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INTRODUCTION

Ideology, censorship and translation across genres: past and present

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History demonstrates that ideology and censorship are two concepts that appear to be inextricably linked to the translation process. Who translates, under what circumstances, and for what purposes are only some of the questions that come to mind as we attempt to examine the activity of translation, cognizant of the notion that ‘the ideology of a translation resides not simply in the text translated, but in the voicing and stance of the translator, and in its relevance to the receiving audience’ (Tymoczko 2003, p. 183).

There are numerous examples where transformations of historical accounts and literary texts have resulted in the omission or distortion of information for ideological and political purposes. In his preface to the Ukrainian translation (1947) of *Animal Farm*, George Orwell conveyed his awareness that a translation may not always be understood in the way the writer of the work intended it to be. Perhaps it is for this reason that, in addressing Ukrainian prisoners of war outside the Soviet Union, Orwell felt compelled to explain his background as a world traveller and avid reader, all the while recognizing his own lack of first-hand experience of that country: ‘And here I must pause to describe my attitude to the Soviet régime. I have never visited Russia and my knowledge of it consists only of what can be learned by reading books and newspapers’ (1945/1989, p. 117).

Much like Orwell, who was able to view with remarkable insight and perspicacity a political apparatus he had never experienced up close, we today are able to gather information about places unknown to us, talk about them, form opinions and question the viability of their leaders and governments, bombarded as we are by news and information that come to us through different media from diverse corners of the planet, either in the original language or, more frequently, in translation. The difference between our time and Orwell’s, as regards the ability to absorb and process information, is not so much the nature of the information itself since, in the main, the problem of its transmission – be it faithful, pseudo-faithful, or distorted – remains constant. What has changed, however, is the overwhelming quantity of sources and immediateness of the data we receive, with the result that the discipline of Translation, functioning as a vehicle for making information accessible from one culture to another, has had to adapt to this plethora of different sources and voices.

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It goes without saying that today's technology offers increasingly sophisticated and efficient mechanisms for communicating both historical and current events, disseminating ideological agendas, and censoring and manipulating ideas in translation. Within the media landscape, digital platforms such as WikiLeaks, Youtube, Twitter, etc., as well as new and old television channels like *Al-Jazeera*, *Russia Today* or *Fox*, reach ever-widening audiences. In so doing, they serve as conduits for instant broadcasts of independent and contrasting viewpoints, which more often than not serve the purposes of political and ideological manipulation, addressed to speakers of different languages.

A case in point is the Russian TV channel *Russia Today*, a mass medium through which pro-government commentators spout pre-packaged narratives. This relative newcomer to the global media landscape – broadcasting in English, Spanish and Arabic – is said to be an instrument designed to ‘foster a sense of shared identity among “brotherly peoples” as well as to punish political enemies’ (Pomerantsev 2013, p. 17). Not surprisingly, as Peter Pomerantsev has observed, *Russia Today* characterized the 2013 demonstration against the Ukrainian government, when Kiev refused to sign a free trade treaty with the European Union, as a ‘pogrom’ fomented by ‘foreign forces’. Such scenarios are, in many cases, ‘social and ideological conflicts rooted in psychological models and manifested in speech and word usage that are in need of airing and decoding’ (David and Muñoz-Basols 2011, xviii). Clearly, notwithstanding our high-speed access to information – previously available almost exclusively through newspapers and books – translation remains the key vehicle for disseminating, sifting and understanding cultural and social phenomena that come to us from foreign countries and languages.

It is for this very reason that our present special issue on ‘Ideology, censorship and translation across genres: past and present’, is premised on the idea that an integrated perception of both ideology and censorship in conjunction with translation across a variety of genres and contexts, and drawing on past and present examples, can be instructive for analyzing the role translation has played, and is able to play, both in disseminating information as well as in manipulating and distorting it. Accordingly, this special issue presents case studies and theoretical analyses from different chronological periods. In so doing, it considers the ethical and ideological implications for the translator, re-examines the role of the ideologist or the censor – as a stand-alone individual, as representative of a group, or as part of a larger apparatus – and establishes the translator's scope of action.

Indeed, the articles in this issue invite us to revisit these important communication issues by adopting a variety of perspectives. Organized chronologically, these various articles focus on ideology, censorship and translation across a variety of genres, themes and audiences. These include: scientific writing, the publishing industry, propaganda, theatre, translated literature, the philosophical and critical essay, the history of ideas, literary theory and cultural studies, cinema and film adaptation, the theory of translation and power relations.

In the first article, Carmen Acuña Partial studies the history of European translations of Charles Darwin's [*On The Origin of Species*] to demonstrate how ideological manipulation, censorship and publishing strategies affected the reception of the translated text. As she explains, the worldwide publishing success of the book only came after Darwin's death, even though manipulated, fragmented and illegal editions in English and in other languages seem to have proliferated, within what was already an increasingly complex book market not exempt from the havoc wreaked by

copyright or spurious commercial interests. The author's analysis sheds considerable light on certain issues regarding the reception of classical science texts, an area which to date has remained largely unexamined in Translation Studies.

The second essay, by Marcos Rodríguez-Espinosa, traces the biographies of a group of women (Paulina and Adelina Abramson, Irene Falcón, María Fortus, Ilse Kulcsar, Constanca de la Mora, Lise Ricol and Lydia Kúper), who worked as translators during the Spanish Civil War. Eventually travelling to the USSR, where they received political indoctrination and linguistic training as translators, these women were recruited by the Comintern (the Communist International), founded in 1919 following the radical political changes of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, to promote revolution throughout the world. Rodríguez-Espinosa explains how the Spanish Civil War was, for these translators, a unique opportunity to put translation at the service of 'the last great cause'. However, for most of them, the end of the Spanish conflict ultimately meant the beginning of a long exile, not just because of the defeat of the Republic, but also on account of their dissidence from Soviet orthodoxy. The article reminds us of the fact that translators always work in a political dimension, and when they have to deal with dictators such as Franco and Stalin, translation is literally a question of life and death.

In the third contribution, Raquel Merino-Álvarez analyzes the translation of imported theatre into Franco's Spain during the 1960s, a period which, interestingly enough, was characterized by political openness within the Ministry in charge of theatre censorship, as well as a time of intense activity on the Spanish stage. Paying particular attention to the changes undergone by foreign plays, such as those by Edward Albee and Tennessee Williams, as they were rendered into Spanish, the author notes that the censorship archives are virtually the only source of information we have available for researching the history of theatre translations in Spain. Merino-Álvarez shows how texts of plays were treated when submitted to the censors' ideologically biased scrutiny; armed with such evidence, she illustrates the extent to which foreign plays were integrated into Spanish theatre even in the face of ideological manipulation and censorship.

In the fourth article, Emily Lygo examines the fate of literature in translation in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev years, in particular the translations published in the important journal *Novyi mir* from 1965 to 1981. In her analysis, Lygo shows that while there were changes in the translations published during that period, overall translation did not experience stagnation. As she indicates, different agents within the Soviet literary process – members of the Party, editors or translators – used translation in order to pursue their various agendas. In particular, Lygo demonstrates the various and specific strategies employed by the journal's editors and translators to get the texts past the censor, and sheds interesting light on the balance in *Novyi mir* in this period between translations from minority languages of the USSR and those from pro-Soviet or neutral Western writers.

The fifth essay, by Pilar Godayol, explores the translations of Jean-Paul Sartre's oeuvre into Catalan in the 1960s and early 1970s by researching the institutional censorship that these works underwent, starting from the time the publishers requested the permits from the Ministry of Information and Tourism until they received the final authorizations. Contextualizing the translations, Godayol concentrates on the analysis of the eight censors' reports, consulted in the General Archive of the Administration (AGA). Through her research she is able to see how the Franco dictatorship reacted to the possibility of translating works by Sartre into Catalan: who the censors were, what

views they expressed and why. Remarkably, despite the fact that Sartre was a banned author, the Ministry finally authorized the translations. Once more, this contribution confirms that censorship is never a monolithic structure: at least one of the censors became a subtle protector of Sartre's works.

In the sixth contribution, Jeroen Vandaele demonstrates through his analyses of Michel Foucault's works that the translation of critical theory has received undeservingly scant attention. Addressing the general reader as well as Foucault specialists, he compares a chapter from *Surveiller et punir* (1975) ('Les moyens du bon dressement') with its English, Spanish and Norwegian translations. These translations, he argues, are by and large not 'the same text in a different language', but rather concepts that have been carved up in translation; shifts in analysis from a structural to a historical perspective; or syntactic adjustments that make Foucault sound like the writer of a book of instructions. In the end Vandaele suggests that Foucault studies themselves could benefit from a 'translational turn'.

The seventh article, by Patrick Zabalbeascoa, embarks on an analysis of Stanley Kubrick's 1962 big-screen version of Nabokov's 1955 novel, *Lolita*. Focusing on the humor and the subtleties of censorship, Zabalbeascoa provides a useful *tertium comparationis* with Adrian Lyne's 1997 film. Through convincing micro-textual analyses, the article offers fascinating insights into the nature of humor and the benefits of comical translations, and it shows how censorship, taboo and ideological misconceptions regarding an author's work can affect the audience's perception of it.

Lastly, in the eighth and final article of this special issue Stefan Baumgarten questions the role of the twenty-first century translator and Translation Studies themselves by looking at different translation phenomena from various viewpoints: theoretical, self-reflexive, ethical-ideological. This is an appropriately thought-provoking survey of where the discipline is currently at, and it offers some challenging ideas about how the world of translators and Translation Studies might change or be changed. Baumgarten explains that in contemporary society structures of domination and hegemony keep defining power relations, even though we are moving towards a post-neoliberal world order in which capitalist values are expected to become a more deeply engrained, and unquestioned standard. In his paper, Baumgarten attempts to inject the notion of 'hegemonic non-translation' into the discourse of translation theory, stressing the significance of enhanced 'self-reflexivity' and 'critical economics' for future research.

Collectively, in demonstrating the role ideology and censorship play in the act of translation, these eight articles help to establish a connection between the past and the present across different genres, cultural traditions and audiences. Focusing on issues that have thus far not been addressed in a sufficiently connected way and from a variety of disciplines, they analyze authentic translation work, procedures and strategies. The result of individual, original analyses, the papers presented here contribute new ideas that help to elucidate both the role of the translator throughout history as well as current practices. Thus, combining various chronological, geographical (Spain, Russia, France, Scandinavia and so forth) and textual perspectives on translation, this special issue makes its contribution to the discipline of Translation Studies by revisiting ideology and censorship as two important and often intertwined themes within translation theory, all the while attesting to their ubiquitousness.

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Javier Muñoz-Basols is Senior Instructor in Spanish at the University of Oxford. He holds a PhD in Translation Studies from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. He has co-authored the books *Speed up your Spanish: Strategies to Avoid Common Errors* (Routledge, 2009), *Developing Writing Skills in Spanish* (Routledge, 2011), *¡A debate! Estrategias para la interacción oral* (Edelsa, 2013), and *Spanish Idioms in Practice: Understanding Language and Culture* (Routledge, 2014). He has co-edited the volumes *Defining and Re-defining Diaspora: From Theory to Reality* (Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2011) and *The Limits of Literary Translation: Expanding Frontiers in Iberian Languages* (Reichenberger, 2012), and published numerous book chapters and articles on Hispanic Literature, Translation Studies, Stylistics and Literary Linguistics, Cultural Studies and Applied Linguistics. He is a Founding Co-Editor of the *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching* (Routledge).

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