . transforms the 'deep structures' of inheritance – verbal, thematic, iconographic – into the 'surface structures' of social reference and currency." Steiner here states that the "'deep structures'" are the appreciation on the part of the translator of the words, the themes, and the images and symbols of the original as the translator "transforms", or changes the form of, the original into the "'surface structures'" that are relevant to the translation in its new cultural setting. It is significant that Steiner refers to the "deep" structures of the original, whereas he refers to the structures of "social reference and currency" as "surface": the implication is that the original structures (source text) are deeper (and perhaps more important) than the "currency" structures (target text).

What Steiner has to say about Dryden is relevant to much translation into Modern English poetry and to a great deal of the translation of Horace in Part iii and to Hughes's translation of Ovid in Part iv of this chapter.

The first two translators of Horace to be studied are David Ferry and Robert Bly. David Ferry writes about his translation of Horace:

> . . . I have tried, generally speaking, to be as faithful as I could be to Horace's poems. English of course is not Latin and I am most certainly not Horace. Every act of translation is an act of interpretation, and every choice of English word or phrase, every placement of these words or phrases in sentences – made in obedience to the laws and habits of English, not Latin, grammar, syntax, and idioms – and every metrical decision –

> made in obedience to English, not Latin, metrical laws and habits – reinforce the differences between the interpretation and the original. (1997: xiv.)

Robert Bly writes: ". . . Horace is most interesting to people familiar with the work done during recent decades on the image and its importance in argument" (2004: viii).

The first of Horace's Odes to be studied is i. 26[13]:

Musis amicus tristitiam et metus
tradam protervis in mare Creticum
portare ventis, quis sub Arcto
rex gelidae metuatur orae,

quid Tiridaten terreat, unice *5*
securus. O quare fontibus integris
gaudes, apricos necte flores,
necte meo Lamiae coronam,

Pipleï dulcis. Nil sine te mei
prosunt honores: hunc fidibus novis, *10*
hunc Lesbio sacrare plectro
teque tuasque decet sorores.

This is a poem about poetic inspiration. The first word is *Musis*, and from line 6 to the end the emphasis is on the Muse's inspiration. It is true that *meo Lamiae* (line 8) are important words that are emphasized by the repeated *hunc* in lines 10 and 11, but, as Horace states *Nil sine te mei / prosunt honores* (lines 9-10): "my poetic offerings are worth nothing without you". The dependence on the muse or muses for inspiration and assistance is important to the poet: it allows him to hand over *(tradam) tristitiam et metus* (lines 1 and 2) and to be *unice / securus* (lines 5-6). Horace's poem contains repeated sounds and words: the repeated t, s, c and q sounds in the first six lines and the repeated words *necte* (lines 7 and 8) and *hunc* (lines 10 and 11). In the last two lines the reader can almost hear the lyre's beat in the repeated l, s, c, t, and q sounds. Horace was a craftsman with words and sounds, and it is difficult to capture that in translation.

[13] The Latin text is that used by Ferry (1997: 68). He acknowledges that it is "The Latin text . . . from Daniel Garrison's selection in his *Horace: Odes and Epodes, A New Annotated Latin Edition* . . . 1991 . . . University of Oklahoma Press" (1997: iv).

Ferry's translation (1997: 69), alongside the original, reads:

Horace Odes i.26	**To Praise Aelius Lamia**
Musis amicus tristitiam et metus *tradam protervis in mare Creticum* *portare ventis, quis sub Arcto* *rex gelidae metuatur orae,*	Because the Muses favor me and love me, As far as I'm concerned let the wild winds carry All sadness and trepidation far away.
quid Tiridaten terreat, unice 5 *securus. O quare fontibus integris* *gaudes, apricos necte flores,* *necte meo Lamiae coronam,*	Who cares what king in some cold country scares us, Or what some other king or would-be king 5 Himself is scared of? Who cares about these things? O Muse who loves the fountains, help me to fashion Metrical garlands to celebrate my friend,
Pipleï dulcis. Nil sine te mei *prosunt honores: hunc fidibus novis,* 10 *hunc Lesbio sacrare plectro* *teque tuasque decet sorores.*	Whose virtues are a cause for celebration. Without your help our praises are as nothing. 10 Grant us new harmonies and grant new measures To guarantee the celebration forever.

Ferry's title is misleading: the poem is hardly about praising Aelius Lamia, who is also mentioned in iii.17; it is more about the poet and his inspiration. The first one-and-a-half lines of the translation expand *Musis amicus* to unnecessary lengths, and Ferry's first stanza does not capture the sounds of the original two-and-a-half lines. By breaking up Horace's first long sentence into three sentences, the link between *Musis amicus* (line 1) and *unice / securus* (lines 5-6) is lost, though Ferry tries to restore it a little by his repetition of "Who cares …?" (lines 4 and 6). Ferry avoids all proper names in the original, even Lamia's, which he uses only in the title. Since Horace has chosen them largely for their sounds, Ferry has missed out on this possible link; it is true, however, that the proper names mean little to the present-day English-speaking world. Ferry uses his own repetition in the last two stanzas where he repeats "celebrate" (line 8) and "celebration" (lines 9 and 12). His last line of the third stanza (line 9) "Whose virtues are a cause of celebration" has little to do with the original. His repetition of the word "grant" in line 11 is perhaps an attempt to repeat something like the repetition of *hunc*, but it does not have the same force.

Bly translates it (2004: 359):

Horace Odes i.26	Let's Do This Poem
Musis amicus tristitiam et metus *tradam protervis in mare Creticum* *portare ventis, quis sub Arcto* *rex gelidae metuatur orae,*	Being a big favorite of the Muses, I'll appeal to The winds to carry my depression off To the seas of Crete. Which bearded German king, Looking up at the Great Bear, worries us, or what disaster
quid Tiridaten terreat, unice *securus. O quare fontibus integris* *gaudes, apricos necte flores,* *necte meo Lamiae coronam,*	Threatens Tiridatias in Persia, it's all One with me. Giver of new poems, Lover of the clear springs, weave some Ornate lines as a gift for Lucius.
Pipleï dulcis. Nil sine te mei *prosunt honores: hunc fidibus novis,* *hunc Lesbio sacrare plectro* *teque tuasque decet sorores.*	If you don't come, none of my honoring Will take hold. Let's do this in Alcaic meter, With its sonorities; you and your sisters, do Come, let's make this boy immortal.

Bly's title is rather startlingly colloquial, but at least it emphasizes more appropriately what the poem is about – about writing, about creating. Unfortunately the mood is not the mood of Horace's poem: Bly's mood is playfully colloquial, whereas Horace's is mildly playful, yet formal at the same time. Bly's use of "big" (line 1), "all / One with me" (lines 5-6), "take hold" (line 10), "Let's do this" (line 10, with its reminder of Bly's title), and "this boy" (line 12) lowers the tone of the poem into almost a parody. His use of "Which bearded German king, / Looking up at the Great Bear" to translate *quis sub Arcto / rex gelidae . . . orae* is hardly appropriate. The word "Ornate" (line 8) suggests exaggeration, which is not what Horace's poetry is. Who Lucius is is difficult to work out: perhaps it is there for the "Alcaic metre" (line 10). The word "sonorities" (line 11) is also inappropriate since it suggests much the same as "Ornate"; perhaps Bly intends to send Horace up. Even the invitation at the end of the poem sounds more like an invitation to a party than to an immortalizing (*sacrare*) through poetry.

Robert Bly writes: "The idea that a great poem should be translated freshly every twenty years is rooted in an awareness of how fast the spoken language changes" (1984: 74). Is a creative translation so ephemeral that it is out of date after twenty

years, whereas an original work is intended to keep its place as a living work? If this is so, then creative translations must be regarded as inferior works of art. If this is not so, then Bly's contention that translation should be in the spoken English of the translator's time should be questioned. Both translators of Horace's Ode i. 26 are caught in this trap.

The next example is Horace's Ode ii. 3, which is alongside Bly's translation on the next page. Horace's poem is about *Aequam . . . servare mentem* (lines 1–2, "keeping a level-headed attitude"). Horace, the craftsman, places the important word *aequam* at the beginning of the poem and strengthens this with *temperatam* (line 3, "mixed in the right proportion' or "tempered" or "restrained"). Throughout the poem there is a balance between the difficult things (*rebus . . . arduis*, line 1) and the good (*bonis*, line 2) and between circumstance (*res*, line 15) and age or life or time (*aetas*, line 15). Whether you have lived gloomy (*maestus ... vixeris*, line 5) or are blessed with riches (*bearis*, line 7), you have to keep the balance. Apart from minor repetitions such as *seu ... seu* (lines 5 and 6) and other obvious minor parts of speech, there is the repetition of *Cedes* (line 17) and *cedes* (line 19): you have to "yield to" or "allow" or "accept" death ("to die" is one of the meanings of *cedo*). Apart from this repetition, there are repeated sounds or tense-forms: the future participles, *moriture* (line 4), *exitura* (line 27), and *impositura* (line 28), all have an ominous ring and are set against the rather ineffective past participles of *temperatam* (line 3), *reclinatam* (line 7), *coëmptis* (line 17), and *extructis* (line 19), as if to suggest the past actions are ineffective against the inevitable future fate. The word *moriture* (line 4) is echoed in *moreris* (line 23), suggesting that when you are a poor and humble loiterer, it is almost like death; *patiuntur* (line 16) has a sound of *potietur* (line 20) and suggests that suffering and losing one's possessions are much the same passive fates; there is a hint of *consociare* (line 10) in *cogimur* (line 25), suggesting that nature actively accepts darkness better than all of us (*omnes* is repeated in *omnium* in the same line 25), who are gathered together not of our own volition but by fate.

ii. 3[14]	BRING ROSES AND CARDAMOM[15]
Aequam memento rebus in arduis *servare mentem, non secus in bonis* *ab insolenti temperatam* *laetitia, moriture Delli,*	To keep the soul serene even when the way is Arduous, and to remain moderately unmoved When gifts roll in, well, that's my advice for you, Friend Dellius, for you are mortal too.
seu maestus omni tempore vixeris *seu te in remoto gramine per dies* *festos reclinatum bearis* *interiore nota Falerni.*	Evenness is best, whether disasters make Everything crooked, or whether you can Enjoy sipping, while you lie on your back In the grass, the host's hidden-away wine.
Quo pinus ingens albaque populus *umbram hospitalem consociare amant* *ramis? Quid obliquo laborat* *lympha fugax trepidare rivo?*	Why do the darkling pines and the white Delicate poplars weave their shady Branches together, and the excited water Work to curl itself around us?
Huc vina et unguenta et nimium brevis *flores amoenae ferre iube rosae,* *dum res et aetas et sororum* *fila trium patiuntur atra.*	Bring some roses, already turning dark, And cardamom and wines; being rich And young, we have to trust the dark threads Of the Three Sisters are still unbroken.
Cedes coëmptis saltibus et domo *villaque, flavus quam Tiberis lavit,* *cedes, et exstructis in altum* *divitiis potietur heres.*	You'll soon lose your cunningly acquired Strips of woods, the estate by the yellow Tiber, the Roman house, its silver and gold, To some miserable heir, and it's over.
Divesne, prisco natus ab Inacho, *nil interest an pauper et infima* *de gente sub divo moreris;* *victima nil miserantis Orci.*	Whether we descend from the great houses, Or drift unprotected under the naked Sky, it's all one; we are sacrifices To Death, not well known for compassion.
Omnes eodem cogimur, omnium *versatur urna serius ocius* *sors exitura et nos in aeternum* *exsilium impositura cumbae.*	We are obliged and herded. The lot is Inside the urn; the ball with our number Will roll out. And what we'll get Is an everlasting absence from home.

It is relevant that all the verbs in the last stanza are in the passive: *cogimur* . . . *versatur* . . . *exitura* . . . *impositura*. This is a well-crafted poem. Is it possible to recreate this kind of complexity in a translation?

Robert Bly's translation again has an unusual title, but he emphasizes the theme as "To keep the soul serene" (line 1); this does not, however, have the same force as Horace's *Aequam* at the beginning of the poem, and "serene" does not have the

[14] The Latin text is that used by Ferry (1997: 108 and 110).
[15] Bly (2004: 355–356)

same force as Horace's word. (It appears Bly is aware that he has not captured the meaning because he starts his second stanza with "Evenness is best . . ." (line 5), but "evenness" does not quite catch the meaning of *Aequam* either.) In the second line "to remain moderately unmoved" is an accurate translation of *temperatam*, but, once again, Bly uses colloquial American in "When gifts roll in, well, that's my advice for you, / Friend Dellius, for you are mortal too" (lines 3–4); the colloquial, casual tone hardly suits the original, and "you are mortal too" loses the ominousness of *moriture*.

In his second stanza "crooked" (line 6) does not "translate" *maestus*; it rather transforms it; similarly "the host's hidden-away wine" (line 8) transforms *interiore nota Falerni*. In the third stanza "darkling" (line 9) and "Delicate" (line 10) are additions that are not in the original; nor is "around us" (line 12). In the fourth stanza *res et aetas* is translated as "being rich / And young" (lines 14–15), and the original connection of the repeated *et* (line 15 of the original) is lost in the translation: the meaning of *res et aetas et sororum / fila trium patiuntur altra* (lines 15–16) is that riches (or circumstances) and youth (or age or life or time) and the dark threads of the three sisters all have to be suffered or accepted: we can do nothing about them; they are inevitabilities.

In the next stanza the repetition of *Cedes* in the original is also lost, and the inclusion of "miserable" to describe the heir and of "and it's over" at the end of the stanza (line 20) is unnecessary. The sound link between *patiuntur* (line 16) and *potietur* (line 20) is difficult to achieve in English, but "and it's over" is far removed from the meaning of *potietur*, which, as a deponent verb, suggests the inevitability of the heir's taking possession of his riches heaped up high. The colloquial "and it's over" is followed by the similar "it's all one" (line 23) for *nil interest* (line 22) – "it does not matter". Bly translates the cryptic *victima nil miserantis Orci* (line 24) as "we are sacrifices / To Death, not well known for compassion" (lines 23–24), which is accurate, but loses the stark finality of the original.

In the final stanza the repetition of *omnes* and *omnium* (line 25) is not achieved. Bly tries to bring the two meanings of *cogimur* (line 25) together in "We are obliged and herded" (line 25). His words "The lot is / Inside the urn; the ball with our number / Will roll out" (lines 25–27), with its reference to his "When gifts roll in" (line 3), sounds almost like a frivolous game and misses the ominous meaning of *versatur* (line 26) – "is kept turning" or "is twisted" or "is disturbed" – and of *serius ocius* in the same line, "too late, more quickly". The word *exitura* (line 27), with its meaning of "about to fall out", as well as of "about to die", is far more "serious" (with a play on *serius*) than "Will roll out". Similarly the final phrase of the poem *et nos in aeternum / exsilium impositura cumbae* (lines 27–28**)** is far more threatening than "And what we'll get / Is an everlasting absence from home". Again, it seems that Bly has transformed the mood of the original.

David Ferry's translation (1997: 109 and 111) is on the next page. As with Bly's title, so Ferry's "To Dellius" is not significant to the meaning of the poem. Perhaps a more suitable title would have been "*Aequam memento rebus in arduis*". The recipient of the poem, Dellius, is hardly significant to modern readers in English. Ferry's note about Dellius is: "Quintus Dellius, 'circus rider of the civil wars,' served Crassus, then Antony, then Augustus. A rich man, he enjoyed his riches." (1997: 336.) This note suggests that, even in Horace's time, who Dellius was, was hardly significant; the poem itself makes it clear that he was a rich man.

Ferry starts his translation with the words, "When things are bad": this is not Horace's emphasis; it would have been better if he had started with his next words, "be steady in your mind", though again it would have lost the original emphasis on *Aequam* (line 1**)**. Nevertheless, the first stanza captures the meaning of the original, and the last line "You are going to die" emphasizes the word *moriture* (line 4) well.

ii. 3	To Dellius
Aequam memento rebus in arduis *servare mentem, non secus in bonis* *ab insolenti temperatam* *laetitia, moriture Delli,*	When things are bad, be steady in your mind; Dellius, don't be Too unrestrainedly joyful in good fortune. You are going to die.
seu maestus omni tempore vixeris *seu te in remoto gramine per dies* *festos reclinatum bearis* *interiore nota Falerni.*	It doesn't matter at all whether you spend Your days and nights in sorrow, Or, on the other hand, in holiday pleasure, Drinking Falernian wine
Quo pinus ingens albaque populus *umbram hospitalem consociare amant* *ramis? Quid oblique laborat* *lympha fugax trepidare rivo?*	Of an excellent vintage year, on the river bank. Why is it, do you suppose, That the dark branches of those tall pines and those Poplars' silvery leafy Branches love to join, coming together, Creating a welcoming shade? Haven't you noticed how in the quiet river The current shows signs of hurry,
Huc vina et unguenta et nimium brevis *flores amoenae ferre iube rosae,* *dum res et aetas et sororum* *fila trium patiuntur atra.*	Urging itself to go forward, going somewhere, Making its purposeful way? By all means tell your servants to bring you wine, Perfumes, and the utterly lovely Too briefly blossoming flowers of the villa garden; Yes, of course, while youth, And circumstance, and the black threads of the Sisters Suffer this to be so.
Cedes coëmptis saltibus et domo *villaque, flavus quam Tiberis lavit,* *cedes, et exstructis in altum* *divitiis potietur heres.*	You're going to have to yield those upland pastures, The ones you bought just lately; You're going to yield the townhouse, and the villa, The country place whose margin The Tiber washes as it moves along. Heirs will possess all that Which you have gathered. It does not matter at all If you are rich, with kings
Divesne, prisco natus ab Inacho, *nil interest an pauper et infima* *de gente sub divo moreris;* *victima nil miserantis Orci.*	Forefathers of your pride; no matter; or poor, Fatherless under the sky. You will be sacrificed to Orcus without pity. All of us together
Omnes eodem cogimur, omnium *versatur urna serius ocius* *sors exitura et nos in aeternum* *exsilium impositura cumbae.*	Are being gathered; the lot of each of us Is in the shaking urn With all the other lots, and like the others Sooner or later our lot Will fall out from the urn; and so we are chosen to take Our place in that dark boat, In that dark boat, that bears us all away From here to where no one comes back from ever.

The second stanza is equally successful, though the breaking up of Horace's single sentence in the first two stanzas of the original into three sentences in the translation makes the translation less forceful. Similarly the overflow of the second stanza into the third in the translation limits the effect of the third stanza of the original; Horace (as well as Bly in his translation) makes the third stanza a statement about nature, which understands the mingling of dark and light and of agitation as part of life more than man does, but Ferry does not appreciate this kind of craftsmanship. Again the carrying over of the words "Urging itself to go forward, going somewhere, / Making its purposeful way" into the fifth stanza of the translation not only introduces words not in the original but also further limits the force of the statement about nature as an independent insight in the original.

By this time Ferry's translation (unlike Bly's) has lost touch with the original, and Ferry is well on the way to expanding the concision of Horace's seven stanzas into eleven. Nevertheless Ferry's translation of Horace's fourth and fifth stanzas is accurate, if bloated: unlike Bly, he captures Horace's *res et aetas et sororum / fila trium patiuntur altra* (lines 15–16**)** well; he expands the fifth stanza of the original into his stanza 7 and part of 8; and in stanza 7 he repeats the word "yield" (lines 25 and 27) to convey the force of the original *cedes* (lines 17 and 19).

Horace's last two stanzas become the last part of stanza 8 and stanzas 9, 10 and 11 in Ferry's translation. Whereas Ferry translates *prisco natus ab Inacho* (line 21) as "with kings / Forefathers of your pride" (lines 32–33) and avoids the classical reference to the first king of Argo, which no modern reader would find meaningful, he keeps Orcus (line 35), no doubt considering it is a more familiar reference. Horace's repetition of *Omnes . . . omnium* (line 25) is given the force of a line on its own "All of us together" (line 36) and the repetition in line 39 of "all". The succinct *versatur urna serius ocius / sors exitura* (lines 26–27) is drawn out into "the lot of each of us / Is in the shaking urn / With all the other lots, and like the others / Sooner or later our lot / Will fall from the urn" (lines 37–41). And the final words *et nos in aeternum / exsilium impositura cumbae* (lines 27–28) are similarly drawn out into "and so we are chosen to take / Our place in that dark

boat, / In that dark boat, that bears all away / From here to where no one comes back from ever" (lines 41–44). One cannot help observing that Ferry has sacrificed the original for the stanza form he has chosen to use.

As previously stated, Horace is a master craftsman, and it is difficult to recreate his concision in translation. Yet Steiner makes a case for "formulaic expansion", even though he does not regard it as the ideal way to translate.

A last example from Horace's Odes is his short 1.11[16]:

> *Tu ne quaesieris – scire nefas – quem mihi, quem tibi*
> *finem di dederint, Leuconoë, nec Babylonios*
> *temptaris numeros. Ut melius quicquid erit pati,*
> *seu pluris hiemes, seu tribuit Iuppiter ultimam,*
> *quae nunc oppositis debilitat pumicibus mare*
> *Tyrrhenum. Sapias, vina liques, et spatio brevi*
> *spem longam reseces. Dum loquimur, fugerit invida*
> *aetas: carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.*

David Armstrong, emphasizes the metre, "the greater esclepiad

(¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯)",

and separates "by a space the syllables that form the choriambs, even when that means breaking up words with a slash:

> tú ne quaésierís (scíre nefás) quém mihi, quém tibí
> fínem dí dederínt, Leúconoé, néc Babylón / iós
> témptar / ís numerós. út meliús quídquid erít patí,
> seú plur / ís hiemés seú tribuít Iúppiter úl / timám
> quaé nunc óppositís débilitát púmicibús maré
> Túrrhen / úm: sepiás, vína liqués, ét spatió breví
> spém long / ám resecés. dúm loquimúr, fúgerit ín / vidá
> aétas; cárpe diém, quám minimúm crédula pós / teró." (1989: 75.)

(Allcroft and Hayes (no date: 14), Page (1950: 135), and Quinn (1985: 144) give slightly different versions of the Asclepiad metre used by Horace in this poem.)

Armstrong gives a literal translation of i. 11 (1989: 75-76):

> You should not inquire (it is wrong to know) what fate to me, to you
> the gods may have given, Leuconoe, nor should you try the Babylonian

[16] Ferry (1997: 32).

horoscopes. How much better to suffer whatever shall be,
whether Juppiter offers more winters or [only this, as the] last,
which now is shattering, on the porous rocks that oppose it,
the Etruscan sea. Show better taste [or : Be sensible], strain the wine, and
from our brief life
trim the long hopes. While we are talking, envious Time
will have fled: pluck the day, trusting as little as possible to the next.

Armstrong then gives his analysis of the poem with special attention to the metre: he starts with high praise: "Anyone can see by looking at the Latin what a tour de force this poem is." Again the simplicity and terseness of the language are stressed: "The language is as simple as always. There are only four "epithets"; and only one is unusual – the pompous and mocking "Babylonian" for the horoscopes." Armstrong draws attention to contrast and metaphor: "'Short' life and 'long' hopes are made interesting by the metaphor of 'trimming' them 'back' (like vines) and the sharp antithetical contrast in which they stand, 'envious' Time by the tense of the verb ('will have fled,' already, irrevocably)." He comments on the technicalities of the metrical system: "The middle choriamb of the three must always be separated by a caesura, or break, before and after the other words. Only eight of the twenty-four choriambs required by the eight lines run across words; but no two successive lines use the same pattern of separation and run-on." His last observation is one that again suggests the impossibility of translation or imitation of a classical poet: "The secret of this kind of metrical tour de force in Latin lyric dies with Homer; his few imitators could produce only the palest shadow of his mastery." (1989: 76.)

Horace's ode (i. 11) is a very well known poem; his words *carpe diem* have become part of the English language (and of other languages too). How have poet-translators succeeded in translating this poem?

David Ferry's translation (1997: 33) reads:

To Leuconoë

Don't be too eager to ask
  What the gods have in mind for us,
What will become of you,
  What will become of me,

What you can read in the cards,
   Or spell out on the Ouija board.
It's better not to know.
   Either Jupiter says
This coming winter is not
   After all going to be
The last winter you have,
   Or else Jupiter says
The winter that's coming soon,
   Eating away the cliffs
Along the Tyrrhenian Sea,
   Is going to be the final
Winter of all. Be mindful.
   Take good care of your household.
The time we have is short.
   Cut short your hopes for longer.
Now as I say these words,
   Time has already fled
Backwards away –
   Leuconoë –
      Hold on to the day.

A numerical contrast between the original and Ferry's translation should be enough to indicate some of the differences: the original poem is 8 lines long, and Ferry's 25; the original consists of 56 words, and Ferry's 125; the original consists of 4 sentences, and Ferry's 8; the original mentions *hiemes* once, and Ferry uses the word "winter" four times. Surely this is carrying "formulaic expansion" or transformation too far?

Ferry re-creates the original in his own style and vocabulary. Whereas it falls short of the ideal translation (in Steiner's sense of the words), there is nothing inherently wrong with Ferry's principle that a translation can adopt a different metre, a different vocabulary, and a different line format. As has been observed, fidelity in translation need not be literal, or metrical, or line equivalence; there is room for interpretation in translation, and an interpretation can succeed as creative translation or transformation.

What follows is my translation, which attempts a close matching with metre, vocabulary, and stanza format.

Ode i.11	**CARPE DIEM** **(after Horace's Ode i. 11)**
Tu ne quaesieris – scire nefas – quem mihi, quem tibi *finem di dederint, Leuconoë, nec Babylonios* *temptaris numeros. Ut melius quicquid erit pati,* *seu pluris hiemes, seu tribuit Iuppiter ultimam,* *quae nunc oppositis debilitat pumicibus mare* *Tyrrhenum. Sapias, vina liques, et spatio brevi* *spem longam reseces. Dum loquimur, fugerit invida* *aetas: carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.*	Don't query, silly – it's scary to know – what to me, what to you what end the gods will give, Leucothea; nor, Babylonian- like, tempt the numbers game. Better allow what will be, patiently, whether more winters are Jupiter's tribute or this the ultimate, which now with opposition debilitates with pumice stones the sea Tyrrhenian. Be sapient, let wine flow, and in that space brief hope not for long rescue. While we speak, it will have fled, invidious life: catch today, and give the minimum credit to tomorrow.

Alongside the Latin original, this translation allows easy cross reference. The title recognizes that Horace's words, *carpe diem*, have been accepted as part of the English language. The word "after" in the sub-title is intended to have all the connotations of the word, one of which is that it may not be an exact, literally equivalent translation.

The first line is sixteen syllables long, the same as Horace's; whereas the English rhythm of the words is not the same as the Latin metre, it has similarities; the choice of words in the translation is intended to remind the reader of the sound of the original and at the same time to be a faithful interpretation of the meaning of the original. This is the pattern of the translation; it is an attempt to recreate the sound but also to retain the meaning of the original.

In line 2 of the translation the word "Leucothea" is used instead of the original *Leuconoë*. Horace's use of the name *Leuconoë* may have had some meaning to his original readers. Kenneth Quinn, in his Commentary on this poem, explains the name in this way: "A name formed from λευκός and νοῦς, perhaps 'Empty head'" (1985: 144). (The meaning of λευκός as "empty" is linked with the word "silly" in the first line of the above translation.) Literally λευκός means "bright" or "white" and figuratively it means "happy". But, again, all this will mean nothing to an English reader of the translation. As a note to the translation, the following explanation of Leucothea may be appropriate: "Leucothea, the daughter of a Babylonian king, beloved by Apollo, was buried alive by her father. Apollo

metamorphosed her into an incense shrub."[17] There is another Leucothea: "Ino, the daughter of Cadmus; she was secretly in love with Athamas, a married man. Ino and Athamas had a son, Melicertes. When Athamas became mad because of the anger of his wife, he killed his legitimate son, and Ino threw herself into the sea with her son, Melicertes. Both were changed into sea deities: Ino became Leucothea and Melicertes became Palaemon."[18] These two explanations of the subsitution of Leucothea for *Leuconoë* are intended to suggest a greater relevance than an unknown classical name. The mythical Leucotheas (literally Leucothea means "the white goddess"[19]) give a sense of the suffering in life that has to be accepted and that is compatible with the theme of the poem, as well as the more optimistic note in the possible metamorphoses that may occur. Whether it is acceptable to change *Leuconoë* to Leucothea is questionable, but it is certainly more acceptable than Ferry's change of *Babylonias* / . . . *numeros* to "the Ouija board".

It is, however, extremely rare for a poem in English to have lines of sixteen or seventeen syllables each. As a response to Ferry's principle that a translation can adopt a different line format from that of the original, one could re-arrange my "Carpe Diem" as is given on the next page. There is no doubt that this is a more readable form for the modern English reader than the version that uses something like Horace's sixteen-syllable line. This version divides Horace's single stanza into three stanzas that correspond to Horace's three sentences; each stanza of the new version consists of nine lines of varying length fairly similar to the length of Horace's sentences. A possible disadvantage is that it is not so easily placed alongside the original, but perhaps the layout offered allows some kind of comparison.

[17] Smith (1952: 173).
[18] Smith (1952: 48 and 173) based on the references to Leucothea and Athamas.
[19] From the Greek λευκός ("white") and θεά (goddess).

Ode i. 11	**CARPE DIEM** **(after Horace's Ode i. 11)**
Tu ne quaesieris – scire nefas – quem mihi, quem tibi	Do not query, silly – it's scary to know – what to me, what to you,
finem di dederint, Leuconoë, nec Babylonios	what end the gods will give, Leucothea; nor Babylonian-
temptaris numeros. Ut melius quicquid erit pati,	like, tempt the numbers game. Better allow what will be,
seu pluris hiemes, seu tribuit Iuppiter ultimam,	patiently, whether more winters are Jupiter's tribute or this the ultimate,
quae nunc oppositis debilitat pumicibus mare	which now with opposition debilitates with pumice stones the sea Tyrrhenian.
Tyrrhenum. Sapias, vina liques, et spatio brevi	Be sapient, let wine flow, and in that space brief hope not for long rescue.
spem longam reseces. Dum loquimur, fugerit invida	While we speak, it will have fled, invidious
aetas: carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.	life: catch today, and give the minimum credit to tomorrow.

It is easier to discuss a short poem together with its translation than it is to discuss a long poem and its translation, and this is one of the reasons why these comparatively short Latin poems have been chosen: the shorter poem allows a more comprehensive study of the various challenges a poet-translator faces.

Charles Tomlinson has drawn attention to Ezra Pound's translations of Horace's "*Odes* 1.31, 1.11 and 3.30, done respectively in 1963, 1964 and 1964 . . . three

masterpieces of translation" written in his old age. Tomlinson writes movingly: "Great translators have sometimes found support in their spiritual crises by expressing them through another mouth. . . . In the twentieth century perhaps the most moving example is Ezra Pound. Amid the wreckage of his late years, his *Cantos* a botch (or so he thought), we see him turning to Horace and away from trying to save the universe." (2003: 59–60.)

Here is Pound's translation of 1.11:

"ASK NOT UNGAINLY"

Ask not ungainly askings of the end
Gods send us, me and thee, Leucothoë;
Nor juggle with the risks of Babylon,
Better to take whatever,
Several, or last, Jove sends us. Winter is winter,
Gnawing the Tyrrhene cliffs with the sea's tooth.

Take note of flavours, and clarity's in the wine's manifest.
Cut loose long hope for a time.
We talk. Time runs in envy of us,
Holding our day more firm in unbelief. (Pound (1963: 36).)[20]

This is more like a poetic transformation than a translation, yet it succeeds. Gentzler writes, ". . . what has been adopted from Pound's theory primarily is his taste – lack of adornments, plain speech, and poetry. . ." (1993: 37). Pound's "Ask Not Ungainly" is certainly evidence of this "taste". Tomlinson calls his two books on translation *Poetry and Metamorphosis* and *Metamorphoses*; it would appear that the tradition of English poetic translations is the tradition of transformations and metamorphoses, rather than of translations.[21]

Burton Raffel refers to Ezra Pound as "the father of modern poetic translation" and quotes Hugh Kenner about Pound: ". . . since he doesn't translate the words, he may deviate from the words, if the words blur or slide, or if his own language fails him. . . . [But] if he doesn't translate the words, the translator remains faithful to the original poet's sequence of images, to his rhythms or to the effect

[20] It is interesting that Pound too changes *Leuconoë* to Leucothoë, but without explanation.
[21] See the discussion on translation, transformation, transmutation, and metamorphosis on pages 43–44 of Chapter One.

produced by his rhythms, and to his tone." (1988: 115–116.)[22] Raffel differs from Kenner and considers Pound "essentially an appropriative translator: that is, he goes to an original because it has something he wants". Raffel has to admit: "There can be no question that he admires, and frequently passionately admires, the beauties of the texts he chooses for translation; there has seldom been anyone, poet or critic or scholar, whose relish of poetic beauty remained all his life so keen." Raffel then states: ". . . appropriation is basically as indifferent to consistency as it is, in the final analysis, to the integrity of the text being translated." Later Raffel discusses Pound's "Seafarer" translation; again at first he praises Pound: "There is no translation of any Old English poem which gives us as much of the music, the harsh rhetoric. And the piled-up effects of Old English poetry. Let me especially emphasize that statement: no translation known to me captures anything like as much of the poetics of Old English, and in particular of its prosody." Then Raffel criticizes Pound's translation, especially his omissions: ". . . what Pound has omitted from the end of the poem is also what he has consistently suppressed throughout, namely all reference to anything religious." Raffel does, however, concede: "No translation … can ever give us all; Pound is to be endlessly praised for what he has given us"; and he calls Pound's translation "responsible". (1988: 159–165.)

In Parts ii and iii of this chapter Ezra Pound's *melopoeia* (the music of the poems), *phanopoeia* (the images of the poems), and *logopoeia* (the intellect of the original poet) have been considered, while James Holmes's "mimetic form" and "analogical form" have also been given attention. In Part iv Holmes's "organic form" strategy, i.e. when a translator concentrates on the organic meaning and content of the poem and chooses his or her own form, and Holmes's "deviant or extraneous form", i.e when a translator deviates from both the form and the

[22] Raffel gives the reference for the quotation from Kenner as Ezra Pound, *Translations* (New York: New Directions, 1954), pp. 11–12.

content and chooses a form extraneous to both the form and content of the original, will be discussed.[23]

iv

Ted Hughes' Creative Translation of Ovid's "Pygmalion" Excerpt

Some of the poet-translators studied so far have not been of the calibre of well-known poet-translators such as Ezra Pound and Seamus Heaney. In this part a translation by the well-known twentieth-century poet Ted Hughes will be discussed.

Tales from Ovid by Ted Hughes appeared in 1997 and in January 1998 it won the Whitbread Book of the Year Award. Hughes' biographer, Elaine Feinstein, referred to his *Tales from Ovid* as "magnificent" (2001: 30).

The title *Tales from Ovid* must surely remind one of Charles Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*, and it is possible that Ted Hughes intended some such recognition. If so, this humble reminder on the part of Hughes could suggest a certain admitted limitation in his translation when compared with the original.

The original will be compared with a prose translation and Hughes' creative translation, and it will be evident that Hughes was not trying to give a literal translation, nor did he try to repeat the original metre of the poem. He was using his own poetic creativity to bring the original Latin poetry to life in English poetry and to keep the spirit of the original. His translation is an example of what Holmes calls "deviant or extraneous form".

Hughes deviated from the structure of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book X in placing the tale of "Pygmalion" after the tales of "Myrrha" and "Venus and Adonis (and Atalanta)" even though Ovid placed the tales in the chronological order of Pygmalion, Myrrha, and Venus and Adonis. This causes some confusion in the

[23] See Chapter One pp. 29–30 on Holmes's "mimetic form", "analogical form", "organic form", and "deviant or extraneous form".

sense that Myrrha was the daughter of Cinyras, the son of Paphos, the child of Pygmalion, and Adonis is the son of Myrrha and Cinyras.

The passage to be studied is Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book X lines 254–266:

saepe manus operi temptantes admovet, an sit
corpus an illud ebur, nec adhuc ebur esse fatetur. *255*
oscula dat reddique putat loquiturque tenetque
et credit tactis digitos insidere membris
et metuit, pressos veniat ne livor in artus,
et modo blanditias adhibet, modo grata puellis
munera fert illi conchas teretesque lapillos *260*
et parvas volucres et flores mille colorum
liliaque pictasque pilas et ab arbore lapsas
Heliadum lacrimas; ornat quoque vestibus artus,
dat digitis gemmas, dat longa monilia collo,
aure leves bacae, redimicula pectore pendent: *265*
cuncta decent; nec nuda minus formosa videtur.[24]

(Often he lifts his hands to the work to try whether it be flesh or ivory; nor does he yet confess it to be ivory. He kisses it and thinks his kisses are returned. He speaks to it, grasps it and seems to feel his fingers sink into the limbs when he touches them; and then he fears lest he leave marks of bruises on them. Now he addresses it with fond words of love, now brings it gifts pleasing to the girls, shells and smooth pebbles, little birds and many-hued flowers, and lilies and coloured balls, with tears of the Heliades that drop down from the trees. He drapes its limbs also with robes, puts gemmed rings upon its fingers and a long necklace around its neck; pearls hang from the ears and chains adorn the breast. All these are beautiful; but no less beautiful is the statue unadorned. (Miller (1964: 83).)

Hughes translates these lines as:

Incessantly now
He caressed her,
Searching for the warmth of living flesh,
His finger-tip whorls filtering out
Every feel of mere ivory.

He kissed her, closing his eyes
To divine an answering kiss of life
In her perfect lips.
And he would not believe
They were after all only ivory.

He spoke to her, he stroked her
Lightly to feel her living aura
Soft as down over her whiteness.
His fingers gripped her hard
To feel flesh yield under the pressure

[24] The Latin version is the Loeb Classical Library version used by Miller (1964: 82).

That half wanted to bruise her
Into a proof of life, and half did not
Want to hurt or mar or least of all
Find her the solid ivory he had made her.

He flattered her.
He brought her love-gifts, knick-knacks,
Speckled shells, gem pebbles,
Little rainbow birds in pretty cages,
Flowers, pendants, drops of amber.
He dressed her
In the fashion of the moment,
Set costly rings on her cold fingers,
Hung pearls in her ears, coiled ropes of pearl
To drape her ivory breasts.

Did any of all this add to her beauty?
He gazed at her adorned, and his head ached.
But then he stripped everything off her
And his brain swam, his eyes
Dazzled to contemplate
The greater beauty of her naked. (1997: 136–137.)

In Hughes' translation of lines 254–5 *saepe manus operi temptantes admovet, an sit / corpus an illud ebur, nec adhuc ebur esse fatetur* the words, "whorls filtering out", jar:

Incessantly now
He caressed her,
Searching for the warmth of living flesh,
His finger-tip whorls filtering out
Every feel of mere ivory.

The next two stanzas in Hughes' creative translation are his translation of lines 256–8:

He kissed her, closing his eyes
To divine an answering kiss of life
In her perfect lips.
And he would not believe
They were after all only ivory.

He spoke to her, he stroked her
Lightly to feel her living aura
Soft as down over her whiteness.
His fingers gripped her hard
To feel flesh yield under the pressure
That half wanted to bruise her
Into a proof of life, and half did not
Want to hurt or mar or least of all
Find her the solid ivory he had made her.

The additions in these translated words are closely identifiable with the original, even to the repetition of the word "ivory": whereas Ovid repeats the word *ebur* in a single line (255), Hughes uses the word in each of his three expanded stanzas. When he comes to translating *et modo blandititias adhibet* (line 259) succinctly as "He flattered her" and *modo grata puellis / munera fert illi* (lines 259–260) as "He brought her love-gifts, knick-knacks," although at first reading the word "knick-knacks" appears strange, these translations capture the triviality of Pygmalion's attempts to please the statue. Whereas Ovid refers to the statue as *illud* (line 255) and *illi* (line 260), Hughes translates "her", which may not capture the still lifelessness of the ivory statue. (The word "ivory" is again used at the end of Hughes's fourth stanza, probably to make up for the substitution of "her" for "it".) Perhaps the best addition is in Hughes' stanza:

> Did any of all this add to her beauty?
> He gazed at her adorned, and his head ached.
> But then he stripped everything off her
> And his brain swam, his eyes
> Dazzled to contemplate
> The greater beauty of her naked.

This is the translation of one line (266): *cuncta decent; nec nuda minus formosa videtur*. Hughes' expansion of the one line into six lines captures the meaning of the line well, even though it lacks the conciseness of the original. Hughes' expansion is similar to what Steiner calls "formulaic expansion" when referring to Dryden's "rewrite" of Horace's Ode 3. 29 lines 41–56.[25] This kind of expansion is a common poetic translation practice in the tradition of English poetic translation.

Hughes' additions to the original are mainly beneficial to the recreating process, as have been analysed in the preceding paragraphs, and the omissions have the same positive results. The omissions are mostly related to classical references that are no longer meaningful to the modern reader. In line 263 the reference to *Heliadum* is translated as "drops of amber": the reference to "tears of the Heliades that drop down from the trees" in the prose translation means little to a modern reader. Similarly, in lines 283–286:

[25] See pp. 128–132 of this Chapter.

> ***. . .*** *minibus quoque pectoral temptat;*
> t*emptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore*
> *subsidit digitis ceditque, ut Hymettia sole*
> *cera remollescit tractataque police multas*
> *flectitur in facies ipsoque fit utilis usu.*
>
> (. . . and with his hands he also touched her breast. The ivory grew soft to his touch and, its hardness vanishing, gave and yielded beneath his fingers, as Hymettian wax grows soft under the sun and, moulded by the thumb, is easily shaped to many forms and becomes usable through use itself. (Miller (1964: 85).)

The reference to *Hymettia . . . cera* (lines 284–5), translated in the prose version as "Hymettian wax", will mean nothing to a modern reader, and Hughes is correct in omitting the reference to "Hymettia":

> He lowered it (his hand) again, incredulous
> At the softness, the warmth
> Under his fingers. Warm
> And soft as warm soft wax –
> But alive
> With the elastic of life. (1997: 138.)

A comparison of the prose translation and the creative translation shows the merit of the latter.

It is very difficult to read the Hughes version parallel with the original; it cannot be, and is not meant to be, read in this way. Charles Tomlinson refers to "*War Music* (1981), Christopher Logue's series of adaptations from Homer's *Iliad*" as "translations in a much looser sense . . ." and he considers that they did "not always work" (1984: 465). Similar criticisms have been made of Robert Graves's *The Anger of Achilles* (1959)[26] and of Robert Lowell's *Imitations* (1961)[27]. How much latitude is the creative poet-translator allowed?

George Steiner (1975: 407–408) can help answer this question:

> . . . A 'perfect' act of translation would be one of total synonymity. It would presume an interpretation so precisely exhaustive as to leave no single unit in the source text – phonetic, grammatical, semantic, contextual – out of complete account, and yet so calibrated as to have added nothing in the way of paraphrase, explication or variant. But we know that in

[26] These criticisms of Graves's translation are well documented in Seymour-Smith (1987: 504) and Kersnowski (1989: 69–70).
[27] The criticisms of Lowell's "imitations" are summarized in Hamilton (1983: 289–293).

> practice this perfect fit is possible neither at the stage of interpretation nor at that of linguistic transfer and restatement.

Steiner accepts that "perfect" translation might be "no more than a formal ideal" and "great translation" might be "rare", but he considers that there were "examples which seem to approach the limits of empirical possibility." He expands on this:

> There are texts in which the initial commitment to the emotional and intellectual risks of unmapped, resistant alternity continues vital and scrupulous even to the finished product. There are translations which are supreme acts of critical exegesis, in which analytic understanding, historical imagination, linguistic expertness articulate a critical valuation which is at the same time a piece of totally lucid, responsible exposition. There are translations which not only represent the integral life of the original, but which do so by enriching, by extending the executive means of their own tongue. Lastly, most exceptionally, there are translations which restore, which achieve an equilibrium and poise of radical equity between two works, two languages, two communities of historical experience and contemporary feeling. For a translation to realize all four aspects equally and to the full is, obviously, 'a miracle of rare device'. (Steiner (1975: 407–408).)

Steiner cites "examples of the 'near-ideal'": "Though there is, perhaps, a faltering, a nuance of sentimentalizing in lines seven and eight, G. K. Chesterton's version of Du Bellay's 'Heureux qui, comme Ulysse . . .' needs no commentary. Far from being a licence, the English sixteen-line form establishes a genuine parity with the French sonnet . . .." (1975: 408.) He quotes the first poem, with Chesterton's translation:

Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage
Ou comme cestuy là qui conquit la toison,
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage & raison,
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de son aage!
Quand revoiray-je, helas, de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminee, & en quelle saison
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,
Qui m'est une province, & beaucoup d'avantage?
Plus me plaist le sejour qu'on basty mes ayeux,
Que des palais Romains le front audacieux:
Plus que le marbre dur me plaist l'ardoise fine.
Plus mon Loyre Gaulois que le Tybre Latin,

Plus mon petit Lyré que le mont Palatin,
Et plus que l'air marin la doulceur Angevine.

Happy, who like Ulysses or that lord
  Who raped the fleece, returning full and sage,
With usage and the world's wide reason stored,
  With his own kin can wait the end of age.
When shall I see, when shall I see, God knows!
  My little village smoke; or pass the door,
The old dear door of that unhappy house
  That is to me a kingdom and much more?
Mightier to me the house my fathers made
  Than your audacious heads, O Halls of Rome!
More than immortal marbles undecayed,
The thin sad slates that cover up my home;
More than your Tiber is my Loire to me,
  Than Palatine my little Lyré there;
And more than all the winds of all the sea
  The quiet kindness of the Angevin air.

(As quoted by Steiner (1975: 408–409).)

George Steiner's second example (1975: 409) is "Pierre Leyris's translations from Gerard Manley Hopkins", "among the finest restatements in modern literature and inexhaustibly instructive both in detail and general grasp". Steiner calls Leyris's translation of "Pied Beauty" "an 'impossibility' if ever there was" (1975: 412–413):

Glory be to God for dappled things –
Gloire à Dieu pour les choses bariolées,
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
Pour les cieux de tons jumelés comme les vaches tavelées,
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Pour les roses grains de beauté mouchetant la truite qui nage;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Les ailes des pinsons; les frais charbons ardents des marrons chus; les paysages
Landscapes plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
Morcelés, marquetés – friches, labours, pacages;
And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.
Et les métiers: leur attirail, leur appareil, leur fourniment.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Toute chose insolite, hybride, rare, étrange,
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
Ou moirée, madrurée (mais qui dira comment?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;

De lent-rapide, d'ombreux-clair, de doux-amer,
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.
Tout jaillit de Celui dont la beauté ne change:
Louange au Père![28]

Hughes' "Pygmalion" does not fall into Steiner's category of the "perfect" translation, nor into his "near-ideal". What Steiner says later may be more relevant to Hughes' creative translation:

> . . . There is between 'translation proper' and 'transmutation' a vast terrain of 'partial transformation'. The verbal signs in the original message or statement are modified by one of a multitude of means or by a combination of means. These include paraphrase, graphic illustration, pastiche, imitation, thematic variation, parody, citation in a supporting or undermining context, false attribution (accidental or deliberate), plagiarism, collage, and many others. This zone of partial transformation, of derivation, of alternate restatement determines much of our sensibility and literacy. It is, quite simply, the matrix of culture. (1975: 415.)

After stating that the "debate as to whether literalism or recreation should be the dominant aim of translation is exactly paralleled by the controversy, prominent throughout the nineteenth century, as to whether the word or the musical design should be uppermost in the Lied or in opera" (1975: 416), Steiner comments, "As in great translation, so in a great musical setting, something is added to the original text. But that which is added 'was already there'." (1975: 423.) Later he discusses the "topology" of the chapter's title: "Defined 'topologically', a culture is a sequence of translations and transformations of constants ('translation' always tends towards 'transformation')." He refers to Dryden's "rewriting" and "formal-cultural rewording" in his translation of Horace and states:

> . . . the fundamental 'rewrite rule' is one of agrandizement (sic). . .. . . . Dryden finds . . . an 'indefinitely expandable formula'. It is on this 'indefinite expansion' of a fairly limited sense of 'formulas' that our culture, our capacities for verifiable

[28] Quoted in this format by Steiner (1975: 412–3). The format of original line followed by the line of translation is another interesting way of presenting the original along with the translation. (Phyllis Gaffney in an essay in praise of Leyris's translations of Hopkins (1998: 45–58) refers to ". . . Leyris's translation of *Spring and Fall*, where near perfect equivalence is achieved, on every level – rhyme, rhythm and sense" (1999: 51).)

> recollection and response appear to depend almost completely. Translation, in the wider senses which we are now considering, is the primary instrument of formulaic expansion.
>
> (1975: 425–427.)

These quotations help us to assess Ted Hughes' achievement.

In referring to Hughes' "creative translation" in this part, there is the suggestion that he has created his own poem rather than creating a poetic translation that matches the original. Hughes' poem complies with Holmes's "organic form" strategy because he has kept closely to the meaning and content of the original and has chosen his own poetic form. There is no doubt that it communicates Ovid's message well, but it is presented in a form and style that is particularly suited to a modern reader, especially one who admires Hughes' poetry. There is no doubt of Hughes' "poetic powers"[29] in this poem, and this is what matters; he certainly has "empathy" or *Einfühlung* with the original poem. He has given the poem an "afterlife" (Donoghue (1989: 252) and Benjamin (1977: 71)).

Hughes' work in *Tales from Ovid* is an example of what Robinson refers to as poetic creativity:

> . . . in hermeneutical dialogue with the SL author, the translator invariably turns the original, turns away from it into the TL[30]; and that instead of pretending otherwise, instead of pretending that the translator constructs a stable one-to-one pattern of correspondence or equivalence between the SL and the TL text (which proves to be impossible), we should recognize and, contextually, encourage the translator's poetic creativity.
>
> (1991: xv.)

Whereas there may be some truth in this concept of "the translator's poetic creativity", Steiner's concept of synonymity is considered in this study to be much more appropriate as the ideal of creative poetic translation.

[29] Vendler (2005: 9). See page 173 for Helen Vendler's comments on translation.
[30] SL refers to the Source Language and TL to the Target Language.

v

Conclusion to Chapter Three

George Steiner, in discussing Hölderlin's work as a translator, writes, "With a vehemence which carried him beyond the metaphoric, Hölderlin came to regard all writing as a translation or transcription of encased, hidden meanings" (1975: 324). In discussing Hölderlin's translation of Pindar, Steiner comments, ". . . Hölderlin strove for utmost literalism. He used such devices as hyperbaton, the separation of object from predicate, the isolation of epithets either preceding or following on their substantive, the asymmetry of predicates and attributes, in order to produce a 'German-Greek' intelligible to German speakers but intensely representational of Pindar's 'rushing darkness'". (1975: 325.) In a footnote Steiner compares an excerpt from Horace's Ode ii. vi with Hölderlin's translation of the excerpt:

> *unde si Parcae prohibent iniquae*
> *dulce pellitis ovibus Galaesi*
> *flumen et regnata petam Laconi*
> *rura Phalantho.*
>
> Lassen mich dahin nicht die neidischen Parzen
> So will ich suchen den Galesusstrom,
> Den lieblichen mit den wolligen Schafen,
> Und die Felder, vom Spartaner
> Philantus beherrscht.

Steiner comments, ". . . the distribution of sibilants, liquids, and fricatives is strikingly imitative of the Latin" (1975: 325). Hölderlin created a translation in a "'strange' idiom", as Steiner states, and one that "belongs integrally to neither language. Yet it is charged with currents of meaning more universal, nearer the sources of human speech . . .." (1975: 332.)

In the part of this chapter on the translation of Catullus, various approaches to translation were discussed – from the Zukofsky attempt at *melopoeia* to other more conventional attempts by various poets. The criticisms of these poetic translations concentrated on close textual analysis of Catullus' concision, emotion, and irony and on close contextual criticism of the translations in relation

to the originals. Although Steiner's views had not yet been mentioned, the analyses demonstrated that these poet-translators had often left vital units "in the source text – phonetic, grammatical, semantic, contextual – out of complete account"[31].

In the next part of the chapter, Steiner's views on Dryden's translation of Horace as "indefinite expansion" were stated and discussed as a preliminary to the critical analyses of the translations of Horace by a variety of modern poets. Steiner states this is "translation in the wider senses" and that whereas it has a place in the tradition of English literary translation, it does not achieve the "synonymity", which Steiner considers to be the "perfect" way of translation. In the case studies in this part there was seldom the "equilibrium and poise of radical equity between two works, two languages, two communities of historical and contemporary feeling"[32]. Instead, there seemed to be examples of "indefinite expansion" and, at times, an almost parodic pandering to the expectations of the target culture. Even Pound's translation of Horace's 1:11 is more of an example of transformation than of translation as synonymity.

In the part on Hughes' translation of Ovid, there is an undoubted use of "indefinite expansion". Opposed to this, Steiner's views on "synonymity" were quoted, with a reference to an English poetic translation by an almost forgotten modern poet, G. K. Chesterton, as an example of "synonymity".

What Steiner regards as Hölderlin's achievement in translation appears to be lacking in many of the English verse translations of the Latin poetry discussed in this chapter. English verse translators (and many critics too) tend to prefer "indefinite expansion" to "synonymity". It perhaps suggests that modern English poet-translators should take note of what Steiner writes about Hölderlin's, Chesterton's, and Leyris's achievements.

[31] Steiner (1975: 407).
[32] Steiner (1975: 408).

Chapter Four
Translating Dante's *Commedia*
i
Theology and Translation in Dante's Time

Moving from Latin poetry to the poetry of Dante is like moving into another world. Timothy McDermott writes, ". . . many people still see the Middle Ages as a great backwater into which the river of history poured for centuries before finally, in the sixteenth century, making a new start. . ." (1991: xvii), but he continues: "The thinkers of that period were moved . . . to see things in new ways, to phrase their questions in a new language and give them new answers, many of these questions and answers being the forebears of our own" (1991: xviii). McDermott is writing about philosophy and theology, but he could have been writing about Dante's poetry. Robert Hollander refers to Dante as "*theologus-poeta*" (1979: 83), and there is no doubt that Dante saw "things in new ways".

George Saintsbury comments on Dante's views on translation: "Translation Dante condemns utterly. Nothing harmonized by the laws of the Muses can be changed from one tongue to another without destroying all its sweetness and harmony." Saintsbury connects this "with Dante's unerring direction towards the criticism of form". He then contrasts translation of content with translation of form: "If 'all depends on the subject,' translation can do no harm, for the subject can be maintained in exactly the same condition . . .. But the form, the language, the charm of the verse, the music of the composition, they go utterly and inevitably; and even if the translator succeeds in putting something in their place, it is another, and not themselves." (1959: 442–443.) This is the by-now frequently stated view that translation of "singular" poetry is impossible.

John Ahern writes of Dante's "original stratagems to defend his poem's textual integrity": "He invented the metrical form *terza rima*, whose interlocking structure immediately exposes interpolations and omissions" (2003: 11). The structure of the *Commedia* makes translation difficult. Yet, in *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, Dante shows that the imitation of the great Latin poets is vital to the poets using the Volgare Illustre:

> . . . quantum illos proximus imitetur, tantum rectius poetamur. Unde nos doctrine operi intendentes, doctrinatas eorum poetries emulari oportet.
>
> (. . . the more closely we imitate these [*the great poets*], the more correctly we write poetry. Thus, when we intend to write learned works, it is proper that we should take as our model their learned poetic teachings.)[1]

Robin Kirkpatrick comments on these words:

> . . . the poet may also be expected to acquire, from his study of the grammar, a certain understanding of the spirit which poetic discourse ought properly to manifest. Let it be said at once that neither in spirit nor in form will the 'imitation' of the grammar be a matter of mimicry or even of retrospective classicism. A profoundly original initiative . . . will still be required of the vernacular poet. . . . as Di Capua has forcefully demonstrated, the virtue above all others which Dante observed in the Latin grammar was a simplicity of utterance, born of 'discretion' – which is 'la potenza efficace di communicare agli altri' (*the power that makes communication with others possible*).[2]
>
> (1978: 89.)

Dante's, Kirkpatrick's, and Di Capua's words refer to the Volgare Illustre but could also be applied to the creative translation of Dante's *Commedia* into English poetry. The creative translator should also attempt a "profoundly original initiative" and demonstrate "the power that makes communication" with the target audience possible.

Griffiths' words about the *Commedia* are relevant:

> . . . the poem itself . . . concentrates on translation and transvaluation. . .. . . . it does not leave (the) deep and testing questions of translation, of religious and cultural transition, to come sidelong into a reader's mind from a hint here or a subtlety there: it dramatizes and upfronts them, incorporates them into its tissues and structure, gives them the force of human encounter . . .. (2005: xxiv-xxv.)

Dante's *Commedia* is not only about imitation and cultural transition; it is also closely related to translation and it invites translation.

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[1] *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, II iv 3 as quoted by Robin Kirkpatrick (1978: 89).
[2] Kirkpatrick quotes from F. Di Capua, "Insegnamenti retorici medievali e doctrine estetiche moderne nel *De Vulgari Eloquentia* di Dante" in *Scritti minori* Vol. 2 (Rome, 1959), p. 89.

Dante drew upon his knowledge of Latin literature, politics, philosophy, theology, astronomy, geography, and literature to construct his one hundred cantos in carefully constructed *terza rima*. Peter Dronke makes it clear, however, that Dante's learning must be understood in terms of "transformation" and "creativeness":

> . . . I should like to stress . . . how little . . . Dante's intellectual and imaginative processes can be accounted for in terms of his learned sources. He leaves nothing in his sources as he finds it. The materials of the world of learning – the medieval Latin world – set him a constant challenge, conscious and unconscious. He was never going to copy simply: all understanding for Dante implied transformation. Almost nothing can be 'traced back' in an uncomplicated fashion. In the study of Dante, *Quellenforschung*[3] must inevitably retain something elusive . . .. There is a rare and obstinate independence – which is close to the heart of his creativeness.
>
> (1988: xii.)

These words are relevant to the way creative translation should be considered: it is not just the scholarship of the translator that is relevant but also the "transformation" and "creativeness" of the translator.

Dante gives Thomas Aquinas a prominent role in the *Commedia*. As Dronke states, Dante transformed and created his characters in the *Commedia* and did not merely copy his learned sources, and with this transformation and creative process in mind, it may be appropriate to transform a part of Aquinas' teachings into a statement about translation. Much of the theory about translation has a decided theological basis. George Steiner writes: "The case for translation has its religious, mystical antecedents" (1975: 244). The case for transforming Aquinas' thought and creating a theory of translation from it may have some merit.

Aquinas writes about an *exitus-reditus* structure in Peter Lombard's *Sentences*[4], and Brian Davies comments, "As M.-D. Chenu famously put it, the *Summa Theologiae* has an *exitus-reditus* structure, which Aquinas conceives of as reflecting the way things are in reality. It deals with a coming from God (*exitus*)

[3] *Quellenforschung* is the German word meaning the study of sources.
[4] Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum,* 1, d. ii as quoted by Davies (1993: 21).

and a return to him (*reditus*)." (1993:21.) This return is through the Word Made Flesh, the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and the Sacraments, especially the Transubstantiation in the Eucharist.

These concepts of Aquinas may be transformed into relevant comments about translation. Is translation not an *exitus-reditus* process? The original work of creativity is where the existence comes from (*exitus*) and the creative act of translation is the act of *reditus*, the return of the grace of the original so that many may share the benefit. The word of the original has to be made comprehensible through an embodiment of the original word in a new form that will be able to communicate with those who would not have understood the original without this new creative act. The act of translation must go through a process similar to the death and the resurrection if the original is to have an "afterlife", as so many commentators on translation have called the successful translation. A translation is in this sense like a sacramental act in which the words of the translation achieve a kind of transubstantiation in which the ordinary bread and wine of the translation assume a new substance that is the original. Aquinas writes about the three things the sacrament of the Eucharist signifies:

> It looks back to the past: in this sense it commemorates the passion of the Lord. . . . In regard to the present, there is another thing to which it points. This is the unity of the Church into which people are drawn together through the sacrament. . . . It has a third significance with regard to the future. It prefigures the enjoyment of God which will be ours in heaven. . ..[5]

Translation may be said to signify three similar things. It looks back to the past. With regard to the present it points to the unity of the readership of the translation. The third significance is with regard to the future: it prefigures the enjoyment of a lasting significance.

A closer look at Aquinas' writing is necessary, with an application of one of his ideas to translation. McDermott writes about Aquinas' thought: "Revealed history is the sending of the persons of God: the historical *coming forth* of the Word and

[5] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a. 79. 1 and 3a. 73.4 as quoted in the English translation in Davies (1993: 362).

the Spirit into the visible world of creation, and the *putting on* of these sendings by individual men's faith and love. Those sendings into the hearts of men and into history as such, are outer created *incarnations*, so to speak, of the inner eternal issuings which those divine persons are." (1991: 64–65.) Translation, like theology, is concerned with "sendings into the hearts of men and into history", and creative translations can be called "outer created *incarnations*" of the original.

Aquinas writes a great deal about the incarnation as "a tool" (as McDermott translates the Latin word *instrumentum)*. This was a concept that Aquinas borrowed or transformed. McDermott states: "Thomas organizes his whole theological treatment of Christ round a concept drawn from John Damascene: Christ's human life as the tool of his divine life, contributing, as all tools do, its own cutting-edge to the use it is put to by its agent" (1991: 511). Aquinas extends this concept into many parts of the *Summa Theologiae*.

Brian Davies comments on the craftsman image:

> . . . the Son may be compared to what a craftsman has in mind in conceiving of what he makes, and . . . he is therefore the exemplar or model for all creation . . .. it is therefore appropriate for the Son to become joined to what is created (3a. 3. 8). . . . Aquinas . . . thinks of Christ's saving role as a kind of mending or repairing. He then reasons that, as a craftsman repairs damage in something he has made according to the idea (or blueprint) of the thing in him, so it is fitting that God repairs humanity by means of the Son, who is the exemplar or model of humanity. (1993: 306–307.)

However Aquinas' word *instrumentum* is translated, whether as "instrument" (the literal translation), as "means" or "exemplar or model" (Davies), or as "tool" (McDermott), it is a metaphor that is appropriate to translation. It emphasizes the craft of translation.

Aquinas writes:

III q. 18 a. 1 ad 2

… quod proprium est instrumenti quod moveatur a principali agente, diversimode tamen, secundum proprietatem naturae ipsius. Nam instrumentum inanimatum, sicut securis aut serra, movetur ab artifice per motum solum corporalem. Instrumentum vero animatum anima sensibili movetur per appetitum sensitivum, sicut equus a sessore. Instrumentum vero animatum anima rationali movetur per voluntatem eius, sicut per imperium domini movetur servus ad aliquid agendum, qui quidem servus est sicut instrumentum animatum, ut philosophus dicit, in I Politic. Sic ergo natura humana in Christo fuit instrumentum divinitatis ut moveretur per propriam voluntatem.

… it is proper to an instrument to be moved by the principal agent, yet diversely, according to the property of its nature. For an inanimate instrument, as an axe or a saw, is moved by the craftsman with only a corporeal movement; but an instrument animated by a sensitive soul is moved by the sensitive appetite, as a horse by its rider; and an instrument animated with a rational soul is moved by its will, as by the command of his lord the servant is moved to act, the servant being like an animate instrument, as the Philosopher says (Polit. i, 2,4; Ethic. viii, 11). And hence it was in this manner that the human nature of Christ was the instrument of the Godhead, and was moved by its own will.[6]

McDermott, later while explaining Aquinas' writing about the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, uses the metaphor[7] again: ". . . Thomas again has recourse to the concept drawn from John Damascene by which he has explained how God can give grace through creatures: the concept of Christ's human nature as the tool of his divine person . . . the tool's application to us through the further tools of the sacrament" (1991: 542).

[6] From the http://krystal.op.cz/sth/settings.php on the thomisticum site.

[7] Douglas Robinson uses the metaphor of the tool in a completely different way: "It is time to offer translators tools, not rules – and tools derived not from Christian theology and the dogmatic demands placed on Bible translating, but from what translators actually do when they translate. In that sense, in fact, the translator's turn also becomes the theorist's turn: our turn to shrug off the role of secularized priests, and the exclusively priestly rules and restrictions we have thought it our task to deliver, and to mingle with the laity that we actually are. Our turn, in a word, to become ordinary humans like everyone else." (1991: xvi.) Robinson explains his title, *The Translator's Turn*: "In the tropics of translation, these 'turns' are tropes (from the Greek for turn), actively modeling patterns for the interpretive shaping first of the SL text, the 'original,' the text from which the translator translates, and then of the TL text, the translation, the text the translator creates." (1991: xv.) It is clear that Robinson would not approve of using Aquinas' work in the way I do.

McDermott translates Aquinas' passages on this theme in this way:

> . . . in holding the sacrament to be an instrumental cause of grace we are attributing to the sacrament a sort of instrumental power for producing that effect, power of the sort appropriate to a tool. Now tools only work when moved by the tool-user who is originating the action; so whereas the power of principal agents is permanent and naturally complete, the power in the tool is something passed through from one thing to another, incomplete in that tool in the same way that change in something being changed is an incomplete actuality, deriving from some agent. The sounds a speaker makes have a certain spiritual power in them from God, ordaining them to their spiritual effects. Instrumental power is not properly speaking a new or independent kind of power but an incomplete derivation of the complete power producing it. . . . Now the primary agent of grace is God, to whom Christ's humanity is like a connected tool, and the sacraments separated ones . . .. *The Word who was in the beginning with God* is the primary agent giving life to our souls, his flesh and the mysteries enacted in that flesh acting as his tools in giving souls life, and not only acting as tools but setting the pattern for our bodies' lives.[8] (1991: 553.)

Connected with this concept of Christ's humanity as God's tool are other interesting concepts in Aquinas' work that are relevant to translation: his ideas of "relatedness"[9], "appropriation"[10], "mediation"[11], and time and change[12] could all be expanded upon here and applied to translation.

To describe translation as a tool might appear rather a bland statement, but, when it is linked with Aquinas' examination of the concept of the tool of the Word Made Flesh or the tools of the Holy Spirit, the sacraments, and the people, whether "evil … lacking life" or "good tools, his own living members"[13], the concept takes on a more profound (and perhaps blasphemous) significance. It

[8] In quoting parts of the original with a literal translation and then McDermott's "concise translation" the purpose is to show another aspect of translation: Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* is almost impossible to read in its original form, and literal translation does not help much, either; but McDermott's re-arrangement and omission of what we today may consider irrelevant make the reading of Aquinas's theology much more accessible.
[9] McDermott (1991: 67–68).
[10] McDermott (1991: 76).
[11] McDermott (1991: 509–510).
[12] McDermott (1991: 554, 573–5).
[13] McDermott (1991: 559).

raises the role of translation to a new height.[14] In the *exitus-reditus* process of translation, the work of the translator bears some similarity with the work of Christ in trying to restore the original creation in such a way that more may know and understand the original. Although many poets, critics, and philosophers have thought that translation is what is lost in translation or that it is impossible, translation, in its relatedness to the original, in its authority yet humility, may become the miraculous tool of restoration and new life. Aquinas' discussion of transubstantiation and the tools of the sacrament suggests an ongoing life, ongoing incarnations, whether the translators are good or bad. The life of the original will nevertheless be there.

The *exitus-reditus* concept of translation is particularly relevant to a study of the poetic translations of Dante's *Commedia* because Dante uses an *exitus-reditus* approach in his poem. There is a continual backwards and forwards movement in the *Commedia*, and important words like *'mparadisa* (*Paradiso* 28. 3) link very closely to the tropes of incarnation and transubstantiation.

Later in this chapter in the part on "Dante's Aquinas and Francis in Canto XI of *Paradiso*", reference will be made to Eric Auerbach's "St. Francis of Assisi in Dante's 'Commedia'" in which he discusses Dante's version of the life of St. Francis as told by Thomas Aquinas. This part of the *Commedia* is an example of the *exitus-reditus* process, not in translation, but in poetic language: the story of Francis, which has been told many times before and which Dante would have known well, is recast by Dante in a poetic form that is original despite the fact that it uses the well-known (in Dante's time) allegorical construct. Allegory was one way in which the medieval church reconstructed the original story of the life of Christ so as to make it more understandable to humanity, and Dante, in using the allegorical form, along with the poetic force of his writing, reconstructs the well-known story of Francis into an original statement that makes Francis come alive again in the minds of his readers. Allegory is also part of the English

[14] George Steiner uses the metaphor "of sacramental intake or incarnation . . . in the context of 'the bringing back'" (1975: 299) when describing his "view of translation as a hermeneutic of trust (*élancement*), of penetration, of embodiment, and of restitution" (1975: 303).

tradition and is a type of extended metaphor. Today metaphor is the more usual poetic method, and we tend to see religious and poetic concepts in metaphorical rather than in allegorical terms: in interpreting the Christian concept of the incarnation we are more inclined to see it as a metaphor than as an allegory; the metaphorical practice of poetic interpretation is a much more apposite method than literalism in biblical criticism and in translation. There is still a close connection between religious and poetic modes of interpretation, and the *exitus-reditus* principle of medieval Christianity is relevant to poetic statement, to any form of interpretation or hermeneutics, and to poetic translation.

The original work may be seen as a work of creation that has not been properly understood, and the translation may be seen as the tool of the original creation that mends or repairs and that reveals the original to a section of mankind in a kind of incarnation or embodiment of the original that will be more comprehensible to the new target audience. The relatedness of the original to the translation "involves over-againstness, one to the other, and thus distinctness . . ., not of distinct absolute realities . . . but of distinct terms of the relationships"[15]: the translation is distinct from the original, but maintains a close relationship with the original. The attributes of the original have been appropriated to the translation, and though there has been "a change, in terms of its destination or end-point . . . its existence depends on the subject of the relationship"[16]. The translator plays the role of a mediator between the original and his target audience. ("A mediator stands in the middle, separated from either extreme, uniting them by carrying things across from one to the other."[17]) And, in terms of the whole picture of translation and interpretation, there is a role for many different translators and interpreters, just as Aquinas saw the role of ministers, perfect and imperfect, in the Eucharist and in the sending forth of the Holy Spirit to mankind. Even poor, imperfect translations have their place in this sending forth, because they serve a purpose in the process of pronouncing the words of the

[15] McDermott (1991: 67).
[16] McDermott (1991: 480).
[17] McDermott (1991: 509).

original in their own tongue and in achieving a kind of transubstantiation, in which the words of the translation become the essence of the original. A translation achieves a union of time past, time present, and time future: the original is something of the past that is given new life; the original is incarnated in the present through the translation; and this in turn has a future life in a new cultural context through its future readers, and perhaps through the work of new translators; in this sense it can be compared with the Resurrection and Pentecost experiences. The term "afterlife", which is often applied to translation, becomes in effect a new life that continues after the death of the original author and after the death of the translator and that continues with each succeeding translator or reader.

ii
Helen Vendler and Eric Griffiths on Dante in English Poetry

The interest shown by English poets in Dante has revived comparatively recently. Helen Vendler writes:

> As a medieval Catholic writer, Dante was foreign to post-Reformation English tastes, not only in England but in the United States. Longfellow's 1867 translation of the *Commedia* revived Dante in America; T.S. Eliot's polemical espousing of Dante's austere sense of the world (more congenial to him than Shakespeare's) set the *Commedia* squarely in the modern poetic mind as a text to be studied. (2005: 9.)

Vendler mentions the "poetic possibilities in Dante . . . that are not common in native English poetry, and Eliot (like Milton, Shelley and Keats before him) profited from them" (2005: 9).

The book Helen Vendler is reviewing is *Dante in English*, "an anthology of English translations of passages from Dante (most of them from the *Commedia*); it also includes poetry in English by authors who have been influenced by Dante." About the translations she writes: "Attempts at rendering Dante into English spring from various theories of translation and 'imitation', all of which seem to be on display here." She discusses the terza rima, rhyme, pentameter, archaic language, and exact or free translation. Her conclusion echoes what I have

maintained: ". . . the translator's mode matters less than his or her poetic powers, which may manifest themselves in an empathy with Dante's style and emotions, and in the handling of rhythm, forms of sonority and verbal intensity." It is not "the translator's mode" or theory that matters, but rather "his or her poetic powers" – what this research refers to as the creativity of the poet-translator, his "empathy" or *Einfühlung* with the original poem, and "the handling of rhythm, forms of sonority and verbal intensity". (2005: 9.)

Vendler criticises the translations in the book she is reviewing:

> . . . there have been a surprising number of translations of the whole *Commedia*, and . . . many of them are in terza rima (about which Griffiths has a rewarding, if not original, set of comments, emphasising the counter-flows of its forward motion and its backward glances); . . . dreariness sets in very quickly in the hands of a stolid translator; . . . it is difficult to capture in English Dante's many planes of discourse . . . without sounding rather absurd; . . . idiom ages very rapidly (one century's modernity is another century's archaism); . . . heroic couplets are the worst form in which to cast Dante's lines; . . . some translators think up extraordinary means (Dante does well in the metre of Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'); . . . the Spenserian stanza, with its prolonged spreading close after each nine lines, is death to the current of terza rima; . . . Shelley's mastery of the form in the unfinished 'Triumph of Life' is a miracle; . . . the dilution of Dantean terseness. . . is always an error; . . . updating Dante's circumstance . . . becomes parodic. . ..

Vendler concludes: "It is fun (at least for anyone interested in Dante and in verse form) to see how the poet has been 'channelled' (as Griffiths might say) over the centuries." (2005: 10.)

She refers to "the full measure of the poet's greatness (beside which all translations pale depressingly)" (2005: 9). On the next page she mentions "the importance of Dante's repetitions (impossible to reproduce in translation)"; she prefers "the oblique influence of Dante . . . in Rossetti's . . . 'The Blessed Damozel' . . . in Yeats's 'Cuchulain Comforted', Eliot's 'Little Gidding' or Heaney's 'Station Island'", and she comments, "Transfusion works better, in many instances, than translation." These statements all challenge the views that

translation is central to the history of English poetry and that good poetic translation deserves to be rated as highly as original poetry. Her concluding remark helps, nevertheless, to assert the value of the book, *Dante in English*:

> . . . a reader unfamiliar with Dante would be provoked agreeably by these translations to a further curiosity about the *Commedia* and its reverberations in English letters. Though there are books on Dante's influence in England, the abstraction 'influence' takes on its true complexity when we see it generating so many English compositions in so many different forms over the last six hundered years. (2005: 10.)

Helen Vendler has raised many issues relevant to the work of poet-translators. Vendler's closing remark about "the abstraction 'influence'" taking on "its true complexity when we see it generating so many English compositions in so many different forms over the last six hundred years" is also relevant: it is a difficult matter to trace the influence of translation on the original work of poets, but the many twentieth-century English poets who have given a great deal of their time to translation of foreign poetry is an indication of influence.

Despite Vendler's criticism (2005: 9) of Eric Griffiths' style in his "peculiar hundred-page introduction", he makes relevant remarks about translation. His first words are: "A translator of Dante might be forgiven for giving up hope", and he quotes Samuel Beckett's character who asks, "Do you think it is absolutely necessary to translate it?" when referring to "qui vive la pietà quando è ben morta . . ." [*Inferno* 20.28]. (2005: xix.) Griffiths first discusses "the rights or wrongs of rhymed or unrhymed versions of the *Commedia*":

> Each side of the argument has some right on its side. Different responsibilities, different priorities, face a translator who works primarily for a bilingual audience: a reader who has Italian, for example, gains little from even the most felicitous 'dubbing' of Dante's phonological patterns into English. The shadowing of an original's form by a translation may or may not be a matter of principle but any translating, however it handles the physique of the original, is an exercise of skill in bringing about recognitions, and must, like many skills, involve a measure of opportunism, of knowing when to insist on a principle and when to go easy on it. (2005: xx.)

Griffiths moves on to

> Problems such as what to do with different systems of grammatical gendering, how to negotiate the exigencies of rhyme or other formality, whether to explicate semantic knots, face any alert translator of any complex writing. They are, though, highlighted in the *Commedia* because the poem itself so concentrates on translation and transvaluation, principally in the encounter between Virgil and Dante but also in hundreds of vivid details – narrative, lexical and allusive – even after the two poets part (2005: xxiv–xxv).

Griffiths shows insight when he refers to the *Commedia* as being "in itself a work of comparative literature, already engaged in a searching assay of its debt to and distance from its pagan fathers (not to mention its standing with regard to Mother Church)" and he expands on this by saying Dante's poem "does not leave these deep and testing questions of translation, of religious and cultural transition, to come sidelong into a reader's mind from a hint here or a subtlety there: it dramatizes and upfronts them, incorporates them into its tissues and structure, gives them the force of human encounter, of a sore point unwittingly touched upon or of separation and its pangs" (2005: xxiv–xxv).

Griffiths discusses the issue of "faithfulness": ". . . We do think faithfulness a virtue in translators but it is not the only virtue they can and must exercise, and, anyway, faithfulness is a complex process of growth and adaptation, as the *Commedia* itself teaches" (2005: xxix–xxx). At the end of his Introduction Griffiths gives a reason why "Dante has not always been well served by his English translators": ". . . the greed for sensuous concretion which is a marked feature of English verse, at least since the time of Shakespeare, has often led them to plump and flesh out what he so delicately etched. . ." (2005: lvii). As has been noted in previous chapters, it is not only Dante who has been badly served by what Griffiths calls "the greed for sensuous concretion". His final observation is a mixture of the impossibility of translation and the continuing hope on the part of the translator:

> It is impossible to replicate the end of *Purgatorio* 31 in English. Only in Italian can we hear how these words are a zenith of eloquence, reintegrating the spectrum of Dante's loves in the

> light of the beloved figure, *grammatica* herself, responsive and unveiled. . .. Yet . . . it (the *Commedia*) can be and has actually been re-performed in new, even alien, settings, and each translator can hope to return to the poem some of its native freshness . . .. (2005: cxiv–cxv.)

Both Vendler and Griffiths demonstrate the difficulties of translation but also the benefits of translating Dante's *Commedia* into English.

In the following parts of this chapter, critical analyses of parts of the *Commedia* and of translations of these parts will be undertaken. It is not possible in this research to study the complete *Commedia*, but the excerpts chosen from the three canticles in this and the next chapter should give opportunity to comment on the quality of translation and to discuss some of the problems involved.

iii
The Ulysses Passage from *Inferno* Canto XXVI (lines 85–142)

Umberto Eco has had much to say about translating Dante. In a section called "Substance in translating poetry" he writes: ". . . in translating poetry one should render as much as possible the effect produced by the sounds of the original text, even though in the change of language a lot of variations are unavoidable. One can miss the real *body* of a discourse, but try at least to preserve, let us say, rhythm and rhyme" (2004: 137–144). Eco refers to Douglas Hofstadter's book *Le Ton beau de Marot*[18] and he compares different translations of Canto 3 lines 1–12 by Robert Pinsky, Seamus Heaney, Mark Musa, and Dorothy Sayers.[19] Eco and Hofstadter raise some pertinent issues connected with the translation of Dante: rhythm, metre, rhyme, and the tercet structure. Their method of comparison and criticism of different translations is similar to the method used in the case studies that follow.

In this part of Chapter Four some of the best-known lines from Dante's *Commedia* (*Inferno:* Canto 26, lines 85–142) will be studied. Dante's reference

[18] The reference for Hofstadter's book is Douglas Hofstadter (1997) *Le Ton beau de Marot*, New York: Basic Books, chapter 17.
[19] Hofstadter is critical of Pinsky's and Heaney's translations, but praises Musa's translation. Eco praises the translation by Sayers.

for this passage is Homer's *Odyssey,* as well as Virgil's *Aeneid,* as can be seen in line 93 with its reference to Aeneas. Dante supports Virgil's attitude to Ulysses; this is why Ulysses is assigned to hell; Virgil was, of course, on the side of the Trojans, not the Greeks, and Virgil had a low opinion of Ulysses and Greeks, generally as liars and treacherous deceivers[20]; Dante writes of Ulysses' *agguato* (line 59) ("ambush") and *arte* (line 61) ("craft") and has Virgil refer to Ulysses and Diomedes rather disdainfully, *perch' e' fuor greci* (line 75).

Dante's account of Ulysses' last journey is Dante's own; though it shows knowledge of Homer's account, Ulysses' narrative as told by Dante is not to be found in Virgil or in Homer (unless the passage in Book 11 line 121 of *The Odyssey*, in which Tiresias tells Odysseus ἔρχεθαι δὴ ἔπειτα ("go forth once more, you must" (Fagles)) has some relevance).[21] Dante's lines are creative poetry resulting from his reading but transformed into something of his own.

As T. S. Eliot writes, Dante's Ulysses "is a creature of the pure poetic imagination, apprehensible apart from place and time" (1953: 248). The lines in *Inferno* Canto 26 are Tennyson's source for his "Ulysses". Eliot states: ". . . The Ulysses episode is particularly 'readable', I think, because of its continuous straightforward narrative, and because to an English reader the comparison with Tennyson's poem – a perfect poem at that – is very instructive. It is worth while noticing the greatly superior degree of *simplification* of Dante's version." (Ibid.)

In her notes on Canto XXVI, Nicole Pinsky comments: "All the characters who speak in the *Inferno* are near contemporaries of the poet except for Ulysses, who will be mentioned several times more in the course of the *Commedia*. The ideals

[20] It is mainly in *Aeneid Book Two* that Virgil vents his spleen on Greeks and Ulysses. It is an interesting puzzle why the Romans changed the name of Odysseus to Ulixes. Robert Bly refers to the name Ulixes, "which some believe to be a union of *oulas*, wound, and *ischea*, thigh. Ulysses' name, then, becomes, literally, thigh wound. He receives the wound and lives. The Romans must have felt the detail in Odysseus' life to be very important." (2001: 218–219.) If Bly's derivation of the Roman name is correct, both the Greek name and the Roman name are derived from the details in Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XIX.

[21] Robert Graves has a different version of Odysseus' death (1957: 373).

Ulysses expresses are reminiscent of those espoused by an equally self-confident Dante in an unfinished philosophical work, the *Convivio*." (1995: 414.)

Steve Ellis writes: "This final voyage seems in fact to be an invention of Dante's own, not provided in any previous text; it is 'perhaps the most beautiful thing in the whole *Inferno*' (Sayers)" (2007: 158).

John D. Sinclair states: "Dante's great story of the last voyage of Ulysses, merely suggested by hints in classical and medieval literature, is essentially an invention of his own, which inspired what are perhaps Tennyson's finest lines" (1958: 330).

Robin Kirkpatrick comments:

> Dante did not know Homer's Greek original, and so relied for his knowledge of the Ulysses legend on references in Latin sources such as Cicero, Seneca and, above all, Horace's *Art of Poetry* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 14: 157 and so on. But these sources all tend to represent Ulysses in terms of low cunning rather than intelligence – as does Virgil in **lines 55–63** of Dante's canto. Nor has any precedent been found that anticipates the account which Dante puts in Ulysses' own mouth of a last journey beyond the limits imposed by the gods upon human endeavour (**108–9**), a journey which ends in death but is impelled by a desire for knowledge of the world and of the vices and virtues of human beings (**98–9 and 116–2)**. (2006: 412.)
> . . .There is no episode in the *Commedia* to which Dante makes more frequent cross-reference. At salient moments in his subsequent narrative, he regularly and often explicitly compares his own progress to the voyage he has invented for Ulysses, as for instance in *Inferno* 28: 48, when Virgil sees Dante's journey through Hell as one which is intended to provide full '*esperienza piena*': 'full experience' of the other world. (2006: 413.)

Peter Dronke gives further references to parts of the *Commedia* in which "Dante's personal echoes of Ulisse's narrative are . . . unmistakable and moving" (1988: 22–23).

Examination of some of these lines and of their translations may help to highlight the difficulties and the successes of translation of Dante into English poetry. The

Inferno canticle is the most translated of the three canticles, and the translations of Pinsky, Ellis, Carson, and Esolen will be used in this part.

The first passage from the original to be examined is Canto 26, lines 94–102:

> *nè dolcezza di figlio, nè la pieta* 94
> *del vecchio padre, nè 'l debito amore*
> *lo qual dovea Penelopè far lieta,*
> *vincer poter dentro da me l'ardore* 97
> *ch'i' ebbi a divenir del mondo esperto,*
> *e delli vizi umani e del valore;*
> *ma misi me per l'alto mare aperto* 100
> *sol con un legno e con quella compagna*
> *picciola dalla qual non fui diserto.*[22]

Robert Pinsky is a United States Poet Laureate and a teacher of creative writing; his translation of these lines (1995: 275 and 277) is:

> Not fondness for my son, nor any claim
> Of reverence for my father, nor love I owed
> Penelope, to please her, could overcome
>
> My longing for experience of the world,
> Of human vices and virtue. But I sailed out
> On the deep open seas, accompanied
>
> By that small company that still had not
> Deserted me, in a single ship . . ..

Pinsky shortens the nine lines to almost eight. Whereas Dante leaves *figlio* and *vecchio padre* without a possessive "my", Pinsky includes "my" for both; this somewhat reduces the original third line's emphasis on Ulysses' particular guilt for the way he has treated Penelope. Dante starts by speaking of general father-son and son-father responsibilities, but becomes more personal when he thinks of his treatment of Penelope. Yet, even there, Pinsky in the words "nor love I owed / Penelope, to please her" contracts the rather protracted original in which Ulysses wrestles with his guilt *nè 'l debito amore / lo qual dovea Penelopè far lieta*. Pinsky brings the words "could overcome" into the third line, whereas Dante keeps them in the fourth line with a decided emphasis on both words *vincer poter*.

[22] The Italian texts from the *Inferno* in this Part and in Chapter Five are those used by John D. Sinclair (1958).

In the four original lines being examined this is the first time there has been a stress on the first syllable of the first word in a line, and this is lost in Pinsky's translation. Instead he brings the words "My longing" to the beginning of the fourth line and contracts the original *dentro a me l'ardore / ch'i' ebbi a divenir del mondo esperto* to the rather bland "My longing for the experience of the world". He loses Dante's repeated d sounds and his long o sounds, as well as Dante's word *divenir*, which means "become" or "develop into" or "grow into" and which has a link with the word *venir* with its own associations of travelling or moving. (It is interesting that Tennyson picks up this word in his poem with the unusual "I am become a name".) Again Pinsky contracts *e delli vizi umani e del valore* into "Of human vices and virtue"; although he keeps the alliteration in "vices and virtue", he does not capture the repeated d and l sounds in the line, nor the i sounds in *delli vizi umani*. Again he brings "But I sailed out" into the middle of a line, where it loses the force of the original at the beginning of a line with its alliteration *ma misi me. . . mare*. Pinsky's "But I sailed out / On the deep open seas, accompanied / By that small company that still had not / Deserted me, in a single ship" is an accurate translation of the words of the original but not of the emphasis of the word order or the original craftsmanship; the placement of the words "in a single ship" is awkward. Pinsky has not succeeded in capturing the complexity of Dante's *terza rima*, although he attempts a kind of rhyme – more like a repetition of the consonant sound at the end of the first and third lines of each stanza.

Steve Ellis is a British poet and a Professor of English Literature. He states his aim in "reproducing important features of Dante's style which it seems to me previous versions have obscured and misrepresented"; his first aim is to reproduce Dante's "colloquial" style, and he mentions Dante's "striking idiomatic expressions, vivid homely details and comparisons, and dialect terms and phrases" and declares his intention to use "my own native Yorkshire background"; his second aim is "to reproduce . . . Dante's concision and economy, his ability to compress much meaning into a few words". (2007: xiii–xv.) His translation of these lines (2007: 158–159) is:

. . . neither joy in a son, nor my duty
to an aged father, nor the love
I owed to Penelope's happiness,
none could bear the thirst in me
to be wise in the ways of men,
to know their strengths and sins;
so I put out on the great ocean
with just one boat and its crew,
those few who hadn't deserted me.

Ellis does not reproduce the original Italian in his book, and this is considered a deficiency. He is more successful than Pinsky in his keeping to the pattern of lines in Dante's original. He does not, however, attempt the sweep of Dante's eleven-to thirteen-syllable line and reduces his lines to six to ten syllables. His first word "neither" loses the abruptness of *nè* and the repetition of *nè*. . . *nè*. . . *nè*, but he does see the change from the general "a son" and "an aged father" to the personal relationship with Penelope, though his use of "my" (in his translation of line 94) limits this. The words "nor the love / I owed to Penelope's happiness" lack the passion of Dante's words, and the next line "none could bear the thirst in me" does not do justice to Dante's line. The same criticism applies to the next two lines, in which the word *divenir* is lost. Again this translation is an accurate and concise translation, but it is rather bland, without the poetic force of Dante's original, despite the alliteration in "wise . . . ways" and "strengths . . . sins" and the assonance in "crew . . . few", which show some inclination towards Dante's original.

Ciaran Carson is an Irish poet; his translation of these lines (2004: 183) is:

. . . neither fondness for my son, sincere
affection for my father, nor the love
that should have brought Penelope good cheer,

could overcome the urge I had to rove
the world, and know the various degrees
of human imperfection and resolve.

So I set forth upon the open seas
with but one vessel and that little band
of comrades who had not deserted me.

Carson writes about his translation: ". . . the measures and associations of the Hiberno-English ballad might prove a model for translation. It would allow for sometimes extravagant alliteration, for periphrasis and inversion to accommodate the rhyme; it could accommodate rapid shifts of register. So I tried to write a *terza rima* crossed with ballad." (2004: xxi.) (Carson's *Inferno* does not include the original Italian either.)

Carson is the only one of the four chosen translators who tries to emulate the *terza rima*. He uses a nine-ten syllable line with the rhyming pattern of the *terza rima*. He avoids the repetition of *nè* . . . *nè* . . . *nè* and substitutes "neither . . . nor"; he misses the general father-son and son-father relationship with his use of "my" and he omits Dante's *debito*. His translation of Ulysses' ardent reference to Penelope is instead rather impersonal: "the love / that should have brought Penelope good cheer", in which the words "good cheer" are inappropriate and merely to achieve Carson's rhyme. He gives the words "could overcome" their rightful force at the beginning of the line, but his translation "the urge I had to rove / the world" lacks the force of the original and is again a pandering to the necessity of rhyme. He inserts the word "know", but, much worse, the words "the various degrees" are in his translation merely for the rhyme. Similarly the word "resolve" is in his translation for purposes of rhyme and misses the meaning of *valore*. The words "So I set forth" lack the force of the original, and Carson ignores the word *alto*, but the last two lines are competently handled.

Carson would appear to believe that any translation that ignores "the aims of harmony in the musical bases of poetry" will not match the original. This raises the question of how important a rhyme scheme is in the translation of Dante and whether it causes more problems than are worth the rhyme scheme in the translation. The unrhymed translations studied suggest that it is not necessarily in the interests of translation to try to emulate the rhyme scheme.

Anthony Esolen is a Professor of English in the United States and a published poet. He writes:

> . . . I think every translator of poetry must decide what he will try to preserve at all costs, what he will take when it is available, and what he will receive only occasionally from the hands of a stubborn Muse. . . . for the *Inferno*, . . . the preservation of Dante's rhyme in any systematic form would so overburden syntax, individual lines, and tercets as to compromise either meaning or music. In the former case the trade is a hard one; in the latter, it is self-defeating. . . . Some contemporary translations have dispensed not only with rhyme but with meter altogether, in an attempt to render Dante's meaning as tersely and accurately as possible. . . . But memorability and all of the power of music are lost.
>
> I have assumed, in this translation, that a sublime poem had better be rendered into a meter capable of hinting now and again at that sublimity. In English, iambic pentameter is the only meter that will do. This translation is in blank verse, with some but not a very great many enjambments, as Dante's own verse is not highly enjambed. If I find a rhyme in my path I will use it, but will not turn things inside out for its sake; some ten percent or more of the lines do rhyme. In diction I have tried to crack English's knuckles to render Dante's striking coinages and constructions; if Dante turns an intransitive verb into a transitive verb, I attempt to do the same, and hope the reader will forgive the violence. Dante's linguistic range rivals that of any poet besides Shakespeare. No translator can match it; I hope only that the ruggedness and muscularity of his diction will still appear, with some regularity, in these English verses. Finally, the polysyllables of Italian will sometimes leave the English translator with a bit of breathing room, since English is rich in monosyllabic words. I try to use such space to bring out submerged or etymological metaphors, or to cover the range of meanings of a single word; from time to time I use a pair of words to translate one, and use a metaphorical verbal phrase for a single verb. Yet taken all in all, the philosophy underlying this translation is conservative, and, especially for figures of speech, the renderings are quite literal. (2005: xxviii–xxix.)

His translation of Canto 26, lines 94–102 ((2005: 271) is:

> Neither the sweet affection for my son,
> nor piety due my father, nor the love
> I owed Penelope to bring her joy
> Could drive from me the burning to go forth
> to gain experience of the world, and learn
> of every human vice, and human worth.
> I sent myself on the deep open sea

with only a boat and that small troop of men,
my friends, who never had abandoned me.

Esolen uses blank verse in a ten-eleven-syllable line with a half-rhyme "forth/worth" and a rhyme "sea/me". Like Ellis, he uses "Neither . . . nor . . . nor", and, like Pinsky and Carson, he inserts "my" to refer to the son and the father; the use of "Neither", "sweet", and "my" in his first line forces him to move "nor piety" to the next line whereas they appear in the first line of Dante's excerpt, and this causes him to move "owed" to the third line and to reduce the force of the third line of the original. He succeeds in his words "Could drive" and "burning", but he limits them by the inclusion of "to go forth" at the end of the line and the rather weak "to gain experience", which ignores the implications of *divenir*, and the inclusion of "to learn" in the next line. He has to pad the next line by the inclusion of "every" and the repetition of "human". "I sent myself" loses the alliteration of *ma misi me*, and the inclusion of "small" in the second-last line causes him to include "my friends" and "never" in the last line.

To try to achieve "the aims of harmony in the musical bases of poetry" in a translation of Dante is a mammoth task and fraught with difficulties, if not impossible. It is much easier to attempt this with a small excerpt than it is with the hundred cantos and the many lines, but an attempt with a small excerpt will show in some way the complexity of the task. The following translation attempts to recapture the twelve-thirteen syllable line, the rhythm, and the rhyme and to pay close attention to the meaning of the passage:

… not affection for a son, no, nor the compassion
for an aged father, not the passionate love I
owed, which should have fulfilled Penelope's glad passion,

could overcome inside me the burning desire
to make me become experienced in the world's ways,
and in men's deep vices and their virtue much higher;

but I moved myself off through deep open seaways
only with one boat and with that small company,
so very small, who'd not deserted, as in past days.

Many of the comments made about Pinsky's, Smith's, Carson's, and Esolen's translations apply to this attempt at translation. Most translators owe debts of insights to other translators, just as critics do to other critics' work.

The next excerpt to be studied along with the translations is lines Canto 26, lines 112–120:

> *"O frati," dissi "che per cento milia* *112*
> *perigli siete giunti all'occidente,*
> *a questa tanto picciola vigilia*
> *de' nostri sensi ch'è del rimanente,* *115*
> *non vogliate negar l'esperïenza,*
> *di retro al sol, del mondo sanza gente.*
> *Considerate la vostra semenza:* *118*
> *fatti non foste a viver come bruti,*
> *ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza."*

Nicole Pinsky, commenting on this speech, writes:

> Dante may have known that Aeneas' speech to his men in Virgil's poem was modeled on Odysseus' speech to his men in the *Odyssey*. Dante reconstructs an imagined Homeric archetype by echoing Aeneas ("O brothers…") but transforming Aeneas' serenity into Ulysses' thirst for the unknown.This (is an) extraordinary act of literary triangulation . . .. The result is the portrait of a Ulysses whose individualism is the antithesis of Aeneas' filial and civic piety. His intellectual pride is not unlike that of the younger Dante, whom he perhaps represents. (1995: 414.)

Robin Kirkpatrick refers to "the high rhetoric of Ulysses' address to his old and weary shipmates (112–20). . . . a 'little' speech – as Ulysses puts it at line 121, with rhetorical understatement (see the use of '*picciola*' at lines 102 and 114)". Shortly after this, Kirkpatrick writes: ". . . Ulysses' posture is . . . that of a demagogue – unthinking as to purpose or effect – as heroic adventurer." (2006: 413–414.)

Whether Kirkpatrick is right about Ulysses being "a demagogue" or not, let us look at the translations of these lines:

> 'O brothers who have reached the west,' I began,
> 'Through a hundred thousand perils, surviving all;
>
> So little is the vigil we see remain

Still for our senses, that you should not choose
To deny it the experience – behind the sun

Leading us onward – of the world which has
No people in it. Consider well your seed:
You were not born to live as a mere brute does,

But for the pursuit of knowledge and the good.'
(Pinsky (1995: 277).)

"O brothers, after so many dangers,"
I said, "you've won the west:
and now in this so little vigil
that our five senses have left,
don't deny knowing that world
without people, behind the sun.
Think on why you were created:
not to exist like animals indeed,
but to seek virtue and knowledge." (Steve Ellis (2007: 159).)

"Brothers, who have reached the west through perils
numberless," I said, "now that you've run
the race of life, in this last watch that still

remains to you, I ask you not to shun
experience, but boldly to explore
the vast unpeopled world beyond the sun.

Remember who you are, what you were made for:
not to live like brutes, but for the quest
of knowledge and the good." I said no more; . . .
(Ciaran Carson (2004: 184).)

Then I spoke:
'O brothers, who have borne innumerable
dangers to reach the setting of the sun,
from these few hours remaining to our watch,
From time so short in which to live and feel,
do not refuse experience of the land
beyond the sun, the world where no one dwells.
Think well upon your nation and your seed!
For you were never made to live like brutes,
but to pursue the good in mind and deed.'
(Anthony Esolen (2005: 271, 273).)

Pinsky, Ellis, and Esolen retain the "O" before "brothers", whereas Carson omits it, probably because it is rather old-fashioned in modern English, but the inclusion helps to keep the same emphasis as in the original. None of these translators

keeps the position of *dissi* immediately after *O frati*; they, rather arbitrarily, move it to the end of the first line, to the beginning of the second line, to the middle of the second line, or to the previous line. Esolen keeps his "innumerable / dangers" in the original position, but it is not an accurate translation. He changes the first two *terzine* into three sentences and loses the sweep of the Dantean sentence. Carson and Esolen maintain the sweep of the Dantean sentence, but Carson changes the word order and many of the original words: he uses the cliché "run / the race of life", probably to achieve his rhyme scheme. Esolen achieves similarity with the word order, line structure, and sense of the original. Carson does not achieve his attempt at *terza rima* in the rhyme of "perils" with "still", and the rhyme scheme compels him to add "I said no more" after Ulysses' speech. Pinsky changes the word-order of the original quite drastically and adds words like "surviving all" and "Leading us onward"; his

> So little is the vigil we see remain
> Still for our senses, that you should not choose
> To deny it the experience – behind the sun
>
> Leading us onward – of the world which has
> No people in it

is awkward syntax. Again we note that Pinsky does not keep to the *terza rima* format, though he attempts to repeat the final consonant sound at the end of the first and third lines of each stanza. Steve Ellis's translation reads fluently, and his "and now in this so little vigil / that our five senses have left" probably captures the meaning of the original words best of the translations. He does, however, change the word order of the original quite drastically.

What are some of the features of the original that have been "lost in translation"? The sound and meaning of the two-syllable word *giunti* ("jewnti", meaning "arrived", "reached", "succeed", even "tricked") in the middle of line 113 expresses achievement; only Ellis captures this with his translation "won", but this does not achieve the sound of the original with its many implications. Dante's word *picciola*, which he used in line 102 and now again in line 114, and which he will use again in line 122, is obviously an important word to Ulysses as he speaks

to Virgil and Dante and to his *compagni . . . vecchi e tardi* (line 106).What Dante and Ulysses intended by this word is the sparseness of circumstances (*compagni, vigilia, orazion* – crew, vigil, and speech) left to him, a kind of premonition of death. In line 114 the word is given special emphasis by the words that precede it, *questa tanto* – the word *questa* is again used in line 122 to make the link even clearer; *tanto picciola* has also an oxymoronic implication that makes it even more striking. It is a *vigilia* that is *tanto picciola*: it is a *vigilia / de' nostri sensi che'è del rimanente* (a "vigil of the senses that remain to us", as Sinclair translates it (1958: 327)); they are waiting for death. This sparseness of circumstances is hinted again with the words *del mondo sanza gente*. Ulysses and his men, in their *folle volo* (line 125), know the *perigli* of this sparseness. Line 116, *non vogliate negar l'esperïenza*, with the stress on *non* at the beginning of the line and the alliteration of *non* and *negare*, with the force of the imperative *vogliate,* and with the reminder of Ulysses' earlier words *ebbi a divenir del mondo esperto* (line 98), is the protracted main clause of the sentence and is spoken with great force. The last two lines of the speech, *fatti non foste a viver come bruti / ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza*, are also forceful lines with stresses on the first syllable of each line, another stressed negative *non* with the alternative *ma*, and the contrast between the brutish existence and the life of "virtue and knowledge". There are some interesting possible ambiguities or examples of polysemy that are perhaps beyond a translator's ability: the word *rimanente* may suggest to an Italian the words *rima* ("rhyme" or "poetry" or even "crack" or "fissure"); the word *semenza* may have sexual connotations; Dante's use of *canoscenza* may remind a native speaker of the words *canoa* ("canoe" or "boat") – it is interesting that the usual spelling of the word is *conoscenza*, but Dante has chosen *canoscenza* here, whereas he uses *conoscenza* in *Purgatorio*, Canto 30, line 37. Such interpretations are probably far-fetched, but a translator, like a critic, has to be aware of such possibilities, even if it is only to reject them in the final choices to be made by the poet-translator: too much emphasis on sound in translation can interfere with the sense, as was seen in Chapter Three Part ii in the translation of Catullus by Celia and Louis Zukofsky.

The last excerpt to be studied from *Inferno* Canto XXVI is from the end of the Canto (lines 136–142):

Noi ci allegrammo, e tosto tornò in pianto; *136*
chè della nova terra un turbo nacque,
e percosse del legno il primo canto.
Tre volte il fè girar con tutte l'acque: *139*
alla quarta levar la poppa in suso
e la prora ire in giù, com'altrui piacque,
infin che 'l mar fu sopra noi richiuso.' 142

We celebrated – but soon began to weep,

For from the newfound land a storm had grown,
Rising to strike the forepart of the ship.
It whirled the vessel round, and round again

With all the waters three times, lifting up
The stern the fourth as pleased an Other – to press
The prow beneath the surface, and did not stop

Until the sea had closed up over us." (Pinsky (1995: 278).)

We rejoiced, but only to despair:
a storm rose on this new land
and hit the prow of the ship.
After three turns with the waters
the poop lifted on the fourth
and the bow sunk, as was desired,
until the ocean closed above us.' (Ellis (2007: 160).)

We cheered; our cheers did not take long to die:
the strange land hurled a hurricane at us,
and tossed our vessel like a butterfly.

Three times it whirled her with tempestuous force;
and at the fourth time round, her stern rose,
her prow went down, as pleased Another. Thus

the waters broke above our heads, and closed.'
(Carson (2004: 185).)

We cheered, but soon the cheering turned to woe,
for then a whirlwind born from the strange land
battered our little vessel on the prow.
Three times the boat and all the sea were whirled,
and at the fourth, to please Another's will,
the aft tipped in the air, the prow went down,

Until the ocean closed above our bones." (Esolen (2005: 273).)

The distinctive features of Dante's original are the repeated o-sounds in line 136, with reminders in lines 137, 138, 140, and 142; the alliteration of k-, t-, p-, and r-sounds; the single sentence of the terzina in lines 136–138, and the longer single sentence in lines 139–142; the precision of the nautical terms that is emphasized by the numbers *tre* and q*uarta*; and the clause *com'altrui piacque* in line 141.

Pinsky changes Dante's seven lines to eight, whereas the other translators keep to the seven-line format, though, as we have seen before, none of these translators attempts the original syllable or metrical format. Pinsky and Essolen (and, to a lesser extent, Ellis) attempt the same sentence structure as the original. None tries to emulate the sound of the original, though Esolen does try to achieve something of Dante's force with his strong verbs "battered" and "whirled". All the translators attempt to maintain the precise nautical terminology and keep the effect of the precise numbering.

Dante's words *com'altrui piacque* are translated "as pleased an Other" (Pinsky), "as was desired" (Ellis), "as pleased Another" (Carson), and "to please Another's will" (Esolen); Ellis's "as was desired", although it contains the idea of willing, loses the power of the original; Esolen probably comes closest to Dante's intention, since with the word *piacque* Dante implies the sense of both pleasing and willing and since Esolen's translations include something of Dante's *la sua voluntate è nostra pace* (*Paradiso* Canto III line 85). But what does Dante intend when he puts the words into Ulysses' mouth? Surely there is a mixture of Ulysses' incomprehension or lack of understanding, of his stoicism in the face of danger, which is a characteristic of the Homeric character, and of Dante's combined admiration for and disapproval of Ulysses' *il varco / folle d'Ulisse* ("Ulysses' mad passage" - *Paradiso* Canto XXVII lines 82–83), which echoes Ulysses' own words in line 125 of Canto XXVI of *Inferno*?

The word *allegrammo* has no English equivalent in sound; perhaps the closest is the word "allegro", which means "quick movement". The translations,

"celebrated", "rejoiced", "cheered for joy", and "cheered", do not bring across the movement of the original word. Similarly the verbs *percosse*, *girar*, and *richiuso*, whereas they have been accurately translated from the point of view of sense-meaning, have a richness of sound that the translations have not been able to emulate. Again the translators have often changed the word order of the original: two striking examples of this are Pinsky's words "to press" after "as pleased an Other", which limits the importance of "as pleased an Other" at the end of the line, and the rather ineffective word "Thus" (only to achieve a rhyme) in the same position in Carson's translation.

An attempt to try to achieve as many of the desired effects mentioned above is this translation of mine:

> We quickened in gladness, then tossed torn in sadness,
> for from the new-sighted coast turbulence now came
> and pelting crushed the vessel's front in its madness.
>
> Three times gyrated with the water's full force, again
> a fourth time the poop deck lifted up helpless,
> the prow jerked down, as pleased some other I cannot name,
>
> in the end the sea had closed right over us lifeless.

Harold Bloom writes about Ulysses and Dante:

> . . . The voice of Ulysses and that of Dante are dangerously close . . . (1996: 86).
>
> Himself inflamed, Dante bends towards the flame of Ulysses with desire, the longing for knowledge. The knowledge he receives is that of pure quest, made at the expense of son, wife, and father. The quest is, amid much else, a figuration for Dante's own pride and obduracy in prolonging his exile from Florence by refusing terms that would have returned him to his family. . . . His Ulysses speaks absolute dignity and terrible poignancy: not the pathos of damnation, but the pride that knows how pride and courage do not suffice. **. . .** he (Dante) is as savage, self-centred, and impatient as his Ulysses, and like his Ulysses he burns with the desire to be elsewhere, to be different. (1996: 88.)
>
> That is the undersong of Dante's vision of Ulysses: admiration, fellow-feeling, familial pride. A kindred spirit is saluted, even though he resides in the Eighth Circle of Hell. It is Ulysses who

> makes the judgment that his final voyage was a 'mad flight,' presumably in contrast to Dante's Virgil-guided flight.
>
> (1996: 89.)

These are relevant comments on the importance of the Ulysses episode in Dante's poem.

iv

The Pia Passage from *Purgatorio* Canto V (lines 130–136)

Robin Kirkpatrick, in his summary of *Purgatorio* Canto V, writes: ". . . Dante meets three figures who have all suffered violent deaths and only at the moment of death have turned to God" (2007a: 342). This information is given in lines 52–54 of the Canto when the three say:

> *'. . . Noi fummo tutti già per forza morti,*
> *e peccatori infino a l'ultima ora;*
> *quivi lume del ciel ne fece accorti,*
>
> *sì che, pentendo e perdonando, fora*
> *di vita uscimmo a Dio pacificati,*
> *che del disio di sê veder n'accora."*[23]
>
> (". . . We all were victims of some violent death,
> yet sinners till we reached our final hour.
> Then Heaven's light dawned and made us see things clear,
>
> so that, repenting and forgiving all,
> we came from life remade at peace with God,
> who heartens our desire to see Him still." – Kirkpatrick (2007a: 41).)

The three figures are: Jacopo del Casseo, who does not identify himself but who expects Dante to recognize him from his speech; Buonconte da Montefeltro, who identifies himself in line 88; and Pia dei Tolomei, who identifies herself simply as *la Pia* in line 133. The contrast between the speeches of the first two figures on the one hand and Pia's speech on the other hand is very marked: Jacopo and Buonconte take 21 (64–84) and 45 (85–129) lines respectively to tell their stories and dwell on their violent deaths, whereas Pia takes six lines (130–131 and 133–136) only and does not mention her death in this speech. Pia's speech, coming as it does at the end of the Canto – a very significant place in Dante's structure of the

[23] The Italian text for quotations from *Purgatorio* in this part and in Chapter Five is that used by Kirkpatrick (2007a).

Commedia – is one of Dante's masterpieces of poetry, as the following analysis makes clear.

W. S. Merwin has given an extraordinary analysis of this passage (2005: 227–231), and it will serve as a useful commentary. He refers to "the voice of La Pia, diffident, gentle, startling . . . a voice so shy and yet so intimate". He comments on the first word:

> *Deh*, she says. That untranslatable syllable: 'oh thou', or 'pray'. They are not our words. How far from us that form of address is now. We do not know how to use it, how to say it. Yet it is still ours somewhere, because what she is saying is clear, and immediately, inexplicably, troubling. *Deh, quando tu sarai tornato al mondo*: 'Pray (or, 'oh thou') when thou shalt be returned to the world.'

Merwin enters into the drama of the scene:

> And when she has spoken those first lines we still do not know who she is, and Dante the poet, with his peerless sense of the value of every syllable, spends the whole of the next line developing, emphasizing, her reticence, in his own voice, and not telling us. . . . She knows more of him and his fate than he himself can claim to know. . . .

Merwin moves to her final words:

> Her own voice resumes, with her only request: for him to remember her. *Ricorditi di me, che son La Pia*: 'Remember (thee of) me, who am La Pia.' He does, and we do – but who is she. . .? . . . Her next three lines end the canto and all that we know of her. They bring both to completion, and yet they leave both floating, continuing, echoing. The lines are brief, it seems, even for Dante . . .. the allusive, deeply wrought verses have a magnetic power, of a kind that occurs throughout the poem, which draws the listener to the enigma itself . . .. We have only these lines.

Merwin mentions the line "that haunts *The Wasteland* and supplied Pound with a title for a poem in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberly: Sienna mi fe', disfecemi Maremma*, 'Sienna made me, Maremma unmade me'" and he goes on to comment on the line:

> At once lapidary and ghostly. Geographically specific, and yet – partly because of its formality and its antithetical symmetry, its

> perfection – oddly remote from the experience it places, and of course from the places themselves. More detached from the speaker than the first gentle lines in which she does not refer to herself.

He concludes with:

> And the rest is her story, which no one now can claim to understand historically, yet which everyone, I imagine, is caught by, hearing in it something unplaceable but distantly familiar: 'he knows it who, first betrothed, had wedded me with his gem.' The words knotted out of order, and ending with that *gemma*, her last syllables: the stone, the humanly prized thing out of the earth, the crystal, the focus, the symbol, the gauge, the promise, the enduring impersonal source of radiance.

Merwin's analysis, of which a few parts have been cited, illustrates how the translator needs to inhabit the work that he translates. Merwin's response is certainly one of *Einfühlung*. Merwin has discussed the excerpt in its context in the canto; he has captured the tone of Pia's words and the effect they have on Dante; and he has appreciated the effect they have had on other poets. He has analysed the six lines with a "peerless sense of the value of every syllable" and has appreciated the "condensed . . . allusive, deeply wrought verses".

Dante's lines (*Purgatorio*, Canto 5, lines 130–136) are

'Deh, quando tu sarai tornato al mondo	*1*
e riposato de la lunga via,'	*2*
seguitò 'l terzo spirito al secondo,	*3*
'ricorditi di me, che son la Pia;	*4*
Siena mi fé, disfecemi Maremma:	*5*
salsi colui che 'nnanellata pria	*6*
disposando m'avea con la sua gemma.'	*7*

In the first three lines of this excerpt there are repeated o-sounds at the end of words, which gave way in lines 2 and 4–7 to repeated a-sounds. The verbs *ricorditi* and *disfecemi* stand out because of their four-syllable length, as do *riposato*, *'nnanellata* (already shortened from *inanellata*), and *disposando*. There are four past participles *tornato*, *riposato*, *seguitò*, and *'nnanellata*, which, by contrast, give force to *disposando*, which should be seen in contrast to *riposato* in line 2.

Merwin has commented, "The lines are brief, it seems, even for Dante, and condensed"; most of these lines are eleven-twelve syllables long, not unusual for Dante, but lines 4–7 of the excerpt are certainly packed with meaning that is difficult to translate if the full meaning with all its implications is to be captured in the translation.

The fourth line, with the four-syllable word at the start followed by five monosyllables and the two-syllable Pia, is usually translated, "Remember me, who am the (or La) Pia". It is not clear why it is necessary to refer to her as "the (or La) Pia" since the definite article in Italian "tends to be used before names of persons"[24]. The word *ricorditi* (a word often used in the *Commedia*) does mean "remember", but it can also mean "record" or "commemorate". Diana Glenn (1999)[25] has given as a possible source Luke 23: 42, the words of the man crucified with Jesus, "remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom", and Glenn quotes the Italian version of the scriptural source: *ricordati di me, quando sarai venuto nel tuo regno*; this is very apt, and she sees the words as "emblematic of the soul turning to God". The translation "Remember me" does not, however, capture the original. It is not only the fact that she is Pia that needs to be recalled, but also what follows.

Glenn quotes "Donatus' epitaph of Virgil, *Mantuame genuit, Calabri rapuere*" as the possible source for "the palindromic 'Siena mi fé, disfecemi Maremma'"[26], and this is again apt, but it does not deal adequately with the original words, which are usually translated, as Merwin does: "Sienna made me, Maremma unmade me". The word *disfecemi* not only picks up the contrast with *fé*, but also adds an auditory suggestion of the Italian word *feci* ("excrement") that Dante may have intended (as, in a similar way, Donatus may have intended a double meaning in using the word "rapuit"). Dante must have intended that Pia wanted Dante (and Dante must have intended his readers) to "remember" the injustice that her

[24] Barbara Reynolds (1975: xxii).
[25] Diana Glenn, "Ricorditi di me, che son La Pia: A Possible Source (Purg. 5. 133)" (http://www.Princeton.edu/~dante/ebdsa/glenn.htm 26 September 1999).
[26] Glenn refers to "Gamelin's commentary (1955)". The word "palindromic" should rather be "chiastic".

marriage had caused her: for Maremma (which in Italian means "swamp", in strong contrast to the architectural and cultural beauty of Siena) had swamped her, unmade her, made her defective, filled her life with excreta. And she wants Dante to "record" this, not just to be remembered in his prayers so that she may be absolved.

The final two lines of the canto continue the facts that she wants recorded: it is noteworthy that Dante does not start a new sentence after line 4 of the excerpt; she wants lines 4, 5, 6, and 7 to be "recorded' or "remembered"; line 4 ends with a semicolon and line 5 with a colon. There is an unusual word that starts line 6, *salsi*: the word *sa* means "he knows", but Dante gives extra force to the word: he elides the definite article *l'* with the indefinite pronoun *si* to make *salsi*, which has the force of "he knows, the one" and then adds *colui che* ("that person who") so that it means something like "he knows, the one, that person who". Pia is not the "timid, fragile soul" that "twentieth-century critical views of Pia" suggest, and Glenn rightly contests these views. Pia is rather a person who vigorously wishes that the record should set the facts straight. She has been grievously wronged: *'nnanellata pria / disposando m'avea con la sua gemma*. These words have been translated rather blandly as "once I wore his ring, / took me in marriage with his own bright gem" (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 47), but such a translation ignores the deeper significance of the original words, especially the word *disposando* in its important place at the beginning of the last line of the canto. Although the bland translation is "faithful" to the literal meaning of the words, it misses the innuendos in her statement. Pia was "ringed" in betrothal, but also in other ways: she was controlled, she lost her being, through her commitment to this man. And she states, *disposando m'avea*: in line 2 of the excerpt Pia wishes that Dante will be *riposato* ("rested"), but her marriage caused her just the opposite: *disposando*; the word reminds English readers of the word "disposed", but its root meaning is "not composed" or "not resting". Pia was no longer composed, no longer herself, "defective" through her marriage (to return to the root of *disfecemi* in line 5 of the excerpt). R. W. B. Lewis refers to her as a woman "disconnected with" her husband (2001: 137). The word "disconnected" includes some of the meaning of

disposando. The use of the gerundive *disposando* along with the main verb *m'avea* gives the line the literal meaning: "by/after/while/because of displacing (me) he had/owned/held me with that gem of his". The link with *riposata* in line 2 of the excerpt and *disfecemi* in line 5 must give *disposando* the negative meaning of causing Pia unrest or anguish or disquiet, and this, as well as the negative implications of *'nnanellata* in the previous line, makes her marriage, of which the ring and the gem are symbols, imprisonment or death. What started as Pia's gentle statement becomes a forceful statement about a woman's abuse by her husband.

Dorothy Sayers translates these powerful lines in this way:

> The third soul followed on the second: "Pray,
> When thou returnest to the world," said she,
> "And art well rested from the weary way,
>
> Remember me, that am called Piety;
> Siena made me and Maremma undid me,
> As well he knows who plighted troth to me,
>
> And set his ring upon my hand to wed me." (1955: 106–107.)

By transposing the third line of the original to the first line of the translation, Sayers loses the surprise of the sudden new voice. She moves the word "Pray" to the end of the first line, where it has some significance, and by using the respectful word "thou" (a word that has had many different uses in English and in other languages) she achieves some of the gentle courtesy of the speaker. The use of alliteration in "world . . . well . . . weary way" is an attempt to recapture some of the poetry of the original. She uses a rhyme scheme that works in the first three lines, but not as well in the last four. Her fourth line is an accurate translation except for the words "that", which is not as good as "who", and "Piety": it is true that *pie* in Latin means "piously" and *pietas* means "piety", but the name Pia should remain as in the original; perhaps "Piety" has been used for the sake of rhyme. The fifth line loses the force of the original when Sayers moves "Maremma" from the end of the line, and the word "undid" does not have the vibrancy of *disfecemi*. The sixth and seventh lines are rather bland, without appreciation of the contrast between *riposato* and *disposando*. The rhyme scheme breaks down with the repeated "me' at the end of each of the last three lines and

creates an effect of a rather pathetic person speaking the words, whereas Pia is an admirably courteous woman who nevertheless is very adamant about her husband's unjust treatment of her.

Robin Kirkpatrick is a published poet and a Professor of Italian and English Literatures at Cambridge University; he is a respected critic of Dante's work. He translates these lines in this way:

> 'When you return, pray Heaven, to the world,
> and, having rested from long travelling'
> (with these few words a third soul joined the group)
> 'please, do remember me. I am La Pia.
> Siena made me, unmade by Maremma.
> And he knows this who, once I wore his ring,
> took me in marriage with his own bright gem.' (2007a: 45, 47.)

Kirkpatrick moves his translation of *Deh* to the middle of his first line and includes the unnecessary word "Heaven" probably for purposes of metre. By doing this, he is in effect making Pia say, "When I hope you return to the world", whereas the word *Deh*, coming as it does at the beginning of Pia's short speech, refers to the whole speech, not only to the first line. In the third line the words, "with these few words", are introduced at the beginning of the line instead of the more appropriate *seguitò*, and Kirkpatrick loses the original's emphasis on *terzo* and *secondo*. The original's use of assonance in the first three lines is lost. In line 4 the word "please" is introduced, probably because Kirkpatrick realises *Deh* refers to the rest of the speech, and he divides the line into two sentences and makes Pia call herself "La Pia"; these changes do not recreate the flow of the original. Again in the fifth and sixth lines there are new sentences, and again this cancels the flow of the original: Pia wants everything she says after the words *recorditi di me* to be remembered or recorded. In the fifth line the word "unmade" does not have the significance of *disfecemi*, but the translation does achieve the balance of *Siena* and *Maremma*, at the start and the end of the line respectively. The last two lines lose the implications of Pia's anguish. Kirkpatrick's translation reads well: his rhythm and sentence structure impress, and his translation is not impeded by forced rhyme, but it does not match the poetry of the original:

"rested" for *riposato*, "unmade" for *disfecemi*, "I wore his ring" for *'nnanellata*, and "took me in marriage" for *disposando m'avea*; all these translations do not capture the significance of the original words as previously discussed; and the link between *riposato* and *disposando* is not appreciated and is lost.

The value and limitations of Kirkpatrick's translation can be gauged by placing his translation alongside the original:

'Deh, quando tu sarai tornato al mondo *e riposato de la lunga via,'* *seguitò 'l terzo spirito al secondo,* *'ricorditi di me, che son la Pia;* *Siena mi fé, disfecemi Maremma:* *salsi colui che 'nnanellata pria* *disposando m'avea con la sua gemma.'*	'When you return, pray Heaven, to the world, and, having rested from long travelling' (with these few words a third soul joined the group) 'please, do remember me. I am La Pia. Siena made me, unmade by Maremma. And he knows this who, once I wore his ring, took me in marriage with his own bright gem.'

W. S. Merwin is another United States Poet Laureate and a translator of note. His translation of these lines is:

> "Oh when you are back in the world again
> and are rested after the long journey,"
> the third spirit followed upon the second,
>
> "pray you, remember me who am La Pia.
> Siena made me, Maremma unmade me;
> he knows it who, with his ring taking me,
>
> first had me for his wife with his gem." (2001: 51.)

As has been observed, Merwin has responded very sensitively to these lines in *Unfinished Originals*, but his translation of the lines, though accurate, is rather bland. He does not attempt any of the multi-syllabic words of the original or the allusions of the words. His translation of the last line, which in the original is a long line of thirteen syllables, is Merwin's shortest line of nine syllables, all of which are monosyllables. It is disappointing that even a recognized poet like Merwin has not been able to capture the force of the original.

C. H. Sisson translates these lines as:

> 'Pray when you go back to the world,
> And are well rested after your long journey,'
> The third spirit followed upon the second,

‘Remember me then, who am La Pia:
Sienna made me and Maremma undid me;
He knows it well, that man who, having declared

His formal intention, married me with his ring.” (2008: 220.)

Sisson starts well with the word “Pray”, which conveys the sound of *Deh*, but the rest of the line, which is an accurate literal translation, does not recapture the sound of the repeated -o sounds, nor the rhythm of the line. In the second line “And are well rested” conveys the meaning and sound of the original, as does the rest of the line. The third line is an accurate translation, but does not capture the three s- sounds. The words “Remember me then” repeat the syllabic length of *ricorditi di me*, as does “who am La Pia”, but “La Pia” is hardly English. In the next line the word “and” destroys the harshness of Pia’s words. In the next line “He knows it well, that man who” captures the meaning of *salsi colui che*, but the rest of the translation, “having declared / His formal intention, married me with his ring”, misses the connotations of ’*nnanellata* and the link between *riposato* and *disposando* and the harshness of the last line and a half. Instead it becomes a “formal” statement.

Is it possible to recreate the power of the original? Probably not, but it can be attempted:

‘Pray, when then you will be returned to the world cleansed
and be reposed after the journey severe,’
in sequence the third spirit spoke after the second,

‘record it for me, who am by name Pia;
Siena made me, unmade by marshy Maremma:
he knew, that person who had ringed me dear,

then held, disposing, me, with that gem, his hard treasure.’

Perhaps line 5 would have been better rendered as

Siena made me, made defective by Maremma:

but the alliteration would have been impaired.

The difference between this translation of mine and Kirkpatrick’s translation is that, whereas Kirkpatrick’s reads like a free-flowing English translation, this

translation attempts to maintain the alterity of the original and sacrifices the clarity of Kirkpatrick's English in the attempt, as can be seen in this comparison:

'Deh, quando tu sarai tornato al mondo	'When you return, pray Heaven, to the world,	'Pray, when then you will be returned to the world cleansed
e riposato de la lunga via,'	and, having rested from long travelling'	and be reposed after the journey severe,'
seguitò 'l terzo spirito al secondo,	(with these few words a third soul joined the group)	in sequence the third spirit spoke after the second,
'ricorditi di me, che son la Pia;	'please, do remember me. I am La Pia.	'record it for me, who am by name Pia;
Siena mi fé, disfecemi Maremma:	Siena made me, unmade by Maremma.	Siena made me, unmade by marshy Maremma:
salsi colui che 'nnanellata pria	And he knows this who, once I wore his ring	he knew, that person who had ringed me dear,
disposando m'avea con la sua gemma.'	took me in marriage with his own bright gem.'	then held, disposing, me, with that gem, his hard treasure.'
(Dante's original)	**(Kirkpatrick's translation)**	**(An attempt at alterity)**

This case study on seven lines of the *Purgatorio* does not do justice to the range of the second canticle, but it provides the opportunity for close analysis to highlight some of the problems that poet-translators experience. Fewer translators have translated the *Purgatorio* than the *Inferno*, and even fewer still the *Paradiso*. In the next part of this chapter more attention will be paid to the wide range of the *Paradiso*, and then in Chapter Five all three canticles will be discussed in exploring the role of Beatrice in the whole *Commedia*.

v

Dante's Aquinas and Francis in Canto XI of *Paradiso*

Thomas Aquinas appears in Canto X of *Paradiso* and speaks from line 82 of that Canto to the end of Canto XI and again in Canto XIII. Although Bonaventura (XII: lines 142–144) and Dante himself (Canto XIV: lines 6–8) both praise Thomas, there is an implication of humorous criticism on Dante's part of Thomas's way of discourse. Dante would have known Thomas's complex style of teaching and writing, which is explained almost ironically in Timothy McDermott's *Aquinas* (2007: 10). Such a style makes for difficult reading, and Dante would have recognized this.

Peter Dronke writes:

> . . . the precise reasons for Dante's choice of Thomas Aquinas as the presenter of the other lights in the crown, and as speaker both here and in Cantos XI and XIII, are not so easy to state. We can no longer follow the earlier generations of scholars who naively held Dante to be a disciple of Thomas' ideas, a 'Thomist'.

Dronke cites "the admirable recent statement of Kenelm Foster":

> . . . there was such a contrast: on the one hand, an intense admiration for Friar Thomas as a model of holy understanding; on the other, divergence, on so many fundamental points, from Thomist teaching.[27] (1988: 91.)

Dronke's and Kenelm Foster's views of Dante's attitude to Aquinas suggest Dante has an ambiguous attitude to Aquinas.

Robert Hollander sees irony in Dante's lines 86–96 of Canto X:

> It is interesting that this portion of the first utterance of St. Thomas, the great opponent of poetry for its seductive figurative quality, beautiful but simply untrue, contains several metaphors: the 'stair' (the ascent of the heavens toward God) that Dante is on; the 'wine' (knowledge) that Thomas will share with Dante; the 'plants' (souls) that surround Beatrice and him; the 'lambs' (friars) who were Thomas and his fellow Dominicans on earth; the 'path' (the way to God) that led to his salvation; the 'fattening' (knowledge of God's truth) found in the nourishment of the Word. One can only imagine Thomas's objection had he been able to read those words, put by Dante into his mouth.
>
> (2008: 272.)

Later, in commenting on Canto XI, Hollander writes: "19–21. Dante here gives Thomas one of the relatively few similes allowed to a speaker in the poem. One feels compelled to wonder what, had he been able to read these cantos of *Paradiso*, he would have thought of his inclusion in them." (2008: 295.)

Dante puts the words *u' ben s'impingua se non si vaneggia*[28] (Canto X line 96) ("where there is good fattening if they do not stray" – Singleton's translation (1991: 113)) into Aquinas' mouth. Aquinas is to repeat '*U ben s'impingua*' in Canto XI line 25 and '*U' ben s'impingua, se non si vaneggia*' in Canto XI line

[27] Dronke quotes from Kenelm Foster, *Dante e San Tommaso* (Casa di Dante, Rome 1975), p. 20.
[28] The Italian text in the quotations from *Paradiso* in this Part and in Chapter Five is that used by Singleton (1991).

139 (the end of the Canto, a very crucial position in any Canto). What is the importance of Dante's or Aquinas' words?

Aquinas says:

> *'. . . Tu dubbi, e hai voler che si ricerna*
> *in sì aperta e 'n sì distesa lingua*
> *lo dicer mio, ch'al tuo sentir si sterna,*
> *ove dinanzi dissi: "U' ben s'impingua,"*
> *e là u' dissi: 'Non nacque il secondo";*
> *e qui è uopo che ben si distingua. ...'* (Canto XI: lines 22–27.)
>
> (". . . You are perplexed and would fain have my words made clearer, in plain and explicit language leveled to your understanding, where I said just now 'where there is good fattening,' and again where I said, 'there never rose a second'; and here is need that one distinguish well. . . ." (Singleton (1991: 121).)

Robert Hollander comments: "Perhaps we are meant to be amused that Thomas's eulogy of Francis begins as a gloss on two difficult passages on his own 'poem' (see *Par.* X.96 and X.114), the veiled speech that made the historical Thomas distrust poetry" (2008: 295). Is it possible that Dante is making fun of Aquinas' method? Dante has not expressed doubt or misunderstanding about Aquinas' statement, but Aquinas persists in believing so and in making what is rather a comical statement and what is not difficult to understand.[29] Aquinas does take rather a long time to explain it: it is only in Canto XI lines 124–139 that he gets to the point of his remark. One cannot read these words either in the original or in a translation without thinking Aquinas is being unnecessarily verbose and condescending and without wondering whether Dante is being ironical in putting these words into Aquinas' mouth.

How does one translate irony from the original text to the new language? Irony is usually part of the tone of a speaker, but here it has to come through Dante's retelling of Aquinas' words and is therefore more complex than mere tone of voice. The translator of Dante's words that have been put into the mouth of Aquinas would translate them and, whether the translator has noticed the irony,

[29] Erich Auerbach (1984: 81) writes: "Francis's life also belongs to the commentary. . . . it is part of a commentary, several hundred lines long, on a subordinate clause which occupies only one line, and which could have been made clear if presented more briefly. . . . Thomas, the great Church teacher, comments copiously on one of his own sayings."

the reader might still understand the irony. This kind of irony seems to be more a matter of interpretation than of translation, but, again, it is important for the translator to be aware of the ambiguous and ironical way in which Dante presents Aquinas and not in any way to impede the ambiguity and irony.

The reference to '*Non nacque il secondo'* (Canto XI line 26) can be discussed in a similar way. In Canto X lines 109–114 Aquinas refers to *La quinta luce* ("The fifth light"). After Aquinas has introduced Albert and himself as the first two lights (Canto X line 99), he refers to the other ten lights, identifying only Peter (the fourth light), Isidore (the ninth), Bede (the tenth), Richard (the eleventh), and Siger (the twelfth) by name. He does not identify who the "fifth light" is. It is only in Canto XIII that he returns to explaining '*Non nacque il secondo*'and finds it necessary in lines 46–51 to say

> **"...** *e però miri a ciò ch'io dissi suso,*
> *quando narrai che`non ebbe 'l secundo*
> *lo ben che ne la quinta luce è chiuso.*
> *Or apri li occhi a quel ch'io ti rispondo,*
> *e vedräi il tuo credere e 'l mio dire*
> *nel vero farsi come centro in tondo. . . ."* (lines 34–51)
>
> (". . . and therefore you wonder at what I have said above, when I declared that the excellence which is enclosed in the fifth light never had a second. Now open your eyes to that which I answer you, and you will see your belief and what I say become in the truth as the center in the circle. . . ." (Singleton (1991: 143 and 145).)

Again Aquinas is both verbose and condescending towards Dante. He takes another thirty-six lines before he comes back to the point:

> ". . . *Or s'i' non procedesse avanti piùe,*
> *'Dunque, come costui fu sanza pare?'*
> *comincerebber le parole tue.*
> *Ma perché paia ben ciò che non pare,*
> *pensa chi era, e la cagion che 'l mosse,*
> *quando fu detto 'Chiedi,' a dimandare.*
> *Non ho parlato sì, che tu non posse*
> *ben veder ch'el fu re, che chiese senno*
> *acciò che re sufficïente fosse; . . .*" (lines 88–96).
>
> (". . . Now, if I went no further, 'How, then, was that other without an equal?" would your words begin. But in order that that which is not apparent may clearly appear, consider who he was and the cause which moved him to make request when it was said to him, 'Ask.' I have not so spoken that you cannot plainly see that he was a king, who asked for wisdom, in order that he might be a worthy king; . . ." (Singleton (1991: 147).)

Not that Aquinas makes himself too clear in these words, either: instead of identifying Solomon, he continues to be obscure, although he claims he is not. The way Aquinas expresses himself is pompous and tedious. If we are to compare Dante's Aquinas with Dante's Bonaventure, Bonaventure is far more intelligible.

The comparison between Aquinas and Bonaventure is enforced by the way that Dante constructs their contributions in telling the lives of Francis and Dominic respectively. The similarities ask us to compare the two narrators, not only for similarities but also for contrasts. The main contrast between the way Bonaventure tells the life of Dominic and the way Aquinas tells that of Francis is that Bonaventure's account is much simpler than Aquinas' method, and this strengthens the underlying element of irony in Dante's portrayal of Aquinas.

The way Dante (and Aquinas) tell the life of Francis and the way that poets have translated this is the main focus of this part of the chapter.

Auerbach expresses surprise at the way Dante presents Francis, not as "concrete life painting", but as "commentary" by Aquinas. Auerbach questions, ". . . where Dante is telling the life of St. Francis, could he not have found a less academic, a less scholastic frame?" and he comments, ". . . the biography that Thomas gives contains only a very small part of all the enchanting and overwhelmingly concrete details preserved by the Franciscan legend". He then proceeds to examine the biography, which, he states, "has an inner leitmotiv, and an allegorical one" and "is represented as a marriage with an allegorical female figure, the Lady Poverty". (1984: 82.)

Lines 55–87 of Canto XI will be studied, as well as translations of these lines:

> "*. . . Non era ancor molto lontan da l'orto,* 55
> *ch'el cominciò a far sentir la terra*
> *de la sua gran virtute alcun conforto;*
> *ché per tal donna, giovinetto, in Guerra* 58
> *del padre corse, a cui, come a la morte,*
> *la porta del piacer nessun diserra;*
> *e dinanzi a la sua spirital corte* 61
> ***et coram patre*** *le si fece unito;*
> *poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte.*

Questa, privata del primo marito, *64*
millicent' anni e più dispetta e scura
fino a costui si stette sanza invito;
né valse udir che la trovò sicura *67*
con Amiclate, al suon de la sua voce,
colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura;
né valse esser costante né feroce, *70*
sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,
ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce.
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso, *73*
Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti
prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso.
La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti, *76*
amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo
facieno esser cagion di pensier santi;
tanto che 'l venerabile Bernardo *79*
si scalzò prima, e dietro a tanta pace
corse e, correndo, li parve esser tardo.
Oh ignota ricchezza! Oh ben ferace! *82*
Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro
dietro a la sposo, sì la sposa piace.
Indi sen va quel padre e quel maestro *85*
con la sua donna e con quella famiglia
che già legava l'umile capestro. . . ."

(". . . He was not yet very far from his rising when he began to make the earth feel, from his great virtue, a certain strengthening; for, while still a youth, he rushed into strife against his father for such a lady, to whom, as to death, none willingly unlocks the door; and before his spiritual court *et coram patre* he was joined to her, and thereafter, from day to day, he loved her ever more ardently. She, bereft of her first husband, for eleven hundred years and more, despised and obscure, remained unwooed till he came; nor had it availed to hear that he who caused fear to the world found her undisturbed with Amyclas at the sound of his voice; nor had it availed to have been constant and undaunted so that, where Mary remained below, she wept with Christ upon the Cross.

"But, lest I should proceed too darkly, take now Francis and Poverty for these lovers in all that I have said. Their harmony and joyous semblance made love and wonder and tender looks the cause of holy thoughts; so that the venerable Bernard first bared his feet, following such great peace, and running, it seemed to him that he was slow. Oh, wealth unknown, oh fertile good! Egidius bares his feet, Silvester bares his feet, following the spouse, so does the bride delight them. Then that father and master goes his way, with his lady and with that family which was already girt with the lowly cord. . . ."

(Singleton (1991: 123 and 125).)

The first three lines of this extract refer, through the use of the word, *orto*, to the words in line 50 of the canto, *nacque al mondo un* sole ("there dawned on the world a sun"), and to lines 52–54, in which Thomas rather strangely prefers *Orïente* to *Ascesi* as Francis's birthplace. Francis's *orto* is like the rising of the

sun, and, not long after the rising of this new sun, the earth felt some comfort because, while Francis was still *giovinetto*, he, *del la sua gran virtute* ("because of his great virtue"), took his *donna* as his wife. Dante makes Thomas suggest that the life of Francis was like a second life of Christ, a new era in which Francis is "the successor or imitator of Christ" (Auerbach (1984: 95)).

Auerbach, commenting on the "life of St Francis . . . as a marriage with an allegorical female figure, the Lady Poverty", quotes Huizinga, whom he regards as "one of its most ardent and discerning modern interpreters": "calling it, almost contemptuously, 'the rank weeds of the late antique hot-house'" (1984: 82–83). Thomas Aquinas' commentary on St. Francis in Dante's *Paradiso* is indeed a strange one. Robert Hollander writes of "Thomas's attacks on the unreliable nature of poetic speech" (2008: 301), but Dante would have known that Thomas had approved of Scripture's use of allegory, and in making Thomas's commentary on St. Francis an allegorical commentary, Dante would have known that this was in keeping with Thomas's style. Robin Kirkpatrick judges Thomas's commentary in this way: "In terms of literary genre, this is in part a rather simplistic allegory (as Dante confesses with something approaching comic irritation at lines 73-5) and in part a fable" (2007b: 376.) Before this statement, Kirkpatrick has commented, ". . . this canto and the next are notable for their fundamental plainness, even primitiveness of language and style. . . . In canto 11 Dante's own language for the most part avoids the philosophical registers that appear in canto 13 . . . experimenting here . . . with a deliberately archaic style. . .." (2007b: 375.) Auerbach, before going on to analyse Thomas's commentary and before coming to the conclusion that "in spite of our antipathy to allegory, the living reality of the eleventh canto of the *Paradiso* grips us; a living reality that only lives here, in the verse of the poet" (1984: 98), has asked the question that has already been quoted, "But here, where Dante is telling the life of St. Francis, could he not have found a less academic, a less scholarly frame?" (1984: 82). These quotations illustrate the diverse ways in which Thomas's commentary of the life of St. Francis has been criticized, from "rank weeds", to "simplistic", to "primitiveness" and "deliberately archaic", to "academic" and "scholarly", and to "living reality".

It is hardly surprising that Auerbach's analysis has also received adverse criticism.

Is it not perhaps a lack of understanding of Dante's ironic approach to Thomas Aquinas that causes some of the contradictions on the part of these critics? Dante would have been very aware of Aquinas' "attacks on the unreliable nature of poetic speech", yet he ironically gives Aquinas poetic speech that is far from being "simplistic" or "primitive" or "deliberately archaic" (unless the whole allegorical context is regarded as such); it is rather a mixture of "academic", "scholarly", "rank weeds", and "the living reality that only lives . . . in the verse of the poet". In this way, while being ironical, Dante elevates Aquinas' allegory of Francis and his Lady Poverty from academic, scholarly allegory to the living reality of poetry and, in so doing, uses irony. The life of Francis, as told by Dante in the words of Aquinas, is a good example of the *exitus-reditus* structure.

The contrast of *donna* . . . *giovinetto* . . . *guerra*, the three main words in line 58, with their different sounds and implications, highlights the drama of the allegory: *donna* can mean any woman, a married woman, or a lady; it is associated with a title such as Nostra Donna; *giovinetto*, with its soft g and the diminutive, refers aptly to a juvenile, a youngster; and *guerra*, with its hard g and r sounds and its meaning of war, is not something associated with a *donna* or a *giovinetto*. The use of these words, with all their connotations amd contrasts, is exactly what Aquinas objects to in poetry. In the next two lines there is a similar contrast in meaning and implication between the alliterated words, *padre* and *porta del piacer*: the *Guerra / del padre* is in total contrast to the *porta del piacer*.

There has been much controversy over the interpretation of the words, *porta del piacer*: Auerbach states categorically, "It seems to me absolutely necessary to interpret the opening of the gates of desire in the proper sense as a sexual act, and thus *porta* as the gateway to the feminine body" (1984: 88). Robert Hollander is, however, equally categoric in his criticism of Auerbach's interpretation:

> In the past sixty years there has been dispute over the somewhat curious phrase 'la porta del piacere' (lit., 'the door of pleasure'),

> generally understood to understate the aversion to poverty, that is, none opens the door to her gladly; none welcomes poverty into his heart. This became 'the doorway to pleasure'. . . in Auerbach's . . . formulation (his translator does not help his case, making *porta* plural while it is singular, and misunderstanding *piacere* in her 'gates of desire,' if one must admit that translating the phrase presents something of a problem). If most were scandalized by this reading, it has found support in some quarters . . .. The core of Auerbach's interpretation, possibly the most controversial point in a series of works dealing with Dante that were hardly intended to be without cause for controversy, may be represented in a single sentence: 'It seems to me absolutely necessary to interpret the opening of the gates of desire in the proper sense as a sexual act, and thus *porta* is the gateway to the feminine body'. . .. What supporters of Auerbach's reading fail to take into account is that it is the male in the metaphor who opens *his* '*porta del piacere*' to the lady, thus rendering his entire argument inapplicable." (2008: 298–299.)

The last sentence in Hollander's discussion is not convincing: there is nothing in the original to suggest that it must be *"his* 'porta del piacere'"; it could be either his or hers. And, "if most were scandalized by this reading" of Auerbach's, perhaps the question should be asked whether it is not part of Dante's irony towards Aquinas: did Dante not intend readers to be "scandalized" by the possible suggestion that the great saint and academic Thomas Aquinas was referring to the sexual act?

The possible scandalous sexual connotation is made more explicit with the comparison with death in line 59; the sexual act and death have often been linked, but the real meaning of the tercet is that Francis opened the gate of pleasure to a woman to whom no-one (*nessun*) else (except Christ, as is divulged later) was prepared to; the woman evoked the same antipathy as death did. At this stage of Aquinas' commentary it is not yet clear that the woman is Poverty, and therefore the allegorical meaning of the woman as poverty and the repugnance that all (except Francis and Christ) feel towards poverty is still hidden. (This is typical of Dante's portrayal of Aquinas: he often leaves things hidden in his statements. And Dante enjoys making this clear.) The immediate suggestion is, however, that she is a repugnant woman.

The repugnance is contrasted with the statement of the next three lines that Francis, *dinanzi a la sua spirital corte / et coram patre*, married her and loved her more ardently every succeeding day. The eagerness has already been expressed in the word *corse* in line 59, which is emphasized later in the repetition of the word in line 81, but in this tercet the spiritual meaning of Francis's love, rather than the exuberance of the *giovinetto*, is stressed. The ceremony before the spiritual court and with the legal and spiritual implications of *coram patre* highlights this further. The comparison between *padre* in line 59 and *patre* in line 62 contrasts the biological father and the spiritual Father, the temporal and the eternal, which is evident also in the lilting line 63. The exuberance of the youth is extended to the exuberance of the spiritual and the eternal.

The repugnance of the woman returns in the next tercet when the reader discovers that she is more than a thousand years old and *dispetta e scura* ("despised and obscure"). One cannot help thinking of that well-known passage of Scripture:

> **. . .** he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.
> He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
> (Isaiah 53: 2b–3 King James Authorised Version.)

Since the death of her husband more than a thousand years ago, *si stette sanza invito* ("she remained without invitation") until Francis came and wooed her and married her. The "concrete impression of the bitterly repulsive" that Dante intends comes across strongly: ". . . this woman whose name is still not given, but whose portrayal must waken in every hearer the image of a harlot, old, contemptible, hideous, but still thirsty for love" (Auerbach (1984: 89)).

In the next two tercets, both beginning with the words *né valse*, the repugnance is again contrasted with her strength, first, in supporting Amyclas against Caesar and, second, in climbing onto the Cross when Christ was crucified. It is implied at this point that Christ was her first husband. Dante's use of Lucan's Amyclas,

along with the reference to the Crucifixion, makes Aquinas' commentary on Francis even more obscure and complex, but it heightens the drama of the commentary and the curiosity of the reader about who this woman may be.

Robert Hollander comments on lines 67–69, the Amyclas tercet:

> Occasionally, a reader . . . complains that this bit of business seems overly cerebral (along with the next *exemplum*, the presence of Poverty on the Cross with Jesus). It surely reveals the high regard Dante held for Lucan's text, putting a moment from its narrative not only alongside one from the Bible (a familiar enough Dantean technique), but alongside one of the supreme moments in the Bible, Jesus' death on the Cross; . . .. (2008: 300.)

Hollander seems, however, to miss the point that such "overly cerebral" *exempla* are typical of Aquinas' method, as Dante would have known and is deliberately using in his typical (and yet ironic) use of Aquinas' method.

Lines 70–72 have elicited much comment, especially over the two versions of the verb in line 72: is the verb *pianse* ("wept", as in Petrocchi's text) or *salse* ("climbed", as in Benvenuto's)? Auerbach summarizes the controversy:

> Is it perhaps a feeling for paradox painful to good taste that has led many copyists and editors to write *pianse* for *salse* or at least to prefer this reading? It seems to me wrong, for it blunts the contrast between Maria and Paupertas. The *Testo Critico* has *pianse*, the Oxford edition *salse*. The only old manuscript at my disposal, the famous Frankfurt ms. in the reproduction of the German Dante Society, certainly has *pianse*. (1984: 238.)

Auerbach is right that *pianse* "blunts the contrast between Maria and Paupertas", whereas *salse* emphasizes it, but the sense of the woman climbing the Cross, *dove Maria rimase giuso* ("while Mary remained below"), comes across anyway, whichever reading is adopted. The important contrast between the woman's greater energy and devotion and Mary's more demure remaining below is there. And this "paradox painful to good taste" is there too. It is a surprising statement on the part of Aquinas, the great Catholic theologian, that the *donna* outdoes *Nostra Donna*, Mary, in her *constante né feroce* behaviour.

By this time the repugnance towards the woman on the part of the reader should have given way to the love and respect that Francis (and Aquinas and Dante) give her, and it is part of Dante's deliberate purpose to make the reader find it difficult to accept it. For to her, *come a la morte, / la porta del piacer nessun diserra* ("as to death, none willingly unlocks the door"). As Auerbach writes, ". . . but the sublime and heroic figure of Paupertas is still not free from a grotesque and bitter aftertaste" (1984: 89).

It is only at line 74 that Aquinas makes it known that the woman is Lady Poverty. He does so in a way that acknowledges his need to be clearer, an admission that is part of Aquinas' perhaps condescending attitude to mere mortals, ". . . as Dante confesses with something approaching comic irritation at lines 73–5" (Kirkpatrick (2007b: 376)). Aquinas has indeed proceeded *troppo chiuso* ("too obscurely"), and his commentary on Francis has been *diffuso* ("lacking in clarity"). Yet Dante has made Aquinas' allegorical commentary into "the living reality of poetry", full of ironic contrasts and surprises.

As if to show that he can be quite clear, the following tercet (lines 76–8) is a model of harmony (*concordia*) and happy (*lieti*), sweet *(dolce*), and holy (*santi*) life, but the next two tercets return to the almost bizarre: the "venerable" Bernardo *scalzò prima* ("is the first to throw off his shoes") and then *corse e, correndo, li parve esser tardo* ("ran and, running, it seemed he was slow") as he chased *dietro a tanta pace* ("after such great peace"). Such erratic behaviour for a venerable man in search of peace is surely bizarre, but more is to come: just as in lines 79 and 80 the word *tanto* is repeated, so in line 82 the word *Oh* is; then in line 83 *scalzasi* and in line 84 *sposo* are repeated. Emotion is rife, and activity is rampant. The three followers of Francis are after (*dietro* in lines 80 and 84) something man has never attained before. Robert Hollander writes,

> The sensuous delights of going barefoot are portrayed as the freedom of the soul in unstinting love of Christ. We note how the heat increases in these lines: Bernard is described with a past definite (*si scalzò*) as having taken his shoes off, but then the verb is repeated in the present tense (*scalzasi*) for Giles and Silvester. Those uses of the 'historical present' intensify the

> feeling of liberation as, one by one, Francis's followers begin also to fall in love with the ugly woman. (2008: 302.)

In his note on line 82, Hollander writes:

> The adjective *ferace* (literally, fertile, fecund), a hapax in the poem (as is, more surprisingly, the parallel adjective that precedes it, *ignota* [unknown]), contrasts with the notion of ordinary life, based as it is in acquiring wealth and possessions, not in living one's faith. Like its unique status among the words of the poem, its unusualness in ordinarily sterile human experience sets it apart.

On line 84 and on the words *si la sposa piace*, Hollander comments: "One can almost hear the suppressed assonantal 'spiace' (displeases), the normal reaction of almost everyone who is forced to contemplate the visage of Poverty." (2008: 302.)

Auerbach comments on these same lines,

> To the grotesque and dreadful picture of sexual union with a despised woman, who is called poverty or death and who manifests the meaning of her name in her outward appearance, is here allied an image that, to later aesthetic taste, would be improper to the point of being intolerable: the pious, ecstatic adherence of the first disciples is presented as a love-thirsty pursuit of the wife of another (1984: 90).

Although this is probably overstated and is modified by Auerbach himself in his next paragraph when he refers to the next tercet, "Francis, the imitator of Christ, now lives with his beloved and his companions, all of them girt with the cord of humility", there is an exuberance on the part of the three disciples that is more like the exuberance of children than of love-thirsty pursuers. (The word *scalzasi* has no English equivalent in its sound but reminds one of the informal, affectionate word "scallywags" when applied to children.) And the relationship of children to parents is emphasized in the next tercet when Francis is called *quell padre e quell maestro* ("that father and that teacher"), while the disciples are called *quella famiglia* ("that family"). The behaviour of the venerable disciples is

consistent with that of excited children. The images of baring their feet[30] and being linked with the humble cord are images that come from the dress habits of the Franciscan order, which stresses poverty and humility as essential characteristics.

Mention has already been made of Auerbach's conclusion, ". . . the living reality of the eleventh canto of the *Paradiso* grips us; a living reality that only lives here, in the verse of the poet." A statement by Robert Hollander may also be a fitting conclusion to this analysis of Dante's original:

> Dante has outdone himself. . . . Dante's addition to existing Franciscan material is spectacularly original . . .. Dante expands the role of Poverty not so much conceptually (the devotion to poverty is the keystone to all Franciscan writings) but stylistically, making his saintly life an allegorical tale of his relationship to her. (2008: 299.)

The first verse translation by Robin Kirkpatrick (2007b: 103 and 105) is on the next page. Kirkpatrick's verse translation maintains the three-line stanza of the original, and each stanza in the translation keeps a close relationship with the original stanza, though not a line-by-line or word-order equivalence. He does not attempt the same rhyme scheme as the original, but from time to time he uses rhyme ("war … door … more" (lines 58, 60, 63) and "lord … cord" (lines 85 and 87)); this shows a perceptive appreciation of the need to use poetic means in his translation since all these rhyming words contribute to the emphasis of the poetic translation. It is a minor point, but it is not clear why Kirkpatrick persists in changing the semi-colon of the original to a fullstop where the semicolon would have served his purpose just as well.

More relevant is the change of word order and word emphasis from the original: after showing an almost perfect alignment between the original tercet in lines 55–57 and his translation, he, in the next tercet, changes the word order greatly: Dante's emphasis on *donna* in the first line of the tercet is changed to the translation "girl" and placed at the end of the second line, as is his translation "as

[30] The word "discalced", which is probably the closest English gets to *scalzasi*, was used to refer to the religious orders who went barefoot.

though to death" from the second line to the third. It is possible that Kirkpatrick deliberately chooses the word "girl" to highlight the suspended revelation that Francis has chosen a woman more than a thousand years older than he is; there is something of this absurdity in Dante's choice of the word *donna*, but "woman" or even the word "donna" would have been a more appropriate translation.

Non era ancor molto lontan da l'orto, *ch'el cominciò a far sentir la terra* *de la sua gran virtute alcun conforto;*	55	Nor was he far from his own rising dawn when he began to make his country feel, by his true powers, a certain strengthening.
ché per tal donna, giovinetto, in guerra *del padre corse, a cui, come a la morte,* *la porta del piacer nessun diserra;*	58	Headlong he ran – a callow boy – to war and fought, against his father, for a girl to whom – as though to death – all lock joy's door.
e dinanzi a la sua spirital corte ***et coram patre*** *le si fece unito;* *poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte.*	61	So, *coram patre* in the bishop's court, he joined himself with her and, ever on, from day to day he loved her all the more.
Questa, privata del primo marito, *millicent' anni e più dispetta e scura* *fino a costui si stette sanza invito;*	64	She, sad and widowed of her first beloved, remained a thousand years (and more) till he came on to her – obscure, undated, scorned.
né valse udir che la trovò sicura *con Amiclate, al suon de la sua voce,* *colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura;*	67	Nor did it count to hear how Caesar – terror of the world – had found her true, unwavering, with Amyclas, not moved by his command.
né valse esser costante né feroce, *sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,* *ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce.*	70	Nor did it count to hear that, likewise, she, so fierce, so constant, wept (Mary herself remained below) with Christ upon his Cross.
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso, *Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti* *prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso.*	73	But lest in what I say I prove unclear, then understand, in all I've just poured out, this loving pair are Francis and pure Poverty.
La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti, *amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo* *facieno esser cagion di pensier santi;*	76	The harmony, the looks of happiness between these two, their tenderness and care, their love, so wonderstruck, became the cause
tanto che 'l venerabile Bernardo *si scalzò prima, e dietro a tanta pace* *corse e, correndo, li parve esser tardo.*	79	of holy thoughts in Bernard (now revered), the first who flung his shoes away and raced – running, he thought himself too slow – for peace.
Oh ignota ricchezza! Oh ben ferace! *Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro* *dietro a la sposo, sì la sposa piace.*	82	Such rampant goodness, riches yet untold! Egidio flung his shoes away, Sylvester his, chasing the groom, the bride so pleased them all.
Indi sen va quel padre e quel maestro *con la sua donna e con quella famiglia* *che già legava l'umile capestro.*	85	So off he goes, Saint Francis, father, lord. His bride was Poverty, his family these - their waists already bound with simple cord.

The words "Headlong" and "callow" suggest recklessness and immaturity, whereas Dante (and Kirkpatrick) have made it clear in the previous tercet that this is the action of a mature and strong person even though he was young. Kirkpatrick's translation of *la porta del piacer nessun diserra* as "all lock joy's door" gains poetic emphasis by the stressing of each of these words, but it does not do justice to the original or to the controversy about the wealth of meaning in the original, a controversy about which Kirkpatrick is surprisingly silent in his notes on Canto XI. As Auerbach and Robert Hollander show, a critic or a poet-translator needs to be aware of previous translations of and comments about an original: this awareness allows for a better "fusion of horizons" in criticism or translation: it is not only the original text that is important but also the historical interpretations that have become part of the traditional meaning of the original. A poet-translator should be aware of the cultural, historical, philological, and literary references of both the original text and the continuing life of the original in criticism and translation.

In the next tercet (lines 61–63) Kirkpatrick again changes the word order and punctuation. The first line of his translation of this tercet places *coram patre* before the words "in the bishop's court" and he leaves out the word *et*, which is part of the Church Latin phrase that Dante places after *e dinanzi a la sua spiritual corte*. (Kirkpatrick, in a note on this phrase, writes: "Dante here, to dignify the scene with legal terminology, invents a Latin phrase meaning 'in the presence of his father'" (2007b: 377).) At the end of the second line of this tercet Kirkpatrick places "and, ever on," instead of the original's semicolon; it may be argued that the words "and, ever on," coming at the end of the line, give them an added significance, but Dante's line *poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte* as the last line of the tercet has a much greater force as a sentence on its own.

The next tercet (lines 64–66) changes the subject from Francis to the woman with the strong emphasis of *Questa*, and Kirkpatrick uses the word "She" with the same emphasis, but for the purpose of rhythm he adds "sad and" before "widowed of her first beloved"; this fits into the meaning of the line and is no problem. The

tercet keeps close to the original, except that the original states it was eleven hundred years and more, not a thousand and more; this too is not particularly important. What is more important is that *stetti* is translated in the second line and that the words *dispetta e scura* are translated in the third and lumped together as "obscure, undated, scorned". Even more distressing are the translations "came on her" and "undated", which are ambiguous, rather idiomatic, and not carefully considered by Kirkpatrick.

The next two tercets (lines 67–69 and 70–72) keep the repetition of *nè valse* as "Nor did it count to hear", though "to hear" applies to the first only. Kirkpatrick sees fit to explain *al suon de la sua voce, / colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura* as "Caesar – terror of the world - … not moved by his command"; why is it necessary to insert Caesar, when Dante did not? is it to explain the reference? should it not be better to include this as a note and keep to the original, which does not explain it? Again in the tercet the original word order is changed, as it is in the next tercet and the tercet (lines 73–75), where Kirkpatrick sees fit to add the word "pure" before Poverty, probably for the purposes of his rhythm.

The next two tercets (lines 76–78 and 79–81) are divided by a semicolon in the original, but Kirkpatrick runs them together with part of the first of the two tercets being included in the next tercet. He changes the word order of *amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo* to "their tenderness and care, / their love, so wonderstruck". And in the tercet (lines 79-81) *'l venerabile Bernardo* becomes "Bernard (now revered)"; why not "the venerable Bernard"? He changes the translation of *corse* as "ran" in line 58 to "raced" in line 80, although he keeps *correndo* as "running", and he changes *e dietro a tanta pace* in line 80 of the original to "for peace" at the end of line 81.

In the last two tercets we are studying (lines 82–84 and 85–87) he inverts "riches" and "goodness", he omits the repetition of "flung his shoes away" in referring to Sylvester, and sees fit to include "Saint Francis" even though it is not in the

original. He divides line 85 from lines 86 and 87 with a fullstop, adds the word "Poverty" unnecessarily, and places a dash at the end of line 86.

It must be accepted that literalism and line-by-line and word-order equivalence are not necessary for good poetic translation; also that additions may be acceptable; but there must be sound reasons for these changes, and the reasons for Kirkpatrick's changes are not always clear. Nevertheless, Kirkpatrick's translation of these lines is a valiant attempt that furthers the cause of poetic translation.

The translation by Robert and Jean Hollander (2008: 287 and 289) of this same excerpt is on the next page. It avoids many of the characteristics of Kirkpatrick's translation that have been criticised: there are no additions such as "Headlong", "sad", "Caesar", "pure", and "Saint Francis"; there are no ambiguous, idiomatic words such as "came on to her" and "undated"; there is a greater control of language: "youth" instead of "callow boy", and "lady" instead of "girl"; and there is a more successful attempt to keep to the word order of the original, though it is not altogether successful.

The first line of the excerpt loses the link with the previous tercet (lines 52–54) with its reference to *Oriente*. This is surprising because in the note on line 55 Robert Hollander writes: "Dante puns on the Sun again, using a metaphoric valence for his birth (*orto* [rising]) more readily associated with the rising of a star or planet in the sky" (2008: 298). To translate *Non era ancor molto lontan da l' orto* as "Not much time as yet had passed" misses completely the metaphor and the link with the previous tercet. Lines 56–57 are, however, acceptable, despite the use of the word "lent" instead of "made to feel", the placing of "comfort" in line 56 instead of line 57, and the fullstop instead of the semicolon.

Similarly, the next tercet (lines 58–60) is well translated, with the words "still a youth" and "lady", despite the translation of *in guerra* / . . . *corse* as "fought", which misses the repetition of the word as "ran" in line 81. The rather bland "no one unlocks the door with gladness" has very little of the sexual implications in it,

but this is not surprising since Hollander's notes state that he disagrees with Auerbach's reading.

Non era ancor molto lontan da l'orto, *ch'el cominciò a far sentir la terra* *de la sua gran virtute alcun conforto;*	*55*	'Not much time as yet had passed when he first lent his comfort to the earth by the greatness of his virtuous power.
ché per tal donna, giovinetto, in guerra *del padre corse, a cui, come a la morte,* *la porta del piacer nessun diserra;*	*58*	'For still a youth, he fought against his father's wish for the favor of a lady to whom, as to death, no one unlocks the door with gladness,
e dinanzi a la sua spirital corte ***et coram patre*** *le si fece unito;* *poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte.*	*61*	'and before his spiritual court *et coram patre* he joined himself to her and, from then on, each passing day, he loved her more.
Questa, privata del primo marito, *millicent' anni e più dispetta e scura* *fino a costui si stette sanza invito;*	*64*	'She, bereft of her first husband, scorned and unknown one thousand and one hundred years and more, remained without a suitor till he came.
né valse udir che la trovò sicura *con Amiclate, al suon de la sua voce,* *colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura;*	*67*	'Nor did it profit her when men heard that she stood unmoved, with Amyclas, despite the voice of him who put the whole wide world in fear.
né valse esser costante né feroce, *sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,* *ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce.*	*70*	'Nor did it profit her when, being fiercely loyal and undaunted, while Mary stayed below, she wept with Christ upon the cross.
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso, *Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti* *prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso.*	*73*	'But, lest I make my meaning dark, let it be understood, in all that I have said, that these two lovers are Francis and Poverty.
La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti, *amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo* *facieno esser cagion di pensier santi;*	*76*	'Their happy countenances and their harmony, their love and wonder and sweet contemplation made them a cause for holy thoughts,
tanto che 'l venerabile Bernardo *si scalzò prima, e dietro a tanta pace* *corse e, correndo, li parve esser tardo.*	*79*	'so that the venerable Bernard was the first to shed his shoes and run, pursuing such great peace, and, running, thought himself too slow.
Oh ignota ricchezza! Oh ben ferace! *Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro* *dietro a la sposo, sì la sposa piace.*	*82*	'O unknown riches and prolific good! Barefoot goes Giles, barefoot goes Sylvester, following the groom, so greatly pleasing is the bride.
Indi sen va quel padre e quel maestro *con la sua donna e con quella famiglia* *che già legava l'umile capestro.*	*85*	'Then that father and teacher went his way in company of his lady and that family, each one girt with the same humble cord. . . .'

A comma – not a semicolon – separates the tercet 58–60 from the tercet 61–63; this observation may seem petty, but there is as much of a problem in using a fullstop as there is in using a comma when the original uses a semicolon. Lines 61–63 introduce a new idea, connected to the previous three lines, but separate.

The tercet 61–63 is an acceptable translation, though *et coram patre* is on a different line and, like Kirkpatrick, the Hollanders use "and, from then on," (with a comma, not a semicolon) at the end of their line 65 and this reduces the force of the original line 66.

Again the tercet of lines 64–66 is a good translation with only a few displacements of words in a different line or a different position in the line when compared with the original (again a fullstop and not a semicolon). Yet the repugnance of the lady does not come across as forcefully as in the original: "scorned and unknown" and "without a suitor" do not convey as strongly the "concrete impression of the bitterly repulsive" as does the original or as the Biblical passage from Isaiah does.

The Hollanders place the words "Nor did it profit her" at the opening of the next two stanzas (lines 67–69 and 70–72). The two translated tercets convey the original faithfully, with only a few words in different positions and again with a fullstop separating them.

In the tercet that refers to Aquinas' "dark" meaning (lines 73-75), the translation changes the word order and puts words in places that are different from the original. The Hollanders do not translate the word *troppo*, which emphasizes the word *chiuso*, and they place "Francis and Poverty" at the end of the third line instead of at the beginning of the second line of the original, where the words gain much more emphasis than in the translation. Another word that is not translated is *oramai* ("now"), which again is an emphatic word, and the omission, like the previous omission, lessens in the translation the possible irony that Dante may have intended in his presentation of Aquinas' speech. The translation of this tercet is one that conveys the superficial meaning, but not the emphases of the original.

The next stanza conveys the sense of the original, though it is not clear why it is necessary to change the word order in the first line and to include "their" in the second line. Again, the semicolon is changed, this time to a comma; this causes

the first words of the next stanza "so that" to lose the force of *tanto che* in the original. There is a spectacular contrast in the original between the conventional ideas of "holy thoughts" and "venerable" and "peace" on the one hand and shedding shoes and running, and the translation, by joining the two tercets by "so that" without translating *tanto* and by using a comma rather than a semicolon, which emphasizes the break or contrast, loses much of the effect of the original. As has already been mentioned, by avoiding the repetition of *corse* in lines 59 and 81 the Hollanders have lost the implication that Francis as a youth "ran" and now the "venerable Bernard" is doing the same. The word "venerable" in the Roman Catholic Church usually refers to a person who has died and been sanctified, and therefore there is a hint that Bernard has metaphorically come back to life through the wondrous love of Francis and Poverty. This suggestion of age comes out in the words *li parve esser tardo*, in which Bernard cannot match the youthful mobility he desires. The translation misses the repetition of *tanto* and *tanta* in lines 79 and 80.

The tercet (lines 82–84) continues the excitement through the repeated *Oh* of the original, which the Hollanders do not repeat. The words "barefoot goes" do not match the sound of excitement in *scalzasi*, and the repetition of the word in the same line of the original is broken in the translation by placing "barefoot goes" in different lines. The word placement of the translation is different from the original, and the word *dietro*, which is repeated in lines 80 and 84 of the original, is translated differently in line 83 from line 80. The repetition of sound in *sposo* and *sposa* in the same line is lost in "groom" in line 83 and "bride" in line 84 of the translation.

The final tercet of the excerpt being discussed is well translated with minor changes in the word order. Perhaps the word "teacher" is not forceful enough for *maestro*, although it is a correct translation, and "girt" does not have the same implications as does *legava*, which has the meaning of "united" or "connected"; it is true that the word "same" in the line "each one girt with the same humble cord" conveys this, but a better word than "girt" could have been chosen.

Hollander writes: “Dante has outdone himself. . . . Dante’s addition to existing Franciscan material is spectacularly original” (2008: 299), but the spectacular nature of the original has not come across in the translation.

The three translations are reliable, faithful translations. In the printed editions of their translations, the translators have placed the original alongside the translation for easy cross-reference. Both verse translations maintain the three-line stanza format, Kirkpatrick with a ten-syllable line, and the Hollanders with a freer verse form of varying syllable length. The last two, as verse translations, do not, however, capture or recreate the style or the living reality of the original. Neither attempts the *terza rima* format as far as rhyme is concerned. The verse translators have often lost the emphases and contrasts of the original word order, rhyme, and sound. What Auerbach sees as the repugnance of Poverty is implied rather than stressed. Perhaps the reason for these shortcomings is that the translators, whereas they may be good scholars of the original, are not sufficiently good as poets.

Singleton’s prose translation is often better than the two verse translations. On the next page there is a comparison of the original with the prose translation by Singleton and the poetic translation by the Hollanders. Apart from the problem of the smaller print, this kind of comparison allows for more careful critical study. The Hollanders appear to depend on Singleton’s prose translation quite often.

Original	**Prose Translation (Singleton)**	**Poetic Translation (The Hollanders)**
Non era ancor molto lontan da l'orto, *ch'el cominciò a far sentir la terra* *de la sua gran virtute alcun conforto;*	He was not very far from his rising when he began to make the earth feel, from his great virtue, a certain strengthening;	'Not much time as yet had passed when he first lent his comfort to the earth by the greatness of his virtuous power.
ché per tal donna, giovinetto, in guerra *del padre corse, a cui, come a la morte,* *la porta del piacer nessun diserra;* *e dinanzi a la sua spirital corte* ***et coram patre*** *le si fece unito;* *poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte.*	for, while still a youth, he rushed into strife against his father for such a lady, to whom, as to death, none willingly unlocks the door; and before his spiritual court *et coram patre* he was joined to her, and thereafter, from day to day, he loved her ever more ardently.	'For still a youth, he fought against his father's wish for the favor of a lady to whom, as to death, no one unlocks the door with gladness, 'and before his spiritual court *et coram patre* he joined himself to her and, from then on, each passing day, he loved her more.
Questa, privata del primo marito, *millicent' anni e più dispetta e scura* *fino a costui si stette sanza invito;* *né valse udir che la trovò sicura* *con Amiclate, al suon de la sua voce,* *colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura;* *né valse esser costante né feroce,* *sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,* *ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce.*	She, bereft of her first husband, for eleven hundred years and more, despised and obscure, remained unwooed till he came; nor had it availed to hear that he who caused fear to all the world found her undisturbed with Amyclas at the sound of his voice; nor had it availed to have been constant and undaunted so that, where Mary remained below, she wept with Christ upon the Cross.	'She, bereft of her first husband, scorned and unknown one thousand and one hundred years and more, remained without a suitor till he came. 'Nor did it profit her when men heard that she stood unmoved, with Amyclas, despite the voice of him who put the whole wide world in fear. 'Nor did it profit her when, being fiercely loyal and undaunted, while Mary stayed below, she wept with Christ upon the cross.
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso, *Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti* *prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso.* *La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti,* *amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo* *facieno esser cagion di pensier santi;* *tanto che 'l venerabile Bernardo* *si scalzò prima, e dietro a tanta pace* *corse e, correndo, li parve esser tardo.*	But, lest I should proceed too darkly, take now Francis and Poverty for these lovers in all that I have said. Their harmony and joyous semblance made love and wonder and tender looks the cause of holy thoughts; so that the venerable Bernard first bared his feet, following such great peace, and running, it seemed to him that he was slow.	'But, lest I make my meaning dark, let it be understood, in all that I have said, that these two lovers are Francis and Poverty. 'Their happy countenances and their harmony, their love and wonder and sweet contemplation made them a cause for holy thoughts, 'so that the venerable Bernard was the first to shed his shoes and run, pursuing such great peace, and, running, thought himself too slow.
Oh ignota ricchezza! Oh ben ferace! *Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro* *dietro a la sposo, sì la sposa piace.* *Indi sen va quel padre e quel maestro* *con la sua donna e con quella famiglia* *che già legava l'umile capestro.*	Oh wealth unknown, oh fertile good! Egidius bares his feet, Silvester bares his feet, following the spouse, so does the bride delight them. Then that father and master goes his way, with his lady and with that family which was already girt with the lowly cord.	'O unknown riches and prolific good! Barefoot goes Giles, barefoot goes Sylvester, following the groom, so greatly pleasing is the bride. 'Then that father and teacher went his way in company of his lady and that family, each one girt with the same humble cord. …'

Walter Benjamin discusses the difference between the work of the translator and that of the poet:

> . . . even though the Romanticists virtually ignored translation in their theoretical writings, their own great translations testify to their sense of the essential nature and the dignity of this literary mode. There is abundant evidence that this sense is not necessarily most pronounced in a poet; in fact, he may be least open to it. Not even literary history suggests the traditional notion that great poets have been eminent translators and lesser poets have been indifferent translators. . . . As translation is a mode of its own, the task of the translator, too, may be regarded as distinct and clearly differentiated from the task of the poet.
>
> The task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect [*Intention*] upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original. This is a feature of translation which basically differentiates it from the poet's work, because the effort of the latter is never directed at the language as such, at its totality, but solely and immediately at specific linguistic contextual aspects. Unlike a work of literature, translation does not find itself in the center of the language forest but on the outside facing the wooded ridge; it calls into it without entering, aiming at the single spot where the echo is able to give, in its own language, the reverberation of the work in the alien one. Not only does the aim of translation differ from that of a literary work – it intends language as a whole, taking an individual work in an alien language as a point of departure – but it is a different effort altogether. The intention of the poet is spontaneous, primary, graphic; that of the translator is derivative, ultimate, ideational. For the great motif of integrating many tongues into one true language is at work. The language is one in which the independent sentences, works of literature, critical judgments, will never communicate – for they remain dependent on translation; but in the languages themselves, supplemented and reconciled in their mode of signification, harmonize. If there is such a thing as a language of truth, the tensionless and even silent depository of the ultimate truth is – the true language. And this very language, whose divination and description is the only perfection a philosopher can hope for, is concealed in concentrated fashion in translations. There is no muse of philosophy, nor is there one of translation. But despite the claims of sentimental artists, these two are not banausic. For there is a philosophical genius that is characterized by a yearning for that language which manifests itself in translations. "*Les langues imparfaites en cela que plusieurs, manque la suprême: penser étant écrire sans*

> *accessoires, ni chuchotement mais tacite encore l'immortelle parole, la divirsité, sur terre, des idiomes empêche personne de proférer les mots qui, sinon se trouveraient, par une frappe unique, elle-même matériellement la vérité.*"[31] If what Mallarmé evokes here is fully fathomable to a philosopher, translation, with its rudiments of such a language, is midway between poetry and doctrine. Its products are less sharply defined, but it leaves no less a mark on history." (1977: 76–77.)

Walter Benjamin wrote this in 1921 in his late twenties. His main concerns were with German and French literature. When he wrote, "Not even literary history suggests the traditional notion that great poets have been eminent translators and lesser poets have been indifferent translators", he was evidently unaware of the truth of Tomlinson's statement (2003: 1) about "how centrally the art of translation has mattered in the history of English poetry". Benjamin was not a poet and, according to Hannah Arendt (1977: 4), "he was no translator". Yet he has a great reputation as a translation theorist.

His statement that the "task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect [*Intention*] upon the language into which he is translating which he produces in it the echo of the original" is valid, even though in translation it is rather awkwardly stated; but his next statement, "This is a feature of translation which basically differentiates it from the poet's work because the effort of the latter is never directed at the language as such, at its totality, but solely and immediately at specific linguistic contextual aspects" is questionable. The poet-translator can direct his effort "at the language as such" while also directing attention "at specific linguistic contextual aspects". Benjamin's celebrated metaphors of translation as "on the outside facing the wooded ridge" and "as the tangent (touching) a circle lightly and at but one point" are also questionable. With regard to the translation of poetry, the poet-translator has to enter the

[31] "The imperfection of languages consists in their plurality, the supreme one is lacking: thinking is writing without accessories or even whispering, the immortal word still remains silent; the diversity of idioms on earth prevents everybody from uttering the words which otherwise, at one single stroke, would materialize as truth." (Translated by Harry Zohn in a note (Benjamin (1977: 7)).

wooded ridge and the circle completely. Benjamin's comparison of the poet's intention as "spontaneous, primary, graphic" with the translator's as "derivative, ultimate, ideational" shows limited understanding of the work of poet-translators. Poet-translators like Pope, Dryden, Middleton, Tomlinson, Kinsella, Heaney, and Merwin – to mention a few English poet-translators – and Boris Pasternak, Paul Celan, and Czeslaw Milosz – to mention a few other-language poet-translators – have shown that translation by poets can be good translations. If I have understood this somewhat obscure passage correctly, it would seem that Benjamin's knowledge of poets' work of translation is limited.

Benjamin's emphasis on "the true language" was influenced by his friend, Gershom Scholem, who approached "Judaism via the Cabala, that is, that part of Hebrew literature which is untransmitted and untransmissable in terms of Jewish tradition, in which it has always had the odor of something downright disreputable"[32]. Arendt refers to "Benjamin, whose early philosophical interest was theologically inspired" and for whom "truth concerned a secret and . . . the revelation of this secret had authority" (1977: 41). J. M. Coetzee refers to "the paradox of 'The Task of the Translator': that a translation becomes a higher thing than its original, in the sense that it gestures toward language before Babel. . ." (2007: 52). Benjamin's writing is paradoxical, esoteric, and not altogether convincing in the above quotation, as Benjamin himself seems to concede when he writes, "If what Mallarmé evokes here is fully fathomable to a philosopher, translation, with its rudiments of such a language, is midway between poetry and doctrine. Its products are less sharply defined, but it leaves no less a mark on history." Benjamin's view of "true language" remains a hermetic view of translation.

After what Benjamin has said disparagingly about the poet in comparison with the translator, ". . . he places at the center of his essay . . . the astonishing quotation from Mallarmé…", as Arendt writes (1977: 50): it is surely ironic that after he has

[32] Hannah Arendt (1977: 40). J. M. Coetzee also refers to "what he (Benjamin) had learned of Jewish mysticism from Scholem" (2007: 51). A different interpretation of the relevance of the Kaballah to translation is suggested in the next chapter.

previously undermined the role of a poet-translator, Benjamin calls on a poet to support his views on the philosophical rather than the poetic role of the translator: the "philosophical genius that is characterized by a yearning for that language which manifests itself in translations". There is no doubt that philosophers have played a major role in translation, but so have poet-translators, especially in translating poetry.

The question of the poetic craft that should be involved in poetic translation is central to this research. The way in which Benjamin approaches the question by stating that a poet's effort "is never directed at the language. . ., at its totality, but solely and immediately at specific linguistic contextual aspects" needs to be countered.

C. H. Sisson, a practising English poet and translator, has some interesting comments about the work of a poet and the work of a poet-translator:

> His [the poet-translator's] task . . . is . . . the effacement of himself, so far as may be, before the text. . . . the only preparation is a long experience of writing poetry of one's own. This is because the poet has . . . to listen rather than to dictate, to accept rather than to decide. In this intimate process the best will sometimes be deceived, but they will be least deceived in their best poems. With a translation, the internal situation is more complicated. The translator's mind is an empty room in which the verses float before him, surrounded as it were by what he has extracted, as possibly relevant, from the half-irrelevancies of dictionaries and the confusing propositions of commentators. The moment comes . . . when he sees through the original to the matter – the actual objects – of the original. It is at that moment that his own words form, and he has to take what is given and to say what he sees. Of course, as with a poem of his own, he will have to return sometimes and admit that he has not seen clearly, or has not said what he has seen. Then he has to go through the process again or to make repairs as best he can. The result is an imperfect reading of the original, but it is a reading with something, however shadowy, of the coherence and stamp of the original." (2008: 42–43.)

Sisson's is a practical analysis of the difference between the task of the poet and that of the poet-translator. It concludes, however, with the modest statement that

every translation is "imperfect" and seems to verify the commonly held view that "perfect" or even "near-ideal" translations are impossible.

Sisson's translation (2008: 397–398) of lines 55–87 of *Paradiso* Canto XI is:

Non era ancor molto lontan da l'orto, *ch'el cominciò a far sentir la terra* *de la sua gran virtute alcun conforto;*	*55*	He was not far away from his dawn When he began to make the world feel Some comfort from the great power he had;
ché per tal donna, giovinetto, in guerra *del padre corse, a cui, come a la morte,* *la porta del piacer nessun diserra;*	*58*	For while young he rushed out to battle With his father, for the sake of a lady to whom, As to death, no one willingly opens the door;
e dinanzi a la sua spirital corte ***et coram patre** le si fece unito;* *poscia di dì in dì l'amò più forte.*	*61*	Before his spiritual court, and in the presence Of his father, he was united with her; After which he loved her more every day.
Questa, privata del primo marito, *millicent' anni e più dispetta e scura* *fino a costui si stette sanza invito;*	*64*	She, who had been deprived of her first husband Eleven hundred years and more ago, was despised and obscure Until he stood before her, without invitation;
né valse udir che la trovò sicura *con Amiclate, al suon de la sua voce,* *colui ch'a tutto 'l mondo fé paura;*	*67*	It was of no effect that she was found safe With Amyclas, within hearing of that voice Which reduced all the world to fear;
né valse esser costante né feroce, *sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso,* *ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce.*	*70*	It was of no effect to be constant and courageous So that she, when Mary remained below, Mounted with Christ upon the cross.
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso, *Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti* *prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso.*	*73*	But, not to continue too obscurely, Francis and Poverty are these two lovers Of whom I have been talking all this while.
La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti, *amore e maraviglia e dolce sguardo* *facieno esser cagion di pensier santi;*	*76*	Their concord and the joy in their appearance Made love and wonder and looks of tenderness To be the occasions of holy thoughts;
tanto che 'l venerabile Bernardo *si scalzò prima, e dietro a tanta pace* *corse e, correndo, li parve esser tardo.*	*79*	So much so that the venerable Bernard Took off his shoes first, to run after peace And as he ran he thought that he was slow.
Oh ignota ricchezza! Oh ben ferace! *Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro* *dietro a la sposo, sì la sposa piace.*	*82*	O unknown riches, O fruitful happiness! Egidius took off his shoes, Sylvester too, Following the spouse, the spouse pleased them so much.
Indi sen va quel padre e quel maestro *con la sua donna e con quella famiglia* *che già legava l'umile capestro.*	*85*	Then he went away, this father and this master, With his lady and with the members of their household Already putting on the humble cord.

Sisson decided "not to follow Dante's rhyme-scheme" and justified his decision with the statements "that a writer must write as comes natural to him, in the

language of his day and in the kind of verse which belongs to the current development of the language, and of his own technique" and "that the differences between the English and Italian languages in general, and English and Italian rhymes in particular, are such as to make the imitation of *terza rima* . . . rather like a clown following a ballet dancer" (2008: 39). Sisson decided also on "liberties with the length of line, as well as in the matter of rhyme, the translator's purpose being to convey Dante's meaning into English verse, not to comply with anyone's preconceptions as to how that should be done" (2008: 41). Such decisions are acceptable, but, in his translation of these lines, how has he succeeded in conveying "Dante's meaning into verse"?

His translation reads very easily alongside the original and is in many ways close to Singleton's translation. He maintains the sense of each stanza though not of each line. Sometimes Sisson changes the word order to the detriment of the emphases of the original words: for instance, Dante places *per tal donna* at the start of line 58, whereas Sisson places it at the end of line 59. At other times, Sisson keeps the word order of the original but to the detriment of the sense: *sanza invito* at the end of line 66 is correctly translated "without invitation", but, in the line "Until he stood before her, without invitation" may be taken to mean that he did not receive an invitation; in comparison with the Hollanders' "remained without a suitor till he came", Sisson's version confuses the meaning.

Sisson keeps some of the repetition in the original: "It was of no effect" is repeated in lines 67 and 70 and "spouse" in line 84; but important words like *corse* in lines 59 and 81 lose the effect of the repetition when translated "rushed" and "ran". There is a similar loss when Sisson does not use "took off his shoes" three times as the original does in lines 80 and 83. Sisson has apparently rejected Auerbach's "gate of pleasure" and he translates ***et coram patre*** as "and in the presence / Of his father", which breaks the original's opening words and, by

avoiding the point of the Latin phrase, Sisson avoids the possible ambiguity of in the presence of Francis's father and/or of the Heavenly Father[33].

Sisson, like Kirkpatrick and the Hollanders, has achieved a readable translation, but the question is whether he has maintained the poetry of the original.

vi

Conclusion: Dante's Words *translato* and *traslatò* in *Paradiso*

In *Paradiso* Canto XIV lines 79–84 Dante writes:

> *Ma Bëatrice sì bella e ridente*
> *mi si mostrò, che tra quelle vedute*
> *si vuol lasciar che non seguir la mente.*
> *Quindi ripreser li occhi miei virtute*
> *a rilevarsi; e vidimi translato*
> *sol con mia donna in più alta salute.*

Robert Hollander comments: "This is Dante's only use in his poem of the Latinism *translato* (in this context, literally 'carried up to'). . . . Paul speaks of God's having snatched us from the power of darkness and *translated* us to His Son's kingdom. . . (Colossians 1:13)." (2008: 388–389.) The word could mean "carried/taken/borne across" in a mental sense, in a visionary way, *in più alta salute (*"to a more exalted blessedness" – Singleton (1991: 159)). Dante's use of the word *translato* refers to one of the crucial experiences of Dante in *Paradiso*: *sol con mia donna in più alta salute* ("alone with my donna in a more exalted state of blessedness"). Perhaps the only kind of "translation" that Dante considered effective was this experience of being carried across with his beloved to a more exalted blessedness of complete harmony. Is this not similar to what the poet-translator envisions in his translation of a poem that he loves?

Kirkpatrick translates these two tercets as

> But Beatrice showed herself to me –
> laughing, so beautiful she must be left

[33] In the Note on lines 61–2, David H. Higgins explains the lines as "The bishop's court in Assisi, where St Francis openly avowed his dedication to a life of poverty in 1207. Here his father attempted to oblige him to renounce his hereditary rights to the family property, lest he should squander it on charity." (Sisson (2008: 682).) Although the facts Higgins mentions are beyond dispute, the proximity of Dante's *dinanzi a la sua spiritual corte* and ***et coram patre*** allow for ambiguity about who the ***patre*** is.

among things seen that memory can't pursue.
And so my eyes, regaining their right strength,
lifted once more, I saw myself alone,
borne with my lady to a higher good. (2007b: 135.)

It is surprising that Kirkpatrick does not translate *translato* as "translated" as Singleton, the Hollanders, and Sisson do. In his Commentaries and Notes he does not comment on this sole use of the word *translato* in the *Commedia*. Perhaps the reason that Kirkpatrick does not comment on this as "Dante's only use" is that he considers there was another use of the word in the poem: in *Paradiso* XX lines 37–39 Dante reproduces the words that the Eagle has spoken:

". . . *Colui che luce in mezzo per pupilla,*
fu il cantor de lo Spirito Santo
che l'arca traslatò di villa in villa…".
(". . . He that shines midmost, as the pupil, was the singer of the Holy Ghost, who bore the ark about from town to town – Singleton (1991: 223).)

It is true that the word is *traslatò*, not *translato*, and that the English word used by all three translators is not "translated" but rather "bore" by Singleton and Kirkpatrick, "carried" by Sisson, and "brought" by the Hollanders; nevertheless the Italian *traslato* as an adjective can have the meaning of "figurative" or "metaphorical" and as a noun it means "metaphor" or "trope"[34]. This poetic implication is justified by the context of the words in Canto XX: before the Eagle speaks, Dante comments that the Eagle spoke *in forma di parole, / quali aspettava il core ov' io le scrissi* ("in the form of words such as the heart whereon I wrote them was awaiting" – Singleton (1991: 223)). The Eagle is speaking in the form of words that speak to Dante's heart, and Dante writes them on his heart and then in the form of his poem; is there a better description of the process of translation?

In case this may seem far-fetched, it is also relevant that the singer of the Holy Ghost is David, about whom we read in the lines following (40-42):

"…o*ra conosce il merto del sua canto,*
in quanto effeto fu del suo consiglio.
per lo remunerar ch'è altrettanto. …"
("… now he knows the merit of his song –

[34] *The Concise Cambridge Italian Dictionary*, compiled by Barbara Reynolds (1975), London: Penguin, p. 279.

as far as his own thought produced such verse –
here seeing he's paid in equal kind. …"
– Kirkpatrick (2007b: 191).)

David, as the singer of the Holy Spirit, is not only carrying over the ark but also the words of the Holy Spirit and he knows the merit of his song, just as Dante, the new David, carries over his (the Holy Spirit's, David's) song to us. Is Dante not one of the greatest translators in this sense?

Chapter Five
Translating the Role of Beatrice in the *Commedia*

i
Does Beatrice "Disturb the Poem's Theological-Institutional Equilibrium"?

The three main characters in the *Commedia* are Dante, Virgil, and Beatrice. Dante is an ever-present character in the *Commedia*, yet his name appears only once in the poem: in Canto XXX, line 55, of *Purgatorio*, the first word spoken by Beatrice in the poem. Virgil's role in the first two Canticles is an interesting one, showing Dante's high regard for the poet and his influence on Dante's work. It is Virgil who first introduces the reader to Beatrice. This part of the chapter focuses on the role and the significance of Beatrice in the poem.

Harold Bloom writes:

> Nothing else in Western literature . . . is as sublimely outrageous as Dante's exaltation of Beatrice, sublimated from being an image of desire to angelic status, in which role she becomes a crucial element in the church's hierarchy of salvation (1996: 77).
>
> The Beatrice of the *Comedy* occupies a position in the heavenly hierarchy that is difficult to apprehend (1996: 79).
>
> . . . all the precedents he (Dante) had were not only heretical, but belonged to the heresy of heresies, Gnosticism. From Simon Magus onward, heresiarchs had elevated their closest female followers to the heavenly hierarchies . . .. in a poetic rather than a theological sense, Dante's myth of Beatrice is closer to Gnosticism than to Christian orthodoxy . . . . Dante integrates Beatrice into Christian typology, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he integrates Christian typology into his vision of Beatrice. Beatrice, not Christ, is the poem . . .. (1996: 90–91.)
>
> . . .Beatrice is not an imitation of the Christ, but Dante's creativity lancing out to identify itself with an old love, whether real or largely imaginary (1996: 93).
>
> The muse intervenes, but he names her "blessedness". . .. . . . she *is* Dante's poem, the single image of images that represents not God, but Dante's own achievement." (1996: 96.)

> She is a Christian muse who enters the poem's action and so fuses herself with the poem that we cannot conceive of it without her." (1996: 101.)

It is true that Beatrice is Dante's entry point into the world of Dante's poem and that she has a status in the poem that no one can deny.

Giuliana Carugati also writes about Beatrice:

> 'Amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare' ('Love moved me, which compels me to speak'), Beatrice's words in *Inf*. 2.72, resume and confirm . . . a design that De Robertis does not hesitate to label 'poetic theology'. . .. But what constitutes the basis for this theology? What place does it occupy in relation to the ecclesiastical theology that it both draws upon and reconfigures? . . . One could begin by asking: what is the poet's point of departure – in terms of life and imagination, of thought and writing – when he starts out on his fictive voyage? The answer is simple: Dante's writing is born from the reflection on the nature of love. . .. (2003: 211.)

> Beatrice is born out of an idea of the world, out of a way of thinking about 'being' that takes its origin from a reflection on the nature of *eros*. . . . Might Dante's greatness be born from the tenacity and precision of thought with which the poet structures a theology of love? 'I' mi son un che, quando / Amor mi spira, noto, e a quell modo / ch'e' ditta dentro vo significando' ('I am one who, when Love breathes in me, takes note; what he, within, dictates, I, in that way, without, would speak and shape' [*Purg* 24.52-54] [trans. Mandelbaum . . .). . . . We are in the present tense, one that detaches itself from its fictive purgatorial context, to extend to all of Dante's writing and its essential, inexhaustible source. And it seems that one could well see Dante as the first, outside of . . . the Song of Songs . . ., who dared to reintroduce an erotic thinking into the heart of a Christian *doxa* that was refractory, even reticent. . . . Beatrice, the poetic, the cosmic Beatrice, is born from the conflictual repetitions of the love-experience and the philosophical problem that results from them. (2003: 217.)

> In fact, Beatrice will disturb the poem's theological-institutional equilibrium with her obstinate and incongruous presence even in the heights of the empyrean" (2003: 219).

Harriet Rubin, in her book on Dante and in a chapter called "Virgin Discoveries", considers that he may have been influenced by Moses de Leon and St. Bernard of

Clairvaux in his creation of Beatrice in the *Commedia*. Rubin draws attention to the work of Moses de León who in 1290 "transcribed the thoughts of the grand master of Jewish philosophy, Simeon bar Yochai":

> . . . When de León wrote these teachings down for the first time, he called Simeon's visions of a better life the Zohar – the Book of Splendour – a mystical tract on how to transcend time and space. . . . But the Zohar's author claimed something new . . .. Simeon had seen the face of God and declared it a she: Shekhina. . . .
> . . . The sensuous, soulful Shekhina became a *cause célèbre*. . . . The Zohar's Shekhina bore a similarity to Beatrice, the woman of Dante's eternal fascination. . . .
> Shekhina was born in the Christian world the year Beatrice died, and Dante, who considered all dates meaningful, might have believed her soul lighted up the rabbi's cave." (2004: 136–137.)

Rubin attributes to St. Bernard of Clairvaux in 1115 the rise of the "worship of the Virgin" in the Catholic Church: "The Virgin became the sinless, giving, feminine principle throughout Europe. . . . Bernard insisted that Mary was the vehicle of transformation". Just before this last sentence Rubin writes, "And Bernard would end up in Dante's vision of Heaven way up at the top of the mystic rose of Paradise." (2004: 142.) Rubin concludes, "In Purgatory the seeker sees that the face of God is feminine . . .. Purgatory is a world of women"[1] (2007: 145). Rubin considers these two influences – Moses de León in 1290 and St. Bernard of Clairvaux in 1115 – were relevant to Dante's creation of Beatrice in the *Commedia*.

When Rubin arrives at the role of Beatrice in the poem, she writes:

> Beatrice is the key to Dante's ideas of beauty and its redeeming force. How can one incarnate beauty? She will tell him. He seeks the source of Beatrice's beauty as the way to God. His eyes cannot bear the divine light except as it is reflected in her eyes. When he is tired in Purgatory, love makes him climb. When he is afraid, she draws him through the fire. Twelve lines of persuasion from Virgil do nothing, but the simple words '*Tra Beatrice e te è questo muro*' do it all. She forces him to see

[1] Clemens writes, ". . . Dante tended to idealize women (only 24 did he find in the total realm of hell) and it is certainly true that vastly more women populate his Paradise than his Inferno . . ."(1967: 233–234).

> himself as he is and to accept responsibility for what he has done. She raises him to the height of his powers and beyond; it is she who 'imparadises' his mind (*Paradiso* 28.3). She is the continuing source of his power. It is through her eyes that he receives the reflected light of God that draws him upward.
>
> (2004: 155.)

It is possible that Dante's vast research made him aware of such sources as Moses de León and St. Bernard of Clairvaux provided. Beatrice does "disturb the poem's theological-institutional equilibrium", and Rubin's references to the Zohar and to the rise of Mary worship are relevant. Dante gives Mary some attention, but nothing like as much as he gives to Beatrice.

Dante's possible knowledge of the Zohar and the concept of Shekhina may raise other pertinent links. Perle Epstein writes:

> A favorite subject for meditation among medieval Spanish Kabbalists, the *Matrona*, or female aspect of God's face, negates the charge that Jewish mysticism has no room for woman. Since the very presence of the living God in the world is female, the *Shekhinah/Matrona*, lodged in the sphere of *Sovereignty* on the cosmic tree, is the most accessible part of the Divine Body. (2001: 47.)

She cites Rabbi Joseph, a thirteenth-century mystic, who wrote in his *Sefer Tashak*: "She so pervades this lower world that if you search in deed, speech, thought, and speculation, you will find *Shekhinah*, for there is no beginning or end to her." Epstein refers to the *Shekhinah* as "the attribute of *Understanding* . . . the wise Mother" and as "*Judgment*" and writes, "When provoked, the beauteous Mother is fierce." (2001: 47.)

Dante's references to Beatrice's effect upon him in the *Commedia* may have come from Bernard's and Joseph's emphasis on the "female aspect of God's face" since most of Dante's descriptions are confined to Beatrice's face, to her smile, and especially to her eyes.

Another possible influence on Dante's poetry is the "meditative technique known as *tzeruf*, permutation of letters" (Epstein (2001: 76)), which Epstein demonstrates in her example of Rabbi Joseph's playing with the Hebrew letters *yod*, *zayin*, and

chet (2001: 48). Dante shows consummate skill in manipulating letters, words, phrases, grammar, and images to achieve the metre and rhyme of the stylistic and syntactic structure of the *terza rima* and of the *Commedia* as a whole. In Dante's poem there is a concentration on the word similar to the meditative technique of *tzeruf*, which achieves a "meaning beyond meaning" (Epstein (2001: 76)).

Part of the difficulty in translating Dante in particular and any poem in general is that it requires a technique similar to the Kabbalists' practice of *tzeruf*, "the path of letters": Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia (1240–1291) described it as follows: "The name of this path includes the mystery of the seventy languages, which is in . . . permutation of letters; it is the bringing back of letters to their first substance, or materialization, by utterance and thought. . ." – Epstein (2001: 85). This sounds like Benjamin's "true language" and is relevant to translation. Referring to "the thirteenth-century practitioners of *tzeruf*" (2001: 76), Epstein mentions Abulafia[2]: ". . . all languages became for him one language. His technique separated and reunited phrases and letters, divested words of their ordinary meaning, indeed, spun them out of recognition until their informing spirit electrified the body and mind." (2001: 77.) Dante uses something like this technique in writing the *Commedia*, and translators of Dante should also. [3] The translator needs to be in the wood or in the circle of meditation on every word and letter of the poem and "instead of forcing away distracting thoughts and images" needs to follow "them by constructing them into sentences, breaking down these sentences into words, the words into letters, and the letters into light" – Epstein (2001: 77). A poet-translator should use this kind of concentration on and absorption in the sentences, words, and letters of the original.

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[2] Epstein writes that Abulafia was sentenced to death by "the notoriously anti-Semitic Pope Nicholas III" and that the Pope died before the sentence could be carried out (2001: 81–82). Pope Nicholas is in hell in Dante's *Inferno*, Canto XIX, 49–120.

[3] Robinson wrote: "This (Goethe's statement) is not the ultimate source of the romantic insistence on translating word-for-word *and* sense-for-sense, that is, perfectly, identically; its source may be in Kabbalism, where absolute cosmic correspondence, translating sense-for-sense, word-for-word, even letter-for-letter, was essential, or more than essential, crucial (anything less meant doom and destruction). But it is probably the most influential statement of that insistence, until George Steiner reformulated it in our time in terms of the hermeneutics of restitution." (1991: 88–89.) It is clear from Robinson's tone that he disapproves of this "romantic redemption" (p. 88).

ii
Beatrice in *Inferno*

The first mention of Beatrice by name in the *Commedia* is in *Inferno*, Canto II, lines 52–133, of which lines 52–72 will be studied with three translations:

‘. . . Io era tra color che son sospesi, 52
e donna mi chiamò beata e bella,
tal che di comandare io la richiesi.
Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella; 55
e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,
con angelica voce, in sua favella:
“O anima cortese mantovana, 58
di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,
e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,
l’amico mio, e non della ventura, 61
nella diserta piaggia è impedito
sì nel cammin, che volt’ è per paura;
e temo che non sia già sì smarrito, 64
ch’io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,
per quel ch’i’ ho di lui nel cielo udito.
Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata 67
e con ciò c’ ha mestieri al suo campare,
l’aiuta sì ch’ i’ ne sia consolata.
I’ son Beatrice che ti faccio andare; 70
vegno del loco ove tornar disio;
amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare. . . .”’

(‘. . . I was among those who are in suspense, and a lady called me, so blessed and so fair that I begged her to command me. Her eyes shone brighter than the stars, and she began to speak to me with angelic voice in sweet, low tones: “O courteous Mantuan soul, whose fame still endures in the world and shall endure as long as the world lasts, my friend, who is no friend of fortune, is so hindered on his way on the desert slope that he has turned back for fear, and from what I have heard of him in Heaven I fear he may already be so far astray that I have risen too late to succour him. Haste then, and with the beauty of thy speech and whatever is needful for his deliverance give him such help that I shall be comforted. I am Beatrice who bid thee go. I come from the place where I desire to return. Love moved me and makes me speak. . . .”’ (Sinclair (1958: 37 and 39).)

Although this is the first mention of Beatrice by name in the *Commedia*, Virgil has made reference to Beatice in *Inferno*, Canto I, lines 122–123, *anima fia a ciò più di me degna; / con lei ti lascerò nel mio partire* (“there shall be a spirit fitter for that than I; with her I shall leave thee at my parting” – Sinclair (1958: 29)). Canto II divulges who it is who will lead Dante “to the tribes of the blest” (*alle beate genti* – line 120). In Canto II there is much indirect speech: Dante tells what

Virgil tells what Beatrice tells him; and Beatrice has told Virgil what Mary and Lucia (and Rachel) told her. This is part of Dante's terchnique of keeping the reader in suspense, but it also establishes the role of women early in the poem. The poets (Dante and Virgil) reveal the hidden wisdom that women communicate.

The first line of the excerpt refers to Virgil *tra color che son sospesi* ("among those who are in suspense") in Limbo. Canto IV of the *Inferno* refers to this as *nel primo cerchio che l'abisso cigne* ("into the first circle that girds the abyss" – line 24), and the word *sospesi* is used again at the end of line 45, in which Limbo is identified. It is not only Virgil who is in suspense; it is part of Dante's style to leave the reader in suspense about what such allusions mean, and the state of suspense makes the reading more absorbing. The rest of the excerpt is about Beatrice, *donna . . . beata e bella*; even when Beatrice praises Virgil, the reader is impressed by her gracious charm. The words *beata e bella*, with their alliteration, emphasize that she is a happy, blessed person (what the name Beatrix means) and is also beautiful. The impact on Virgil is that he felt impelled to request her to command him; the word *richiesi*, coming as it does with the force of the end of the line, has a wealth of innuendos: literally it means "to ask again for something"; there is the force of "demand", of its being necessary; the participle *richiesto* means "sought after" or "in demand"; related words by sound are *richiamo* ("allurement") and *ricchezza* ("wealth" and "riches"); and would it be too far-fetched to state that there is also a reminder through its similar sound of the word *richiuso* in the Ulysses passage? As Ulysses' end was the sea closing over him again, Virgil's new life opportunity is asking Beatrice for a new task. All the innuendos seem relevant to the way Virgil had to respond to this woman. The words at the beginning of the line *tal che* support this sense of necessity of response. If one compares the rhyming words *sospesi* and *richiesi*, it is as if Virgil has been freed from his state of suspension into the riches of response through the sight of this alluring woman.

It is Beatrice's eyes (*occhi*) that contribute to this kind of response: *Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella*. Dante places the verb first in the line, and coming as

it does as the first word of a new sentence it gets even more force. The English verb "shone" is mild in comparison with the Italian that is more like "sparkled" or "glittered" or "shone with great brightness". The reference to *stella* at the end of the line, taken together with the word *Lucevan* at the beginning of the line, may link with Lucifer, the angel of light, the morning star, the brightest of them all. Beatrice has taken over the role of the fallen angel of light.

It is not only Beatrice's eyes but also her voice that impress Virgil: *e cominciommi a dir soave e piana, / con angelica voce in sua favella* ("and she began to speak to me with angelic voice in sweet, low tones"). The lines sound like their meaning: a combination of hard and soft sounds and repeated s-, v-, and l- sounds, with a predominance of a- sounds. Lines 55–61 all end with the unstressed -a sound (and lines 63, 65, 67, and 69 continue with it), and this gives the lines an unusual lilt, more so than the usual *terza rima*.[4] The words *soave e piana*, which describe *favella*, are placed long before the word they describe and are thus given prominence, especially at the end of the line, with the words *con angelica voce* separating them from the noun. The word *soave* has a range of meanings from "sweet" to "soft" to "mild" to "gentle"; it comes from the Latin *suavis* meaning "agreeable" and has come into the English language as "suave", charming and elegant, though the English has developed a slightly negative meaning. The word *piana* means "soft", "gentle", "quiet", and "smooth", a word that must have soothed both Virgil and Dante in their troubled states of mind. The word *favella*, with its soft vowel and consonant sounds, means "speech", but must have had the hint of *favilla*, which, with its meaning of "spark" or "light", takes us back to Beatrice's eyes. The word *angelica* is not only figurative but also literal, for Beatrice is an angel from heaven. Robin Kirkpatrick writes about "the extraordinarily inventive choreography that characterizes Dante's language and narrative in canto 2" and goes on, "Virgil, now speaking of Beatrice, abandons the epic elevation of his earliest utterances in favour of a lyric style . . ." (2006: 321).

[4] The rhymes *stella / bella / favella* are used again in *Paradiso*, Canto XII, lines 29, 31, and 33, along with repeated -a rhymes in lines 112–118.

When Virgil reproduces Beatrice's speech, the reader hears the *soave e piana . . . favella* of her voice. The word *cortese* is an important word in the *Commedia*, e.g. Bonaventure's praise of Thomas's *cortesia* in Canto XII, lines 111 and 143; it is one of the characteristics of saintliness, not only of ancient rhetoric. And praising another's courtesy is also evidence of courtesy in the one praising the other. Beatrice's first words in the *Commedia* are in praise of Virgil and his poetry and have all the characteristics of good poetry: repeated a, n, m, and c sounds and repeated words (*mondo* and *dura/durera*).

When, in line 61, Beatrice speaks of Dante, she starts with the words, *l'amico mio*: the word *amico* can mean "friend" or "boy-friend" or "lover", unlike the word, "friend" in English, which tends to be more discreet. Her love and concern come out in all of lines 61–69, but in the first of these she shows sympathy for his difficult life (presumably his life in exile as a man condemned to execution) *non della ventura* before she goes on to refer to his present predicament in hell: *nella diserta piaggia è impedito / si nel cammin, che volt' è per paura* (literally "on the lonely slope he is hindered, / so on his way that turned back he is through fear"). The word *piaggia* is closely associated with the words *piaga* (which means a "wound" or "calamity") and *piagare* ("to wound"), and the calamity of Dante's state is suggested. The halting word order with the repetition of *è* (almost like a fearful hesitation) shows her emotional concern for Dante's plight, which she expresses in the next line with the word t*emo* and in this and the following line when she tells what she fears: *temo che non sia già sì smarrito, / ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata* (literally "I fear that not only already he has so lost his way, but also that I myself may have delayed in help raising"). Her anxiety over Dante's plight is accompanied by a humble feeling of inadequacy on her part. The repetition of the s sound in *sia . . . si . . . sia . . . soccorso* helps to make her words sound like a sigh of concern. Line 66 prepares the reader for the words quoted later of what Lucia told Beatrice in lines 103–114.

In lines 67–69 Beatrice returns her attention to Virgil and his appointed mission:

Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata

e con ciò c' ha mestieri al suo campare,
l'aiuta sì ch' i' ne sia consolata.

The first words, *Or movi*, show Beatrice's sense of urgency: it is her order or appeal for Virgil to hasten; but the words following show her courtesy even while giving such an order or making such an urgent appeal: the words, *con la tua parola ornata*, remind the reader of lines 58–60 not only in their courtesy towards Virgil and praise for his eloquence but also in the repeated a sounds, while the words *con ciò c' ha mestieri*, despite their strangeness, continue Beatrice's confidence in Virgil's competence to deal with Dante's plight. The word, *mestieri*, is virtually ignored by translators; it is a strange word meaning "occupations" or "trades", but surely Dante chose it for its rich suggestiveness: it reminds one of *maestria* or *maestro* or perhaps *mistero* or *misterioso*, and Dante, the poet, and Beatrice would have known that Virgil, the poet, had the mastery or the talents or the tools of the trade to achieve Dante's survival. A literal translation of the line would be something like this: "and with that which it (the *parola ornate*) has, the trades for his (Dante's) being saved from danger". The second imperative of the tercet is *aiuta*, a word that sounds like a cry of anguish, and the motive for this appeal is that Beatrice may also be consoled. Dante's words in Beatrice's mouth show how much Beatrice is affected by Dante's plight.

The last tercet in this excerpt identifies Beatrice.[5] It is a characteristic of the *Commedia* that its characters tend to delay or withhold their identities for some time; sometimes they do not identify themselves at all. This tercet is an unusual one in comparison with other tercets in the Commedia: normally a tercet consists of one complete sentence, but here the tercet is divided into three short sentences with long caesuras after *Beatrice* and *mosse*. After the identification, Beatrice repeats the appeal or command to Virgil and states that she wants to return to heaven; then comes one of the famous lines of the poem, *amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare* ("love me moves, which me makes speak"). The repetition of the verb *muovere* (the first being *movi* in line 67) suggests that Virgil is to be moved by the

[5] The early translator, Henry Francis Cary, in a note to his translation, writes that the word Beatrice is pronounced in Italian as "four-syllables, of which the third is a long one." (Henry Cary's Note on line 70: http://www.danteinferno.info/translations/canto2.html.)

same love, but the enormity of the loving movement from heaven to hell should not be lost; this is not just a movement of feeling, though it certainly is that; it is a movement from one sphere to another (a translation, in effect) in order to show compassion and love (in all its senses) to Dante. The alliteration of the m- sound in the line and the repetition of *mi* before the verb emphasize her personal relationship with Dante (as did the *mio* in line 61), and the word *fa* shows the absolute compulsion of this love.

This analysis is intended to demonstrate the kind of *tzeruf*-like meditation on words and letters that the poet-translator needs to experience before the poem can be translated.

The translation by Steve Ellis (2007: 9) is placed alongside the original:

'. . . Io era tra color che son sospesi,	*52*	' . . . There I was, suspended in Limbo:
e donna mi chiamò beata e bella,		a blessed, lovely lady calls me,
tal che di comandare io la richiesi.		one whose orders I begged for.
Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella;	*55*	Her eyes outshone all the stars
e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,		and her soft and serious voice
con angelica voce, in sua favella:		was like listening to an angel's:
"O anima cortese mantovana,	*58*	"O noble-hearted Mantuan soul
di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,		whose fame still fills the world
e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,		and will last just as long,
l'amico mio, e non della ventura,	*61*	that friend to me, not fortune,
nella diserta piaggia è impedito		he's held up on the empty slope
sì nel cammin, che vòlt' è per paura;		and turns back round in fear;
e temo che non sia già sì smarrito,	*64*	I worry he's already so astray
ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,		that I come to his aid too late,
per quel ch'i' ho di lui nel cielo udito.		from what I hear up in heaven.
Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata	*67*	But go, and with your poet's speech
e con ciò c' ha mestieri al suo campare,		and whatever he needs to escape,
l'aiuta sì ch' i' ne sia consolata.		help him, so I can be at ease.
I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare;	*70*	Beatrice I am, who sends you;
vegno del loco ove tornar disio;		love makes me speak, sending me
amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare. . . ."'		from where I burn to be back. . . ."'

Ellis's translation achieves the "colloquial . . . diction, grammatical construction and speech rhythms" (2007: xiii) he intended, but he has lost much in translation. He unnecessarily adds "in Limbo" in the first line of the extract and misses Dante's intended suspense in explaining *sospesi* later in Canto III. Ellis makes little attempt to keep the Italian word order, the sound, or the repetition of the original: in the words "a blessed, lovely lady calls me, / one whose orders I

begged for" and "whose fame still fills the world / and will last just as long", he attempts a different kind of alliteration, but he loses the implications of *richiesi* and misses the repetition of *nel mondo* (line 59) and *'l mondo* (line 60). He misses the force of a word like *mestieri*, and he translates *cortese* as "noble-hearted" and *amico* as "friend". He ignores the repetition in *movi* … *mosse* and does not attempt anything like Dante's *aiuta* . . . *consolata.* He changes Dante's line sequence in the last two lines and does not give the last line its proper emphasis.

The next translation to consider is that of Robert Pinsky:

'...Io era tra color che son sospesi,	*52*	"… it was
e donna mi chiamò beata e bella,		A lady's voice that called me where I dwelled
tal che di comandare io la richiesi.		In Limbo – a lady so blessed and fairly featured
Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella;	*55*	I prayed her to command me. Her eyes out-jeweled
e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,		The stars in splendor. 'O generous Mantuan spirit,'
con angelica voce, in sua favella:		She began in a soft voice of angelic sound,
"O anima cortese mantovana,	*58*	'Whose fame lives still, that the world will still inherit
di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,		
e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,		
l'amico mio, e non della ventura,	*61*	As long as the world itself shall live: my friend –
nella diserta piaggia è impedito		No friend of fortune – has found his way impeded
sì nel cammin, che vòlt' è per paura;		On the barren slope, and fear has turned him round.
e temo che non sia già sì smarrito,	*64*	
ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,		
per quel ch'i' ho di lui nel cielo udito.		I fear he may be already lost, unaided:
Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata	*67*	So far astray, I've come from Heaven too late.
e con ciò c' ha mestieri al suo campare,		Go now, with your fair speech and what is needed
l'aiuta sì ch' i' ne sia consolata.		To save him; offer the help you have to give
I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare;	*70*	Before he is lost, and I will be consoled.
vegno del loco ove tornar disio;		I am Beatrice, come from where I crave
amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare. ..."'		To be again, who ask this. As love willed,
		So have I spoken. …'" (1995: 17.)

Pinsky does not keep to the same stanza or line order, and his translation alongside the original demonstrates this. This translation raises the question of whether it is the translator's task to keep strictly to the stanza and line format of the original. Pinsky has opted for what Timothy McDermott calls a concise translation; it is true that sometimes a concise translation can meet the needs of the target audience, but a poet-translator should perhaps attempt to achieve the

synonymity about which George Steiner wrote. Pinsky attempts something similar to rhyme, ending the first and third lines of each tercet with repetition of consonant sounds: “dwelled . . . jeweled”, “spirit . . . inherit”, “friend . . . round”, “unaided . . . needed”, and “give . . . crave”; but this is far short of Dante’s *terza rima*. He changes the terse structure of the *terza rima* into a much freer three-line stanza that does not correspond with the original. He too thinks it necessary to add “In Limbo”, translates *amico* as “friend”, and attempts his own kind of alliteration and repetition that does not, however, match the original. There is nothing like the force of Dante’s *richiesi* . . . *mestieri* . . . *aiuta* . . . *consolata* . . . *movi* . . . *mosse* in his translation of these words. His line, “So far astray, I’ve come from Heaven too late”, could be read as meaning Beatrice was “So far astray”. His translation of the last three lines of the original excerpt, “As love willed, / So have I spoken” misses the original in almost every way: by changing *amor mi mosse* from the main clause to a subordinate clause, he lessens the force of the clause; by translating *mosse* as “willed”, he misses the repetition from line 67; and there is no appreciation of the link between lines 70 and 72 of the original.

Ciaran Carson’s translation (2004: 10–11) is on the next page. Carson places “I am one of those who dwell in Limbo” in an earlier stanza; he avoids the important word *sospesi* altogether and includes “in Limbo”, which is not in the original. Similarly, he omits *beata e bella* and substitutes “so smitten was I by her sweetness”, in which he tries to substitute the s- alliteration for Dante’s repeated b- sounds, but he has changed the word order and the line sequence of the original so that the translation can hardly be read alongside the original. In the remaining stanzas of this excerpt he uses a rhyme scheme in the first and third line of each stanza, but at great cost to conformity with the original. He avoids the important word *cortese* and the words *e non de la ventura* and includes rather old-fashioned words like “yonder” and “yore”. Probably the greatest inconsistency is his inclusion of the words “I the hand, you the glove”.

		". . . I am one of those who dwell in Limbo.
'. . . Io era tra color che son sospesi, *e donna mi chiamò beata e bella,* *tal che di comandare io la richiesi.*	*52*	In that place I heard a lady's voice call out to me. I asked how I might serve her cause, so smitten was I by her sweetness.
Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella; *e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,* *con angelica voce, in sua favella:*	*55*	Her eyes shone like the dewy star of eve; in dulcet tones, or some angelic tongue, she then embarked on this recitative:
"O anima cortese mantovana, *di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,* *e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,*	*58*	"O man of Mantua! – whose name is long remembered in the world, for all the art with which you spun your epic song –
l'amico mio, e non della ventura, *nella diserta piaggia è impedito* *sì nel cammin, che vòlt' è per paura;*	*61*	my friend has been restricted in a part of yonder gloomy Godforsaken wasteland; terror-stricken, he, with weakening heart,
e temo che non sia già sì smarrito, *ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,* *per quel ch'i' ho di lui nel cielo udito.*	*64*	has gone so far astray, I fear my errand might have come too late for his relief; from what I've heard of him above in Heaven.
Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata *e con ciò c' ha mestieri al suo campare,* *l'aiuta sì ch' i' ne sia consolata.*	*67*	Go to him. I charge you with this brief, to weave the magic verbal spells you wove of yore, so that he might not come to grief.
I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare; *vegno del loco ove tornar disio;* *amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare. . . ."'*	*70*	I am Beatrice: I the hand, you the glove: where I am from, I wish to be once more; as love moved me, I speak because of love. . .."

The last of the translations of this excerpt to be discussed is by Anthony Esolen and is on the next page. Esolen keeps to the three-line stanza well, even if he does not keep to the line-equivalence. He translates *sospesi* as "in Limbo" and places a note at the foot of the page: "*Limbo*: Literally, 'among the suspended souls.' Limbo, deriving from Latin *limbus*, 'edge,' is a state suspended between salvation and damnation. Dante describes it in Canto Four." (2005: 17.) The crux of the matter is, however, that Dante does not use the word Limbo in Canto Two: he uses *sospesi*, and it is this word that needs to be translated. The translated line 52 ends with the rather ineffectual word "when" – the same applies to the end of line 62 "up" – and the next line starts with "so lovely and blest a lady", on which there is another footnote (2005: 17) : "Dante puns on her name, which means 'the blessed woman.' I have brought out the same pun in line 67 below."

'. . . Io era tra color che son sospesi, *e donna mi chiamò beata e bella,* *tal che di comandare io la richiesi.*	*52*	I was among the souls in Limbo when so lovely and blest a lady called to me I asked her for the grace of a command.
Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella; *e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,* *con angelica voce, in sua favella:*	*55*	Her eyes were flashing brighter than the stars, and she addressed me with an angel's voice, sweetly and softly, in such words as these:
"O anima cortese mantovana, *di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,* *e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,*	*58*	'O kind and gracious soul of Mantua, whom the world still renowns and ever shall, whose fame will last as long as earth endures,
l'amico mio, e non della ventura, *nella diserta piaggia è impedito* *sì nel cammin, che vòlt' è per paura;*	*61*	The friend I love – and not a fortune-friend – has been so checked along his journey up the desert slope, he has turned back for dread,
e temo che non sia già sì smarrito, *ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,* *per quel ch'i' ho di lui nel cielo udito.*	*64*	And from what I have heard of him in Heaven I fear he may have wandered so far wrong, my rising for his help may come too late.
Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata *e con ciò c' ha mestieri al suo campare,* *l'aiuta sì ch' i' ne sia consolata.*	*67*	Go then, and with the beauty of your words, and any skill you have to set him free, help him, that I may be consoled. I am
I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare; *vegno del loco ove tornar disio;* *amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare. ..."'*	*70*	The blessed Beatrice who bid you go; love makes me speak, and bade me hasten from the place that stirs my longing to return. …'

The alliteration of *beata e bella* is not retained in the translation, but Esolen, in line 57, tries to compensate with "sweetly and softly in such words as these". In line 59 of the translation he has an unusual grammatical form for the word "renowns" as a verb, but its meaning is clear and appropriate. He misses the repetition in the orginal of *mondo* by translating the first as "world" and the second as "earth", and he substitutes the repeated "go" in lines 67 and 70 for the repeated *movi* . . . *mosse*. The repetition of "go" does not give *mosse* the emphasis of the original, and "love makes me speak" in line 70 loses the most important part of the meaning of Dante's *amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare*.

Again, in comparison with the critical analysis of the original, it is clear that the translators have not recreated the original as successfully as one would have hoped they would. Is it that a critic is more creative than a translator? Or is it just that the poet-translators quoted have not been good enough at their work?

Burnshaw's claim[6] may be relevant: perhaps the impossible is being expected from "verse translators"?

What do these brief analyses of the translations show? Although each reads well in modern English, none has caught the nuances mentioned in the analysis of the original. Perhaps this is because the poet-translators have more in mind their present-day readers than they have the original poem: they do not accept Schleiermacher's maxim of alterity[7] and find it is too difficult to achieve what Ezra Pound calls *melopoeia*, the music of the original[8]. They have not allowed their own language "to be powerfully affected by the foreign language of the original" and have insisted on keeping their own language in the state in which they found it, as Pannwitz wrote.[9] Coleridge's "secondary imagination" is what poet-translators need most of all rather than "fancy".[10]

It may be considered that this continual referring back to the original is not desirable. If, however, there is merit in trying to achieve the *melopoeia* and the alterity of the original, if the translation is to be powerfully affected by the foreign language of the original, if translation is to be seen as an *exitus-reditus* process, then the original is an important part of the creative translation and should be placed alongside the translation so that continual backwards and forwards reference may be possible. Is this not the way a translator works? And should not the reader be encouraged to be part of this process? If the translation of poetry is read merely on its own without close relationship with the original, then the cross-cultural benefits of translation will be lessened, and the reader will not have the full benefits of having the force of the original returned to him or her.

In the translation that follows I have attempted to bear in mind the *terza rima*, the word order, the sentence and stanza construction of the original, and the allusiveness of Dante's language. I have tried to apply the *tzeruf*-like task in

[6] See pages 5–6 of Chapter One on "Burnshaw's claim".
[7] See pages 7–9 of Chapter One on Schleiermacher.
[8] See page 29 of Chapter One on *melopoeia*.
[9] See page 9 of Chapter One on Pannwitz.
[10] See pages 16–17 on Coleridge's concepts of "imagination" and "fancy".

analysing the original – the meditation on word- and letter-mutation – to the translator's task.

'. . . Io era tra color che son sospesi, *e donna mi chiamò beata e bella,* *tal che di comandare io la richiesi.*	*52*	". . . I was trapped caught along with those suspended, and a donna called to me, blessed and beautiful, so that I, set free to request her command, responded.
Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella; *e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,* *con angelica voce, in sua favella:*	*55*	Lucid shone her eyes more brightly than the star that fell; and she commenced her speech to me so soft and gentle, with her angelical voice, something like favour's bell:
"O anima cortese mantovana, *di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,* *e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,*	*58*	'O animate soul courteous Mantovanan still for whom fame in the world still endures perpetual and will endure as long as the distant world will,
l'amico mio, e non della ventura, *nella diserta piaggia è impedito* *sì nel cammin, che vòlt' è per paura;*	*61*	that friend so dear to me, but not to fortune's will, on the deserted calamitous slope is impeded and cannot walk, revolted by fear of ill;
e temo che non sia già sì smarrito, *ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,* *per quel ch'i' ho di lui nel cielo udito.*	*64*	and I fear even more he's marooned and bewildered and I'm too late to succeed in removing his trouble, from what I've heard in heaven about him and what's needed.
Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata *e con ciò c' ha mestieri al suo campare,* *l'aiuta sì ch' i' ne sia consolata.*	*67*	Now move on, and with your speech so elegant and subtle and with all the mastery you possess for this campaign, O please aid him so that I may be consolable.
I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare; *vegno del loco ove tornar disio;* *amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare. . . ."'*	*70*	I am Beatrice who bids you go again; I come from a place to which I desire to return; love moved me, which bids me speak to you my name. . . .'"

ii

Beatrice in *Purgatorio*

There are, of course, many more references to Beatrice in *Purgatorio* than in *Inferno*. Detailed attention will be given to one passage from *Purgatorio* and to translations, with short comments on other relevant passages. The excerpt is from Canto 30, lines 22–75:

Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno *22*
la parte oriental tutta rosata
e l'altro ciel di bel sereno addorno,
e la faccia del sol nascere ombrata, *25*
sì che per temperanza di vapori
l'occhio la sostenea lunga fiata:
cosi, dentro una nuvola di fiori *28*
che da le mani angeliche saliva
e ricadeva in giù dentro e di fòri,
sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva *31*
donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto
vestita di color di fiamma viva.

E lo spirito mio, che già cotanto 34
tempo era stato ch'a la sua presenza
non era di stupor tremando affranto,
sanza de li occhi aver più conoscenza, 37
per occulta virtù che da lei mosse
d'antico amor sentì la gran potenza.
Tosto che ne la vista mi percosse 40
l'alta virtù che già m'avea trafitto
prima ch'io fuor di puerizia fosse,
volsimi a la sinistra col respitto 43
col quale il fantolin corre a la mamma
quando ha paura o quando elli è afflitto,
per dicere a Virgilio: 'Men che dramma 46
di sangue m'è rimaso che non tremi:
conosco i segni de l'antica fiamma!'
Ma Virgilio n'avea lasciati scemi 49
di se – Virgilio, dolcissimo patre,
Virgilio, a cui per mia salute die'mi –,
né quantunque perdeo l'antica matre 52
valse a le guance nette di rugiada
che, lagrimando, non tornasser atre.
'Dante, perché Virgilio se ne vada, 55
non pianger anco, non piangere ancora,
ché pianger ti conven per altra spada.'
Quasi ammiraglio che in poppa e in prora 58
viene a veder la gente che ministra
per li altri legni, e a ben far l'incora:
in su la sponda del carro sinistra, 61
quando mi volsi al suon del nome mio,
che di necessità qui si registra,
vidi la donna che pria m'appario 64
velata sotto l'angelica festa
drizzar li occhi ver' me di qua dal rio,
tutto che 'l vel che le scendea di testa, 67
cerchiato de le fronde di Minerva,
non la lasciasse parer manifesta.
Regalmente ne l'atto ancor proterva, 70
continuò come colui che dice
e 'l più caldo parlar dietro reserva:
'Guardaci ben! Ben son, ben son Beatrice. 73
Come degnasti d'accedere al monte?
non sapei tu che qui è l'uom felice?'

At the beginning of the Canto there are two quotations: the first is *'Veni, sponsa, de Libano!'* (Canto 30, line 11 'Come, bride, from Lebanon'), which is a Latin quotation from the Vulgate of the Biblical *Song of Songs*; and the second is

'Manibus, oh *date lilia plenis!'* (Canto 30, line 21 'Oh, give lilies with full hands'), which is a quotation (with the inclusion of the word "oh" probably for Dante's metre) from Virgil's *Aeneid* 6: 883. The first quotation from *The Song of Songs*, a love poem that, "by Dante's time, had come to be read allegorically as an account of the loving relationship between God and His creation"[11], serves both the purposes of a call to the loved one to appear and of the allegorical meaning. Beatrice is Dante's loved one, the spouse, and the representative of the Church loved by God. The second quotation is not only a tribute to Virgil, who is about to leave Dante, but also, in the *Aeneid*, a tribute to the young Marcellus who had died before his prime, just as Beatrice had done. It also prepares the way for the extravagant display of flowers from which Beatrice emerges in Canto 30. Just as in the passage from *Inferno*, where Virgil explains how Beatrice prompted him to come to be Dante's guide, so here the departure of Virgil and the appearance of Beatrice are poignantly linked.

Lines 22–27 recall in Dante's words his appreciation of the dawn and is meant to be directly compared with the appearance of Beatrice in lines 28–33. It is not clear whether the word *già* is to be translated as "once" or "already" or "indeed"; it could be a reminiscence of a very recent experience of Dante's or of an experience from his distant past; the past, the present, and the future are caught up as in *i beati al novissimo bando* (line 23); this experience is one that is spectacular in its being out of time and space as one usually regards time and space. The colours of *tutta rosata* (line 23) and *bel sereno* (line 24) are complemented by the *ombrata* (line 25) that allows the eyes to appreciate the epiphany. In the same way (this is the intention of the colon at the end of line 27 and the *cosi* at the beginning of the next line), the *nuvola di fiori* (line 28 – the "cloud of flowers") and the *vel* (line 31 – "veil") allow Dante to appreciate the appearance of Beatrice in all her glory. The two verbs *saliva* (line 29) and *ricadeva* (line 30), with their different movements of rising and falling, suggest that the angelic hands are serving the same sustaining function of protecting Dante from the shock of Beatrice's

[11] Robin Kirkpatrick (2007a: 485).

appearance. These two verbs, which are given prominence by their same grammatical form, the repeated *–va* sound at the end of each word, and their close proximity to each other, also prepare the way for Dante's rising and falling as he experiences the vision: he rises in awe, but he falls into the holes (*fòri* – line 30) of fear and trembling. The repeated word *dentro* (in lines 28 and 30) is surely intended by Dante to have special significance, a significance that is stressed by the words *in giù dentro e di fòri* (line 13 – "down below inside and out of holes"): the experience that Dante will have is one that will take him inside the depths of consciousness as well as raising him to the heights of vision.

With such preparation the reader comes to the actual appearance:

> *Sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva*
> *donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto*
> *vestita di color di flamma viva.*

Again colour is stressed: pure white, olive, green, and the colour of living flame; the word *Sovra* is an important word: it means "super" or "excessively" and links with a word used later in line 70 *Regalmente* ("Royal"); an associated word is *sovrana* meaning "a female ruler", but here, in referring to the colour white, it probably means something like "dazzling". To begin with, Beatrice's clothing is stressed, not her physical features, but they are enough to throw Dante into a state of awe.

Dante reminds the reader of his past state of *stupor tremando affranto* (line 36) in her presence, and even though he has not yet recognised her with the knowledge of eyesight, the power of her *occulta virtù che da lei mosse* (line 38 – "hidden virtue/strength/power that moved from her") causes him to feel the great power or force of his old love (*d'antico amor sentì la gran potenza* - line 39). Kirkpatrick writes about these lines: "The rhythms become agitated – under the repeated alliterations of 't' – and the emphasis falls upon the terrifying and apparently destructive impact of love" (2007a: 487). The tercet (lines 34–36) contains many long 'o' sounds: *lo spirito mio . . . cotanto . . . tempo . . . stato . . . tremando affranto*; they suggest that Dante is emotionally distraught and remind us of his inclusion of the exclamation "oh" in his earlier quotation from Virgil. The

alliteration of ‘s-’ and ‘t-’ sounds emphasize this agitation in his state of *stupor tremando affranto*, and yet the words *la sua presenza* suggest by their sound a peculiar peace. The first line of the next tercet (line 37) with its two words of similar sound to *presenza – sanza* and *conoscenza* – suggest that peace can come without (*sanza*) knowledge (*conoscenza*) of sight (*occhi*). The word *occhi* is used three times in the selected passage (in lines 27, 37, and 66): here in line 37 the reader is reminded of the earlier use of the word in line 27: Dante states that eyes need the *ombrata* (line 25) - or *occulta* (line 38) - to sustain (*sostenea* – line 27) the vision of splendour, whether it be the brightness of the sun or of Beatrice’s presence. The similar sounds of *occhi* and *occulta* help to enforce this interpretation. The word at the end of line 38, *mosse*, reminds the reader of Beatrice’s words to Virgil recounted to Dante when they first met, *amor mi mosse* (*Inferno*, Canto 2, line 72), especially since the word is followed soon by *amor* in line 39 of this excerpt from *Purgatorio*. And the tercet ends with the words *la gran potenza*, in which the rhyme with *presenza* and *conoscenza* again suggests the presence of Beatrice: even though she is not yet recognised or known by Dante and even though the impact of love may be “terrifying” and “destructive”, it has great power over him.

This power returns him to his boyhood state as he combines the present and the past in the next three tercets (lines 40–48). The present flash of recognition, *Tosto che ne la vista mi percosse* (“As soon as the sight of her struck me”), is again linked to his childhood experience of her, *l’alta virtù che gia m’avea traffito* (“that sublime power that had once wounded me”) *prima ch’io fuor di puerizia fosse* (“before I was past childhood”). (The word *alta* to describe *virtù* can also mean high and can be linked with the word *saliva* (line 29): Dante experiences the heights and the depths that are mentioned in lines 29 and 30.) Dante matches the childish experience with simplicity of language that does not have the complexity of the previous lines, but the slightly longer lines (42, 44, and 45) with more syllables suggest his agitation. Like a child (*il fantolin*) who runs (*corre)* to his parent (*mamma*, which is the colloquial, childish word for the more formal *madre*) because he is full of fear (*paura*) or when he has been afflicted or

distressed (*afflitto*), he turned (*volsimi)* and ran for comfort with the respect due to a parent or an adult whom he respects (Virgil). He wanted to confide his feelings to Virgil; he wanted to say to him:

> *Men che dramma*
> *di sangue m'è rimaso che non tremi:*
> *conosco i signi de l'antica fiamma!*
> (Less than a gram
> of my blood is left that does not tremble:
> I know the signs of the old flame!)

These words contain the feelings of deprivation *(rimaso*), the previous trembling *tremando* (line 36) in the repeated *tremi*, the previous *conoscenza* (line 37) in *conosco*, the previous *antico* (line 39) in *antica*, and the previous *fiamma* (line 33), which is repeated here. But the most poignant part is the last line of the tercet, which is a translation of one of Virgil's own lines, *agnosco veteris vestigia flammae* (*Aeneid* IV: 23), in which Dido recognizes in her feelings for Aeneas the old love she had for her late husband Sychaeus. The inclusion of this translation is not only a poignant tribute to Virgil, but it is also a heightening of the original experience that Dido had, because Dante's recognition of the old flame is not the love of a new person (as in Dido's case) but of the same person, Beatrice. (It is also rather ironic that Dante, who expressed a low regard for translation, here uses an exact translation to great effect.) It is not only the translated words from Virgil's *Aeneid* that are relevant but also the previous line from the *Aeneid* and the whole of the line, part of which Dante has translated:

> s*olus hic inflexit sensus, animumque labantem*
> *impulit: agnosco veteris vestigia flammae.* (*Aeneid* IV: 22–23)
> (only this man (Aeneas) has moved (my) thoughts/feelings/
> senses/judgment, and struck/incited/overthrown/shaken (my)
> tottering/unsteady/hesitating/collapsing
> mind/consciousness/heart/passion/purpose/resolution:
> I recognise/understand the signs of the old/former flame.)

Virgil's words *inflixit sensus, animumque labantem/ impulit* must surely have influenced Dante in his earlier description of his feelings for Beatrice and in his choice of the words, *stupor tremando affranto . . . mosse . . . percosse . . . traffito . . . afflitto . . . tremi*. Another possible influence on Dante is Virgil's use of shortened lines in which the quantity of syllables changes when he expresses

deep emotion: for Dante also varies the quantity of syllables in a line from time to time in this selected excerpt in order to heighten the emotional impact.

The poignancy of the fact that the words addressed to Virgil were intended to be said but were not actually said continues in the next tercet when Dante realizes that Virgil is not there:

> *Ma Virgilio n'avea lasciati scemi*
> *di se – Virgilio, dolcissimo patre,*
> *Virgilio, a cui per mia salute die'mi - . . .*
> (But Virgil had left us diminished/lacking
> alone – Virgil, dearest/sweetest/most gentle/most amiable father,
> Virgil, to whom for my safety I gave myself. . .)

W. S. Merwin in his note on these lines states:

> The farewell to Virgil and his disappearnce is a moment of great symbolic and personal significance. . .. Virgil is named five times, first once, then three times in one tercet, then again once. The echo, several commentators have pointed out, recalls in turn lines of Virgil's in *Georgic* IV, 525–527, where Orpheus' voice, calling the lost Eurydice, is echoed down the stream. (2001: 356.)

It is difficult to attain the effect of the repeated name *Virgilio* in an English translation: the repeated *–io* in the Italian is like a cry of anguish. The repeated –sh sounds in *lasciati scemi* and the soft 'c' sound in *dolcissimo*, along with the soft 'g' sound and the repeated 'm' sounds, suggest a subdued whisper of regret. This is one of the great elegies of poetry showing distress and respect towards the departed father figure to whom Dante has given himself in absolute trust. The shorter middle line of the tercet with its opening words *di se* (followed by a pause where the dash appears in the Italian version that Kirkpatrick uses[12]) emphasizes again the deprivation and is followed by an unusually long line of sixteen syllables that suggests an outpouring of emotion. (The reader should, however, give heed to Patrick Boyle's statement (1980: 211): ". . . in Dante's verse dipthongs, and a final vowel together with a following initial vowel, regularly (apart from a few constant exceptions) count as a single syllable"; whether the

[12] Kirkpatrick writes: "The text reproduced in the present volume (with, on a few occasions, silent emendation) is that established by Giorgio Petrocchi in *La commedia secondo l'antica vulgata* (Milan, 1966 –7)." (Kirkpatrick (2007a: lxiv).)

dipthongs in this line are elided or not, the line is to be read with a quickness that suggests emotion.)

After the long pause at the end of the tercet, the following tercet emphasizes again Dante's deprivation but in different terms. The double negative in *né* and *non* links with the *n'* of the previous tercet, and the further repetition of *antica* with reference to Eve, who had also lost (*perdeo*), suggests the depth of his own loss: nothing at all could stop him from weeping *(lagrimando*). (Kirkpatrick interprets this tercet in this way: "His tragic sympathy for another human being is teetering on the edge of a second Fall" (2007a: 488).) The word *atre* at the end of the tercet is an interesting word, more Latin than Italian, and referring to the depth of his despair, despite the earlier experience of his pleasure at the dew of dawn. This tercet is like a dark pause before the blinding revelation of Beatrice's first words to Dante.

Her words are hardly the words that the reader expects from Dante's loved one; they are not obviously loving words, more like "scolding" or a "rebuke", as Harriet Rubin calls them (2004: 198), and they remind us of the *Shekhinah,* who, "When provoked, . . . is fierce" – Epstein (2001: 47):

> *'Dante, perché Virgilio se ne vada,*
> *non pianger anco, non piangere ancora,*
> *ché pianger ti conven per altra spada.'*

Dante is called to recognize both himself and the speaker by Beatrice's use of his name. Much has been said about this being the only time Dante's name is used in the poem, and Dante makes an apologetic comment on this use in line 63. But Beatrice's use of his name is as much a call for Dante to know who she is who is using it. Virgil's name is again used – the last time in the poem – and the first line ends with the verb *se ne vada* (a form of the verb *andarsene*, which means to "go away" or "take one's leave"). Again, as seen in the Virgil-Beatrice passage from *Inferno*, this word *vada* starts six successive lines ending with the "–a" rhyme. The verb *non pianger* or *piangere* is used three times in the next two lines, while the word *anco* or *ancora* is used twice in the one line. Whereas at first it may seem as if Beatrice is sympathizing with Dante in telling him not to weep, the

word *ancora* (yet) has an ominous meaning that is revealed in the last line of her first speech – a different sword (*altra spada*) must make him weep (*pianger ti conven*). This is not the conventional speech of a loved one meeting a past love after a long time, but Beatrice is not just a past loved one, she is now also "the willing and necessary mirror of divine intentions, who through her very existence makes the light of God available to Dante's eyes" – Kirkpatrick (2007b: xiv) – or, as Lewis writes, "The Beatrice who confronts Dante is the personification of Divine Wisdom, that transcendant understanding that can illuminate the human mind and lead it to God" (2001: 156). Whether Beatrice is "the willing and necessary mirror of divine intentions", "the personification of Divine Wisdom", or the Shekhinah, she must now take over the role that Virgil had of guiding him on his way to paradise. To do that she must first prepare him for that journey, and part of the preparation involves Dante in repentance.

The next tercet is one of Dante's similes – there are 400 similes in the *Commedia*, according to Valerio Lucchesi, who considers them to be, "as they deserve to be, a source of perpetual fascination and the recurrent object of critical attention" (1980: 190). The simile starts with the word *Quasi* ("as if" or "approximating"); this is an unusual conjunction or adverb in Dante's *Commedia*: it is used here and again in *Paradiso* in Canto 7 line 8 and Canto 19 line 34. For this and other reasons the simile deserves special attention: the comparison is of Dante (or is it Beatrice?) with an *ammiraglio* ("admiral") who goes *in poppa e in prora* to see the men who serve on the other ships to encourage them. Perhaps Dante has deliberately allowed the ambiguity about whether the comparison is with himself or Beatrice.

Surely this comparison is meant to remind the reader, as Dante does quite often in the *Commedia*, of Ulysses? The passage in *Inferno* Canto 26 lines 55–142 uses many words that have been repeated or remind the reader of words and ideas used in *Purgatorio* Canto 30: in *Inferno* Canto 26 line 85 the words *fiamma antica* are used, while in *Purgatorio* Canto 30 line 48 *antica fiamma* are used; Ulysses has experienced loss *(perduto* – Canto 26 line 84) and desertion (*diserto* – Canto 26

line 102); Ulysses encourages his men in the *Inferno* passage to seek virtue and knowledge (*virtute e canoscenza*), both of which words are used in the *Purgatorio* passage; the mountain, which is the Mountain of Purgatory, which Dante has ascended, *apparve* (Canto 26, line 133); the word *piangevisi* is used in *Inferno*, Canto 26 line 61, and later Ulysses' joy turns to tears, as Dante's does; the word *percosse* is used in both passages, as are *segno, lasciata, rimanente, volte, alta, tornò, legno, poppa, prora, altrui,* and *sovra*.

The main word in the comparison is *ammiraglio* ("admiral"), which, both in Italian and English, is closely associated with admiration: who is the most admirable of all seamen? Surely Ulysses. What would be the purpose in Dante's possible comparison between himself and Ulysses in this comparison? Perhaps it is to suggest that he, like Ulysses, is close to extinction in this experience of his, which has many similarities to Ulysses'. The tercet is full of dipthongs, which again suggest quickness of speech, and elisions, which are appropriate for the emotions expressed.

If, however, the comparison refers to Beatrice as the *ammiraglio*, the association with admiration is particularly suitable: she is the admirable person who, with her authority and concern, tries to help Dante and other sailors on their difficult journey.

After this significant simile, there is a long sentence that occupies three tercets. The first tells us that Dante turned (*volsi*) to the sound of his name, with an aside to apologize for his name being mentioned. It is like a lull before the flash of lightning when he sees Beatrice for the first time for a long time. The second and third tercets of the sentence describe his vision of Beatrice:

> v*idi la donna che pria m'appario*
> *velata sotto l'angelicha festa*
> *drizzar li occhi ver' me di qua dal rio,*
> *tutto che 'l vel che le scendea di testa,*
> *cerchiato de la fronde di Minerva,*
> *non la lasciasse parer manifesta.*

Although the *donna* appeared to him (*m'apparve*) in line 32, it is only now in line 64 that Dante saw (*vidi*) her; the words *che pria m'appario* ("who appeared to me before") *velata sotto l'angelica festa* ("veiled beneath the angelic festivity"), which was first described in lines 28–33), emphasize this delay. She is, however, not yet seen *manifesta* ("clearly" – line 69): although she has directed her eyes at him (*drizzar li occhi ver' me*[13]), she is across the river (*di qua dal rio*) from Dante and she is still veiled and encircled by Minerva's leaves (*cerchiato de la fronde di Minerva*). Dante not only reminds the reader that Beatrice is, like Minerva, an embodiment of Divine Wisdom, but he also refers to line 31 (in which the words *cinta d'uliva* appeared) because Minerva's traditional colour is olive. The word *lasciasse* has been used before in line 49 (and, as mentioned before, in the passage about Ulysses). It is as if Dante deliberately takes the reader back in these lines to lines 28–33 to try to slow down the impact of Beatrice on him and on the reader to create suspense for what is still to come, not only in this Canto but also in the later cantos when she appears. This deceleration technique is one of Dante's techniques in the *Commedia*.

Although Beatrice is not seen *manifesta*, Dante comments on her appearance and attitude:

> *Regalmente ne l'atto ancor proterva,*
> *continuo come colui che dice*
> *e 'l più caldo parlar dietro reserve . . .*

Dante has already used the word *sovra* in line 31 when describing Beatrice; this word has the suggestion of "sovereign"; now he refers to her as *Regalmente* ('regally"): the last two syllables (*-mente*) is the suffix to form the adverb, but it has the same force as the English "minded" as in the English word "like-minded" or "liberal-minded"; perhaps a good translation of the Italian word is "regal-minded" since it retains the syllable length of the original and since the line does tell the reader how Beatrice appears to think of herself. Dante describes her

[13] The word *drizzar* has a nautical connotation meaning "to hoist". Could it perhaps be that Beatrice is the *ammiraglio* – a better one than Ulysses? Lines 58–60 lead on to lines 61–69 by means of the colon, and there are two subjects of the verbs in the lines following – Dante and Beatrice. It is, after all, Beatrice's role *a ben far l'ancora* – to encourage the sailors in the ship of the Church.

attitude (*atto*) as *ancor proterva* ("still arrogant" or "still stubborn"); most translators cannot bring themselves to be so critical of Beatrice as to call her arrogant or stubborn, but the Latin word from which it derives, *proterva*, which means "forward" or "insolent" or "violent", probably derives from the verb *proterivi* ("I have trampled down/crushed/overthrown"); perhaps the best English word to maintain the sound and syllable length would be "perturbing" since it also has the advantage of reflecting Dante's response to Beatrice's attitude. The next line with its hard "c-" sounds suggests the cutting, hardness of Beatrice's speech that follows and links with the word *caldo*, which is the key word in the final line of the tercet. To try to preserve something of the sound of *caldo*, perhaps the word "scalding" is appropriate. My translation of these lines attempts to retain the sound and syllable length, although it does not achieve the rhyme:

> Regal-minded, her attitude still perturbing,
> she continued like a person who intends to speak
> and to hold back the more scalding words in reserve . . .

Such a translation is consistent with the tercet that follows, giving Beatrice's words. The opening word *Guardaci* is an imperative with the addition of *–ci* meaning "there" and means "look here" or "mind". The word *ben* is used three times in the line; it can mean "well" or "indeed"; although "well" may suit the first use, it does not suit the next two, while "indeed" does not sound like the word *ben* at all. The word *son* is used twice in the line, and the last word *Beatrice* sounds very different in Italian from the way it is used in English. This is a very difficult line to translate in a way that maintains the force of the Italian. The two questions that end the tercet are almost contemptuous in their tone. The words *Come degnatti* mean "How/Why did you regard yourself as worthy/deserving"; the verb is similar to the English verb "deign" but here used in a sarcastic way. The word *monte* refers to the Mountain of Purgatory, the same mountain Ulysses was trying to get to, at the top of which is the Garden of the Earthly Paradise that Dante is entering. The second question is even more scalding; it mocks Dante's tears. To translate these lines is difficult in the extreme, but an attempt to represent the sense, tone, and sound is the following:

> "You are to see, yes! Yes, I'm, yes, I'm Beatrice, I say.

How dare you have the cheek to ascend this mountain?
Don't you understand that the people here are happy?"

Dante portrays Beatrice as anything but the conventional loved one. There is an understanding on his part that love involves harsh criticism, and more is still to come in *Purgatorio* before he enters Paradise.

The first translation to be studied in the light of this analysis is by Merwin (2001: 293, 295, 297) on the next page. (For purposes of line-by-line comparison, Merwin's line-breaks between tercets have been closed up, but in the analysis they are restored.) There is no doubt that Merwin gives an accurate translation of the original words; he also attempts from time to time something like a rhyme: "rising/falling" (lines 28–9), "by/I" (lines 37–8), "my/I" (lines 40–1), "trembling/burning" (lines 47–8), "parent/prevent" (lines 52–3), "do/you" (lines 55–6), "me/festivity" (lines 64–5), and "bearing/speaking" (lines 70–1); but this is nowhere near Dante's tight rhyme scheme. In lines 28–9 he achieves something like the contrast between *saliva* and *ricadeva* by placing "rising" and "falling" at the end of lines 28–9 respectively, but the original uses the Italian words at the end of line 28 and towards the beginning of line 29 and is more effective. Merwin misses the repetition of *dentro* in lines 28 and 30 and does not translate the significant word *sovra* in line 31.

His translation

And in my spirit, which for so long, by then, 34
had not been left helplessly undone
with awe and trembling in her presence,

without more knowledge from the eyes, but by 37
an unseen force that was coming from her . . .

is awkward English and does not recapture the sound of the original. He rarely attempts to keep close to the original word order and line structure. He misses the repetitions in the original: for instance, he translates *fiamma* as "flame" in his line 33 but as "burning" in his line 48 and he translates *antica* as "old' in line 48 and as "ancient" in line 52.

Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno	22	I saw at the beginning of the day
la parte oriental tutta rosata		it was all the color of roses to the east
e l'altro ciel di bel sereno addorno,		and a clear sky made beautiful the rest,
e la faccia del sol nascere ombrata,	25	and the face of the sun emerged shaded
sì che per temperanza di vapori		so that, through the mists that tempered it
l'occhio la sostenea lunga fiata:		the eye could rest for a long time upon it.
cosi, dentro una nuvola di fiori	28	So, in a cloud of flowers rising
che da le mani angeliche saliva		from the angelic hands and again falling
e ricadeva in giù dentro e di fòri,		into the chariot and around it,
sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva	31	wearing an olive wreath on a white veil,
donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto		a lady appeared to me, in a green mantle,
vestita di color di fiamma viva.		and her garments were the color of living flame.
E lo spirito mio, che già cotanto	34	And in my spirit, which for so long, by then,
tempo era stato ch'a la sua presenza		had not been left helplessly undone
non era di stupor tremando affranto,		with awe and trembling in her presence,
sanza de li occhi aver più conoscenza,	37	without more knowledge from the eyes, but by
per occulta virtù che da lei mosse		an unseen force that was coming from her, I
d'antico amor sentì la gran potenza.		felt the old love in its great power.
Tosto che ne la vista mi percosse	40	And as soon as the high force beat upon my
l'alta virtù che già m'avea trafitto		sight, as it had pierced me before I
prima ch'io fuor di puerizia fosse,		had yet emerged out of my childhood,
volsimi a la sinistra col respitto	43	I turned to the left with the confidence that
col quale il fantolin corre a la mamma		a little child shows, running to its mother
quando ha paura o quando elli è afflitto,		when something has frightened it or troubled it,
per dicere a Virgilio: 'Men che dramma	46	to say to Virgil, "Not even one drop
di sangue m'è rimaso che non tremi:		of blood is left in me that is not trembling;
conosco i segni de l'antica fiamma!'		I recognize the signs of the old burning."
Ma Virgilio n'avea lasciati scemi	49	But Virgil had left us, he was no longer there
di se – Virgilio, dolcissimo patre,		among us, Virgil, most tender father,
Virgilio, a cui per mia salute die'mi -,		Virgil to whom I gave myself to save me,
né quantunque perdeo l'antica matre	52	nor did all that our ancient parent
valse a le guance nette di rugiada		had lost have any power to prevent
che, lagrimando, non tornasser atre.		my dew-washed cheeks from running dark with tears.
'Dante, perché Virgilio se ne vada,	55	"Dante, because Virgil leaves you, do
non pianger anco, non piangere ancora,		not weep yet, do not weep even yet, for you
ché pianger ti conven per altra spada.'		still have another sword that you must weep for."
Quasi ammiraglio che in poppa e in prora	58	Like an admiral going from stern to bow
viene a veder la gente che ministra		to see the men who are in service on
per li altri legni, e a ben far l'incora:		the other ships and to encourage them,
in su la sponda del carro sinistra,	61	so at the left rail of the chariot
quando mi volsi al suon del nome mio,		when I turned at the sound of my name
che di necessità qui si registra,		which of necessity is here noted,
vidi la donna che pria m'appario	64	I saw the lady, who first appeared to me
velata sotto l'angelica festa		veiled beneath the angelic festivity,
drizzar li occhi ver' me di qua dal rio,		turn her eyes upon me, across the river.
tutto che 'l vel che le scendea di testa,	67	Although the veil descending from her head
cerchiato de le fronde di Minerva,		with Minerva's leaves in a wreath around it
non la lasciasse parer manifesta.		did not allow her to be seen distinctly,
Regalmente ne l'atto ancor proterva,	70	royal, and still severe in her bearing,
continuò come colui che dice		she went on, like someone who in speaking
e 'l più caldo parlar dietro reserva:		holds back the hottest words to the end.
'Guardaci ben! Ben son, ben son Beatrice.	73	"Look at me well; for I am, I am certainly
Come degnasti d'accedere al monte?		Beatrice. How did you dare approach the mountain?
non sapei tu che qui è l'uom felice?'		Did you not know that here man is happy?"

In Merwin's translation of the tercet, lines 46–8, he substitutes "burning" for "flame", which is probably to achieve the half-rhyme with "trembling", but he does not achieve the sound of the original in the following tercet (lines 49–51).

Beatrice's words to Dante are probably the most important parts of this episode, and Merwin's translation of the first of these in lines 55–7 changes the word order in the last line and loses the force of Dante's word order *ché pianger ti conven per altra spada*. Beatrice's second speech he translates as

> 'Look at me well; for I am, I am certainly
> Beatrice. How did you dare approach the mountain?
> Did you not know that here man is happy?'

Merwin tries to achieve something similar to Dante's use of *ben* three times in the first line of the original, but, by placing the word "Beatrice" at the beginning of the second line of the tercet, Merwin loses the emphasis of the three separate sentences in three separate lines, an unusual occurrence in the *Commedia*.

Robin Kirkpatrick uses a fairly consistent ten-syllable line in his translation (2007a: 281, 283, 285), which appears on the next page. Like W. S. Merwin (and Dorothy Sayers also), Kirkpatrick does not observe Dante's repetition of *dentro* in lines 28 and 30 of the original and places his translation of *saliva* and *ricadeva* far apart in his translation of lines 29 and 30, in this way not achieving the full effect of the original contrast.

Like Merwin, Kirkpatrick translates *fòri* as "chariot", which is rather bland. Both poet-translators change the colon at the end of line 27 to a fullstop and minimize the effect of the comparison. In line 31 Kirkpatrick changes the word order and does not give *sovra candido* its proper place at the beginning of the line, but he does translate *sovra* as "pure", which Merwin has not translated at all. In lines 32 and 64 of the original the same word *donna* is used, but Kirkpatrick translates the word differently: "lady" in line 32 and "donna" in line 64. Similarly, although he translates *antico* (line 39) and *antica* (line 48) as "ancient", he chooses to translate *antica* in line 52 as "primal" and in this way loses the intention of Dante's repetition.

Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno 22 *la parte oriental tutta rosata* *e l'altro ciel di bel sereno addorno,* *e la faccia del sol nascere ombrata,* 25 *sì che per temperanza di vapori* *l'occhio la sostenea lunga fiata:* *cosi, dentro una nuvola di fiori* 28 *che da le mani angeliche saliva* *e ricadeva in giù dentro e di fòri,* *sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva* 31 *donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto* *vestita di color di fiamma viva.* *E lo spirito mio, che già cotanto* 34 *tempo era stato ch'a la sua presenza* *non era di stupor tremando affranto,* *sanza de li occhi aver più conoscenza* 37 *per occulta virtù che da lei mosse* *d'antico amor sentì la gran potenza.* *Tosto che ne la vista mi percosse* 40 *l'alta virtù che già m'avea trafitto* *prima ch'io fuor di puerizia fosse,* *volsimi a la sinistra col respitto* 43 *col quale il fantolin corre a la mamma* *quando ha paura o quando elli è afflitto,* *per dicere a Virgilio: 'Men che dramma* 46 *di sangue m'è rimaso che non tremi:* *conosco i segni de l'antica fiamma!'* *Ma Virgilio n'avea lasciati scemi* 49 *di se – Virgilio, dolcissimo patre,* *Virgilio, a cui per mia salute die'mi -,* *né quantunque perdeo l'antica matre* 52 *valse a le guance nette di rugiada* *che, lagrimando, non tornasser atre.* *'Dante, perché Virgilio se ne vada,* 55 *non pianger anco, non piangere ancora,* *ché pianger ti conven per altra spada.'* *Quasi ammiraglio che in poppa e in prora* 58 *viene a veder la gente che ministra* *per li altri legni, e a ben far l'incora:* *in su la sponda del carro sinistra,* 61 *quando mi volsi al suon del nome mio,* *che di necessità qui si registra,* *vidi la donna che pria m'appario* 64 *velata sotto l'angelica festa* *drizzar li occhi ver' me di qua dal rio,* *tutto che 'l vel che le scendea di testa,* 67 *cerchiato de le fronde di Minerva,* *non la lasciasse parer manifesta.* *Regalmente ne l'atto ancor proterva,* 70 *continuò come colui che dice* *e 'l più caldo parlar dietro reserva:* *'Guardaci ben! Ben son, ben son Beatrice.* 73 *Come degnasti d'accedere al monte?* *non sapei tu che qui è l'uom felice?*'	I saw, once, at the opening of the day, 22 the orient sky in colour all clear rose, the western height still robed in tranquil blue, and then the sun newborn, with shadowed face, 25 hazy, in vapours that so tempered it that eyes could tolerate its light a while. So now, beyond a drifting cloud of flowers 28 (which rose up, arching, from the angels' hands, then fell within and round the chariot), seen through a veil, pure white, and olive-crowned, 31 a lady now appeared to me. Her robe was green, her dress the colour of a living flame. And I, in spirit, who so long had not 34 been, trembling in her presence, wracked by awe, began again to tremble at her glance (without more evidence that eyes could bring, 37 but darkly, through the good that flowed from her), sensing the ancient power of what love was. But on the instant that it struck my sight – 40 this power, this virtue, that had pierced me through before I'd even left my boyhood state – I turned aside (and leftwards) meaning now, 43 with all the hope and deference of some child that runs when hurt or frightened to his mum, to say to Virgil: 'There is not one gram 46 of blood in me that does not tremble now. I recognize the signs of ancient flame.' But Virgil was not there. Our lack alone 49 was left where once he'd been. Virgil, dear sire, Virgil – to him I'd run to save my soul. Nor could the All our primal mother lost, 52 ensure my cheeks – which he once washed with dew – should not again be sullied with dark tears. 'Dante, that Virgil is no longer here, 55 do not weep, do not yet weep for that. A different sword cut, first, must make you weep.' From stern to prow, some admiral will pace 58 to see how well, in other hulls, his captains fare, and seek to hearten them to do their best. So, almost (left along the chariot), 61 turning now to hear my own name voiced (I here record it of necessity), I saw my *donna* – who'd at first appeared 64 hidden in garlands of angelic joy – fix, from beyond the brook, her eyes on me, though still the veil descending from her brows, 67 encircled with Minerva's olive fronds, did not allow, distinctly, any sight of her. Her look was stern and proud. With sovereign strength, she then went on, and spoke as though she still held back, until the last, her fiercest words. 'Look. I am, truly, I am Beatrice. 73 What right had you to venture to this mount? Did you not know that all are happy here?"

He uses a strange comma after "been" in line 35 that disrupts the sentence and the meaning, but his translation of lines 34 to 39 is better than Merwin's. Although Kirkpatrick in his note on these lines has recognized the alliteration, his words do

not achieve anything like the sound of the original, despite his repetition of the word "tremble", which is not in the original.

Kirkpatrick changes the word order of line 39 "sensing the ancient power of what love was" and loses the force of *la gran potenza* at the end of the line in the original. He translates *virtù* in lines 38 and 41 as "good" in line 38 and as "virtue" in line 41, thus losing the repetition, but he superimposes his own repetition of "power" in lines 39 and 41.

In the translation of lines 40 to 48 –

> But on the instant that it struck my sight –
> this power, this virtue, that had piereced me through
> before I'd even left my boyhood state –
> I turned aside (and leftwards) meaning now,
> with all the hope and deference of some child
> that runs when hurt or frightened to his mum,
> to say to Virgil: 'There is not one gram
> of blood in me that does not tremble now.
> I recognize the signs of ancient flame.'

– Kirkpatrick keeps closely to the original line formation, and although he does not translate *alta*, which describes *virtù*, and loses the important suggestion of height, which is relevant to the rising and falling of sight and emotion in this passage, his alternative of "this power, this virtue" compensates for the loss. He inserts the words "meaning now", which are implied in the original, and translates *respitto* as "hope and deference" and *mamma* as "mum", which are close to the original. The words that Dante intends to speak to Virgil are also translated consistently with the original, although he omits *rimaso* (line 47) in the translation. His omission of the article in "ancient flame" is acceptable because the Italian article does not always have to be translated into English. The words "ancient flame" are the same as he used in translating the words *la fiamma antica* in *Inferno*, Canto 26, line 85 and remind us that these words are not only a translation of Virgil but have been transformed to have the added significance of reminding us of the Ulysses episode in *Inferno*. These lines are close to a model of good translation, even if they do not attempt the *terza rima* of the original.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said about the following tercet:

> But Virgil was not there. Our lack alone
> was left where once he'd been. Virgil, dear sire,
> Virgil – to him I'd run to save my soul.

The lament of the repeated "–io" ending of the repeated *Virgilio* as well as the force of the words *dolcissimo patre* are lost in his translation as "dear sire". Kirkpatrick's "was not there", with the fullstop placed for the effect of pathos, does not match Dante's word *lasciati*; the words *lasciati scemi/ di se* are translated as "Our lack alone/ was left where once he'd been"; and the original *a cui per mia salute die'mi* as "to him I'd run to save my soul". Dante's one-sentence structure in 49–54 is unnecessarily broken up into four different sentences. In the next tercet the insertion of "the All" is equally unnecessary, and the word "primal" for *antica* loses the force of the repetition of the Italian word. The translation of the line *che, lagrimando, non tornasser atre* as "should not again be sullied with dark tears" does not match the forceful sound of the original.

The translation of Beatrice's first words to Dante in lines 55–57 includes the strange word "that" for *perché*, and although the word "weep" is repeated three times as in the original, the repetition of *anco* . . . *ancora* is not given in the translation. Again the single-sentence structure of the original tercet is broken into two sentences in the translation, and the word order of the last line is changed radically and unnecessarily.

The long sentence of twelve lines (58–69) is again broken into two in the translation, but is compensated by the word "So" at the beginning of line 61. The change in the word order in line 58 of the translation reduces the emphasis on the word *ammiraglio* in the original, and although from time to time in these twelve lines the word order is again changed, the translation is good. It is a pity, however, that the repetition of *lasciati* (line 49) and *lasciasse* (line 69) does not appear in Kirkpatrick's translation.

In the last two tercets of the passage being studied Kirkpatrick again changes the sentence and the word order to the detriment of his translation: in the first line of the following tercet he places "Her look was stern and proud" in a separate sentence and before the words "With sovereign strength"; line 72 also changes the word order and ends with a fullstop, where the original has a colon. Beatrice's words in line 75 are not translated in any way that matches the sound and force of the original, but her words in lines 76 and 77 are translated with the biting harshness of the original.

Helen Vendler considers Dante's repetitions are "impossible to reproduce in translation" (2005: 10), while Robin Kirkpatrick comments:

> . . . the translator would, in principle, have wished to render the repeated use that Dante makes of a term by a comparable repetition in English. However, various considerations make this difficult to achieve and, at times, undesirable to attempt. Dante's words often have many facets of meaning. According to context, one aspect of the original word may come to predominate over another, and thus demand a different treatment in English. Or else (in a verse translation, though not usually in prose) the rhythm or euphony of the English text may require a departure from exact equivalence. Verse translators are concerned not only with exact meaning but also with the formal properties of the original, with the effects of metre and lexical variety which, especially in the *Paradiso*, constantly animate even the most rigorous of Dante's verses. (2007b: lxv.)

Despite these views, there should be a conscientious effort on the part of the translator to maintain Dante's repetitions in the creative translations into English poetry.

The table on the next page compares the way in which Merwin and Kirkpatrick deal with the repetitions in Canto 30 of *Purgatorio* from Canto 26 of *Inferno*. Harold Bloom considers that the voices of Ulysses and Dante are close (1996: 86). In the table some of the significant words used in the Ulysses episode in *Inferno* Canto 26 that are repeated in *Purgatorio* Canto 30 are given with the way in which W. S. Merwin and Robin Kirkpatrick have translated them.

***Inferno* 26**	**Merwin's Version on**	**Kirkpatrick's**	***Purgatorio* 30**
l. 61 *piangevisi*	Mourn weep … weep … weep	mourn weep … weep … weep	 l. 56 *pianger* ... *piangere* l. 57 *pianger*
l. 64 and l. 97 *dentro*	inside … in in into and around	within … in beyond round	 l. 28 *dentro* l. 30 *dentro*
l. 84 *perduto*	lost lost	lost lost	 l. 52 *perdeo*
l. 85 *la fiamma antica*	the ancient flame the old burning	ancient flame ancient flame	 l. 48 *l'antica fiamma*
l. 85 *antica*	Old old old ancient	ancient ancient ancient primal	 l. 39 *antico* l. 48 *antica* l. 52 *antica*
l. 94 *amore*	Love Love	love love	 l. 39 amor
l. 108 *segno*	Markers Signs	mark signs	 l. 48 *segni*
l. 109 *l'uom*	Men Man	men all	 l. 75 *l'uom*
l. 73 *lascia* l. 110 *lasciai* l. 111 *lasciata*	Leave left left left	leave left left lack	 l. 49 *lasciati*
l. 115 *rimanenti*	remains left	remains -	 l. 47 *rimaso*
l. 120 *canoscenza*	knowledge knowledge	knowledge evidence	 L, 37 *conoscenza*
l. 127 *altro*	other other	alien other	 l. 60 *altri*
l. 133 *apparve*	appeared appeared appeared	appeared appeared appeared	 l. 32 *apparve* l. 64 *appario*
l. 134 *alta*	higher high	higher -	 l. 41 *alta*
l. 136 *torno*	turned running	turned sullied	 l. 54 *tornasser*
l.138 *percosse*	struck beat	struck struck	 l. 40 *percosse*
l. 138 *legno*	vessel ships	- Hulks	 l. 60 *legni*
l. 140 *poppa*	stern stern	afterdeck stern	 l. 58 poppa
l.141 *prora*	prow bow	prow prow	 l. 58 *prora*
l. 142 *sovra*	over -	over pure	 l. 31 *sovra*

The table shows a certain amount of consistency, but, at crucial times, inconsistency: for instance, Merwin's choice of "burning" instead of "flame" and Kirkpatrick's "evidence" instead of "knowledge". Dante's repetition from the one Canto to the other does not seem to have been noticed by the translator, and the significance of the repetition and of the one passage relating closely to the other is lost.

Dorothy L. Sayers's translation (1955: 307–309) on the next page attempts to maintain the *terza rima* pattern. In the publication of her translation there is no Italian text alongside her translation.

Umberto Eco, in comparing the various translators of the opening tercets of *Inferno* Canto 3, gives high praise to Dorothy L. Sayers' translation: ". . . the translation of Dorothy L. Sayers (1949) . . ., in my opinion, does the best in at least partly preserving the hendecasyllables and the rhyme" (2004: 141).

Sayers' use of English is quaint at times: "Oft" (line 22), "heart and reins" (line 41)[14], "thee" (line 57), "Like to" and "anon" (line 58), "thitherward" (line 61), "must needs" (line 63), "O'er" (line 69), "withal" (line 70), "thou" (lines 74 and 75), and her use of "the royal we" in lines 49 and 73. Her use of the word "car" in lines 30 and 61 is anachronistic, even though it has been used previously in poetry and literature with the meaning of a chariot.

Sayers misses the force of the repeated *dentro* in lines 28 and 30 and of the proximity of *saliva* and *ricadeva* in lines 29 and 30; she does not translate *sovra*, and her line 35 changes the word order and minimizes the force of "fright" with her words "with a kind of". There is nothing like the force of *stupor tremando affranto* in her line 36: "could awe me and make my spirit faint within". She translates *alta* as "strange" (line 38), and her line 39, "The old, old love in all its

[14] Sayers uses the word "reins" in the archaic, late Middle English, and Biblical sense: "The Hebrews ascribe to the reins *knowledge, joy, pain, pleasure*: so in scripture it is often said, that God searcheth the hearts and the reins, Ps 7:9; Jer 17: 10; 20: 12." (Cruden (1964: 535).)

mastering might", does not keep the repetition of *antico* in lines 39, 48, and 52. She changes the quotation from Virgil to "embers" (line 48).

Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno	22	Oft have I seen, when break of day was nigh,
la parte oriental tutta rosata		The orient flushing with a red-rose gleam,
e l'altro ciel di bel sereno addorno,		The rest of heaven adorned with calm blue sky,
e la faccia del sol nascere ombrata,	25	Seen the sun's face rise shadowy and dim
sì che per temperanza di vapori		Through veils of mist, so tempering his powers,
l'occhio la sostenea lunga fiata:		The eye might long endure to look on him;
cosi, dentro una nuvola di fiori	28	So, even so, through cloud on cloud of flowers
che da le mani angeliche saliva		Flung from angelic hands and falling down
e ricadeva in giù dentro e di fòri,		Over the car and all around in showers,
sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva	31	In a white veil beneath an olive-crown
donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto		Appeared to me a lady cloaked in green,
vestita di color di fiamma viva.		And living flame the colour of her gown;
E lo spirito mio, che già cotanto	34	And instantly, for all the years between
tempo era stato ch'a la sua presenza		Since her mere presence with a kind of fright
non era di stupor tremando affranto,		Could awe me and make my spirit faint within,
sanza de li occhi aver più conoscenza,	37	There came on me, needing no further sight,
per occulta virtù che da lei mosse		Just by that strange, outflowing power of hers,
d'antico amor sentì la gran potenza.		The old, old love in all its mastering might.
Tosto che ne la vista mi percosse	40	And, smitten through the eyesight unawares
l'alta virtù che già m'avea trafitto		By that high power which pierced me, heart and reins,
prima ch'io fuor di puerizia fosse,		Long since, when I was but a child in years,
volsimi a la sinistra col respitto	43	I turned to leftward – full of confidence
col quale il fantolin corre a la mamma		As any little boy who ever came
quando ha paura o quando elli è afflitto,		Running to mother with its fears and pains –
per dicere a Virgilio: 'Men che dramma	46	To say to Virgil: "There is scarce a dram
di sangue m'è rimaso che non tremi:		That does not hammer and throb in all my blood;
conosco i segni de l'antica fiamma!'		I know the embers of the ancient flame."
Ma Virgilio n'avea lasciati scemi	49	But Virgil – O he had left us, and we stood
di se – Virgilio, dolcissimo patre,		Orphaned of him; Virgil, dear father, most
Virgilio, a cui per mia salute die'mi -,		Kind Virgil I gave me to for my soul's good;
né quantunque perdeo l'antica matre	52	And not for all that our first mother lost
valse a le guance nette di rugiada		Could I forbid the smutching tears to steep
che, lagrimando, non tornasser atre.		My cheeks, once washed with dew from all their dust.
'Dante, perché Virgilio se ne vada,	55	"Dante, weep not for Virgil's going – keep
non pianger anco, non piangere ancora,		As yet from weeping, weep not yet, for soon
ché pianger ti conven per altra spada.'		Another sword shall give thee cause to weep."
Quasi ammiraglio che in poppa e in prora	58	Like to an admiral, who comes anon
viene a veder la gente che ministra		To poop or prow, to watch the crews aboard
per li altri legni, e a ben far l'incora:		The other ships, and cheer their valours on,
in su la sponda del carro sinistra,	61	So, at the car's left rail, when thitherward
quando mi volsi al suon del nome mio,		At sound of my own name I turned to look
che di necessità qui si registra,		(Name that at this point I must needs record),
vidi la donna che pria m'appario	64	I saw the lady whose appearance shook
velata sotto l'angelica festa		Me first amid the angelic festival
drizzar li occhi ver' me di qua dal rio,		Gazing upon me now across the brook;
tutto che 'l vel che le scendea di testa,	67	Although the veil beneath the coronal
cerchiato de le fronde di Minerva,		Twined of Minerva's leaves, from head descending
non la lasciasse parer manifesta.		O'er face and form, did not reveal her all,
Regalmente ne l'atto ancor proterva,	70	Regal of aspect and withal unbending,
continuò come colui che dice		Thus she resumed, as who, to hold the ear,
e 'l più caldo parlar dietro reserva:		Keeps the most telling words back from the ending:
'Guardaci ben! Ben son, ben son Beatrice.	73	"Look on us well; we are indeed, we are
Come degnasti d'accedere al monte?		Beatrice. How hast thou deigned to climb the hill?
non sapei tu che qui è l'uom felice?'		Didst thou not know that man is happy here?"

Sayers tries to capture the sound of *Virgilio* by inserting the word "O" (line 49), but the words "Kind Virgil I gave me to for my soul's good" (line 51) are awkwardly expressed with the two prepositions "to" and "for" next to each other. She loses the sound and meaning of *caldo* (line 72) in her translation of the word as "most telling", and her translation of Beatrice's words in line 73 has nothing like Dante's sound.

There is a sharp contrast between the Beatrice in the *Inferno* passage and the Beatrice in this *Purgatorio* passage. In the *Inferno* Beatrice is all love and compassion, whereas here she is stern and scathing in her attitude to Dante. Her appearances in *Purgatorio* are often intended to scathe or incense him into repentance. (This is, after all, the purpose of Purgatory.) Although there is not the opportunity to analyse another of the excerpts in the same way as was done with Canto 30 lines 22–75, brief glimpses of what the translator might consider in the appearances of Beatrice in the rest of *Purgatorio* are given.

Dante acknowledges his hurt in his words *d'amaro / sente il sapor de la pietade acerba* in Canto 30, lines 80–1; Merwin translates these words as "the flavor / of raw pity when tasted is bitter" (2001: 297), Sayers as "Stern pity is a bitter-tasting drink" (1955: 309), and Kirkpatrick as "true concern / is bitter to the taste and quick to sting" (2007a: 285)[15]. All these translations are acceptable, but Dante surely intended the sound of *amaro* to remind the reader of the word love and to emphasize that mercy and love and bitterness and sourness form an integral part of an unsentimental understanding of love. In response to the angels' question, *'Donna, perché sì lo stempre?'* (line 96) ("Donna, why do you so dissolve him?"), Beatrice explains, *'...m'intenda colui che di là piagne, / perché sia colpa e duol*

[15] Kirkpatrick gives an interesting comment on the word *pietade*: "Beatrice subsumes and gives new meaning to the *'pietas'* which Virgil in the *Aeneid* constantly attributes to the heroic Aeneas. *'Pietas'*, for Aeneas, means that sense of public duty which leads him at all points to consult the best interests of the Roman race. . . . Like Aeneas, Dante is still on a journey which is intended, once he records it in his poem, to bring about a restoration of justice in the contemporary world of fourteenth-century Italy. . . . Under Beatrice's guidance, however, it becomes clear that Dante will only complete this task when his whole being – body and soul, mind, emotions and perceptions – has been brought back into harmony with the order of divine creation, acknowledging its utter dependence on the God who first made it." (2007a: 490.) It is a pity, therefore, that Kirkpatrick translates *pietas* as "true concern", which does not suggest the Virgilian *pietas*.

d'una misura' (lines 107–108) "I intend that that one who weeps there / his guilt and grief should measure". Again the hard facts of love are that guilt and grief and weeping are parts of love, as Beatrice goes on in the rest of the Canto to show Dante (and the angels – and the reader). Dante must first pay *alcuno scotto / di pentinento che lagrime spanda* (lines 144–145, the closing words of Canto 30 – "any reckoning of penitence that sheds tears"). The word *scotto* has the implied meaning of "scorching, burning, scalding" and reinforces the necessity of pain in any experience of love.

Eric Griffiths, in his Introduction to *Dante in English*, has commented on the use of the word *scotto* at the end of Canto 30: he refers to Giovanni Della Casa who was "typical in his Renaissance humanist dismay that Beatrice (of all women!) should cap *Purgatorio* 30 and pronounce on lofty matters in words such as

> *Alto fatti di Dio sarebbe rotto,*
> *Se Letέ si passasse e tal vivanda*
> *Fosse gustata sanza alcuno scotto*
> *Di pentimento che lagrime spanda.*
> [The high decree of God would be broken, if he were to pass through Lethe and such a repast were to be tasted before he has cleared his slate with tears as penitence sheds.]" (2005: lxxvii –Translation by Griffiths.)

Griffiths continues:

> '*Scotto*' was the offending term here, one of the 'base wordes that come out of the *Tavernes*'[16], in Robert Peterson's translation, for the word means payment made to 'settle up' at a bar. At the climax of a canto, in a *distingué* setting of classical allusion and syntactic refinement, the word carries a real charge, verging on a humiliation in and of style which is wholly appropriate to the dramatic shaming of Dante that is taking place at this point in the story. . . . The sudden vulgarity of the single word has its place in the larger architecture of the poem.
> . . . Across sixty-four cantos of the poem, Dante has sprung an arch whose keystone is this speech from Beatrice; this arch stands for a range of considerations about eloquence and honesty which could not be more pertinent to Dante as he stands mute and about to weep before Beatrice and the encircling blessed, harrowed with embarrassment . . .. (2005: lxxvii-lxxix.)

[16] See the translation by Robert Peterson on p. 22 of *Dante in English*.

Griffiths has raised important issues as regards translation. The poet-translator must consider the full register of a particular word in recreating the word in a translation.

Eric Griffiths' words about the end of *Purgatorio* 31 are relevant; he quotes "the most humanly ecstatic lines of his poem, as Beatrice opens herself out beyond what he can say",

> ***. . .*** *tentando a render te qual tu paresti*
> *là dove armonizzando il ciel t'adombra,*
> *quando ne l'aere aperto ti solvesti?*
> (*Purgatorio* 31.143–5)

which he translates as

> "trying to render you as you appeared there where the sky in tune shows you forth when into the open air you released yourself".

Griffiths' comments on these lines (2005: cxiv–cxv) are relevant:

> It is impossible to replicate the end of *Purgatorio* 31 in English. Only in Italian can we hear how these words are in a zenith of eloquence, reintegrating the spectrum of Dante's loves in the light of the beloved figure, *grammatica* herself, responsive and unveiled. And are, at the same time, by the same token, the sound of a child learning the phonemes of his mother-tongue (*'te . . . ta . . . te . . . tu . . . ti . . . ta . . . to . . . ti . . . ti')*. Yet because the *Commedia* is a ritual action with 'material results, such as healing', it can be and has actually been re-performed in new, even alien, settings, and each translator can hope to return to the poem some of its native freshness as it, in its turn, gave for a while to Christianity again the aspect of a dawn.

It is true that Kirkpatrick (2007a: 299), Merwin (2001: 311), and Sayers (1955: 319) do not recapture the phonemes Griffiths has highlighted:

> . . . endeavouring to draw what you then seemed,
> where heavens in harmony alone enshadow you,
> as you came forth and showed yourself in air (Kirkpatrick)

> . . . trying to render you as you appeared
> there shaded by the harmonies of Heaven,
> when you disclosed yourself to the open air (Merwin)

> . . . To show thee as thou showedst thyself to be,

Unveiling thee in the free air displayed,
There where all heaven harmonious shadows thee (Sayers)

Nor does Griffiths in his prose translation. Is it, however, impossible? Or is it that translators have not studied the original carefully enough to notice what Griffiths has detected in the original lines? Now that it has been pointed out, will a future translator not attempt to maintain the sound of the original? This is part of the exciting opportunity that future translators have.

Canto 32, "the longest Canto in the *Comedy*"[17], begins with the words:

Tant' eran li occhi miei fissi e attenti
a disbramarsi la decenne sete,
che li altri sensi m'eran tutti spenti.
(So were my eyes fixed and intent
that I might free my desire from the ten-year thirst
that all the other senses had been extinguished.)

The word *disbramarsi* is an unusual usage and, as the only four-syllable word in the tercet, it has great force: it means literally "dis- or un-desired" and is translated as "freed" by Fitzpatrick, "satisfying" by Merwin, and "satiate" by Sayers. Dante's eyes are so "fixed and intent" that the nymphs with *lo santo riso* warn him *'Troppo fiso'* (that he is staring "Too fixedly") and distract him. He falls asleep, and when he awakes, Beatrice says to him in lines 100–105,

'Qui sarai tu poco tempo silvano; *100*
e sarai meco sanza fine cive
di quella Roma onde Cristo è romano.
Però, in pro del mondo che mal vive, *103*
al carro tieni or li occhi, e quell che vedi,
ritornato di là, fa che tu scrive.'

(Kirkpatrick translates this as:

'With me a while you'll be a woodsman here
and then, with me, a citizen eternally
in that new Rome where Christ is Roman, too.
And so, to aid the world that lives all wrong,
keep your eyes firmly on the chariot.
And what you see write down when you get back.'
(2007a: 307))

Kenelm Foster calls the first three lines of this speech "a terzina of extraordinary simplicity and power, one of the greatest in the *Comedy*":

[17] Kenelm Foster (1981: 147).

> . . . Dante is assured of his personal salvation in an utterance all turning on the archetypal distinction between wild nature and order, the forest and the city:
>
> ‘Qui sarai tu poco tempo silvano;
> e sarai meco sanza fine cive
> di quella Roma onde Cristo è romano’ (100–2)
>
> (‘Here you shall be for a short time a woodsman; and then with me forever a citizen of that Rome whereof Christ is a Roman.’)
>
> Note the solemn Latinisms ‘silvano” and ‘cive”; but especially, in the third line, balanced between ‘Roma’ and ‘Christo’, that the idea of order, already introduced by ‘cive’, is given two referents, a secular and a sacred, firmly combined by the copula ‘è’. The natural order is seen as contained by the supernatural, the earthly by the heavenly – by ‘*that* Rome’ of which God’s own Son is ‘citizen’. (1981: 147)

The word *silvano* is a significant word in a number of ways. With its Latin origins and especially with its Virgilian overtones, it suggests that the *silvano* (“the sylvan one, the rustic one, the rural one, the pastoral one”) is perfectly adapted to nature. Dante in *Purgatorio* Canto 22 line 57 refers to Virgil as *cantor de’ buccolici carmi* (“singer of pastoral songs”); in Virgil’s *Georgics* (e.g. I. 20 and II. 494) Sylvanus is the Latin deity, the protector of woods; also in *Georgics* II. 36–176 Virgil claims that no land can compete with his native Italy in its natural beauty. It should be borne in mind that at this point in the *Commedia* Dante is approaching the Tree of the Garden of Eden, which, at first, is bare (*dispogliata* – line 38) and then bursts into flower (lines 58–60). The word *silvano* therefore becomes a symbol of the ideal person, perhaps the ideal Roman (like Virgil), who appreciates and protects nature, a symbol that is hardly conveyed by the translation of the word as “a woodsman”.

Beatrice contrasts the *silvano* with the *cive* and uses the words *poco tempo* to refer to the *silvano* and to contrast with *sanza fine*, which refer to the *cive*: the *silvano*, the ideal rustic Roman, has a short relevance, whereas the *cive* has eternal immortal life as a citizen of the ideal eternal Rome *onde Christ è romano*. Many critics have written about Dante’s political ideals of *civitas* and the Roman

Empire as "a model of what civilization might properly be"[18]. Beatrice's words about *cive / di quella Roma onde Cristo è romano* are intended to affirm Dante's views of the importance of being a citizen with Christ in the ideal Rome. Of course, Rome is associated also with the Roman papacy, which, despite the corruption that Dante acknowledges and abhors, is another ideal that Dante holds and that Beatrice here affirms.

The second tercet of Beatrice's speech links the first word *Però* (line 103 - "Therefore/On that account/And so") with the first tercet: because Dante has been made both *silvano* and *cive*, he has a duty to the world, which lives wrongly, to give close attention now to what he witnesses and *quell che vedi, / ritornato di là, fa che tu scrive* ("what you see, when you return there, create/do what you write"). Beatrice links his artistic creativity to the new insights he is experiencing and confirms his role as "*theologus-poeta*". Beatrice's involvement with Dante's role as a poet is part of the love that moves her to guide Dante.

From now on in *Purgatorio*, Beatrice is described as *pia* (33:4 "compassionate", a word that should remind the reader of the *La Pia* episode at the end of Canto 5), as *con tranquillo aspetto* (33:19, referring to Dante as *Frate* in line 23), as *sorridendo* (33:95 "smiling"), and as *iscorta* (33:107*)*. It is true that there is still some criticism of Dante in her words:

> *Ed ella a me: 'Da tema e da vergogna*
> *voglio che tu omai ti disviluppe,*
> *sì che non parli più com' om che sogna. . . .' (33:31–33.)*
> *(*And she to me: 'From dread and shame alike,
> I'd have you now at once unknot yourself,
> so you no longer speak as in a dream.') (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 313).)
>
> '*Dorme lo 'ngegno tuo, . . .' (33:64)*
> ('Your wits lie sleeping . . .' (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 315).)
>
> *'. . . io veggio te ne lo 'ntelleto*
> *fatto di pietra e, impetrato, tinto*
> *sì che t'abbaglia il lume del mio detto, . . .' (33:73–75.)*
> *(*'. . . I see that you, in intellect,
> are turned to stone and petrified, pure black,

[18] Robert Kirkpatrick (2007a: xiv).

hence dazzled by the light of what I say, ...') (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 315).)

'. . . Veramente oramai saranno nude
le mie parole quanto converrassi
quelle scovrire a la tua vista rude.' (33:100–102.)
('. . . My words must be as naked, after this,
as far as they may fittingly unveil
themselves to your as-yet-untutored sight.') (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 317).)

Dante responds to Beatrice as *'O luce, o Gloria de la gente umana'* (33:115 – "You light and glory of the human race" (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 317)) and is led by Matilda to Eunoe. The Cantica ends with the words:

Io ritornai da la santissima onda
rifatto sì come piante novelle
rinovellate di novella fronda,
puro e disposto a salire a le stelle. (33:142-145.)
(I came back from that holiest of waves
remade, refreshed as any new tree is,
renewed, refreshed with foliage anew,
pure and prepared to rise towards the stars.) (Kirkpatrick (2007a: 319).)

These words should remind the reader of Beatrice's promise to Dante that he would for a while be a *silvano*.

The portrait of Beatrice in *Purgatorio* must be one of the most unsentimental accounts of a beloved woman in all literature: the love that moves her includes admonition, sarcasm, and anger, yet she remains the beautiful, loving loved one. Most descriptive attention is given to her eyes and to her thought, not, as in later literature, to the woman's body, and yet there is no doubt about her physical beauty. Dante's controlled understatement heightens the portrait.

iv
Beatrice in *Paradiso*

A word that stands out in *Paradiso*, partly because of its connection with the title of the third Canticle, is *'mparadisa* in Canto 28, line 3. It is one of the neologisms that Dante uses in the Canticle to try to convey the inexpressible. Dante's use of neologisms is relevant to the study of translation: just as a poet like Dante or Hopkins frequently creates new words in order to express the inexpressible, so also does the poet-translator frequently have to do the same in order to recreate the work he is translating: the ordinary language of the poet-translator's own

period is often inadequate for the task. Dante's use of neologisms is crucial to his journey into the unknown realms of Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise, which mortal beings had not previously discovered, and he needs a new language, a new way of writing – what Norris calls "the concept of truth as *aletheia*, as the moment of epiphany, or inward 'unveling', vouchsafed to the soul through an exercise of reason transcending all forms of sensory perception"[19]. Dante has achieved this in his *Commedia*, and poet-translators can also in their translations.

The neologism *'mparadisa* is significant in stating what Beatice's role in the *Commedia* is: she, more than anyone or anything else, enables Dante to understand paradise:

> **. . .** *che 'ncontro a la vita presente*
> *d'i miseri mortali aperse 'l vero*
> *quella che 'mparadisa la mia mente. . .(28:1–3).*
> (. . . she, in contrast with the present life
> of miserable mortals, had opened the truth,
> she who imparadises my mind. . ..)

Dante's neologism requires an English neologism, "imparadises", in translation, and most translators and commentators use the word.[20] It links with a previous statement that Dante has made: in reply to what Beatrice has said –

> "*Apri li occhi e riguarda qual son io;*
> *tu hai vedute cose, che possente*
> *se' fatto a sostener lo riso mio.' (23: 46–8.)*
> ('Open your eyes and look at what I am!
> You have seen things by which you're made so strong,
> you can, now, bear to look upon my smile.' (Kirkpatrick (2007b: 221).) –

Dante responds with these words:

> *e così, figurando il paradiso,*
> *convien saltar lo sacrato poema,*
> *come chi trova suo cammin riciso.* (23: 61–63.)

Kirkpatrick translates *figurando il paradiso* (23:61) as "imagining this Paradise" (2007b: 221), Singleton "depicting Paradise" (1991: 261), and the Hollanders "in representing Paradise' (2008: 627). Lewis writes: ". . . Beatrice, understandingly,

[19] As quoted by Payne (2003: 80–81). See also pp. 27–28 of Chapter One.
[20] Perhaps "imparadises" should not be called a neologism since Milton uses the word "Imparadis't" in Paradise Lost, Book IV, line 506 and it is therefore part of the English language.

has him turn his gaze upon her, 'upon what I am'; for she is not only Divine Wisdom but also his beloved. Altogether, she *is* Paradise, and 'figuring Paradise,' Dante says, 'the sacred poem must make a leap…''. (2001: 183.) It is this kind of "leap" that the poet-translator must also make, even when he finds his way cut off.

The words *figurando il paradise* refer to the *sacrato poema*, but coming as they do just after the reference to Beatrice, they must also refer to Beatrice. In his "Figura" Auerbach writes, "Beatrice is incarnation, she is *figura* or *idolo Christi*" (1984: 75), but here there is the link between Beatrice and Paradise: she is for Dante the *figura* of Paradise.

There are many quotations from *Paradiso* that show Beatrice's role in the *Commedia:*

in Canto 1 line 85 Dante writes

ella, che vedea me sì com' io,
("She, who saw me as I am");
in 2: 27
cui non potea mia cura essere ascosa
("from whom my cares could not be secret");
in 4: 139–140
con li occhi pieni / di faville d'amor
("with eyes full of the sparks of love");
in 5: 1–2 Beatrice says to Dante,
'. . . io ti fiammeggio nel caldo d'amore
di là dal modo che 'n terra si vede. . .'
("' . . . I blaze at you with the heat of love / beyond the way that you see on earth'");
in 23: 70 she asks,
'Perché la faccia mia sì t'innamora. . .?'
("'Why does my face so inspire you with love. . .?'");
in 26: 10–12 John describes the role of Beatrice as
'. . . la donna che per questa dia
region ti conduce, ha ne lo sguardo
la virtù ch'ebbe la man d' Anania.'
(" '. . . the lady who through this divine
region leads you, has in her look
the virtue that the hand of Ananias had.'")

These selected statements about Beatrice's role in the *Commedia* emphasize her insight, her compassion, her love, and her role as God's messenger to lead Dante to new life.

Dante's various responses to Beatrice in *Paradiso* are also indicative of her role; here are some of them:

> in 1: 70 Dante uses the word *Trasumanar* ("To become more than human" or "To be transfigured") to describe the experience that came from looking at her; Dante acknowledges the experience cannot be expressed *per verba;*
>
> in 2: 28 he describes her *sì lieta come bella* ("as joyful as beautiful");
>
> in 3: 1 he describes her as *Quel sol che pria d'amor mi scaldò 'l petto* ("That sun who first with love warmed my heart");
>
> in 3: 126 as *segno di maggior disio* ("the target of greater desire");
>
> in 4: 118–120 he addresses her as divine and as one who brings him more and more to life:
>
> > *"O amanza del primo amante, o diva,"*
> > *diss' io appresso, "il cui parlar m'inonda*
> > *e scalda sì, che più e più m'avviva, . . ."*
> > ("'O beloved of the first lover, o divine one,'
> > said I close by, 'the one whose speech floods me
> > and scalds me so, that more and more it brings me to life, . . .'")
>
> In 7:11-12 he refers to her as *mia donna / che mi diseta con le dolce stille* ("my donna who quenches my thirst with her sweet drops") and continues in line 13 using another neologism *indonna* to link with *mia donna* in line 11 when he refers to *quella reverenza che s'indonna / di tutto me* ("that reverence that is donna over the whole of me").

Dante uses many "trans-" words, but he also uses the "im-" (as in *'mparadisa*) and "in" prefixes for his neologisms, and both types of words have relevance to translation; the experience of *Einfühlung* ("feeling into") is close to what Dante mentions here: the poet-translator must show the same reverence to the original poet "that is donna over" him or her. The word *donna* is an often-repeated word in the *Commedia*, and it is interesting how Dante "form(s) neologisms out of the root

word or embellish(es) it with decorative flourishes, as in the case of *donneare* (*Paradiso* 24: 118 and 27: 88) and *indonnare*" – Kirkpatrick (2007b: lxvii). Kirkpatrick's "embellish(es) . . . with decorative flourishes" is rather condescending; the way Dante makes up words out of the important word *donna* is part of Dante's creativity rather than embellishment, decoration, or flourishing.

In 9: 16–18 Dante comments again on the effect of Beatrice's eyes on him:

> *Li occhi di Bëatrice, ch'eran fermi*
> *sovra me, come pria, di caro assenso*
> *al mio disio certificato fermi.*
> (The eyes of Beatrice, which were firm
> upon me, as previously, with caring assent
> my desire certified affirmed.)

This very literal translation, which keeps the word order intact, to retain some of the sound of the original, and to repeat the word *fermi* at the end of lines 16 and 18, demonstrates some of the difficulties of translation: the word *sovra*, as we have seen previously, reminds the reader of Beatrice's sovereign bearing that comes out also in the word *fermi*, while *caro* suggests her compassion and the words *certificato fermi* suggest her authority. Although the following translations read much better in English, they have lost much of the original's emphasis:

> The eyes of Beatrice, firm on me
> as earlier, confirmed me in desire,
> giving beloved assurance as before. (Kirkpatrick (2007b: 81).)

> The eyes of Beatrice, fixed on me,
> as they had been before, held loving reassurance
> of her glad consent to my desire. (Hollanders (2008: 229).)

> Beatrice's eyes, fixed on me as before, made me assured
> of dear assent to my desire. (Singleton (1991: 95).

Dante acknowledges Beatrice's role as *quella donna ch'a Dio mi menava* (18: 4 – "that donna who was leading me to God"), but at times he has to be reminded by Beatrice, *'. . . non pur ne' miei occhi è paradiso'* (18: 21 – "'not only in my eyes is Paradise'"). In 22: 1 he acknowledges her as *la mia guida* and in 22: 102 that *sua virtù la mia natura vinse* ("her virtue conquered my nature"). Again in 23: 34 he refers to her as *'Oh Beatrice, dolce guida e cara!'*

Perhaps the best quotations that show Dante's desire and Beatrice's role are the two tercets in Canto 27: 88–90 and 103–105:

La mente innamorata, che donnea 88
con la mia donna sempre, di ridure 89
ad essa li occhi più che mai ardea; 90
. . .
Ma ella, che vedëa 'l mio disire, 103
incominciò, ridendo tanto lieta, 104
che Dio parea nel suo volto gioire… 105

(My loving mind, which always lingers lovingly
on my lady, ardently longed, still more than ever,
to let my eyes once more be fixed on her.
. . .
But she, who knew my wish, began to speak,
smiling with such gladness that her face
seemed to express the very joy of God. – Hollanders (2008: 739).)

(My mind, so deep in love that always woos,
as *donna*, my *donna*, burned more fiercely still
to turn its eyes once more to where she was.
. . .
But she, who saw the strength of my desire,
laughing with such great happiness
that God appeared rejoicing in her face. . . –
Kirkpatrick (2007b: 263 and 265).)

(My enamored mind, which ever pays court to my lady, was more than ever burning to bring back my eyes to her; . . . But she, who saw my longing, began, smiling so glad that God seemed to rejoice in her countenance, ... – Singleton (1991: 307).)

These three translations show great diversity of interpretation and translation. In line 88 the two neologisms *inamorata* and *donnea* appear in the same line, while *donna* appears in the next; something of the sound of *ridure* (line 89) is repeated in *ridendo* (line 104); and the word *parea* reminds the reader of the often used verb *apparire*. The Hollanders translate *inamorata* as "loving"; Kirkpatrick as "so deep in love"; and Singleton as "enamored"; whereas Singleton probably comes closest to the original, the Hollanders and Kirkpatrick in using the word "love" are probably more consistent in translating *amor* throughout as love. The word *donnea* gives all three of the above translators some difficulty: the Hollanders

translate it as “lingers lovingly”; Kirkpatrick as “woos, / as *donna*”; and Singleton as “pays court”; Kirkpatrick probably comes closest to the repetition, but the word “woos” is unsatisfactory; the Hollanders in their “My loving mind, which always lingers lovingly / on my lady, ardently longed” achieve a repetition of sound, which, although not in the original, is in keeping with Dante’s poetic method; Singleton in his “pays court” achieves something of the courtly tradition implied in the word *donna*; but all fall short of the original. Perhaps the best explanation of *inamorato* is that the word expresses the experience of love that brings the lover and the loved one together as one person and as one experience. But how does the translator achieve this meaning in one English word, as Dante has in Italian? The words *di ridure / ad essa li occhi più che mai ardea* are translated as “ardently longed, still more than ever, / to let my eyes once more be fixed on her” (Hollanders), as “”burned more fiercely still / to turn its eyes once more to where she was” (Kirkpatrick), and “was more than ever burning to bring back my eyes to her” (Singleton); none is able to retain anything like the original word order and therefore word emphasis, but Singleton’s is probably the most accurate. The passion of Dante the poet to bring back his eyes to Beatrice is similar to the translator’s passion to bring back his or her eyes to the original poem which he or she loves.

The translation of the other tercet shows variety in translating the words *vedea 'l mio disire* and *Dio parea nel suo volto gioire*. The Hollanders translate the first words as “knew my wish”, which does not capture the emphasis on sight and desire that Dante intended; Kirkpatrick is closer to the original with his “saw the strength of my desire”, but finds it necessary (probably for his metre) to add the words “the strength of”, which are not in the original; and Singleton again is the most accurate with his straightforward “saw my longing”. The word *incominciò* is transferred to the first line of the tercet by the Hollanders, is omitted by Kirkpatrick, and is more easily dealt with in Singleton’s prose translation. The words *ridendo tanto lieta* are translated as “smiling with such gladness” (Hollanders), as “laughing with such great happiness” (Kirkpatrick), and as

"smiling so glad" (Singleton); none can achieve the repetition of sound between *ridure* and *ridendo*. The words *che Dio parea nel suo volto gioire*, which form the last line of the tercet, are broken into two lines by the Hollanders: "that her face / seemed to express the very joy of God", in which the word order and emphasis of the original is distorted; Kirkpatrick is much closer to the original with his "that God appeared rejoicing in her face", which keeps the link between *parea* and *apparire*; and Singleton translates the words as "that God seemed to rejoice in her countenance". One cannot help wondering why the original word order cannot be retained: "that God appeared in her face to rejoice".

What these two tercets show about Beatrice's role is that there is a connection between mind and love, between the physical eyes and face and the emotional *ardea* and *disire*, and between Beatrice and God. Dante is saying that his love for Beatrice and Beatrice's physical beauty gives him a vision of God, that the way to God is through the physical and emotional love of a historical figure. This affirms, as many critics have affirmed, that Beatrice is an incarnation of God or of Christ. This is a very radical statement and it makes Carugati's statement that it distrurbs "the poem's theological-institutional equilibrium" more relevant. But is Dante's concept of Beatrice as an incarnation so radical or disturbing? What Dante is saying in the *Commedia* is that the way to God is to be understood through historical *figurae* and that Beatrice is the prime *figura* in Dante's journey to Heaven.

In 28: 10-12 Dante gives affirmation of this:

> *. . . la mia memoria si ricorda*
> *ch'io feci riguardando ne' belli occhi*
> *onde a pigliarmi fece Amor la corda.*
> (". . . my memory recalls that I did, gazing into the beautiful eyes wherewith Love made the cord to capture me." (Singleton (1991: 313).)

This quotation comes almost immediately after the statement that Beatrice is the one who *'mparadisa la mia mente* (28:3). What Dante's memory recalled was that he found the truth declared by Beatrice to be affirmed by his "gazing into the beautiful eyes" of Beatrice. Truth or intellectual thought is affirmed by physical

beauty "wherewith Love made the cord to capture me". The importance of the physical is continually emphasized in Dante's account of spiritual truth and love. This quotation has many echoes of what Dante has already written: the importance of the word *ricorda* has already been stressed in the Pia episode; Dante's use of the repeated words *feci* and *fece* also remind of this episode; the word *riguardando* takes the reader back to Beatrice's imperative *'Guardaci ben!'* when she first spoke to Dante in *Purgatorio* 30: 73; the continual use of the words *belli occhi* stresses the importance of the physical; the often repeated word *Amor*, this time with a capital, combines physical and spiritual love; and the word *corda*, even though it refers to the past hold that Beatrice had on Dante, reminds us of the cord that binds Francis's spiritual family. The word *pigliarmi* ("to take/catch/seize/hit/get me"), with all its forcefulness, has a link with the word *piglio* ("look/aspect/bearing"), which is relevant to Beatrice's *occhi*.

This emphasis on the importance of intellectual truth being closely linked with the physical should remind us that poetry and poetic translation also has sensory, emotional, and intellectual links.

In Canto 30 Dante is aware that Beatrice's work is almost done: *con atto e voce di spedito duce* (line 37 – "With the voice and bearing of a guide / who has discharged his duty" – Hollanders (2008: 815)), Beatrice speaks her final words in Canto 30, and in Canto 31 lines 79–90 Dante addresses his last words to Beatrice:

> *"O donna in cui la mia speranza vige,* *79*
> *e che soffristi per la mia salute*
> *in inferno lasciar le tue vestige,*
> *di tante cose quant' i' ho vedute,* *82*
> *dal tuo podere e da la tua bontate*
> *riconosco la grazia e la virtute.*
> *Tu m'hai di servo tratto a libertate* *85*
> *per tutte quelle vie, per tutt' i modi*
> *che di ciò fare avei la potestate.*
> *La tua magnificenza in me custodi,* *88*
> *sì che l'anima mia, che fatt' hai sana,*
> *piacente a te dal corpo si disnodi."*
>
> ("O lady, in whom my hope is strong, and who for my salvation did endure to leave in Hell your footprints, of all those things which I have seen I acknowledge the grace and the virtue to be from your power and

your excellence. It is you who have drawn me from bondage into liberty by all those paths, by all those means by which you had the power so to do. Preserve in me your great munificence, so that my soul, which you have made whole, may be loosed from the body, pleasing unto you." – Singleton (1991:353).)

The poet-translators translate these lines as follows:

'In you, beloved, my hope grows strong. All this
you bore: To greet me and to make me whole,
you left your footprint in the depth of Hell.
The inward strength and grace of everything
I since have seen has come to me, I know,
through you, your goodness and your grace and power.
From servitude you've led me to be free
by all those pathways and by all the means
you have within your power to exercise.
Keep safe in me your own magnificence,
so that my soul, since you have made it well,
should leave the knot of body, pleasing you.'
– Kirkpatrick (2007b: 303).

'O lady who give strength to all my hope
and who allowed yourself, for my salvation,
to leave your footprints there in Hell,

'of all the many things that I have seen,
I know the grace and virtue I've been shown
come from your goodness and your power.

'It is you who, on no matter what the path,
have drawn me forth from servitude to freedom
by every means that you had in your power.

'Keep your munificence alive in me, so that
my soul, which you have healed,
may please you when it leaves its mortal frame.'
– Hollanders (2008: 853, 855).

'O lady in whom my hope always springs,
And who for my salvation have submitted
To leave the print of your feet in hell,

By all the many things that I have seen,
I recognize the grace and the capacity
There is in your power and goodness.

You have brought me from servitude
To liberty, through all those ways and means
Which you had it in your power to use.

Continue your munificence to me
So that my soul, which you have made whole,
May please you when it is untied from my body.' – Sisson (2008: 488).

Robert Hollander points out that this is the first time that "the affectionate *tu*" is used instead of "the honorific *voi*" (2008: 868); this is difficult to show in modern English translation. Furthermore, there are many references and repetitions of important words previously used: *donna, salute, lasciar, grazia, virtute, anima,* and *piacente*. All of these have been discussed previously, with the exception of *grazia*; the most prominent use of this word (twice in one line) is in *Purgatorio* Canto 31 lines 136–138:

'... Per grazia fa noi grazia che disvele
a lui la bocca tua, sì che discerna
la seconda bellezza che tu cele.'

(' Out of your grace, grace us by unveling
your mouth to him, so that he may perceive
the second beauty you are concealing.' – Merwin (2001: 311).)

These were words spoken by the four nymphs after Dante's baptism in Lethe; the nymphs were appealing to the rather harsh Beatrice to reveal herself further to Dante. When Dante uses the word *grazia* in his final speech to Beatrice, *riconosco la grazia e la vitute*, he has progressed from *conosco i segni de l'antica fiamma* to these words, in which there is a sense of fulfilment and understanding of Beatrice's grace and virtue, which he did not have before. In the last line of Dante's speech, the word *piacente* suggests a comparison with the use of the word by Ulysses in *com' altrui piacque* at the close of his speech: both Ulysses and Dante are referring to their respective deaths, but, whereas Ulysses has a detached, almost ironical understanding of some other's will or pleasure, Dante, as he thinks about his death, has a far more positive understanding of the real pleasure of Beatrice's will for him**.**

Singleton keeps the sentence structure of the original, but loses the force of *vige*, an active verb, by translating it as "is strong"; he frequently changes the word order of the original; he introduces the second sentence with "It is you who have",

which lessens the impact of *Tu m' hai*; he, like, the Hollanders, uses the words "great munificence" where "magnificence" (as used by Kirkpatrick) is closer to the original sound; and the words "so to do" and "pleasing unto you" (perhaps echoing the Book of Common Prayer) sound rather awkward to a modern English ear.

Kirkpatrick, who has often translated *donna* as "donna", now chooses "beloved" and leaves out the "O"; he also starts the sentence with "In you" and loses the emphasis of *O donna* at the beginning of the line; he changes the sentence structure and line formation by ending the first line with "All this"; he does, however, translate *vige* as "grows strong", which is more accurate and more forceful than Singleton's or the Hollanders' translation of this word; Kirkpatrick does not maintain the sentence structure of the first sentence of the original and changes it into four sentences; he translates *per la mia salute* as "To greet me and make me whole", which is hardly accurate; he includes the unnecessary word "inward" in his fourth line and inverts *la grazia e la virtute* as "The inward strength and grace", which he places in the first line of the tercet, whereas Dante has it in the third line; his tercet –

> The inward strength and grace of everything
> I since have seen has come to me, I know,
> through you, your goodness and your grace and power.

– distorts the original tercet; he, like Singleton, loses the force of Dante's *Tu m' hai*; and the last line "should leave the knot of body, pleasing you", changes the word order and has a participial phrase at the end of the line, which does not have the effect of the original *piacente* at the beginning of the line.

The Hollanders' translation keeps the sentence structure of the original, and although the word order and the line order are sometimes changed, maintains the flow of the original well; the problem with this translation is their choice of words: "give strenth" does not have the force of *vige*; "allowed" does not do justice to *soffristi*; nor do the words, "leaves its mortal frame", to *dal corpo si*

disnodi. Perhaps the poet-translator needs the kind of poetic insight or inspiration to translate these words with a Shakespearian "shuffles off this mortal coil"?

Sisson gives a readable translation that keeps to the stanza formation of the original. His version often deviates from the original word order and introduces the words, "always" and "to use", rather unnecessarily. His use of the word "springs" to translate *vige* does not have the force of the original, but at least it keeps the verb at the end of the line, as neither of the other two verse translations do. In the second line of the extract he changes the word order and uses "submitted" at the end of the line; his word does not convey the double meaning of "suffered" and "allowed"; only Kirkpatrick with his translation as "bore" does. Sisson's use of the word "capacity" to translate *virtute* is strange, and he does not keep to the original line construction in "I recognize the grace and the capacity / There is in your power and goodness" or in the next two lines either. In the last stanza "Continue" is a weak translation of *custodi*. One cannot help feeling that Sisson's translation does not match the poetic intensity of the original.

The following is my attempt at a poetic translation that strives for synonymity:

> O donna, in whom my hope is inspired with vigour,
> and who suffered for the purpose of my salvation
> to leave in Inferno your footprints' figure,
>
> of all those things I have seen in my vision,
> from your power and your bountiful goodness,
> I recognize grace and virtue in perfection.
>
> You've freed me from servitude to liberty's access
> by all those many ways, by all those many means
> which you had the power to perform with all your prowess.
>
> Your magnificence hold inside me within love's screens
> so that my soul, which you have made sensitive and whole,
> as it pleases you, may shuffle off its mortal scenes.

v

Conclusion to Chapter Five

Eric Griffiths writes:

> The *Commedia* remembers its own words, and the words of other writers, and integrates these memories into a cohesion of past and present lexical identities as, at a narrative level, it holds together earlier and later Dantes. Virgil stands in the poem for what Virgil in fact was: someone who wrote poetry before Dante but who so entered into Dante's own writing as to become a past, a very past, self. (2005: xcvii.)

This is also true of poetic translation: the original poet is integrated "into a cohesion of past and present lexical identities" so that the original poet enters into the poet-translator's writing and becomes "a past . . . self".

The *Commedia* is not only about returning and telling, as Griffiths says (2005: xcvii), but also a continual entering and leading out, returning and leaving, *exitus-reditus-exitus-reditus;* it is not only a *Commedia*; it also combines poetic and theological insights.

Griffiths refers to the frequent use of a verb of motion, which is used "in both a physical and a figurative sense" (2005: cviii). The whole of the poem is a movement from past to present to past to present . . . and eventually to future. The *Commedia* gives the ideal background for the *exitus-reditus* process of theology to be applied to poetry and translation. Griffiths links the structure of the *Commedia* with the structure of the sacrament:

> The three *cantiche* of the *Commedia* respond to the three stages of the sacrament: examination of conscience (*Inferno*); confession and penance (*Purgatorio*); reintegration ino the community of the faithful, specifically by participation in the Eucharist (*Paradiso*). . . . It (*The Commedia)* has the shape of a sacramental action. . ..(2005: cxii.)

Walter Benjamin writes: "There is no muse of philosophy, nor is there one of translation" (1977: 77). Harold Bloom refers to Beatrice as "The Muse" who "intervenes, but he (Dante) names her 'blessedness' and asserts a role for her that

could benefit everyone else" (1996: 96). Beatrice is not only Dante's muse that inspires him to write the *Commedia*, but could also be translated (transformed? transmuted?) into the muse of translation.

Samuel Johnson in his "'Shakespeare' Preface" (1765) writes: "Shakespeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful". There is no one who "approximates the remote and familiarizes the wonderful" better than Beatrice in Dante's *Commedia*: her deliberate going away and coming back in Dante's poem, her intelligible metaphorical pronouncements on what a mortal like Dante previously found perplexing, her "imparadising" of Dante's mind, her giving to Dante the experience of love that brings the lover and the loved one together as one person and as one experience (*La mente inamorata*), her helping Dante physically, intellectually, and spiritually to cross from one level to another – all these allow Dante to progress and to translate his experiences into poetry that will be meaningful to his readers. Surely this is what Aquinas and others see as the *exitus-reditus* process of transubstantiation? Is this not the *exitus-reditus* process of poetic translation also? The poet-translator can benefit from the muse-like influence of Beatrice as she accompanies the poet-translator into the complexity of the original poem and the poet-translator comes out with a greater sensory, emotional, and intellectual understanding of the original and translates it into a poem that will give readers a comprehensive and comprehensible reading of the original.

CONCLUSION

i

Preserved Order through Reversibility

Cervantes is reputed to have said disparagingly that translation is "a tapestry seen from the wrong side"[1]. Maurice Merleau-Ponty uses the same image but in a more positive way when he writes: ". . . the writer, like the weaver, works on the reverse side: he works solely with language and it is because of this that he finds himself suddenly surrounded by meaning"[2]. Ferris comments:

> . . . what demands attention here is the reversiblity introduced by this example. Inasmuch as the weaver and the writer work on the reverse or wrong side (*à l'envers*) of their respective mediums, what they produce may only be understood from a position that, in effect, repeats the position from which the writer and the painter both work. To be on the other side of the writer or the weaver is to be in the position of sight, the position of being able to see what is meant to be seen, that is, to be able to see what the writer or weaver cannot see. (1997: 36.)

Although Merleau-Ponty and Ferris were referring to the writer and not the translator, these remarks may be applied to a poet-translator and are relevant to the translator's task: the translator must know the original inside out, and this is very similar to the *exitus-reditus* concept of translation that I have adopted. The poet-translator, as well as the reader or critic, has to be "in the position of sight, the position of being able to see what is meant to be seen, that is, to be able to see what the writer . . . cannot see" and then become the poet-translator working on "the reverse or wrong side" in creating the poetic translation. It is conceivably a *reditus-exitus* process, as well as an *exitus-reditus* process. As Steiner suggests,

> The arrows of meaning, of cultural, psychological benefaction, move both ways. There is, ideally, exchange without loss. In this respect, translation can be pictured as a negation of entropy; order is preserved at both ends of the cycle, source and receptor. (1975: 302.)[3]

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[1] Quoted by Landers (2001: 8).
[2] Maurice Merleau-Ponty ("Le langage indirect et les voix du silence" (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), p. 56, as translated by David S. Ferris (1997: 33–34).
[3] Steiner's statement is contested by Robinson (1991: 21).

ii

Striving for Synonymity

The different kinds of poetic translation that have been presented in Modern English may be summarised as (1) literal translations, which Steiner describes as "word-for-word metaphrase which traditional theory has regarded as most puerile" (1975: 333), (2) adaptation or imitation, in which the poet uses the original as an influence and creates a new poem of his or her own rather than a poetic translation, (3) paraphrase, in which the translator concentrates on the sense of the original and amplifies the original, and (4) an attempt at total synonymity. The first three are very close to the the "three classes" into which Steiner states the "theory of translation, certainly since the seventeenth century, almost invariably divides the topic" (1975: 253). Later he writes: "The view of translation as a hermeneutic of trust (*élancement*), of penetration, of embodiment, and of restitution, will allow us to overcome the sterile triadic model which has dominated the history and theory of the subject" (1975: 303). This "sterile triadic model" does not contribute much: there have been translations of each kind that have been successful translations, but there have been many more of each that have been unsuccessful.[4]

Raffel classifies translations into "four broad types":

> 1. *formal* translation, aimed primarily at scholars and those taught by scholars, largely for scholarly rather than literary purposes;
> 2. *interpretive* translation, aimed primarily at a general audience which reads for literary reasons;
> 3. *expansive* (or "free") translation, aimed not simply at those who read for literary reasons but at those who usually prefer to read something, anything, new rather than something old;
> 4. *imitative* translation, which in plain truth I think barely translation at all; it is aimed at an audience which wants the work of the particular translator rather than the work of the original poet; Robert Lowell's accurately titled volume *Imitations* is the model of this type of translation in our time.
>
> (1988: 182.)

[4] See page 12 of Chapter One for more details on the "triadic model".

Raffel cites a poet-translator for each type: Frederick Goldin, Ezra Pound, Christopher Logue, and Robert Lowell respectively. He prefers the interpretive translation and quotes an extract from one of his translations with these comments:

> . . . interpretive translators almost never assert that their versions manage, in some magical fashion, to reduplicate the original. In the introductory essay to my own *Beowulf*, I explain that 'The translator's only hope is to re-create something roughly equivalent in the new language, something that is itself good poetry and that at the same time carries a reasonable measure of the force and flavor of the original.' (1988: 121.)

Raffel's four types can be compared with the three models (Jerome, Horace, and Schleiermacher)[5] and with the types proposed by Pound and Holmes[6], but, as has been stated before, no one type or model is relevant to the practice of creative poetic translation. The only relevant consideration is what the original poem demands from the translator. As Steiner has pointed out,

> Changed[7] as it is with stylistic genius and interpretive audacity, Hölderlin's art of translation always derives from literalism, almost, in fact from a literalism not only of the single word but of the letter. . . . Paradoxically, therefore, the most exalted vision we know of the nature of translation derives precisely from that programme of literalism, of word-for-word metaphrase which traditional theory has regarded as most puerile. (1975: 333.)

The case studies have considered Steiner's category of synonymity to be far more relevant, one that contradicts what Raffel and many others think:

> A 'perfect' act of translation would be one of total synonymity. It would presume an interpretation so precisely exhaustive as to leave no single unit in the source-text – phonetic, grammatical, semantic, contextual – out of complete account, and yet so calibrated as to have added nothing in the way of paraphrase, explication or variant. (Steiner (1975: 407).)

[5] See pages 7–9 of Chapter One.
[6] See pages 29–30 of Chapter One.
[7] The word "Changed" appears on page 333 (Steiner (1975)), but it is probably a printer's error and should be "Charged".

Holmes writes, ". . . the translator, whether or not he is conscious of it, establishes a *hierarchy* of correspondences" or "hierarchy of correspondence priorities" (2005: 86). The case studies have postulated the need for choosing a realistic hierarchy of relevant units in the source text[8] when the poet-translator recreates the poem in his or her language: in achieving what Steiner calls a "near-ideal" translation of a particular poem (1975: 408), a poet-translator has to choose which aspects of synonymity with the original are most important in his or her translation and which aspects are less relevant. It is the poet-translator's role to strive towards synonymity and to have a good reason whenever he or she is unable to achieve this standard: usually the reason will be that in striving for one kind of synonymity he or she will be unable to achieve another kind. In each translation the poet-translator may have to use a different hierarchy of units in the source text when he or she strives for the "near-ideal" synonymity.

Holmes writes:

> Traditional translation theorists often defined the relation between an original text and a translated text derived from it as one of identity; a translator, or at least a 'good' translation, was, or should be, 'the same as' its original. When this position was seen to be untenable, it was replaced by the notion that the relation is one of 'equivalence', and 'equivalence' and 'equivalent' are key terms in almost all recent theoretical works.

[8] The need for a realistic hierarchy of relevant units in the source text on the part of the translator is closely aligned to Francis R. Jones's concept of "relative weighting" of "valent features" (1989: 190) in a translation or to his "strategies of equivalence" (1989: 191): "accurate weighting is crucial (as is a deep knowledge of the resources of the target language, which is perhaps why poets often seem to be good translators of poetry)" (1989: 194). In his conclusion he writes: ". . . the good translator of poetry stands out by dint of his or her skills of incisive assessment of *all* the systems operating in the source text, his or her control of the poetic devices appropriate to the target culture, and in the ability to mediate effectively between source and target text." (1989: 198). Jones explains his use of valency in this way: "Taking an analogy from chemistry (the individual items being likened to atoms), I suggest that the textual networks show up at item-level as the item's "**valency**", i.e. the number of marked "**valent features**" it possesses. Examples of valent features might be an item's literal meaning, associative meaning, etymological meaning, pragmatic meaning; its concrete or metaphorical role in the image; its typical collocations and its actual collocations in this text; repetitions elsewhere in the text; style, register; sound-quality/length; syntactic function, morphological form; and so on. Moreover, because the textual networks have been assigned, whether intuitively or consciously, distinct weightings in terms of their importance to the image or the text as a whole, some valent features are more important than others." (1989: 190.) (It is interesting that Robert Hollander uses the same "analogy from chemistry" when he refers to Dante "using a metaphoric valence" (2008: 298), as I quoted on p. 217.)

> (Synonym, also a highly debatable term in this conext, is something of a competitor.) Equivalence is quite likely the goal of painstaking translators. But it is a goal that always exceeds their grasp. What the translator actually achieves is not textual *equivalence* in any strict sense of the term, but a network of *correspondences*, or *matchings*, with a varying closeness of *fit*. These correspondences are of various kinds, a formal, a semantic, and/or functional, mimetic, or analogical, and achieved at various levels of the translated text, macro-, meso-, and/or macrostructural. Defining the nature of these correspondences and minimum and maximum degrees of fit should be a major task of the translation theorist. (2005: 100-101.)

Whether or not "synonym" or "synonymity" is a highly debatable term, it is Steiner's and my contention that it should be the aim of every poet-translator. If the hierarchy of units in the source text is carefully considered in the way that Jones suggests, a near-ideal translation can be achieved, and synonymity should be the basis for the literary criticism of the poetic translation.

iii

The Poet as Translator

Susan Bassnett refers to the "hegemonic distinction . . . between writing and translating . . . which has led to translation being seen as the poor relation of writing, often referred to as 'original' or 'creative' writing, and widely perceived as superior" (2006: 173). She regrets that the "high status" accorded to translation in the Middle Ages and in the sixteenth century in the English literary tradition has been withdrawn. "What is often forgotten", she continues, "is that many writers also translate, and for those who do both, the hierarchical distinction that prevails . . . simply does not exist". She traces the importance of translation among the "great eighteenth-century poets, the European Romantics, the monolithic nineteenth-century writers, the fin-de-siècle writers, the modernists and the poets of the 1930s" and states, "Translation was a means not only of acquiring more information about other writers and their work, but also of discovering new ways of writing." (2006: 174.) About Ted Hughes, Bassnett writes, "For Hughes, as for many poets, writing and translating were not

antipathetic but rather offered different possibilities at different points in his literary career" (2006:175). Then she mentions Seamus Heaney's experience in translating *Beowulf* and her own experiences with translation and she concludes: ". . . translating serves as a way of continuing to write and to shape language creatively, it can act as a regenerative force". (2006: 179.)

It is difficult to measure objectively the truth of this last statement, but it is one that many poets have expressed. Josephine Balmer writes about her "odyssey from . . . translation . . . to original poetry . . . the one leads into the other" (2006: 194). Whatever one may think of Robert Lowell's *Imitations*, he was able, after he had spent time on them, to return to writing original poems after a dearth of over eighteen months; Lowell writes in his Introduction to *Imitations*: "This book was written from time to time when I was unable to do anything of my own." (1961: xii); as Clive Scott states, "Lowell translates in order to replenish his creative stock" (2006: 115).

In a way translation sets the poet-translator free. Just as Dante says about Beatrice in *Paradiso* 31. 85–87

> *Tu m'hai di servo tratto a libertate*
> *per tutte quelle vie, per tutt' i modi*
> *che di ciò fare avei la potestate*

so a reader or critic or poet translator may say to the original poet:

> From servitude you've led me to be free
> by all those pathways and by all the means
> you have within your power to exercise.
> (Kirkpatrick (2007b: 303).)

A poet-translator may benefit from the translation of poetry, which contributes to the inspiration for his writing of his own original work. John Frederick Nims writes: "I am not sure that the enjoyment I had in doing these translations is very different from that of writing 'one's own' poetry" (1971: 301). Burton Raffel comments on this statement by Nims: "The relationship of work translated and the sometime translator's own original work is a subtle and difficult one. Nims, for

example, may be making more of a statement than he intends by using quotation marks around 'one's own'" (1988: 179–180).

Raffel relates a different experience:

> . . . the tension between my own primary work and my translations has been largely responsible for whatever changes I am aware of in my sense of responsibility as a translator. That is, as I have progressed in my own primary work, both poetry and fiction, and as I have grown more confident and clear about what I was doing, I have grown more careful to observe the distinction between original and translated work. I have, bluntly, felt less need to 'appropriate' what I was translating. Ezra Pound, forever unsure about his primary work, was an appropriative translator to the day he died. (1988:181.)

Whether this is true of Ezra Pound or not, Raffel stresses the influence of his own poetry on his translation and not the translation on his own work. The influence, it seems, can be either way. It may be *exitus-reditus* or *reditus-exitus*.

Ros Schwartz calls "the translation process 'finding a voice'" (2006: 10). Although he is speaking about the translation process, his "finding a voice" can also refer to the close connection between translation and original writing: the translator often finds his own voice through translating.

T. S. Eliot, in his "Introduction" to Ezra Pound's *Selected Poems*, writes: "Good translation is not merely translation, for the translator is giving the original through himself, and finding himself through the original" (1948: 13). A poet-translator often finds himself as a poet through translation.

Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush call the book they edit *The Translator as Writer*. They intend to establish that the translator deserves the status of a writer. (The translator of the original has not been accorded the same status as the talented musician who performs an original score. Very often the musician has as high a status as, or a higher status than, the original composer.)

This part of this concluding chapter is called "The Poet as Translator" and uses the same words as Charles Tomlinson does for a chapter of his book *Metamorphoses: Poetry and Translation* (2003: 121–141); there is a difference between the translator as writer or poet and the poet as translator: the latter stresses that it is the poet who deserves the status of a translator of poetry and it implies that the poet brings to the translation of poetry insights that a translator who is not a poet may not; it is the craft of the poet that will assist greatly in translating the original poem. This does not ignore the linguistic, philosophical, and cultural aspects of translation but stresses that the literary aspects of poetic translation are the most important.

It is revealing that so many modern poet-translators feature prominently in recent collections of original poetry and so many modern poets feature in books of translations of poetry. It is, however, true, as Helen Vendler has pointed out, that in the English tradition of poetry "Transfusion works better, in many instances, than translation" (2005: 10). As the case studies in the previous chapters have shown, the modern English poetic translations have often not been successful in giving the originals an afterlife as creative translations of the original, whereas the metamorphoses or transfusions of the original into original poems such as T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land"[9] and "Little Gidding"[10] are more likely to live on in the English literary tradition. (Perhaps one of the best transfusions is Heaney's "Ugolino"[11].)

Nevertheless, if the art of poetic translation is to continue to matter, the study of the art of poetic translation is a worthy study and could lead to better creative poetic translations in the future. Tomlinson writes: "The presence of translation changes, or should change, our vision of the whole. Its presence in the *oeuvre* of a number of major poets should change our all-over view of *them* and of the riches they have to offer to present and future heirs." (2003: 1.) There is no doubt that if

[9] See Charles Tomlinson's chapter "T.S. Eliot: Meaning and Metamorphosis" (2003: 121–141).
[10] See lines 78–149 quoted in *Dante in English* (2005), edited by Eric Griffiths and Matthew Reynolds, London: Penguin, pp. 319–321.
[11] Seamus Heaney (1979: 61–64).

the art of creative poetic translation in modern English poetry were to improve, it would offer riches to present and future heirs.

iii

The Art of Translating Poetry

This is the title of Burton Raffel's book, in which he describes his task as "a practical orientation" that is "linguistic- and theory-oriented". In his Preface, he states that he wrote the book as "a result of disquieting realizations about general knowledge in the literary field". To Raffel, "translation is by its very nature an interdisciplinary subject, whether one is practicing, theorizing about, or evaluating it" (1988: vii.). He insists, "The translator of poetry *must* be himself a poet", but he continues: ". . . the translator must also be something of a scholar. He must know more than simply the language with which he works. He must be aware of literary and cultural history both in that language and in his own tongue. . . . he must also have some awareness of basic linguistic realities. He should also have thought about the act of translation, both practically and from some theoretical point of view." (1988: vii–viii.) Towards the end of the Preface he writes, "I have written this book to meet what seems to me an almost desperate need for some reasonably unified presentation of both the theoretical and linguistic and the practical aspects of translation" (1988: ix).

These are all acceptable statements and aims, but in the first chapter Raffel makes the statement that affects his whole book: "The impossibility of translation is in a sense not debatable. . . . it is literally impossible to fully render anything written in one language into another." He qualifies this, "But good translation can and frequently has been achieved. It is good translation with which this book is concerned, and specifically good translation of poetry." (1988: 11.) The repetition of the word "good" highlights the tenuous nature of a subjective evaluation, and later he states, "The impossibility of exact recreation does not preclude the very real possibility of approximation – and it is precisely on approximation that good translation of poetry must be built" (1988: 13). The word "approximation" reminds one of what has been said about Shakespeare and Beatrice at the end of

the last chapter, where the word "approximates" suggests "very close", but one fears that Raffel uses it in the sense of "fairly close". Evaluation of a translation as good, based on a standard of "fairly close" approximation, is perhaps the reason why poetic translation into English has not achieved the highest standard. Everyone knows that perfection is unattainable, but one must still evaluate according to standards of perfection and not according to standards of "fairly close" approximation.

In the case studies in Chapters Two, Three, Four, and Five the approach of George Steiner has been preferred: "A 'perfect' act of translation would be one of total synonymity" (1975: 407). It is true that, before this statement, Steiner has admitted, "This ideal can never be realized totally. No contingent form can be defined as perfect. It is a platitude to say so. But the issue is not entirely trivial." (1975: 406–407.) Immediately after this statement, he writes, "But we know that in practice this perfect fit is possible neither at the stage of interpretation nor at that of linguistic transfer and restatement" (1975: 407). Raffel might argue that Steiner and he are saying the same, but the perfect or ideal translation must be the standard of evaluation, not the "fairly close" approximation. Steiner states:

> But if 'perfect' translation is no more than a formal ideal, and if great translation is rare, there are, none the less, examples which seem to approach the limits of empirical possibility. There are texts in which the initial commitment to the emotional and intellectual risks of unmapped, resistant alternity (sic) continues vital and scrupulous even to the finished product. There are translations which are supreme acts of critical exegesis, in which analytical understanding, historical imagination, linguistic expertness articulate a critical valuation which is at the same time a piece of totally lucid, responsible exposition. There are translations which not only represent the integral life of the original, but which do so by enriching, by extending the executive means of their own tongue. Lastly, most exceptionally, there are translations which restore, which achieve an equilibrium and poise of radical equity between two works, two languages, two communities of historical experience and contemporary feeling. For a translation to realize all four aspects equally and to the full is, obviously, 'a miracle of rare device'. (1975: 407-408.)

As previously mentioned, Steiner gives examples of what he calls the "near-ideal" translation (1975: 408-413), in which the approximation is "very close", without the "latitude" that Dryden's "rewrite" allows[12]. Steiner shows appreciation of what Dryden has done, but he prefers the concept of synonymity in assessing a translation, and the analyses in the case studies of Chapters Two, Three, Four, and Five have taken the same approach.

Each original poem will present its own challenges of synonymity to the translator: metre, rhyme, stanza form, sentence structure, word-order, rhythm, imagery, tone, to mention a few. As has been demonstrated in the case studies of Chapters Two, Three, Four, and Five, the poet-translator has to deconstruct the original with the most intensive and the closest critical reading of the original; he or she must use linguistic scholarship and others' critical analysis, as well as others' translations if they are available; historical and cultural aspects of the original work need to be considered and how these are going to be translated in the best way for the receiving culture; in striving for the closest synonymity, the poet-translator has to select a hierarchy of the most relevant units in the original text and have a good reason for discarding one unit for another; and then he or she must use his or her poetic creativity to fashion the new poem so as to try to maintain the alterity of the original and the new life of the translation.

In my paper delivered to the XIV Forum for Iberian Studies I suggest three ways of approaching an original text: homage, adaptation, and synonymity (Andrew (2010)). Every translation is an act of homage to the original, every translation is an adaptation in some way or another, but every translation should strive for synonymity.

Apart from the issue of approximation, Raffel denigrates the work of the poet-translator by writing:

> . . . in time all translations fall away, fade, become literary curiosities, time-bound and largely of scholarly rather than literary interest. . . . newer translations – my own of course

[12] See pp. 128–132 of Chapter Three.

> among them – will go on dating and aging and will in the end become what all translations inevitably turn into, museum pieces." (1988: 182.) [13]

Although Raffel could probably give statistical evidence to prove that what he has written is generally true, his statement is depressing and discouraging for any poet-translator. Surely the poet-translator, like the poet, must strive for the continuing life of his work? Otherwise, the work of the poet-translator is in fact the poor relation of writing.

In the preceding pages there has been a certain amount of criticism of Walter Benjamin's writing, but his lofty vision of the translator is more encouraging for the poet-translator. In regarding translation as an almost spiritual "mode" (1977: 70) of its own, Benjamin writes:

> . . . a translation issues from the original – not so much from its life as from its afterlife. For a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life." (1977: 71.)

Gentzler comments: "Benjamin speaks in terms of a 'recreation' which 'must lovingly and in detail' transform and renew something living, i.e. the original text, as it supplements and ensures the survival of the existing language" (1993: 194).

What has informed the case studies is the need for a close relationship between the original and the poetic translation. In placing the original alongside the translation the case studies have highlighted both the concepts of synonymity and the *exitus-reditus* approach to translation. In transforming Thomas Aquinas' *exitus-reditus* process and applying it to translation, both the concept of synonymity and the need to place the original alongside the translation have been given greater emphasis. In essence the *exitus-reditus* approach to translation stresses much the same as what Walter Benjamin states: a translation is the

[13] Raffel's view of the temporariness of poetic translation is shared by many, e.g. Bly and Sisson, as mentioned earlier. Robinson is critical of "the perfectionist ideology that binds the translator's fortitude and despair" (1991: 61). Even Jones, rather amusingly, states, ". . . the literary translator is indeed 'on aboriginal sufferance', his or her work being inevitably superseded by that of the next generation" (1989: 195).

afterlife, the recreation of the original. Benjamin, in explaining the "idea of life and afterlife in works of art", writes: "The history of the great works of art tells us about their antecedents, their realization in the age of the artist, their potentially eternal afterlife in succeeding generations" (1977: 71). The *exitus-reditus* approach, with its close links to incarnation and transubstantiation, suggests identity or synonymity between the *exitus* and the *reditus*, between the original and the translation. In the translation there is the same metaphorical transubstantiation of the translation into the original: like Beatrice and Dante in the *Commedia* the translator travels into new realms in order to recover the original "*aletheia*, . . . the moment of epiphany, or inward 'unveiling'", which is not just "an adequate matching-up, a correspondence between words and the things they can properly be used to represent"[14].

iv

The Process of Creative Poetic Translation

There is no one definitive approach to the process of creative poetic translation; each translator has his or her own approach. Nida and Tabor (1969) have a process of analysis, transfer, and restructuring[15]. De Beaugrande (1978) provides "a model of poetic translation based on strategies of textual equivalence", which Jones criticizes: ". . . despite the baffling visual complexity of De Beaugrande's model of translation (1978: 2–3), in practice his work is far more concerned with the analysis and comprehension of source-text language-use . . . than with elucidating the actual *process* of translating" (1989: 186). Reference has been made before to Bly's eight stages of translation (1984).[16] Jones's "Process Model

[14] Payne (2003: 81). See Chapter One pages 25–26.

[15] Robinson (1991: ix) quotes the process of Nida and Tabor as ". . . (1) analysis, in which the surface structure (*i.e.*, the message as given in language A) is analyzed in terms of (a) the grammatical relationships and (b) the meanings of the words and combinations of words, (2) transfer, in which the analyzed material is transferred in the mind of the translator from language A to language B, and (3) restructuring, in in the receptor language" (1969: 33).

[16] Bly's eight stages (1984) can be summarized as: (1) a literal translation, (2) dealing with the issue of what the poem means; (3) translation into English, (4) translation into American or spoken English, (5) capturing the mood of the original, (6) capturing the sound of the original, (7) someone born in the language going over the version, and (8) the final draft.

of Poetic Translation"[17] uses less "baffling visual complexity" and is a most helpful analysis of the process.

What follows is my attempt to give an original statement of the process of creative poetic translation based on the case studies in the previous chapters.

The first requirement in the translating of a poem is the initial appreciation of, or a positive response to, the original work – what may be called homage. The act of translation is a form of homage to the original poem. There is no point in translating a poem or an extract of a poem if the translator does not appreciate the original.

After this the poet-translator needs to consult scholarly and critical texts to analyse critically what others have written about the poem in all its many facets: linguistic, literary, historical, and cultural. This will give a deeper appreciation than the initial response to the original poem.

The poet-translator should then have the critical ability to deconstruct or analyse the poem (again in all its many facets: linguistic, literary, historical, and cultural). Each important word in the original should be analysed so that its grammatical function, its different possible meanings in the original language and their applicability to the word in the poem as a whole, and its historical and cultural relevance have been thoroughly considered. At this stage, dictionaries, lexicons of

[17] Jones summarizes his process in his **Abstract**: "*This paper presents an empirical model of the processes involved in translating poetry. I suggest three main stages*: **Understanding**, **Interpretation** *and* **Creation**. *The* **Understanding** stage *involves close* ST *analysis. At the* **Interpretation** *stage the translator works item by item, though with continual reference to* ST *and* TT. *An item may participate in one or more textual structures; hence it may be said to carry a number of marked* valent features *marking its role in the various structures. Valent features may be weighted differently depending on the importance of their structure to the image or the text. I suggest five main strategies of equivalence:* Transference – TT *item* = ST *item;* Convergence/Divergence – TT *item covers larger/smaller semantic space than* ST *item, but valency remains constant;* Improvisation – TT *feature is different from* ST *feature but has similar poetic role;* Abandonment *of a low-weight for a high-weight feature;* Estrangement – *equivalent retains an "untranslated"* ST *feature. The* **Creation** *stage is that of fashioning the target text as an artefact valid in target-culture terms. This informs and is informed by choices made during the Interpretation phase.* (1989: 185.)

the different usages of the word in the work of the poet (if available), and scholars' notes should be consulted.

Having given attention to individual words, the poet-translator needs to consider the sentence structure of the poem: the function of the individual words in their relation to others in the sentence, with attention to their grammatical structure and to the creative arrangement by the original poet of the words in the sentence structure. At this stage the original word order should be analysed to understand any unusual or creative structures in the poem.

So far, what Kelly Oliver, referring to Julia Kristeva's "Revolution in Poetic Language" calls "the symbolic" element, "the meaning proper" (1997: xiv), has been considered. Some may regard this as the literal meaning, but already the analysis of the original poem has gone beyond literal meaning. The next stage is an investigation of the figurative language – similes, metaphors, and imagery – in order to expand the meaning of the words in their context. What does the figurative language imply about the sets of comparisons made? How does this add to the meaning of the poem? By this time the poet-translator should be able to form some preliminary idea of the theme or themes of the poem, but it is only a preliminary idea, and he or she will have to reconsider theme later when other characteristics of the poem have been weighed. In the preliminary consideration attention should be given to such elements in the poem as repetition of words or ideas, for they will emphasize the theme or themes.

It is now time to give attention to formal aspects of poetic construction: the stanza format or free verse structure, the syllabic length of a line, the metre, the rhyme (end-rhyme or consonance and internal rhyme), the emphasis on words at the end or the beginning of lines, the possible use of caesura (the internal pauses within lines), enjambment, the use of alliteration, assonance, or onomatopoeia, . . . – these are mainly aspects of English poetry, and there may be other historical or cultural poetic conventions applicable to the original poem. In studying these formal aspects, the poet-translator must return to how they affect the meaning of

the poem and he or she will have to take them into account later when it comes to the creative poetic translation.

No analysis will be complete without consideration of what Kristeva calls the "semiotic" elements of the poetic language – "the organization of drives in language".[18] These refer to "rhythms and tones that are meaningful parts of language and yet do not represent or signify something".[19] Careful attention has to be given to the rhythms and tones and sounds of the original because they affect the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a tone may imply a totally different meaning from the literal, whereas the rhythm, in which the metrical emphasis is often changed, may give an emphasis to certain words that will alter the original more literal emphases. The tone of a poem indicates the poem's or poet's attitude towards what has been written and, if it is lost, the poem may be totally misunderstood. About rhythm, Brooks and Warren wrote: "The only way to grasp the significance of rhythm in a poem is to listen to it as an aspect of the total experience of reading" (1976: 49).

This raises an interesting aspect of poetic translation: it is at this stage of the process that, if the poet-translator is not fluent in the language of the original, he or she needs to hear the poem read by someone fluent in the original language or, if this is not always possible (as in the case of classical Greek or Latin), needs to pay special attention to the phonetic structure of the original language. Again, Burnshaw's words are appropriate: ". . . the only way one could experience the poetry of a language one did not command was by learning to hear and pronounce (if only approximately) the sounds of the originals and 'simultaneously' reading literal renditions. . . . the poetry inheres in the tonal language (the sounds of the

[18] Robinson refers to the "somatic" response: "The 'somatics' . . . are in fact a humanistic, specifically a phenomenological way of talking about the autonomic system: I am concerned with the ways in which our body 'signals' to us what we know and how we should act on it, through muscle memory and anxiety responses like constrictions of the chest or throat, clammy palms, tight shoulders, trembly legs, and so on." (1991: x.) He later states: "A somatics of translation will allow us to explore the feedback system between 'mind' and 'body,' intellection and emotion, analysis and gut-level certainty, cerebral and visceral response. It seems undeniable that translation is largely an intuitive process." (1991: xii.) Robinson gives more detail in his chapter called "The Somatics of Translation" (1991: 3– 64).

[19] Oliver (1997: xiv).

poem in its original tongue). . ..” (1964: xi.) Burnshaw’s statement holds true not only for foreign poetry but also for poetry in one’s own language, as Brooks and Warren have written.

It is therefore at this point that the poet-translator may ask for the help of a collaborator who may be more conversant in the language of the original. Many of the translators mentioned in this research have relied on such help. Sometimes a poet-translator will not have the benefit of a collaborator but will use a recording of the original poem in the original language, or perhaps he or she will use the work of scholars who have attended to the sound patterns. Some form of collaboration is essential.

When the poet-translator has studied the sound, tone, and rhythm of the original, there will be a return to the theme of the poem to make sure that it has not been altered in any way by the sound, tone, and rhythm. Brooks and Warren have suggested another aspect of poetry, the dramatic situation or dramatic structure of a poem: “. . . the total meaning of a poem can never be fully summed up in a ‘statement’. *The meaning is the special import of the dramatization of a situation*.” (1976: 267.) I have attempted, especially in discussing the possible irony in Dante’s portrayal of Aquinas, to pay close attention to the dramatic structure of the poetry discussed.

Derrida writes: “One of the definitions of what is called deconstruction would be the effort to take (the) limitless context into account, to pay the sharpest and broadest attention possible to context, and thus to an incessant movement of recontextualization” (1988: 136). Later Derrida refers to contexts as “the literary, philosophical, rhetorical traditions, the history of the . . . language, society, history, which is to say, so many other things as well” (1988: 145). To deconstruct the original before translation takes place is certainly an arduous but rewarding task. Kathleen Davis refers to this process of deconstruction as the “system of signification” in which “each concept refers to the other ‘by means of

the systematic play of differences'" and she continues, "…then we can see that this play of differences is the requirement for meaning" (2001: 15).

After such close analysis or deconstruction of the original, the poet-translator should consult other translations if they are available. Again, this involves close analysis and an evaluation of how successfully the translators have accomplished their tasks. The evaluation would be on the basis of synonymity with the original with relation to Steiner's "four aspects". If the poet-translator considers that there is the synonymity of the perfect or near-ideal translation in the translation being studied, there is no point in creating a new poetic translation. If, however, the poet-translator considers that there is something important that is lacking in the translation, he or she can attempt a new translation that meets the challenge of supplying a translation that will rectify the omission. This would be attempted, not with the proud assumption that he or she is a better poet-translator than the other or others, but with the intention of filling a gap and producing a creative poetic translation that will satisfy his or her readers' and future readers' appreciation of the original poem. This is where very often his or her culture's needs or those of a new and different readership may apply, but he or she should strive to combine these with those of the culture of the original's historical situation as well. Fusion of horizons and alterity are important considerations.

The "writerly task of reading" having been undertaken, the poet-translator has to begin the task of creative poetic translation. A prose version will probably be the starting point, not necessarily a literal translation, but rather a version that does not attempt all the formal poetic requirements. Then the important questions of rhyme, metre, stanza format, line equivalence, word order, figurative language, rhythm, and tone arise: can all these be attempted, or which should be sacrificed — what Jones calls "**abandonment** of a low-weight feature in a particular item in favour of a high-weight one" (1989: 193) — in order to achieve a near synonymity?

The comparison between the musical performer and the poet-translator has been made already. Kathleen Davis, referring to Derrida's "'Signature Event Context', an essay that engages J. L. Austin's speech-act theory", writes: "… the translator can never simply re-present an intended meaning, but must make performative decisions" (2001: 57). The process described can be compared with the performing artist's work leading up to the concert performance: he or she must study the original musical score, must know others' performance techniques, and will strive to give his or her own interpretation of the score; he or she will have to make "performative decisions"; the concert performance will strive to bring to the composer's work new life that will be meaningful and entertaining to the modern audience. The poet-translator performs in a similar way.

In the Introduction to this research reference was made to Jonathan Miller's *Subsequent Performances* and his lecture *The Afterlife of Plays*. Dramatic performances of plays are similar in many ways to the performative nature of translations. A director of a play has many performative decisions to make: textual omissions or amendments, interpretation of the text, rhythm and tone of the spoken words, the new cultural context of the performance, stage setting, costumes, lighting, and many others. The performance may be startlingly different from what the original text intended, but the success or failure will be assessed by what impact the new production will have on its audience. Nevertheless, the best performances will show understanding of, and fidelity to, the original text, otherwise it is no longer a performance of the original but something different. These performative decisions are very similar to those of the poet-translator.

The creative poetic translation will go through the many drafts that most original poems require – a process also very similar to rehearsals before the final dramatic or musical performance. The measure for the final translation will be whether the poetic translation will have the closest synonymity possible with the original. Each draft should be striving for closer synonymity. The questions are: What has been "lost in translation"? Can it not be restored? In the end is it a new poem belonging to the new poet? Or is it a recreation of the original in such a way as to

combine the source text with the recreated text in another language? Does it show respect for the original and the new readers in the new culture? Is there *Einfühlung* with the original? Is the poem a homage to the original, an adaptation of the original, or an attempt at synonymity? Or can it be all three at once? For all creative poetic translations are acts of homage; all are adaptations in some way or another; but few achieve synonymity or near-synonymity. The recreation will require all the gifts of a creative poet as well as those of a critic and a scholar. Only then will the original poem have its afterlife. In the terms of this research, the *exitus-reditus* process of translation will aim at the translation being "transubstantiated" in the same way as the sacrament is believed to bring to life the original.

The final versions should be read aloud – performed – and compared with the performance – the recording or the reading – by the collaborator. If a collaborator is present, his or her advice should be asked about the final versions. The translation should occupy the poet-translator's mind for a few days, and there will usually be further minor changes.

In the Introduction attention was given to Timothy Clark's views about the singularity of great poetry and its untranslatability. Kathleen Davis writes: ". . . any language event is an irreducibly singular performance with a meaning that effectuates from a systematic play of differences in a specific context. . . . But . . . if an event were *absolutely* singular, it would also be absolutely incomprehensible: any event – in order to be interpretable and therefore meaningful at all – must repeat structures already recognizable in a general code." (2001: 21–22.) After quoting Derrida on a text being "*at once* translatable *and* untranslatable" (Derrida (1979b: 102)), she comments,

> If a text were totally translatable, it would simply and purely repeat what already exists: it would have no singularity and thus no identity. (Such a text is an impossibility, of course, since even verbatim repetition must occur within a new context and is therefore different.) Totally untranslatable, a text would bear no relation to any meaningful system: fully self-contained, it dies immediately. (Again, such a text cannot exist, in the sense that it

> could never be recognized as a text.) The object of translation theory, paradoxically perhaps, is the untranslatable – the singularity of a text – signaled by the elements most inextricable from context, syntax, or lexicon. (2001: 22.)

It is this conflict between the translatability and the untranslatability of a singular text in which every poet-translator must engage. Towards the end of her book, Davis asserts: translation "plays a crucial role in mediating languages and cultures" (2001: 97). Despite (or because of) the acknowledged difficulties and problems facing the translator, translation is crucial, and the work of the creative poet-translator can be an artistic achievement of great note.

The concept of synonymity in translation must not be seen as impossibly idealistic in the practice and process of creative translation, nor must it be seen as a simplistic correspondence. It is part of the paradox of translation that Derrida and Davis acknowledge, and every poet-translator has to come to terms with this paradox.

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