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Part I

Professor Krzysztof Hejwowski (1952-1919)
In Memoriam

Source: The photo archive of the Hejwowski family

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"Hejwo" Professor Krzysztof Hejwowski as a Translation Theorist and Practitioner

I met Krzysztof Hejwowski in 1989. By then, he was already a long-standing and respected lecturer at the University of Warsaw's Institute of Applied Linguistics, and a sought-after translator of specialist texts from and into English. He was also hugely respected by his students, who abbreviated his name and called him "Hejwo". He never shunned them and was always at their disposal in room 214 in the now defunct institute in Browarna Street, which he occupied as a lecturer. Later, after the smoking ban was introduced in most of the building, he would also meet them in the basement smoking room, where everyone could find him, and then, after the ban was extended to the whole building, on the huge steps in front of the building.

The year 1989 was a turning point in the history of Poland (and other Eastern European countries), as well as in Hejwowski's personal history, as he not only became involved in the university's Solidarity movement, but also began to reflect on literary translation, drawing on his many years of experience in translating various kinds of texts. This led first to his doctoral thesis, entitled *Psychologiczny model tłumaczenia* (*Psychological Model of Translation*), which he defended in 1992, and then to the translation of a book for older children by Penelope Lively entitled *Dom od podszewki* (A House Inside Out, see Pict. 1). To publish it, the Hejwowskis set up the Topos Publishing House and, of course, bought the copyright to the book.

The book came out in 1995 and did not become a hit. On the one hand, the market was already saturated with books translated mostly from English, and on the other hand, the Hejwowskis did not have the contacts and resources to be able to give it proper distribution. And even today some copies of this book are in the basement of their house.

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However, the publishing house functioned for several years and published several valuable items, some thanks to the support of various institutions. One of these was *Raptularz 1843-1849* by Juliusz Słowacki, edited by Marek Troszyński, which came out in 1996 (see Pict. 2).

At the same time, Hejwowski, having already made his literary translation debut, was able to develop independent translation activity. He started with how-to and popular science books at the Świat Książki Publishing House, which was then owned by Bertelsmann, and gained such enormous recognition there that, as it turned out, editors transposed his completely informal comments on the margins of the books directly into his translations.

However, he was keen on worthwhile literary books, and it was these that he primarily opted for. One of them was undoubtedly *Ingenious Pain* by Andrew Miller, which was published by Prószyński in 1999 as *Przemyślny ból* (see Pict. 3). Hejwowski, who always stipulated that he did not translate poetry, translated for this novel the popular folk song "John Barleycorn Must Die". Later, he still happened to render into Polish the short poetic texts that were part of the books he translated, but he actually did this rarely and not very willingly.

Another important translation by Hejwowski was *The Rage and the Pride* (see Pict. 4), which Oriana Fallaci, who lived in New York, wrote after the attack on the World Trade Center. The book was originally written in Italian, but Fallaci wished the translation to be made from its English translation. Similar situations happen on the publishing market, but usually when we are dealing with a language that is not very popular, as in the case of Isaac Bashevis Singer, who himself translated or supervised the translation of his books from Yiddish, or when the translation itself deserves special attention, such as *Księga Drogi i Dobra* (*Tao Te Ching: A Book About The Way And The Power Of The Way*) by Lao Tzu, recently translated by Justyna Bargielska and Jerzy Jarniewicz from the translation made by Ursula K. LeGuin. It is difficult to say why it was English in this case, probably above all the author's own confidence in this translation. Apart from that, this was already after the *fatwa* condemning Salman Rushdie had been issued and there were fears that the translator of this 'anti-Islamic' book might also be at risk, but Hejwowski did not want to use a pseudonym.

Hejwowski was becoming increasingly well-known on the market as an excellent translator of all sorts of texts that required not only good Polish, but also expertise. He owed this to such items as Penelope Ody's *Zioła w domu* (*Home Herbal*), for example, which came out in 1996, at a time when you couldn't look everything up on the Internet and had to do a lot of research to be able to work out all the relevant, nitty-gritty details. Another such book was, for example, *Twoje ciało* by Kate Barnes, also translated for Świat Książki and published the following year. The same was also true of the last book translated by Hejwowski, which was about artificial intelligence.

Hejwowski's could feel more fulfilled as a literary translator when he cooperated with *Literatura na Świecie*. He started in the early 1990s and translated for this monthly texts by Namba Roy, Alexander Trocchi, Martin Amis, whom Hejwowski valued above all for his book *Money*, as well as the very witty Dallas Wiebe, Robert Coover and Chester Himes. The translation of the

latter author, which appeared in issues 4-5-6 of the magazine in 2002, ended his collaboration with *Literatura na Świecie*. As usual, the meticulous Hejwowski rendered all the imperfections of the prose of the author he translated:

> After much deliberation, however, I decided not to revise parts of the autobiography of the well--known African-American writer Ch. Himes. I decided that a writer with such an oeuvre should be able to write in English, and if he cannot, the Polish reader has a right to know. So I painstakingly recreated the awkwardness of his style in Polish (...) I also tried to 'translate' the syntactical errors appearing in the text, but these intentional lapses in relation to grammar were corrected by the editors. (*Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria* 146–147)

It was these corrections that caused the very principled Hejwowski to resign from his collaboration with *Literatura na Świecie*. As an aside, it is worth noting here that Hejwowski never became rigid when it came to the translation itself, and was able to state, for example, that a book written by an unprofessional author deserved to be corrected in translation (2004a: 146). He also never mocked anyone's views on translation in advance. For example he disliked the issue of foreignization, as presented in a rather extreme form by Venuti (1995), but at the same time greatly appreciated his reflection on cultural appropriation precisely through domestication, and he himself stated that after reading Venuti he would not have chosen to translate the anthroponym John Barleycorn into Jan Żytko.

Hejwowski excelled as a translator, which allowed him to gain further experience, which he was able to 'translate' into theory. For some time, his career developed in two directions: he was a highly regarded lecturer and TS scholar, and at the same time an excellent translator. It is also worth mentioning that he also did (increasingly less) consecutive interpreting, but always claimed to be too apprehensive when doing so. I only saw him in action once. He performed really well and there was no sign of nervousness at all.

This order of things was shattered at the end of the last century, when Hejwowski was given a book to translate about heaven and its different depictions in various cultures. As he claimed, this was his biggest and most difficult translation. He also devoted masses of time and effort to it, putting less emphasis on his scholarly activities and hoping for a solid, contractual fee. He translated this book for Marabut Publishing House, which had previously published a book about hell translated by Jerzy Jarniewicz. Unfortunately, in 1997 the publishing house decided to close down, and the break lasted until 2001. According to the contract, Hejwowski received only part of the remuneration for the finished translation, which significantly undermined the budget of his family of six. This event arguably marks a turning point in his business. Hejwowski never stopped translating and did so with real passion, but from the beginning of the new century he was first and foremost an academic. The publishing house Marabut has not returned to the project of publishing *O niebie*, as Hejwowski's translation was titled. The book itself is now only available on floppy disk and is in possession of the family.

In the following years, three of Hejwowski's most important scientific works were produced in which he drew from many different theoreticians, but he always emphasized the role of Olgierd Wojtasiewicz's monograph (1957) in his own thinking about Translation Studies in general: *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* (2004), *Translation: A Cognitive-Communicative Approach* (2004), *Iluzja przekładu* (2015) – the title was the term used by Jiri Levý in his book *The Art of Translation*. In the latter we find the following passage, when Hejwowski described various linguistic allusions, including archaization: "It seems that archaization is such a complex issue that it deserves a separate study" (*Translation* 244).

This one sentence was a marker of Hejwowski's further interests: he got interested in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, in which John the Savage speaks in Shakespeare's language, and therefore sounds very archaic, even against the background of pre-war English. Hejwowski went on to criticise Bogdan Baran's existing translation, who did not take the trouble to recognise all the quotations John used and translated them all by himself. We can find these objections in the book he wrote with Grzegorz Moroz, entitled *Nowe wspaniałe światy Aldousa Huxleya*, published in 2019 by Warsaw University Publishers. Aware of the previous translator's negligence, Hejwowski began to translate Huxley himself, assuming that someone would publish it. In doing so, he used the oldest translations of Shakespeare into Polish, which was another unusual thing.

Translators are usually aware that their work has a limited time span and that, according to Edward Balcerzan's "series theory": a translation is followed by another one that uses a new language which better suits the needs of contemporary readers. However, Hejwowski has proved that old translations can be useful and have value beyond the historical one. For they can certainly be used – like the original old texts in Polish – for archaization. And that there are situations (e.g. Huxley's *Brave New World*) in which they will work better than the new, modernised translations by Barańczak or Kamiński.

The finished translation of this novel was sent to Ossolineum, where it met with a warm, if somewhat delayed, reception, and it seemed that Hejwowski would return to the arena of literary translation with an important and interesting proposal, but at some point the publishing house received information that the copyright to publish Huxley's books in Polish was held by Muza, which had just released *Brave New World*. In the old translation, of course, which means that Hejwowski's translation has not been published yet. Fortunately, at least it became known to the general public, as the Juliusz Osterwa Theatre in Lublin used this translation to stage Huxley, directed by Piotr Ratajczak and adapted by him and Magdalena Drab. There is also a book *On Heaven* waiting to be published, although we don't know if it survived on floppy disk. Unfortunately, we will no longer be able to put another original book authored by Krzysztof Hejwowski on our shelves.

On 19 March 2019, I defended my PhD, for which he was the supervisor. A little later, Professor Hejwowski had already signed my diploma with his left hand and then did not attend the graduation ceremony. I phoned him in May of that year with an offer to take part in a discussion on the translation of song lyrics, for it must be remembered that he was a true expert on rock

music and probably the whole counterculture. Unfortunately, he declined; he was already seriously ill. He died on 28 September of the same year.

The grief remains.

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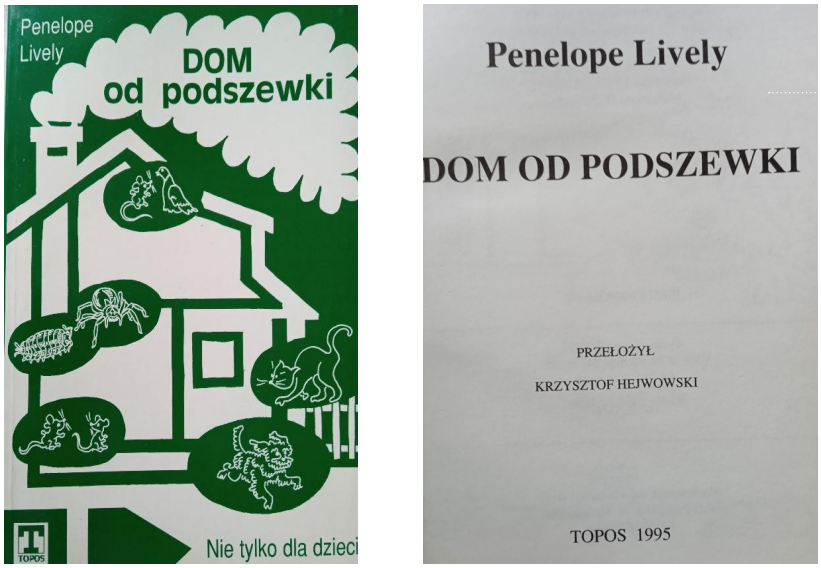
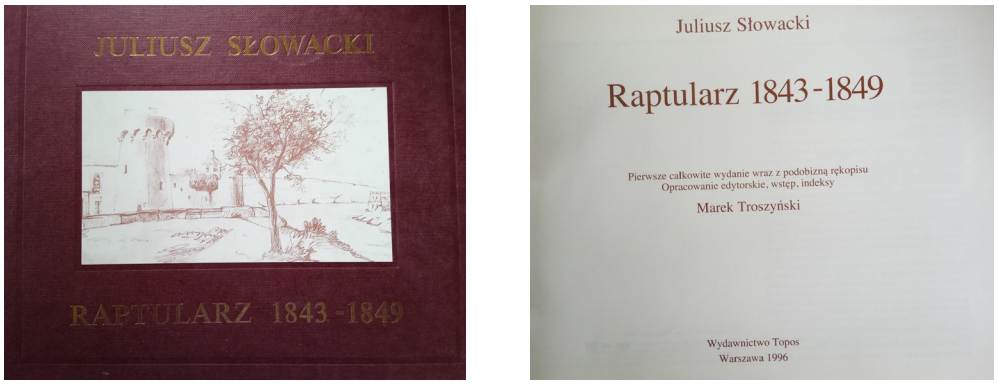
Krzysztof Puławski is an English philologist, translator and a research assistant at the University of Białystok, Poland. He obtained his PhD from the University of Warsaw. His publications concern broadly defined literary translations (mainly poetry and songs) and include many articles and a monograph on Polish translations of the books in Hiberno-English: *Przetłumaczyć Irlandię* (Białystok, 2020). Apart from that, he translated over a hundred books from English by authors such as David Lodge, Tracy Chevalier, Raymond Carver, Flann O'Brien, Michael Ondaatje, Bruce Chatwin, E. L. Doctorow or Joe Biden, and poems by William Blake and William Butler Yeats, as well as dozens of plays including those by Andrew Bovell, Jordan Tannahill, Max Posner and Jez Butterworth, and songs by Michael Flanders and Tom Lehrer, among others. Puławski is also the author of plays, a volume of poems entitled Martwiątka (Deadlings) (Białostocka Filologiczna Kolekcja, 2017), a book of short-stories *Mikołajek w szkole Dobrej zmiany* (Little Nicholas in Present-Day Polish School, Kielce 2019), and a novel *Pan Walczyk w mieście B* (Mr Waltz in the city of B).

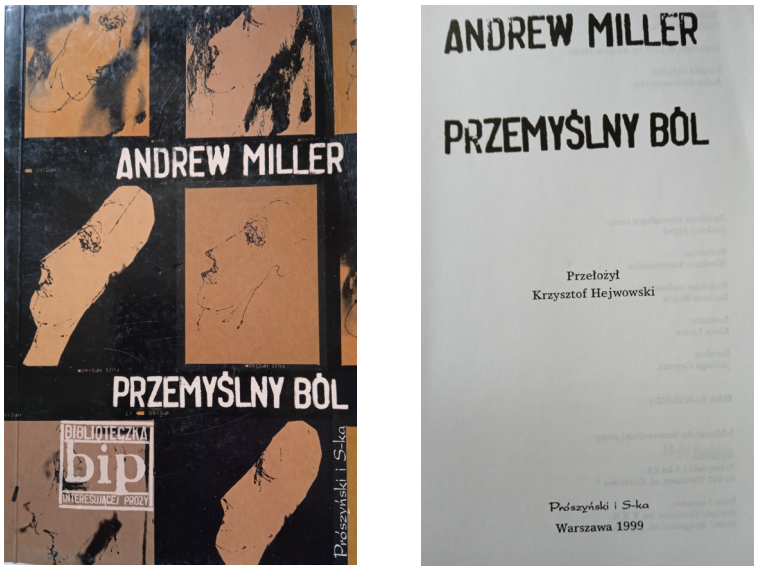
Prof. Hejwowski's translations: From the Photo Archive of the Hejwowski Family



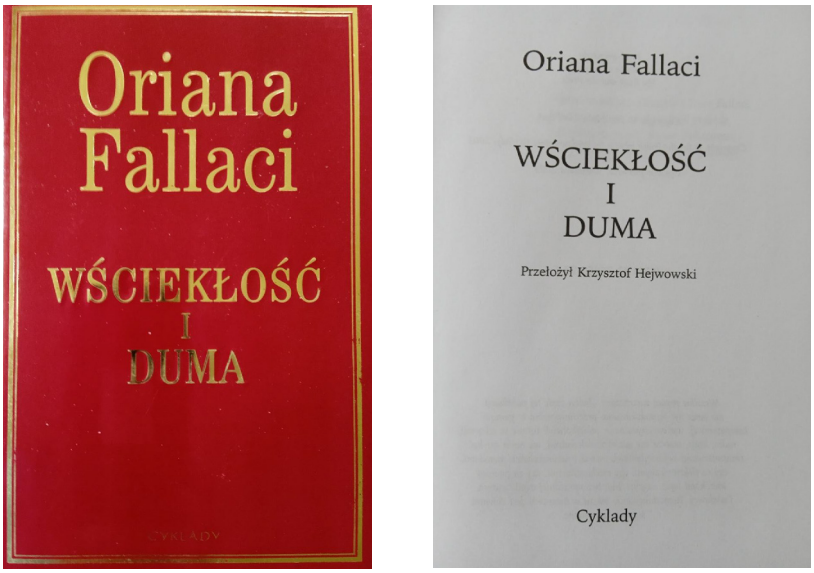
Picture 1 Dom od Podszewki



Picture 2 Raptularz



Picture 3 Przemyślny ból



Picture 4 The Rage and Pride

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Krzysztof Hejwowski: An Academic Biography

Abstract. The aim of the paper is to discuss the research output of Krzysztof Hejwowski, as well as his academic activity, didactic work and translations. First, Hejwowski's academic career is introduced with a focus on the main publications, his contribution to the development of the Institute of Applied Linguistics (University of Warsaw), and the functions he held there. The second section is dedicated to his cognitive communicative model of translation, presented in his first and second books. In the next part, other publications are discussed, including Hejwowski's third book, shorter papers, and volumes he edited or co-edited. The fourth section focuses on Hejwowski's translation practice and includes a presentation of his last book concerning his own translation of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. In the last part, Hejwowski's didactic work is presented: his lectures and other classes, as well as the BA, MA, and PhD theses he supervised.

Keywords: Krzysztof Hejwowski, cognitive communication model of translation, literary translation, *Imago Mundi*, Institute of Applied Linguistics

1. Academic activity

Krzysztof Hejwowski was born in 1952 in Warsaw. He graduated from the faculty of English Studies at the University of Warsaw in 1976. He pursued his academic career at the Institute of Applied Linguistics (University of Warsaw), where in the years 1981–1983 he was a student of Postgraduate Studies in Translation. In 1992, he defended his PhD thesis dedicated to a psychological model of translation [Psychologiczny model tłumaczenia], written under the supervision of Professor Barbara Z. Kielar. Already in this early work he referred to the notions of scripts and schemes in the translation process (as a specific kind of communication). These ideas were later developed in Hejwowski's publications. The interest in psycholinguistics and the cognitive aspects of communication and translation continued and led him to formulate his own theory of translation, presented in the book *Translation: A Cognitive-communicative Approach* (the Polish edition, slightly abbreviated, was released in 2004 under the title *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu*). On 9 June 2005, he was granted a postdoctoral degree [habilitacja] at

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the University of Gdańsk (at the Faculty of Philology and History), in acknowledgement of both the book and the whole research work. In the year 2010, he became associate professor at the Institute of Applied Linguistics (University of Warsaw), and at the Department of English Studies at SWPS University in Warsaw.

Professor Hejwowski actively participated in the intellectual life of the community of researchers from the field of translation studies. He initiated (in 2005) and organized the cycle of conferences entitled *Imago mundi* held at the Institute of Applied Linguistics. The focus was often on literary translation but not only: a number of papers tackled other key issues in translation studies, such as audiovisual translation or sign language translation; or new issues, such as respeaking. The meetings and discussions in Warsaw set the tone for the academic life at the Institute of Applied Linguistics. After each conference (*Językowy obraz świata w oryginale i przekładzie* [Linguistic image of the world in the original and in translation[2]], 2005; *50 lat polskiej translatoryki* [50 years of translation studies in Poland] in 2007; *Tłumacz: sługa, pośrednik, twórca?* [Translator: the servant, the intermediary, the creator?], 2010; *Tłumaczenie w XXI wieku. Teoria-kształcenie-praktyka* [Translation issues in the 21st century: theory, training, practice], 2012; *Teoria tłumaczenia czy teorie tłumaczeń?* [Translation theory or a theory of translations?], 2015; *Tłumaczenie wczoraj, dziś i jutro* [Translation: past, present, and future], 2018) in the cycle, a multi-authored monograph coedited by Hejwowski was published.

Apart from his activity in Warsaw, the Professor also eagerly collaborated with other scientific centres. He cooperated with the Wydział Neofilologii [Faculty of Modern Languages] at Wszechnica Mazurska in Olecko [Masurian Academy], where he also worked as an associate professor. Among other things, two interesting publications co-edited by Hejwowski were released during that cooperation: *Teoria i dydaktyka przekładu* [Theory and didactics of translation], 2003; *Kulturowe i językowe źródła nieprzekładalności* [Culture- and language-specific reasons for untranslatability], 2005, both including Hejwowski's articles. He also co-edited a volume of papers following a linguistic conference held there in 1999 (Kątny and Hejwowski). He actively collaborated with different universities (including smaller ones) and was often invited to review publications or deliver keynote addresses at linguistic or translation conferences. He was also frequently invited to meetings of translation scholars organized by Professor Roman Lewicki (from Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin) in Kazimierz Dolny (and later in Lublin). After each conference of that cycle, subsequent volumes from the series *Przekład. Język. Kultura* [Translation, language, culture] edited by Roman Lewicki were published (some of them included Hejwowski's contributions). Hejwowski was also editor of a number of periodicals, including one

2 Polish translation of most of the titles provided in square brackets in this section by Agata Balińska (Urbanek, "In Memoriam"). The titles *Translation issues in the 21st century: theory, training, practice* and *Translation theory or a theory of translations?* are given in my own translation. The English title *Between Originals and Translation* is the official translation of the journal title.

of the major translation journals in Poland, that is *Między Oryginałem a Przekładem* (*Between Originals and Translations*). From 2012, he was also the President of its Scientific Council.

In 2015, he supported the acquisition of publishing rights to the renowned journal *Lingua Legis*, earlier published under the auspices of the Polish Society of Sworn and Specialized Translators (TEPIS); he was also a member of the Scientific Council of that journal.

At the same time, he remained dedicated to the development of the Institute of Applied Linguistics, working as the Deputy Director for Student Affairs in the years 1998–2001, and then as Head of the Department of Translation Studies. In 2008, he took the post of Director of the Institute of Applied Linguistics, and in 2012 he was elected Dean of the Faculty of Applied Linguistics UW, a function that he held until 2016.

2. The cognitive communicative approach to translation

In his first book, Hejwowski presents his own model of translation as an operation on human minds rather than on texts. The theory was inspired by the concept of verbal frames (Charles J. Fillmore), scenes and scripts (Roger Shrank and Robert Abelson), as well as the idea of "effort after meaning" (Frederic C. Bartlett). It also draws from contemporary cognitive works (George Lakoff or Ronald Langacker).

A great admirer of Olgierd Wojtasiewicz, Hejwowski partly based his definition of translation on Wojtasiewicz's ("Translation consists in formulating, in language B, of text b which is an equivalent of text a, previously formulated in language A (…). Text b, in language B, is an equivalent of text a, in language A, if text b evokes the same response (reaction, set of associations) as does text a") (Wojtasiewicz 123). However, instead of preserving the vague notion of *the same response,* Hejwowski focused on the mental structures: "Translation consists in reproducing the mental structures signalled by text A in language a, and then producing text B in language b that will make it possible for users of language b to reproduce as much of those mental structures as possible" (Hejwowski "Applied Linguistics" 8).

The point of departure is thus the definition of translation as a peculiar kind of a communication process. As such, it starts in the sender's cognitive base (seen as the set of "mental structures and processes activated in a given situation", particularly in the production and comprehension of texts) (Hejwowski, *Translation: A Cognitive Communicative Approach* 63). The cognitive base is extensive and heterogeneous, and thus it cannot be verbalized as a whole. Therefore, the sender establishes the utterance base and proceeds to select the deep structure of the utterance, building the verbal structure of the communication.

When exposed to it, the addressee is supposed to reconstruct the utterance base, also partly relying on their general knowledge of the world, as well as the recognition of so-called frames (these may be verb frames, but also scenes, scripts and other schemata), which helps them to draw general conclusions, or predict what will be said next, when a given frame is recognized. The translator's task is to reconstruct as much of the sender's cognitive base as possible and then (relying on their knowledge of communication strategies and the source culture,

and other information) make assumptions as for the degree in which the primary addressees may have comprehended the communication. In order to produce the translation, it is necessary to conceive a representation of the "(potential) recipient" (Hejwowski, *Translation: A Cognitive Communicative Approach* 63), establish a strategy and select appropriate translation techniques that will favour it. Hejwowski puts forward his own classification of translation techniques, as well as sets of translation techniques used when handling particular translation problems like proper names or idioms.

Krzysztof Hejwowski has been one of the two, alongside Elżbieta Tabakowska, most influential Polish scholars to have developed an independent theory of translation based on cognitive studies. The core difference between their approaches was that while Hejwowski focused on the idea of scripts and scenes, Tabakowska built on Ronald Langacker's concept of imagery. Additionally, Tabakowska highlighted the elements of meaning that just cannot be translated. Hejwowski, on the other hand, was a great advocate of thinking about translation in a positive way. He referred to the relative similarity of mental and linguistic structures across cultures, as well as the ability to be flexible and empathetic—an idea that appears to be strikingly relevant today. He would often repeat that if people for centuries have managed to communicate, translation must be possible.

The monograph *Translation: A Cognitive Communicative Approach* was not only a lecture on the cognitive communicative theory. The fact that it also presented a review of the most influential approaches to translation and covered a wide range of specific challenges (such as translation of proper names and other culture-bound items, of titles, or of polyphonic texts), as well as the structure of the Polish version (*Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu*), based on the debunking of six popular myths associated to translation, contribute to its immense didactic value. The main claims discussed are that despite all kinds of obstacles, translation is possible (the myth of absolute untranslatability), that neither literal nor functional translation should be accepted as a sufficient method of translation (the myths of literal translation and of functional translation), that culture can be translated and understood by foreign readers (the myth of cultural untranslatability), that meaning does not belong to the language (the myth of linguistic untranslatability), that translation mistakes can and ought to be studied (the myth of idealization), and that translation does require specific skills (the myth of natural translation).

3. Other publications

Although Hejwowski's theory can be applied to all sorts of translation, his main interest was literary translation, which, according to the Professor, "is the epitome of all translation: all translation problems encountered in other types of texts appear in literature" (Hejwowski, "Płeć i rodzaj gramatyczny w przekładzie" 15).

In his second book, *Iluzja przekładu*, Hejwowski wrote about the illusion of translation as the original work. Contrary to many contemporary scholars and translation practitioners, he emphasized that translators play an instrumental, ancillary role, serving the author, the reader and their cultures. That duty requires making sacrifices and creating the "illusion of translation",

understood as the reader's conviction that what they are reading is what the author wrote. Translations being representations of the originals, when presenting the reader with an intentionally deformed version of the work, the translator is lying. Obviously, the illusion is also ruined when the translator uses an unjustified technique (which results in unnatural sounding sentences when there is no reason for them to be such) or makes other mistakes. As an enthusiast of footnotes, he believed they do less harm to the illusion of translation, and when appropriately formulated, they should be accepted by the readers. He also noticed the problem of translation reviews, which hardly ever include any mention about the quality of translation as such.

In his shorter publications he showed interest in such topics as translation of idioms (e.g., *1000 idiomów angielskich*), dialects ("O tłumaczeniu aluzji językowych"), and proper names ("Imiona własne w tłumaczeniach", "Nazwy własne w tekście"); the importance and the limits of fidelity in translation (*Językowy obraz świata*), sex and gender in translation (e.g., "Płeć i rodzaj gramatyczny", *Iluzja przekładu*), and the use of dictionaries in translation practice ("Rola słownika dwujęzycznego").

He wrote a lot about the question of untranslatability, stressing, however, the distinction between absolute and relative ones (e.g., "O nieprzekładalności" and *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu*). He often chose translation series as an object of his studies (one of his last conference papers—unfortunately, not followed by a publication—was dedicated to *Just So Stories*). Nevertheless, he did not take the subsequent elements of translation series uncritically and was willing to question their raison d'être. He approached the vastest series with reserve, insisting that literature be translated as aptly as possible, instead of multiplying translation versions beyond measure. When analyzing one of the longest Polish translation series, which is the one based on *Alice in Wonderland*, he drew attention to the commercial aspects and the problem of translation being perceived as merchandise, which obviously does not favour high quality work ("Przygody Alinki" and "O upiększaniu przekładu").

Enthusiastic about translation curiosities, he was the first scholar to have reached for and analyzed the very first Polish translation of *Alice in Wonderland,* made by the mysterious Adela S. at the beginning of the 20th century ("Przygody Alinki").

Hejwowski was keenly interested in issues often neglected in translation research, such as translators' paratexts and children's literature.

A great part of his last book, *Iluzja przekładu*, was dedicated to the Polish translation series of Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's,* with a focus, among other things, on translator's footnotes; his paper on the oldest Polish translation of *Alice in Wonderland* involved an analysis of the paratext, the illustrations, the cover, and not only those. In his papers on children's literature, he always treated that branch of translation very seriously, insisting that it should be translated just like other kinds of literature, if not even better ("O upiększaniu przekładu"). He also emphasized the importance of fidelity in translation and warned against too radical changes introduced by translators, especially in the case of books and stories for young readers, who should not be lied to or presented with simplified versions of literary works.

Hejwowski was also interested in the issues of translation ethics. In one of his short articles ("Tłumaczenie, ekwiwalencja i teorie przekładu") he discussed the concept of the translator's responsibility (which seems to complement the earlier concepts of fidelity and loyalty). According to the Professor, the translator is responsible towards the author and the readership, but also towards the source and the target cultures. In particular, it is the translator's duty to ensure that the text assumes its rightful place in the target culture.

A great advocate of the practical approach to translation, Hejwowski did not avoid discussing purely theoretical issues. Above all, he supported the claim that translation studies should be granted the status of an independent branch of science, not just a subfield of linguistics or literary studies. He also asked vital questions about the nature of translation studies and its status ("Przekładoznawstwo—ale jakie?", "Applied Linguistics") or its usefulness for practicing translators ("Czy tłumaczowi potrzebna jest teoria?"). He was also not afraid to question the direction in which translation studies are heading and soberly reminded that translations are linked to the originals and they should not be analyzed in complete isolation from them ("The Myth of the Cultural Turn"). After the so-called cultural turn in translation studies, when the very notion of equivalence is frequently questioned, Hejwowski was not afraid to speak in favour of it, reminding about the lasting value of this core notion of translation studies. At the same time, he was emphasizing that not all translations are equal and that translations can and ought to be evaluated—thus the importance of studying translation mistakes and the translator's competence ("Tłumaczenie, ekwiwalencja"). In this context, he highlighted the rising expectations towards translators, resulting from the easier access to information, but also from the growing knowledge about translation as such.

Hejwowski was also the editor of a number of books, among which were the volumes published after each conference from the already-mentioned *Imago Mundi* cycle. The first one, titled *Językowy obraz świata w oryginale i przekładzie* (Hejwowski and Szczęsny), centered around the image of the world (in a broad sense) in translation. Most of the contributions tackled the issues of culture-bound items (especially in literary works). The second one, *50 lat polskiej translatoryki*, was an attempt at summing up the reflection on translation in Poland during the five decades since the publication of the founding work by Olgierd Wojtasiewicz: *Wstęp do teorii tłumaczenia* [An introduction to the theory of translation[3]], about whose impact Hejwowski wrote himself in his contribution ("*Wstęp do teorii tłumaczenia* po pięćdziesięciu latach"). The third volume: *Tłumaczenie—Leksyka, frazeologia, styl* was dedicated to lexis, phraseology and style in translation (and particularly tackled such issues as idioms, metaphors, wordplay, humour, neologisms, substandard language, and terminology). The opening paper, authored by Hejwowski, focused on techniques of translating idioms, and listed six of them (what draws attention is the fifth of them, rarely noticed by other scholars, namely substituting an idiom with a non-existing idiom in the other language, fashioned by the translator). In the fourth volume: *Tłumacz: sługa, pośrednik,*

3 English translation of the title taken from Hejwowski's "Olgierd Wojtasiewicz—Ojciec Polskiej Translatoryki".

twórca? (Guławska-Gawkowska et al.) a question was asked about the translator's role, duties, and responsibility. The contributions tackled such issues as the translator's role as an author, the translator's competence, and correcting the original author. The fifth volume: *Z zagadnień tłumaczenia: teoria, kształcenie, praktyka* (Głogowska et al.) dealt with, among other things, the greatly important problem of training translators. The last (until now) one, titled *Tłumaczenie wczoraj, dziś i jutro*, looked at the tradition and the future of translation studies, and included papers about respeaking and sign language translation.

What draws attention in all of Hejwowski's output is the synergetic combination of theoretical reflection, translation practice, and didactic work. His publications and books provide not only inspiration for scholars, but also practical aid for translators; during his lectures and workshops, he used examples from his own practice; and he also showed his appreciation for his students by including and acknowledging their findings in his publications.

4. Translation practice

Krzysztof Hejwowski was a keen literary translator. He translated such authors as Robert Snedden, Andrew Miller, Cheryl Bolen, Janice Woods Windle, and Oriana Fallaci. A number of popular scientific books were also published in Poland in his translation; among them works on artificial intelligence, and the history of life on Earth. He collaborated with such prestigious periodicals as *Literatura na Świecie* (*Literature in the World*). What is characteristic is that there are typically no paratexts added to his translation; an advocate of the ancillary role of the translator, he seems to have hidden behind his work. Therefore, he left no clear description or explanation of his own translation method; nevertheless, particular challenges encountered in the translation process are discussed in his theoretical books (providing more proof of the synergetic character of his work).

Additionally, as a practicing translator and an expert, he was frequently asked—and willingly agreed—to write reviews of translations. Among other things, he reviewed an important series of classical works on translation published by Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, including *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (*Esej o zasadach sztuki przekładowczej*) by Alexander Fraser Tytler, and two influential essays about translating classical literature: Matthew Arnold's *On Translating Homer* (*O przekładaniu Homera*) and Francis Newman's answer thereto: *Homeric Translation in Theory and Practice* (*Teoria i praktyka przekładu Homera*).

Hejwowski's last book publication: *Nowe wspaniałe światy Aldousa Huxleya i ich recepcja w Polsce* [Aldous Huxley's brave new worlds and their reception in Poland] (Hejwowski and Moroz) was dedicated to an analysis of the two existing Polish translations of Huxley's novel, as well as a description of a new one, prepared by Hejwowski himself. In the third chapter, Hejwowski explained why the previous versions do not appear to give justice to Huxley's masterpiece and discussed his own solutions. One of the main points made in the commentary was the need for recognizing the literary allusions (particularly to Shakespeare's works) and quoting the already existing, often widely known Polish translations, thus also recreating the stylistic contrasts,

so striking and meaningful in the original novel. Only by doing this is it possible to stay true to and to do justice to the exquisite intertextuality of Huxley's masterpiece. Unfortunately, his translation of *Brave New World* has not been published to date.

5. Didactic work

Hejwowski's didactic work at the Institute of Applied Linguistic was of course centered around translation issues: both theoretical and practical. He generally held three types of classes: practical translation workshops, lectures on translation theory, and BA and MA proseminars and seminars.

During his translation workshops, he famously employed very short and inconspicuous texts, often press articles or book fragments, which nonetheless presented a range of difficulties. As previously mentioned, Hejwowski advocated for the use of literary texts in translation didactics, irrespective of the students' future specialization. He argued that these texts encapsulate a broad spectrum of translation challenges—often subtle and thus easily overlooked—and working with them equips students with skills applicable to any area of translation. In an era of rapid machine translation development, he recognized the potential of digital tools and artificial intelligence in the field. However, he strongly emphasized the importance of acquiring fundamental translation competencies—linguistic, stylistic, and cultural—before relying on digital or AI support.

Hejwowski's workshop classes were centered on discussions with students, where their translation ideas were always valued. He typically assigned a text for students to translate at home, then collected their proposed translations to read and analyze each one. In the following session, he would discuss the translation challenges the text posed, exploring various ways to address each issue, highlighting the logic and the function of the text. This approach turned out to be greatly encouraging for students, but also inspiring for other teachers, and thanks to the inclusion of sample texts to translate and descriptions thereof in *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* they can still be used to train new generations of translators.

Indeed, combining theory and practice was a hallmark of Hejwowski's approach. During his translation studies lectures, he kept students engaged by illustrating complex theories and concepts with practical examples from his own experience and beyond, thanks to which linguistic and translation theories did not appear as unfathomable abstract concepts. He not only traced the development of translation studies over the years, highlighting the connections between different theories, but also emphasized the practical implications of each approach. Consequently, graduates left with a deep understanding of the major scholarly contributions to translation studies and the ability to apply these insights to their own translation work. This fusion of theory and practice, along with the ideal of a translator who is aware of various attitudes, strategies, and their potential consequences, is particularly significant today, as the worlds of translation theory and practice seem increasingly disconnected. The lecture room was always full, even though the Professor did not have the habit of checking the attendance list.

Hejwowski never refused anyone participation in his classes, even when the limit of students was largely exceeded. His BA and MA proseminars and seminars were always among the most popular ones. The Professor supervised several hundred Bachelor's and Master's theses, mostly dedicated to literary translation (plus more than a few on audiovisual translation). The topics tackled included translation techniques, translation errors, translation of idioms, culture-bound items, proper names, dialects, and puns. Professor Hejwowski also graduated seven doctoral theses. Their topics are strikingly varied: from literary translation (particularly translation of polyphonic texts, of dialects, and of neologisms) through audiovisual translation (including audiodescription and translation of opera surtitles) to specialized translation and even conference interpreting.

At each level of his seminars (BA, MA, PhD) Hejwowski allocated time for both analyzing key texts in translation theory and discussing the chapters of participants' theses. Notably, he encouraged unconventional topics, which allowed his students to explore areas beyond traditional translation comparisons. As a result, students often tackled subjects such as intralinguistic translation, translators' paratexts, and the translator's image in press reviews.

Additionally, he co-authored or wrote contributions to a number of dictionaries (Lukszyn et al.; Duszak et al.; Hejwowski, "Słownik fałszywych przyjaciół tłumacza"), including a thesaurus of translation studies terminology (Lukszyn et al., *Tezaurus terminologii translatorycznej*)—one that is still used by students and others—and a didactic dictionary of translation studies terminology (Lukszyn et al., *Słownik dydaktyczny*). He created himself or translated and adapted didactic materials for teaching and learning English, focusing on such issues as idioms and false cognates (Hejwowski, *Angielski na wesoło*; *Język angielski1000 idiomów angielskich*).

He remained a devoted and committed mentor until the end of his life. Despite being compelled to relinquish his formal duties due to health issues, he continued to engage with and support his doctoral students, offering them inspiration, insight, and valuable guidance. He ensured that they could proceed with their research under the supervision of other qualified tutors. He will be remembered as an embodiment of both moral righteousness and academic passion. Professor Hejwowski's contributions to translation studies—as a scholar analyzing the work of his predecessors and developing his own theoretical model, as a practitioner with translations of a diverse range of texts, and as a dedicated educator—have left an indelible mark on the field. His memory will serve as both a privilege and a responsibility for students and scholars in the field of translation.

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Nothing Sacred? Not Quite: Krzysztof Hejwowski as a Critic and Self-critic

Abstract. Krzysztof Hejwowski was one of the most eminent translation studies scholars and translators in Poland. Working within the paradigm of cognitive linguistics, he left a legacy embracing a host of articles and three books in which he formulated his theory of translation based on a communicative and cognitive approach to language. While working on his theory, he both subscribed to and challenged the views of other scholars, depending on their theoretical validity, practical pertinence, and lucidity, thus demonstrating his theoretically and practically-oriented attitude to scholarship. Nevertheless, he was not a rebel in the field or an iconoclast who criticized other scholars for the sake of criticism. Rather, he was critical of the ways in which the discipline was developing at the turn of the twenty-first century and searched for a more balanced approach to the theory and practice of translation. Striving for clarity and applicability of his propositions, he also continuously developed his ideas. The aim of this essay it to present some of those theoretical approaches and formulations that he disagreed with as evidenced mostly in his 2004 book *Translation: A Cognitive-Communicative Approach*. Additionally, his 2015 book *Iluzja przekładu. Przekładoznawstwo w ujęciu konstruktywnym* will serve to demonstrate how he self-corrected some of his ideas.

Keywords: Hejwowski, translation, translation theory, criticism, self-criticism

When Krzysztof Hejwowski embarked on his academic career, he set himself a formidable task: to formulate an all-encompassing theory of translation. The difficulty with such a project is at least two-fold. First, given the multiplicity of translation acts and specific situations, such a theory should be universal enough to account for the diversity of translation seen as a process and then realized as the various products (in a variety of media) of that process. As indicated in the seminal work by James Holmes: "It hardly needs to be pointed out that a *general translation theory* in such a true sense of the term, if indeed it is achievable, will necessarily be highly formalized and, however the scholar may strive after economy, also highly complex"

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(178; original emphasis). Second, presently, theoreticians are faced with a multitude of already proposed theories (both general and partial) that have appeared since the establishment of translation studies as a scientific discipline and need to find their own path to navigate among them in order to embrace what is consistent with their ideas and to reject what in their opinion is contradictory to the novel approach. This is what Hejwowski did in his two books published in 2004: *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* and its English version: *Translation: A Cognitive-Communicative Approach*. As scholars proceed with their research, they develop their ideas, which may involve re-evaluation of their previous proposals triggered by their more extensive practical and theoretical investigations, criticism launched by others, and self-criticism. This is the case with Hejwowski's last book, published in 2015, *Iluzja przekładu. Przekładoznawstwo w ujęciu konstruktywnym*. These processes (designing one's own theory and its self-critical evaluation and, perhaps, modification) require not only a solid theoretical background, but also a breadth of thinking characterized by considering insightfully different points of view and frames of reference, supported with what I would call scholarly courage: dealing critically with and constructively challenging already well-grounded approaches and eminent predecessors' ideas. But such an approach to academic research also calls for scholarly humbleness: openness to being assessed and readiness to admit that one's suggestions may be perfected. This is psychologically not easy: someone who (sometimes sharply) criticizes others may not be prepared to face criticism. Yet this was not what Krzysztof Hejwowski was like as a researcher. The purpose of this essay is to present him as a critic of others and as a self-critic—to show his open-mindedness and independent thinking, as well as his scholarly flexibility and modesty. This will be demonstrated on the basis of his books,[2] and if the following seems to be a collage of quotations, it is precisely to be so: to allow Krzysztof Hejwowski to speak with his own voice. Naturally, due to the scope of this essay, the presentation will be selective and therefore reductive. Before presenting him as a critic, however, it needs to be stressed that he was not a rebel in the field who wished to revolutionize research in translation, or an iconoclast who criticized other scholars for the sake of criticism. Rather, he was critical of the ways in which the discipline was developing at the turn of the twenty-first century and searched for a more balanced approach to the theory and practice of translation.

Given that Hejwowski's theory of translation is linguistically-oriented and, as indicated in the titles of his 2004 books, based on the communicative approach that requires the author, or sender in the traditional model of communication by Roman Jakobson (1960), and the reader (or receiver/recipient) for the meaning to emerge, one of the basic precepts of his approach is the undermining of the idea of "the death-of-the-author" as proposed in 1967 by Roland Barthes in his essay of that title, and subsequently embraced not only by literary scholars of poststructuralism and deconstructionism but also some linguists. Barthes intended to remove

2 The material will be taken from the English version of his first book and from his last one. Translations from Hejwowski's Polish texts are mine.

the author from the theoretical discourse, whereby he was concerned with the category of the author understood as the theoretical equivalent of the interpretative truth, that is, to put it bluntly, discovering what "the author had in mind" rather than the author *per se* (Burzyńska and Markowski 320). He argued that giving a text to an author means furnishing it with a final signification (Barthes 358). In other words, he was against determining a single interpretation of the text that would be aligned with the authorial intention. This led to the idea that it is the reader who becomes a second writer: reading is "another writing" (*lecture-re-écriture*), whereas interpretation is no longer connected with assigning meaning to the text but rather evaluating the multiplicity that has shaped that text (Burzyńska and Markowski 320–321). Consequently, the text has as many writers as there are its readers. For Hejwowski, the very concept of the-death-of-the-author was unfeasible, resembling "the doctrine of immaculate conception—interesting, but acceptable only in supernatural contexts" (*Translation* 92), which he most likely meant to stand for the Virgin Birth: the text has no "physical" father, just as Jesus had no earthly father. This critique arose directly from his approach: he was less concerned with theoretical literary deliberations and more with translation as a communicative phenomenon in line with the Leipzig School, which emphasises that translation is primarily concerned with communication. Allowing for different interpretations (after all discovering "what the author had in mind" is not only utopian as we can only know what he/she communicated, but it is also counterproductive as texts are open to interpretations), Hejwowski argued that "[t]he recipient can reconstruct the sense only after having constructed in his mind some representation of the sender" (*Translation* 92). In this perspective, understanding (interpretation) depends on the recipient's cognitive base: the knowledge that encompasses also that of a given person (the author of the text even if this is only the representation of the author) and the structure already existing in one's mind to which a given utterance can be attached. The representation of the author means that he/she is no longer dead as he/she is attributed with some features.

The death of the author simultaneously implied the death of the translator as the latter is perceived not merely as a reader but also as a kind of author (Hejwowski, *Translation* 94). This, paradoxically, might connect translation with the notion of *lecture-re-écriture*, yet this was also not quite acceptable for Hejwowski. Although he does not explicitly refer to translation as the double model of communication proposed by Anna Legeżyńska on the basis of Jakobson's model (cf. Legeżyńska 11–12) in his section "The death-of-the-author myth" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 92–94), this model is inscribed in his theory. By fully subscribing to the idea that the reader is "the ultimate authority on the given text producing his or her own interpretation of it (or several different interpretations if a given text is worth reading several times)", the translator becomes eradicated as the author of the target text because "translation is no longer important. It does not really matter who translates and how" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 94). But it does. Even if the translator as the reader of the original text is "the ultimate authority on its interpretation", he/she then changes the role and actually, in reality not only theoretically, produces a target text. The final shape of this new text depends on a multiplicity of factors, interpretation being

only one of them, and it is the translator who decides on how he/she wants to communicate the message and needs to construct a representation of his/her recipients if he/she wants the process to be effective. Obviously, Hejwowski accepted different interpretations of a single text. This, after all, is one of the reasons for re-translations—the ontological status of translation as an open-ended series of target texts, as proposed in 1968 by Edward Balcerzan (17–18), though in reality this mostly applies to literary texts. Yet, in his approach Hejwowski combined the practice and theory of translation whereby the two are inseparable—"mutually dependent and equally important" (*Translation* 13). Given the former element—the practice—the translator can hardly be "dead" as his/her decisions and solutions are crucial for the emergence of the new text.

With his practical attitude, as well as communicative and cognitive aspects as the founding blocks of his approach to translation, Hejwowski undermined also the very notion of untranslatability as proposed by many scholars, especially as regards cultural differences. He did not reject culture as a translation problem. Quite the contrary. Yet, he would not subscribe to the view that cultural differences would result in "insurmountable barriers" and "absolute untranslatability" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 129). Criticising Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa's conclusions that target readers of Noel Clark's translation of Stanisław Wyspiański's *Wesele* "will never experience [elements rooted in Polish culture] in the same way as native audiences do" (Bałuk-Ulewiczowa 176–177), he would see such opinions as arising from "excessive and unrealistic expectations" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 129). Such claims reflect a utopian vision of translation as an ideal representation of the original text that would generate a similar (if not identical) response in both source and target readers. This is impossible because "what is familiar and domestic to the SL readers will be alien and exotic to the TL readers" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 129). Human reactions are individual. People may react to the same stimuli in completely diverse ways, depending on their knowledge, education, life experiences, current physical and mental conditions, and many other factors. In translation these reactions must by necessity be also affected by cultural differences, so translation, in practice, must be seen as only a process of approximation. Consequently, "[t]he myth of 'identity of experience' cannot be treated seriously: even the people living in the same country, speaking the same language and brought up in the same culture cannot react identically to the same stimuli" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 130).[3] For Hejwowski, it is similarities (in interpretations) and not the differences that matter, and with his down-to-earth, pragmatic approach he observed: "Nobody can experience Yeats's or Joyce's works in quite the same way as the Irish—and yet the books are published in Britain, in the US, translated into

3 This echoed the ideas of Olgierd Wojtasiewicz, whom Hejwowski considered one of the greatest translation scholars, the founder of this discipline in Poland (*Translation* 17), in the understanding of what translation involves and how languages function in communication: "Languages fulfill their communicative function and therefore it cannot be denied that the reactions of different people to a given text may be, if not identical, then in any case very similar" (Wojtasiewicz 22; [Hejwowski's] translation). Of course, we have to put aside the purely individual, idiosyncratic reactions to certain texts or parts of texts that each of us may have. We have to concentrate on 'more average', typical reactions (cf. Wojtasiewicz 23; Hejwowski, *Translation* 74).

many other languages and read all over the world" (*Translation* 129). Obviously, target readers will have different responses and even different interpretations than source readers, but this is the nature of translation, and also of literature as such. The important thing in translation is to elicit responses that would not be contradictory to those envisaged in the original message. As observed by Hejwowski, people read books "because they are more universal than particular or exotic" (*Translation* 37). Hence, in literary translation it is the universality of experience that matters, and cultural differences may be overcome in various ways.

This pragmatic attitude led Hejwowski to criticize the "biggest names" in translation studies and some well-established theories. One of them was Lawrence Venuti, whom he appreciated for "warning translators that it is very easy to fall into the trap of 'improving' and 'polishing' the original" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 35), but whom he disagreed with on many points. A proponent of signifying the foreign in translation, Venuti argued that translation is doomed because no matter how much the translator attempts to "invent domestic analogues for foreign forms and themes […] the result will always go beyond any communication to release target-oriented possibilities of meaning" ("Translation, Community" 471). This is because "[t]he foreign text is rewritten in domestic dialects and discourses, registers and styles, and this results in the production of textual effects that signify only in the history of the domestic language and culture" (Venuti, "Translation, Community" 471). While the very nature of translation necessitates the employment of domestic language and its varieties (otherwise what would translation be?), Hejwowski could not agree with the idea that this would "signify only in the target culture". Readers, in his understanding, are able to interpret a particular target language variety as signifying the difference in the source culture. This he illustrated with the replacement of cockney with Warsaw dialect in *Pygmalion*: "the reader knows that s/he is dealing with an English text, set in London, and is able to interpret the use of the Polish dialect as a representation of a certain sociolinguistic phenomenon occurring in the foreign culture" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 34). This does not mean that he supported such solutions, clearly controversial, but he opposed generalizations and, in particular, lack of clarity, as well as the selection of examples by Venuti to illustrate his theses concerning domestication that were "simply examples of poor translations" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 35). He believed that Venuti's condemnation of domesticated translations missed the point as, paradoxically, thanks to such translations "we have learnt quite a lot about other cultures" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 35). If one considers the example of *Pygmalion*, with Eliza Doolittle's speaking Warsaw dialect, clearly an extreme case of domestication, Polish readers still learn about the class differences in English society that are marked by language. Hejwowski was, however, against "unjustified domestication" (*Translation* 35), and equally against "the other extreme of excessive, unnecessary 'foreignization'" (*Translation* 144) as suggested repeatedly by Venuti.[4] If the translation is to be communicative, any excess is undesirable. Nevertheless,

4 Though Venuti did not write about excessive foreignization, one would wonder why the translator should disrupt the text at the linguistic level (via artificial, convoluted syntax, for instance) if the source text communicates

"[i]f translators are to be intermediaries between different nations, if translation is to build bridges between different cultures, then it should be every translator's ambition to convey as much as possible from the original culture to the target language recipients" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 144). The crucial point is how to do that. How to achieve resistance that "assumes an ethics of foreignization, locating the alien in a cultural other, pursuing cultural diversity, signalling linguistic and cultural difference and unsettling the hierarchies in the translating language" as suggested by Venuti (*The Translator's Invisibility* 266). Would this really be accomplished via deviations from the standard (colloquialisms, archaisms, calques)? For Hejwowski, Venuti's discourse was too vague to be of assistance for theorists and practitioners: "it is difficult to see what Venuti really means by 'foreignizing'. Here, Venuti is much less outspoken and explicit [as compared to domestication]" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 35). As a scholar, Hejwowski was concerned with clarity, that is communicating ideas in an understandable and explicit manner.

Consequently, Hejwowski questioned the formulations of theories that were not lucid. In referring to the unclear term "abusive fidelity" used by Venuti after Philip E. Lewis, who addressed the issues of domestication and foreignization based on English versions of Jacques Derrida's French texts, and to Lewis's deliberations, he stated: "We never learn what 'the movement of difference' is and why it should be 'a fundamental property of languages'. Similarly we can never be quite sure what the term 'abuse' refers to" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 38). For Lewis, real translation (foreignized) is "translation that values experimentation, tampers with usage, seeks to match the polyvalencies or plurivocities or expressive stresses of the original by producing its own" (270). But what if the original employs typical non-experimental language. Should the translator still "tamper with usage", otherwise he/she would not produce real translation? Lewis proposed a "new axiomatics of fidelity", with the foreignizing approach being "abusive fidelity", that "both resists the constraints of the translating language and interrogates the structures of the foreign text" (Venuti, "1980s" 218). As Hejwowski rightfully commented, the kind of discourse employed by Lewis (but also evident in Venuti's works) is characterized by "ultimate vagueness", whereby "[p]hrases like 'clusters of textual energy' are very nice metaphors, but they are hardly translatable into the terminology of linguistics, discourse analysis or in fact any discipline dealing with human communication" (*Translation* 38). Indeed, reading Lewis and, more importantly, comprehending his ideas, is a challenge, which Hejwowski actually dealt with quite well, as he concluded: "one gets the impression that Lewis is really opting for maximal literalness of translation. Again, most of the examples quoted are not really instances of domestication but of overdomestication, oversimplification or outright translation error" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 38).

Apart from terminological vagueness and extremist approaches, as in the case of Vladimir Nabokov, whose claims Hejwowski deemed "overgeneralized and misdirected" as "he seems

fluently. Would that indeed signify the foreign? Or would that merely deform the original message in misrepresenting how it was communicated?

to assume that there is nothing between a 'free translation' (which must be simplified, easy to read, primitive as compared with the original) and 'literal translation' (which must result from the sophisticated translator's strife to render as much as possible from the original)" (*Translation* 40), the Polish scholar was particularly sensitive to imprecision within the field of linguistics. This is hardly surprising given his background. Hence, he would be more than ready to pinpoint illogicality in the arguments of most distinguished scholars, as when criticising Venuti, who discussed translation as "not so much communicated as inscribed with domestic intelligibilities and interests" ("Translation, Community" 468). This, of course, stemmed from Venuti's ideological approach to (domesticated) translation as "[t]he inscription begins with the very choice of a text for translation, always a very selective, densely motivated choice, and continues in the development of discursive strategies to translate it, always a choice of certain domestic discourses over others. Hence, the domesticating process is totalizing" (Venuti, "Translation, Community" 468). But Hejwowski was more concerned with the linguistic aspect of communication and so indicated where Venuti erred: "This argument reveals basic misunderstanding of what communication really is. Venuti seems to assume that a monolingual act of communication is some kind of direct transfer of ideas or messages, resembling an exchange of goods, and communicative problems begin only with the intrusion of a translator. This is not the case. Monolingual communication is also based on overcoming cultural, educational, experiential, intellectual, temperamental and other differences between the participants in a communicative act" (*Translation* 90–91). 'Borrowing' Venuti's language, he argued that any type of communication is approximative. In monolingual communication interlocutors "understand each other only to a certain extent and only by 'inscribing the utterance with our personal intelligibilities', i.e., by investing the utterance with significance in terms of our own memory structures" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 91).

The thorough linguistic background gave him the advantage, when referring to linguistic phenomena inherent in translation, over translation scholars rooted in the literary-oriented tradition of translation, irrespective of their authoritative position. But he was equally harsh on linguists specializing in translation studies. Whenever he found problematic aspects, he would bring them to light irrespective of the author's worldwide recognition or background (literature, linguistics or translation studies per se).[5] Such was the case of Venuti, but also of Peter Newmark, whose books in the 1980s were as groundbreaking as Venuti's in the 1990s. Newmark's *A Textbook of Translation*, which contains many inconsistencies, was awarded the British Association of Applied Linguistics prize in 1988. Such acclaim was never an obstacle for Hejwowski, and in his critical reading he would not refrain from demonstrating the flaws. For instance, while Newmark observed that "whilst the meaning of a completely context-determined word may appear to be remote from its non-contextual (core) meaning there must be some link

5 This comment is of a general nature, referring both to Polish and foreign scholars. In Poland, unfortunately, translation studies remain unrecognised as a separate scientific discipline. Consequently, scholars dealing with translation have either a linguistic or literary background, with the majority being linguists.

between the two meanings" (17), Hejwowski counterargued: "A word cannot have any 'non-contextual meaning' […]—except in a dictionary. But even there—in a dictionary which provides no examples or explanations, but only the lemmata and their TL 'equivalents', the equivalents are there only due to the fact that the author of the dictionary imagined some of the contexts and situations in which a given SL word could appear" (*Translation* 49). More importantly from the point of view of students of translation, especially since Newmark's book is targeted at such readership, Hejwowski indicated confusing terminology, as in the case of a functional equivalent that should actually mean the same as a cultural equivalent, and additionally confounding explanation ("deculturalizing a cultural word") and examples for this type of equivalent (*Sejm* as *Polish parliament* that could easily be a descriptive equivalent (*Iluzja przekładu* 88). In fact, it is ever so difficult to discern the difference between functional and descriptive equivalents in Newmark. Similarly, synonymy is described in such vague terms that, according to Hejwowski, it is not clear what Newmark actually meant (*Iluzja przekładu* 88), whereas it would be difficult to state the difference between a componential analysis and a descriptive equivalent (*Iluzja przekładu* 89). Actually, the only difference I might possibly see is that a descriptive equivalent would refer to culture-related words (because it follows the discussion of cultural and functional equivalents) as no explanation is given for this procedure except for the vague "[i]n translation, description sometimes has to be weighed against function" (Newmark 83), whereas a componential analysis: "the splitting up of a lexical unit into its sense components" (Newmark 90) to other, non-culture-related words. Yet this is contradicted by Newmark's further explanation: "The second use of a componential analysis is in translating cultural (and institutional) words that the readership is unlikely to understand" (119). Additionally, a functional equivalent is termed "a cultural componential analysis" (Newmark 83), and at this point one just feels helpless, especially when asked by more inquisitive students to clarify the differences between these procedures. Hence, Hejwowski's argument of the lack of precision in Newmark's typology and opinions is more than valid.

Actually, the Polish scholar was very generous in his criticism of the English one as many more problematic areas might be pinpointed in *A Textbook of Translation*. Just one example will suffice. Normally, a paraphrase means a restatement, i.e., expressing the meaning using different words to achieve greater clarity. But not for Newmark, who defines it as "an amplification or explanation of the meaning of a segment of the text" (90). If so, what would be the difference between this procedure and "notes, additions, glosses" that involve "supplying additional information in a translation" (Newmark 91) that may take various forms. In particular, additional information placed within the target text (Newmark enumerates different options, such as, for instance, "an alternative to the translated word", "an adjectival clause", "a participial group", "classifier" [92]) would clearly equate to amplification. Moreover, why paraphrase should be "used as an 'anonymous' text when it is poorly written, or has important implications and omissions" (Newmark 90) is a mystery to me. As understood by Newmark (amplification or explanation of the meaning), paraphrase (or should we say "explicitation" after Hejwowski?) can be used

in any text that requires such clarification of meaning for completely different recipients, irrespective of whether it is well or poorly written and by whom (in any case, an 'anonymous' text is another vague idea). Rather than criticising each unclear technique, Hejwowski succinctly summarized: "Newmark's other techniques—translation label, compensation, componential analysis, reduction and expansion, paraphrase—are either less important for our considerations, or described so vaguely that it is difficult to discern their role" (*Iluzja przekładu* 90).

This overview of criticism launched by Hejwowski at other researchers, both linguists and literary scholars, is far from exhaustive. The list might well continue. He was also dissatisfied with Ernst-August Gutt's (1991) theory of translation, the first cognitive theory, which although interesting and valuable, has some drawbacks as "it is hard to believe that such a complicated sphere of human activity as verbal communication or translation can be explained by means of one or two simple rules" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 258), one of them being that "the translation should be expressed in such a manner that it yields the intended interpretation without putting the audience to unnecessary processing effort" (Gutt 377). Clearly, literature requires much processing effort, and Gutt's ideas might imply unnecessary simplifications and clarifications, grossly deforming the original text. The translator's task is to create a text that might generate a similar interpretation to its original, and not to interpret it for target readers. Though appreciating another cognitive theory of translation, the one formulated by Elżbieta Tabakowska (1993), based on Ronald W. Langacker's cognitive grammar, he observed: "The theory definitely offers a very sensitive instrument for text analysis, which makes it useful both for translation training and for translation criticism. However, it is doubtful whether Langacker's theory could be applied to such tasks as modelling the process of translation, as it is too concentrated on texts and as it avoids postulating any mental structures not directly reflected in texts" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 258). Hence in his model he focused, among other issues, on the process of translation *per se*.

Another approach in translation studies that Hejwowski was not quite convinced by was polysystem theory as formulated by Itamar Even-Zohar, who did not "take into account the statistical and the marketing factor: translated literature may become central (or only 'important') in the target polysystem only if a sufficient number of foreign books are actually translated and published, and only if they reach the reading public" (*Translation* 145). He indicated circumstances that also influence the position of the translated literature in a given system, mostly "publishing inertia: publishing houses will not publish translated books because people do not read them, people will not read translated books because hardly any are published, and almost none advertised" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 145–146). In such comments he combined common-sense and knowledge of the market as a practising translator with theoretical knowledge.

This overview does not mean that he was not appreciative of others and their ideas. He definitely was, and his own theory of translation was based on the propositions of many other scholars (that he duly referenced), especially utilizing the following concepts: verb frame, scenes, scripts, schemata, memory structures, propositional base and semantic input, conversational implicature, metaphor, sense constancy, but creating a conceptual whole. His views were always

based on scientific investigations, balanced, and never intuitive or prejudiced. Even when he criticized someone and modified that person's proposals, raising serious objections, as was the case with Leszek Berezowski's classification of techniques (strategies as he preferred to call them) for translating dialect, he was ready to offer compliments: "Berezowski's book is the most serious investigation of this problem in translation studies literature. It should be required reading for every self-respecting literary translator, because it presents this issue comprehensively, based on extensive research material" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 221). On the other hand, he was not blindly uncritical of those whom he appreciated greatly, Wojtasiewicz being a case in point, whose book "*Wstęp do teorii tłumaczenia* (*An Introduction to the theory of translation*), written as early as 1957, has remained one of the most important books about translation" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 61). Wojtasiewicz is frequently referenced by Hejwowski, especially in *Iluzja przekładu,* in which he emphasized: "Wojtasiewicz's deliberations on the translation (or rather untranslatability) of linguistic varieties were well ahead of their time" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 213), as they truly were, just like his view on human communication, which would later be echoed by cognitive linguistics. But on many occasions, Hejwowski disagreed with his intellectual mentor. Constructing his theory to embrace practical problems (and solutions), he wrote: "I do not agree with Wojtasiewicz when he states that translation theory requires an ideal translator and should disregard all the translation mistakes stemming from the translator's inattention, unskilfulness or inefficiency, insufficient command of the source or target language (Wojtasiewicz 8). I prefer to deal with a 'professional translator', whose translations are acceptable most of the time, but who inevitably makes mistakes, as there are no ideal translations. What is more, I think that the translator's mistakes, i.e., symptoms of his non-ideal competence, are a very important element of translation theory" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 239). He also challenged Wojtasiewicz's approach to allusions as "a renunciation of originality by the author", classification of untranslatability of allusions, and non-problematic translation (or transfer) of third-language elements (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 77, 210). Always, when disagreeing with some theses, he would justify why that was the case and would offer his alternatives or modifications. Criticism for the sake of criticism was neither his goal nor approach to scholarship.

As a scholar, Hejwowski was equally critical of others as of himself. He had a distance to himself and to his work, as can be seen in the examples that he provided in his discussion of proper names: "few people know how such names as Jeremy, Warszawa or Hejwowski came into being" (Hejwowski, *Translation* 150). This distance made him conscious of his own imperfections but also sensitive to criticism while harbouring no grudge against his critics. Rather, he was willing to introduce corrections and to re-evaluate his ideas. This is evident in his developed and revised typologies of techniques applicable to culture-bound items, proper names, and linguistically heterogenous texts, as well as in his classification of translation errors in *Iluzja przekładu*. To his succinct classification of techniques for translating culture-bound items of 2004, designed on the basis of a critical analysis of several categorizations proposed by his predecessors, including transfer with and without explanation, syntagmatic translation with and without explanation,

recognized equivalent, functional equivalent, hypernym, descriptive equivalent, and omission, he added two more: hyponym (which was definitely missing since if the translator can replace a source element with one that has a broader meaning, why not with one of a narrower meaning?) and explicitation.[6] The latter was most likely motivated by differentiating a descriptive equivalent typically offered for culture-bound items denoting realia from a technique that would be applicable to more allusive elements. Thus, if a descriptive equivalent involves the replacement of the original element with its description, explicitation relies on formulating *expressis verbis* what was only implied in the original, replacing a metaphor or metonymy with non-figurative expressions (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 93–94). This self-correction was well grounded, as clearly demonstrated by the provided example. Hejwowski admitted: "I would now classify the translation of the phrase 'szkiełko i oko, czucie i wiara' [literally: glass and eye, feeling and faith] as 'no faith, except in reason, no sensibility, only sense', described by me as an example of a descriptive equivalent, as an explicitation" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 94). Indeed, this example can hardly be treated as a descriptive equivalent as it does not describe an element but clarifies the allusion that otherwise would be rather incomprehensible for target readers.[7] He also extended the scope of a functional equivalent (cultural replacement) to account for replacements from different cultures (source, target, and third) that covered various possibilities of such substitutions. The result of self-correction is a less confusing typology (considering the offered examples) and also one that accounts for more real-life choices made by translators.

As regards proper names, in his 2015 book Hejwowski presented Jan Van Coillie's extensive typology of translation techniques that first appeared in 2006, with his critical commentary. This indicates that he constantly kept up-to-date with the latest research and incorporated the relevant results into his own. But he also updated and revised his previous observations: "In my earlier books […] following Irina Bagajewa […], I divided toponyms into macrotoponyms and microtoponyms. However, these terms can be misleading, because it is not the size of the place that determines possible translation problems. […] The recognition of proper names is therefore determined not by the size of the objects they name, but by history" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 138–139). While in onomastics the two terms are obviously valid, Hejwowski refrained from that division owing to misleading conclusions that macrotoponyms would normally have recognized equivalents as their use exceeds the boundaries of one culture, whereas microtoponyms would be much more troublesome (Hejwowski, *Translation* 161). This may seem overcautious but given that the readers

6 He also differentiated between pure transfer and transfer with modification that was not made explicitly in the 2004 typology.

7 Obviously, it could be argued that this is a case of substitution (one allusion is replaced by another), as Hejwowski himself indicates: "It is worth noting that such a translation loses the allusion to the original [Adam Mickiewicz's poem "Romantyczność"] and introduces an allusion to the target culture (Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*)" (*Iluzja przekładu* 94). Thus, this example could possibly be classified as a functional equivalent from the target culture; yet, in Hejwowski's argumentation, it is not the substitution that is at the core of the explicitation but the clarification of the original phrase.

of the book include students of translation, making them aware of the possible traps and sensitive to the need for research in the case of toponyms, irrespective of the size of the place they denote, was crucial for him.

The most extensive self-correction, however, involved translation errors. Hejwowski frequently stressed that he disagreed with those scholars who disregarded the issue of translation errors as unnecessary and non-constructive in the analysis of translations, mostly Theo Hermans, André Lefevere, and Tomasz Wójcik (*Iluzja przekładu* 288–289, 290–291). With his pedagogical focus and stress placed on translator's competence, the problems of translation errors were a significant part of his approach, also considering translation as communication: what and how the target text communicates to its readers should not be underestimated, both for aesthetic and pragmatic reasons. Commenting on his revised typology of errors, he stated, quite generally, that: "In revising my earlier [2004] classification of translation errors, I came to the conclusion that all errors can be actually divided into two main types: interpretation errors and realization errors" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 295). This led to the simplification of the earlier categorization in which four main groups were distinguished: errors of syntagmatic translation (now classified as interpretation errors, or actually lack or insufficient interpretation), misinterpretation errors, realization errors, and meta-translation errors (now placed in the realization errors group). This general statement veiled a much more extensive self-correction, as the 2004 typology lacked precision, and addition of new types of errors.

Since the comparison of the two taxonomies would require a separate study, only a few problematic areas will be pointed out here. In the 2004 division, insufficient knowledge of the subject-matter was categorized as belonging to realization errors (Hejwowski, *Translation* 220), with examples actually mostly indicating a wrong choice of equivalent (whereby it is not clear whether the translator lacked specific knowledge or selected some sort of functional equivalent) and omission (which was a separate category of meta-translation errors). In the 2015 typology, such errors fall into the category of interpretation errors, quite rightly. Yet, the examples might still better illustrate the problem. Demonstrating explicitly that the translator created an internally illogical text because he/she lacked specialized knowledge and therefore misinterpreted the original would be much more fitting here. The mistranslated phrase "canvas sharply peaked" in Aniela Zagórska's translation of Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" as "mocno napięte płótna", which indicates that the barges were moving, whereas in the original (and also in translation) they were standing still (Kujawska-Lis, *Marlow pod polską banderą* 98–99), is the case in point: the translator did not know specialized nautical vocabulary, misinterpreted the phrase, created a scene that was not only contradictory to the original but also impossible in real life, and could not self-correct the target text as she did not notice that the image was illogical.

While in the 2015 classification dictionary and commonly accepted equivalents, false friends, and calques were placed in the interpretation errors group, unnecessary transfers were rightly moved to realization errors as, on the one hand, it was rather difficult to accept that these were

errors of syntagmatic translation,[8] and, in fact, in the 2004 typology would have better fitted the category of wrong choice of translation technique (meta-translation errors). Also, the division of meta-translation errors into subcategories was confusing. If omission, for instance, is listed as a separate technique for translating culture-bound items, why should it not be classified as a (wrong) choice of translation technique but as a separate category in the typology of errors? The same might apply to additions and also footnotes, as explanations provided in footnotes are a type of technique. Such inconsistencies necessitated self-correction, and the revised typology not only gained clarity but was also extended by new elements, such as censorship and selection of a wrong equivalent, the latter being very frequent in translation practice, whereby its absence in the 2004 typology made it difficult to apply as an analytical tool by students.

A similar, though less substantial, self-correction was introduced for the problematic group of linguistic varieties used in the source text. To his 2004 typology, which greatly simplified Berezowski's strategies for translating dialect, Hejwowski added transfer, transfer with explanation, transcription, and transcription with explanation and modified types of stylization by clearly differentiating its variants: sub-standard, rustic, urban, colloquial, slang, and archaic, thus accounting for more possibilities (*Iluzja przekładu* 208–245). Apart from that modification, which rightly extended the range of options to deal with problematical aspects, he refrained from the term "polyphonic text". This was his response to critical comments. As he admitted: "When describing linguistically diversified texts earlier, I used the term 'polyphonic texts' to refer to them […], and was accused of overusing the term introduced by Bakhtin (1983)" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 209). He went on to justify his previous terminology by stating that in translation practice the major problem related to polyphony would not be the content or worldviews (as understood by Bakhtin), but the manner of communicating them, which is a specific feature of characters' languages. Consequently, according to him, from the point of view of the translator, polyphony actually means stylistic, idiolectal, dialectal marking. This explanation indicates how consciously he selected terminology, although in hindsight he was ready to admit that it might be confusing. He did not indicate the source of criticism, but was ready to accept it, though typically for him, with some reservation.[9] Thus, he modified the term: "However, in order not to cause unnecessary misunderstandings, I decided to return to the term introduced by Olgierd

8 Transfer does not involve any translation at all (though it is a valid translation technique), whereas Hejwowski defined syntagmatic translation as corresponding to literal translation in Vinay and Darblenet's and Newmark's classifications (*Translation* 138), whereby source elements are replaced by target language elements.

9 In May of 2015, when Krzysztof Hejwowski was writing his book, we met at the conference "Authenticity and Imitation in Translation and Culture" organized by SWPS in Warsaw. In my presentation, subsequently published in 2017 in a volume in which his paper also appeared, I criticized the term "polyphonic text" as used by him and we had a discussion about it, with me representing a school of literary studies. Paradoxically, in the title of my presentation I myself employed the term "polyphonic texts" after Hejwowski, changing it only later for the publication. Whether this triggered the change in his book, or any other comments, I have no idea as we remained in a friendly relationship and I never felt any trace of a grudge.

Wojtasiewicz and write about 'linguistic allusions'" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 209). Though he changed the terminology, he must have been really attached to the previous formulation because at some point he seems to have forgotten about it: "Ultimately, one has to agree with Brodowicz (1998) that translations of polyphonic texts are generally flatter and more colourless than the originals" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 244).[10]

Krzysztof Hejwowski was a paragon of scholarship. His extensive theoretical knowledge in linguistics and practical experience as a translator made him acutely sensitive to theoretical inaccuracies and linguistic convolutions in scholarly texts that were either misleading or hardly communicative. In such cases, nothing was too sacred, and nobody was too great an authority to be criticized. Still, as all human beings, he also made mistakes, but unlike many people, was ready to concede and correct them. This is evidenced in his academic work, in which he not only revised previous observations but also looked critically at his own translations. As he openly admitted: "After reading *The Translator's Invisibility*, I wrote an article criticizing my own translation solutions" (Hejwowski, "An Ethics of Translation" 37). This refers to his self-analysis of the translation of the anthroponym in the song "John Barleycorn must die" in Andrew Miller's novel *Ingenious Pain*. Having considered all possible options, he turned John Barleycorn into the familiar Jan Żytko, thus himself joining the school of functionalists (Hejwowski, "Tekstualizm a funkcjonalizm" 190). Influenced by his analysis of propositions formulated by various scholars representing the opposing schools of functionalism and textualism, he concluded that neither extreme was welcome, yet, self-reflexively observed: "I'm not sure whether when re-translating the English novel mentioned at the beginning, I would now deal differently with the poor John Barleycorn" (Hejwowski, "Tekstualizm a funkcjonalizm" 200). Self-development in the scholarly and translatorial milieu was his credo. And yet, despite his open-mindedness, even he was occasionally limited in his vision, as when he stated: "In newer translations, names are most often left in their original forms [...]. This does not apply to children's and young adult literature, where the names are still often translated into Polish, which sometimes results from the tradition of translating a given work—it is difficult to imagine, for example, changing the names of such famous characters as 'Ania' (Shirley z Zielonego Wzgórza), 'Piotruś' (Pan) or 'Alicja' (w Krainie Czarów). A special case is Kubuś Puchatek" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 149). He did not envisage what would come in 2022. Otherwise, he would not have written about the first translation of *Anne of Green Gables* as follows: "Admittedly, the translator found herself in a difficult situation, because 'Ania z Zielonych Szczytów' would sound odd and confusing, and the more unambiguous 'Ania z Domu o Zielonych Szczytach' is not quite suitable for a title. […] None of the (at least ten) subsequent translators, however, decided to change the title, because 'Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza' is already part of Polish culture" (Hejwowski, *Iluzja przekładu* 157). Well, it is not the case anymore. With the appearance of *Anne z Zielonych Szczytów* in Anna Bańkowska's

10 Olga Brodovich used the term non-standard speech.

translation everything has changed, and had he lived, Krzysztof would have had an opportunity to enter into another polemical discussion with himself, and I'm sure he would have.

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Retranslations of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* in Poland

Abstract. Retranslation is a well-established concept in translation studies. Beginning with Edward Balcerzan's text (1967; 1998), it has functioned as a theoretical basis but also as a method by which successive translations of a single text can be analysed, with the aim, for example, of determining the best of them. The paper analyses selected aspects of the retranslations of A. Huxley's *Brave New World* in Poland. Significantly, G. Ojcewicz points to the possible networks of references between retranslations. In the essay, I apply this theoretical approach to retranslations to the new (unpublished) translation of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* by Krzysztof Hejwowski in the context of his earlier criticism of the translations by Stanisława Kuszelewska and Bogdan Baran, as well as his theoretical works on translation.

Key words: retranslation, Krzysztof Hejwowski, Huxley, *Brave New World, Nowy wspaniały świat*, Kuszelewska, Baran

1. Retranslation

Retranslation (translation series) is a well-established concept in translation studies. It denotes a second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language (Baker; Koskinen and Paloposki). Beginning with Edward Balcerzan's essay ("Poetyka"), it has functioned as a theoretical basis but also as a method by which successive translations of a single text can be analysed, with the aim, for example, of determining the best of them. I discussed this issue in detail elsewhere (Adamowicz-Pośpiech, *Seria* 19–48); here, I wish to signal its selected aspects. First, the openness of the series. Noteworthy is Grzegorz Ojcewicz's observation that the translation of a foreign work always has the status of one of the possible variants (35), and second, literary translation exists in the series. Ojcewicz claims that the series is ready to accept qualitatively and conceptually different translation solutions in relation to the original text, ensures the revival of the original in a new linguistic version, and attests to the preservation of the continuity of the tradition both in relation to the translation itself and its criticism. Balcerzan highlighted the status of a new translation in the corrective function of creating the best recent

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retranslation, which was in line with the retranslation hypothesis.[2] Although Paloposki and Koskinen demonstrated that the retranslation hypothesis does not always apply, in the case of Polish retranslations of *Brave New World,* it does, which I will try to prove below. Significantly, Ojcewicz foregrounds possible networks of references between retranslations; the greater the number of retranslations, the denser the network of connections involving sometimes also discussions between translators about the different variants of a given work. Noteworthy for my argument is Ojcewicz's comment as to what role a critic of translations can play in the network of retranslation. For example, when they perform simultaneously a few roles including the role of translator and critic, and I would also add (in the case of Hejwowski) a theorist of translation studies. In the essay, I apply this theoretical approach to retranslations to the new (unpublished) translation of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* by Krzysztof Hejwowski in the context of his earlier criticism of the initiating translation by Stanisława Kuszelwska and retranslation by Bogdan Baran, as well as his works on translation. Comparing the retranslations, I wish to focus on such issues as the title, intertextuality and the translations of poetry and rhymes.

2. The Translators

The first translator of *Brave New World* was Stanisława Kuszelewska (1894–1966), who was a writer, literary translator, scout, and soldier of the Polish Military Organization and the Home Army. She fought in the Warsaw Uprising. After World War Two she emigrated to Great Britain. She propagated scouting and the idea of city gardens – the so-called Jordan parks.[3] She sat on the Reading Committee and the Program Council of Polish Radio, while publishing countless texts. Her major achievements, however, are translations of works of English, Irish and American literature, including books by Jack London, Aldous Huxley, Donn Byrne and Sinclair Lewis.

In 1933, the publishing house "Rój" published a translation of Huxley's novel *Brave New World* under the title *Nowy, wspaniały świat* with the following information on the other side of the title page: "translated by Stanisława Kuszelewska on the author's authority".[4] I could not verify

2 The issue of why retranslations are produced was extensively discussed by Antoine Berman, who claims that first translations are poor and lacking, whereas subsequent retranslations can make use of the first translation's paving the way and bringing the source text's true essence through to the target language. The first (according to Berman, usually domesticating) translation having introduced the text, the second (foreignizing) translation can be truly loyal to the spirit of the source text. According to Berman, first translations can never be great translations. This idea of the progress of quality between particular retranslations is often referred to as the Retranslation Hypothesis (Berman; Koskinen and Paloposki; Paloposki and Koskinen).

3 These parks were equipped with exercise fixtures modelled after those of similar playgrounds in the United States. Henryk Jordan's innovative idea behind these public gardens, located in the city centres, was the importance of physical education and making parents realize that physical exercise was equally important to the intellectual development of children in their formative years.

4 Kuszelewska 1933. For ease of reference I will refer to this translation as K in the main text.

what this *author's authority* was supposed to mean.[5] It is surprising that Huxley's novel, first published in 1932, was so quickly translated and printed in Poland (1933).[6] This may suggest direct contact between the translator and the writer.[7] Her translation was reissued twice in 1935 (Rój) and 1985 (Warszawa: Oficyna Liberałów, underground edition).

In 1988 Bogdan Baran published a retranslation in Wydawnictwo Literackie under an unchanged title.[8] Baran (born in 1952 in Cracow) is a Polish writer, essayist, and a translator of more than a hundred books from the humanities and German, Anglo-Saxon and Romance literature (Bartelski 9–10). He graduated in philosophy and mathematics from Jagiellonian University (1976). In 1988 he received a doctoral degree for his dissertation on Martin Heidegger. In 1976-1983 he was an employee of the Institute of Philosophy at the Jagiellonian University, and in 1983-1987 editor of the Literary Publishing House. In the 1990s he founded the Inter Esse and Baran & Suszczyński publishing houses. Currently he is chairman of the Editorial Board of Aletheia Publishing House.

His retranslation was reprinted in various collections such as, for example, *Kanon na koniec wieku* [Literary Canon at the End of the Century], and *Arcydzieła literatury światowej* [Masterpieces of World Literature]. Also recently, it has been released as an audiobook (2020). The translation rights were bought by Wydawnictwo Literackie Muza, which reprinted it 12 times by 2019. Starting with the 11th edition (2013), there is an annotation that the edition has been revised.[9] Interestingly, the first edition was accompanied by seven illustrations prepared by Krzysztof Kiwerski.

In his illustrations Krzysztof Kiwerski focused either on the shocking or the pivotal moments of the narrative, namely the artificial production of children (p.19; fig.1), the ghostly city skyline (p.67), Bernard and Lenina's night helicopter flight (p. 96), the programming of the toddlers' love-life (p. 155), the pacificators in gas masks (p.223; fig.2) and the helicopters' raid on John's seclusion. One of the most intriguing images is the illustration on the title page portraying the *Vitruvian Man* inscribed in a new world's cross. He is as if in a cage with a geometric grid superimposed on him. In comparison to Da Vinci's sketch in which the figure was circumscribed by

5 Kuszelewska also translated Huxley's travel essays entitled *Beyond the Mexique Bay* (1934) published by Przeworsk publishing house under the title *Nad Zatoką Meksykańską* [By the Gulf of Mexico] in 1935. Again, on the back of the title page there was an annotation "authorized translation from English by Stanislawa Kuszelewska" - also in this case it was not possible to determine the nature of the authorization.

6 A detailed publishing chronology of Huxley's other works in Poland is outlined by Hejwowski and Moroz (123–131).

7 This is my hypothesis. A similar situation occurred in the case of the first Polish translation of Joseph Conrad's *Wyrzutek* (Adamowicz-Pośpiech, *Seria* 55). The hypothesis could have been verified if the interwar archives of *Rój* publishing house had survived (Krupa and Nafpaktitis 563).

8 For ease of reference I will refer to this translation as B in the main text.

9 Hejwowski and Moroz (154) claim that this edition was not revised, giving as an example the 2016 edition. However, all reprints starting with the 11th edition (2013) were in fact revised editions but the changes introduced were negligible (I compared the editions from 1988 and 2017).

a circle and a square, in Kiwerski's drawing the man is dissected into component parts measured to the millimetre. The illustration combines two iconic images of Western civilization, the *Vitruvian Man* and the cross, both distorted according to the rules of the World State. His illustrations were never reproduced in later editions.

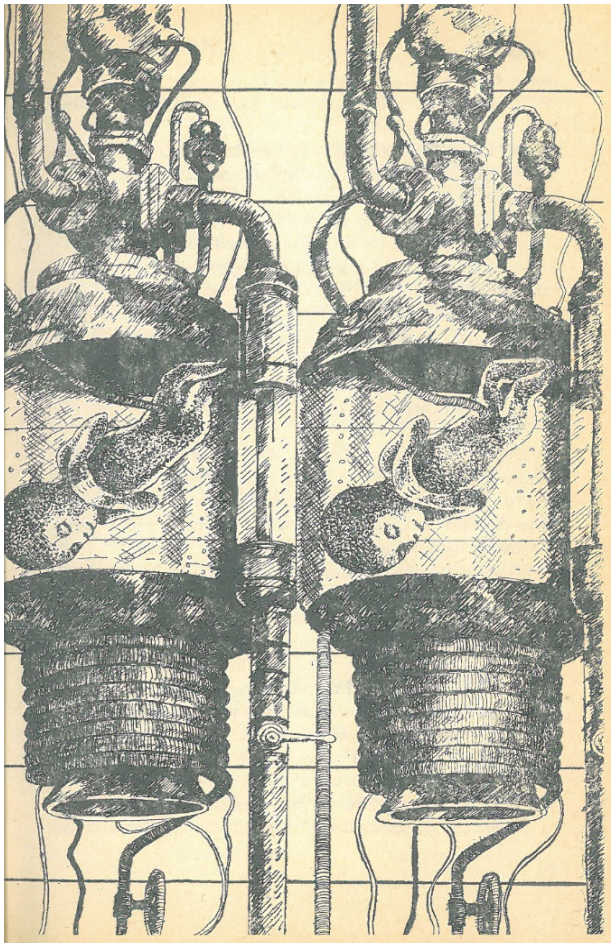

Fig. 1 K. Kiwerski's illustration to A. Huxley, *Nowy wspaniały świat*, translated by B. Baran, p. 19. It depicts the artificial production of children.

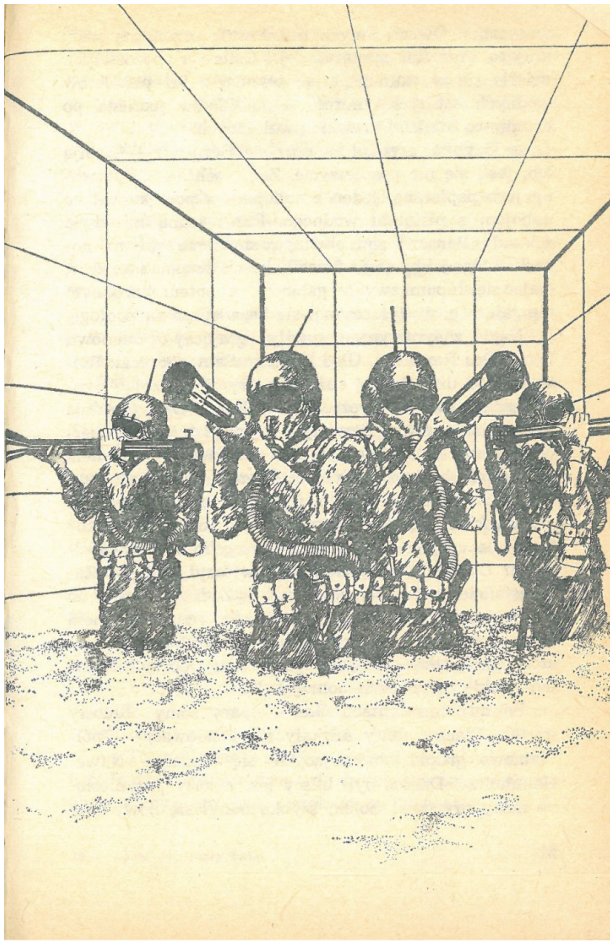

Fig. 2 K. Kiwerski's illustration to A. Huxley, *Nowy wspaniały świat*, translated by B. Baran, p. 223. It depicts the pacification of the rebellion raised by John in the hospital.

The most recent retranslation was produced by Krzysztof Hejwowski (1952–2019), who openly criticised the previous Polish versions of the novel (Hejwowski and Moroz 149–168)[10]. Hejwowski was a linguist, academic teacher, theorist of translation studies and a translator of more than twenty books from English to Polish.

3. The Title

The title of Hejwowski's translation of *Brave New World* remained the same as proposed by Kuszelewska. Hejwowski's decision to repeat the earlier version was the right choice for several reasons.

10 Baran's translation was also criticised by Moroz (30, 39).

First, the translatorial tradition – the variant proposed by Kuszelewska was repeated by Baran. The phrase "brave new world" entered the Polish language as a collocation and was classified as a stock phrase (the so-called winged words[11] (Markiewicz and Romanowski 289, 590[12]). Thus it should not be changed as it would disrupt the identifying function of the title (Hejwowski).[13] Second, the title's intertextual dimension; it was taken for granted that the phrasing harks back to one of the early Polish translations of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (Ignacy Hołowiński's, Józef Paszkowski's or Leon Ulrich's). Yet, as Hejwowski and his students demonstrated, none of them used this expression. Therefore, he concludes that the very phrase "nowy wspaniały świat" was coined by Kuszelewska. Interestingly, we observe here a reverse process of influence of the invented phrase on subsequent retranslations of *The Tempest,* namely later translators copy Kuszelewska's version (Słomczyński 123; Barańczak 121; Kamiński 172; Berwińska 198). The third reason is the network of titles in the literary polysystem. In other words, the location of the title on the map of titles of literary works in the target culture. Roman Lewicki observes that "the cultural position of the title also causes its relationship with other titles already present in a given culture – a specific cultural semantic field whose existence the translator should not ignore" (353). The network of titles is in a state of flux: for one thing, it was non-existent for Kuszelewska's first translation since it was her initial proposal; next, for Baran it was related to such publications as Huxley's *Brave New World Revisited – Nowy wspaniały świat poprawiony* (trans. Jerzy Horzelski 1960), *Nowy niezbyt wspaniały świat* (Maciej Iłowiecki, illustr. Szymon Kobyliński, 1974), *Wyzwanie naturze: nowy wspaniały świat inżynierii genetycznej* (Robert Cooke, translated by Barbara Komuda, 1983); lastly, for Hejwowski there were even more titles in the network – *Nowy wspaniały świat?: moda, konsumpcja i rozrywka jako nowe style życia* (ed. by Wojciech Muszyński, 2009), *Wirtual: czy nowy wspaniały świat?* (ed. by Kazimierz Korab, 2010), *Nowy wspaniały Irak* (Mariusz Zawadzki, 2012) *Nowy wspaniały żołnierz: rewolucja biotechnologiczna i wojna w XXI wieku* (Łukasz Kamieński, 2014), *Nowy wspaniały świat 30 lat później*: *raport rozbieżności* (trans. Radosław Madejski, 2018) among others.

It can be concluded that Hejwowski treated the phrase "nowy wspaniały świat" (brave new world") as a "collective word" of the retranslations (Legeżyńska 194)[14]. The translator, by adopt-

11 The original meaning of the phrase *winged words* (*ἔπεα πτερόεντα, epea pteroenta*) is "highly significant or apposite words" (The Free Dictionary). In Polish it was slightly modified by Markiewicz and Romanowski as often quoted statements whose authorship or circumstances of composition can be established. They are figurative, colourful and allusive. They have the character of phraseologisms (Markiewicz and Romanowski 5-6).

12 Markiewicz states that the phrase was popularized by Huxley (289) and adds a reference to the entry on Shakespeare (590). Interestingly, in Shakespeare's case, however, he gives this phrase without the translator's name, although in the other Shakespeare quotes the Polish translator is always mentioned (Markiewicz and Romanowski 590-597).

13 For an extensive discussion of the issues related to the changing of well-known titles, see Adamowicz-Pośpiech "Gry".

14 Legeżyńska proposed the concept of a *collective word* for retranslations that would encompass specific phrases, longer fragments, or entire sentences that were deemed effective in previous retranslations and

ing the syntagma systemically, refers to the series, which means that the proposed poetics of translation contains some elements of earlier translations. Anna Legeżyńska, for one, claims that the progress guaranteed by the translators' creativity is to some extent *collective* in translation and the rule of plagiarism does apply at this level (194).[15] It seems that in this case we are dealing with a case of phrases "finally polonized and untouchable" (Majchrowski 103).

4. Intertextuality

Intertextuality in translation studies can be considered on three levels. First, this term is applied to describe the relationship between the original and the translation. Second, the concept of intertextuality is used by scholars analysing retranslations by specifying the interrelationship between various elements of the series. Third, intertextuality "proper" (as I call it here) is the transposition of explicit and implicit intertextual implicatures present in the original into the secondary text (Adamowicz-Pośpiech, *Seria* 265-299). The complexity and connotativity of the network of intertextual relations of the so-called intertextual chains in the original is sometimes different from that which the translator reproduces in the translation (Hatim and Mason 121–23). Moreover, in my view, intertextuality is not so much a name for the relationship between a work of art and pretexts as it is an indication of the work's participation in a certain expressive space and its reference to codes that are a potential formalization of this space and the previously defined texts. Addressing the issue of intertextual references in this paper, let me emphasize that I regard them as intertextual when they are an element of the construction of the semantic structure of the text and when they produce semantic tension that gives a new semantic quality to the receiving text (Majkiewicz 17; Culler 299).

In Huxley's novel we can find a substantial number of explicit and implicit intertextual references to Shakespeare and other Anglo-Saxon writers. Because the repertoire of allusions is extensive I will focus on selected references to Shakespeare and all the more so, since this intertextuality builds up the archaic dimension of the translation. In other words, in Huxley's novel intertextual references to Shakespeare are constitutive for the semantics and symbolism of the work, which was underscored by many scholars (Moroz, Hejwowski, Hejwowski and Moroz). Thus they should be counted among the obligatory intertextual relations, and there can be no question of omitting them without impoverishing the semantic layer of the work. The problem of describing intertextual relations in the case of Shakespeare's dramas is all the more complex because the translations of his works have changed significantly over the course of almost 100 years since the publication of the first version of *Brave New World.* Hence the translators faced

were well-integrated into the native culture, thereby eliminating the need to create new versions in the next link of the series. She assumed—though this assumption is not always accurate, as shown by Paloposki and Koskinen—that subsequent retranslations are always better.

15 The issue of plagiarism in retranslations is a contentious one. For a discussion of plagiarism on particular examples see Stiller; Adamowicz-Pośpiech, *Seria* 26-28; Jarniewicz.

not only the task of deciphering the intertextual signal, but also the choice of such a pretext that would be most firmly rooted in the cultural consciousness of the readers and would be easiest to recognize (Adamowicz-Pośpiech, *Seria* 258–265). As noted above, some of Shakespeare's pretexts entered the canon of "winged words" in Poland, and in such cases it seems that the choice has already been made by the frequency of usage and its codification.

Huxley's novel is a description of a futuristic World State which is characterised by mindless mass culture, consumer sports, and freewheeling sex. Its citizens are environmentally engineered into predetermined castes, and their (extreme) emotions are suppressed by a soothing, happiness-producing drug called "soma". The comprehensive descriptions of the new world and its inhabitants are provided by the narrator in a determinedly flat and affectless language. In this society nobody reads Shakespeare[16] – he is forbidden and forgotten, like most old writers. Shakespeare in the new wonderful world represents our exaltations, sufferings passions, betrayals and disasters – the feelings which "make us human" (Moroz 90). These emotions are most often expressed by John the Savage in a specific poetic and archaic language. And it is precisely at the intersection or clash of these two kinds of language that new or extra meaning is generated.

There are more than 50 quotations from Shakespeare.[17] Obviously, Stanisława Kuszelewska faced an almost impossible task when translating in 1933 (most of these quotations are implicit, i.e. interwoven into the utterances of various characters), and therefore she referred to earlier translations of Shakespeare only in five cases: three times to Paszkowski's translation of *Romeo and Juliet* and twice to Ulrich's translation of *The Tempest* (K 169, 203, 211, 212). Strangely enough, she lacks any reference in the case of Miranda's key statement in the novel about the brave new world. On the other hand, Baran in 1988 could have consulted Shakespeare concordances, although it would still have been time-consuming to identify the quotations and their translations; probably, that is why he decided to translate Shakespeare in his own words (B 137). However, given that the translation has been reissued for another 35 years, the translator should have verified these quotations because now there are search engines that work on Shakespeare's *Collected Works* and one can trace them within minutes. In this respect, the undisputed advantage of Hejwowski's version are the quotations in Ulrich's, Koźmian's or Paszkowski's old translations explained and identified in footnotes. Since Grzegorz Moroz wrote extensively on Baran's decision and its consequences to translate Shakespeare's lines in his own words, let us focus just on three cases.

Let's emphasize again that a translator who encounters quotations from other literary works should use their earlier translations, especially if these are recognized examples or even canonical ones (Majkiewicz 20). In the case of Shakespeare's quotations in *Brave New World*, some of

16 Except for Mustapha Mond, the "Resident World Controller for Western Europe."

17 List of quotes from Shakespeare in *Brave New World* https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/List_of_quotes_from_Shakespeare_in_Brave_New_World

them may be recognizable to Polish readers (lines from *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* or *Romeo and Juliet);* as far as other Shakespearean quotations are concerned, the issue is not so much their recognizability but the archaic overtone they have in Huxley's original and the clash they generate in comparison with the World State's poetry. That is why it is well-reasoned that Hejwowski used old translations by Paszkowski, Ulrich and Koźmian and not the new ones by Barańczak or Kamiński. There are three types of these quotations. The first group subsumes quotations that could be identified as Shakespearean by Polish readers.

Out, **damned spot**, out I say! (Macbeth V, i; BNW 192)
Kuszelewska: Widzicie tę przeklętą plamę? (K 137)
Baran: Widzicie to **cholerne miejsce**? (B 122)
Hejwowski: Czy widzicie tę **przeklętą plamę**? (H 71; trans. J. Paszkowski)[18]

Kuszelewska and Hejwowski's choice of the word "plama" for stain is more apt in terms of preserving the marker of intertextual reference.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. (*Hamlet* I, v; BNW 211)
Kuszelewska: Jedną z tych licznych rzeczy na niebie i na ziemi, o których się filozofom nie śniło jest to! (wskazał ręką) my, nasz świat nowoczesny! (K 269)
Baran: Człowiek, któremu się nie śniło o wielu rzeczach, jakie są na niebie i ziemi. (B 240)
Hejwowski: To był ten, któremu się nie śniło, jak wiele jest rzeczy na ziemi i w niebie. (H 138)[19]

… it is a tale
Told by an idiot… (*Macbeth* V, v; BNW 201)
Baran: Ależ … to tworzy jakiś idiota. (B 229)
Hejwowski: Ale one są … **powieścią idioty** (H 132; trans. J. Paszkowski)

In these two cases, Hejwowski's translation refers to well-known phrases in Polish identified as "winged words" (Markiewicz and Romanowski 596). From the excerpts quoted above, it is clear that the language introduced by Hejwowski following Shakespeare's translations is archaic,

18 In the case of this quote, its introduction is crucial. John the Savage meets the guests from the new world (Bernard and Lenina) for the first time and greets them in the old-fashioned way: "'Hullo. Good morrow,' says the stranger in faultless but peculiar English" (BNW 104). "-Bądźcie pozdrowieni – powiedział nieznajomy bezbłędną, choć dziwaczną angielszczyzną" (H 71). This form of the greeting constitutes a marker of intertextual reference, which disappears in Baran's variant: "– Cześć. Dzień dobry – powiedział obcy bezbłędną, choć nieco dziwną angielszczyzną" (B 122). The marker allows for the opening of the space of intertextual dialogue. The classification of markers was proposed by Majkiewicz (23-27).

19 This phrase was classified as "winged words" by Markiewicz and Romanowski (591).

and the words may open an intertextual space for the Polish reader and trigger connotations with Shakespeare's dramas.

Another group encompasses explicit quotations introduced by specific expressions such as: "he opened the book" (BNW 119, 165) ("otworzył książkę …" H 79, 109], "Czytałem o nich u Szekspira" (H, 138), "Czy pamięta pan te scenę w *Królu Learze"* (H 140)*,* "Nie pamięta pan, co powiedział *Otello*?" (H 142), among others.

> Huxley: The Savage shook his head. 'Listen to this (…)'
> Let the bird of loudest lay.
> On the sole Arabian tree,
> Herald sad and trumpet be… (BNW 165)

> Kuszelewska: Dziki potrząsnął głową. – Lepiej posłuchaj tego! […]
> Zaćmiłem słońca blaski południowe,
> Zbudziłem wiatry, wywołałem wojnę
> Zielonej fali i błękitnych stropów
> Grzmiących piorunów zapaliłem ognie
> (Szekspir, *Burza,* translated by Ulrich, K 211)

Interestingly, Kuszelewska failed to identify the quotation cited by Huxley (and it was a passage from the poem *The Phoenix and the Turtledove*), perhaps because it is a little-known work. But realizing how crucial this passage was to Helmholtz's experience in discovering true poetry, she decided to replace it with other lines from Shakespeare's work. Hejwowski corrected this misquoted passage:

> Hejwowski: Dzikus pokręcił głową.–Posłuchaj tego […].
> Niechaj z ptaków najgłośniejszy
> Na drzewie owym w Arabii,
> Czyste skrzydła tu przywabi,
> Jako herold najsmutniejszy…
> (Szekspir, *Feniks i turkawka*, translated by M. Słomczyński; H 109)

The significance of the quote is highlighted by Helmholtz's reaction to it: "Helmholtz listened with a growing excitement. At 'sole Arabian tree' he started; at 'thou shrieking harbinger' he smiled with sudden pleasure; at 'every fowl of tyrant wing' the blood rushed up into his cheeks (…)" (BNW 165). Thus, we can observe how essential it is to cite the words of Shakespeare in accurate translation so as to stir the emotions of a budding poet like Helmholtz. To convey the unique agitation of the protagonist with this poetry one should not render it with one's own words, as Baran did:

> Baran: Dzikus pokręcił głową… - A posłuchaj tego […].
> Niech śpiewem rozgłośny ptak
> Na samotnym Azji drzewie,
> Smutny zwiastun, da nam znak… (B 191)

One more example of this type of quotation.

> Huxley: 'Do you remember that bit in *King Lear?'* said the Savage at last: "'The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to plague us; the dark and vicious place where thee he got cost him his eyes" (BNW 214-5).

Kuszelewska did not identify this passage but Hejwowski did:

> Hejwowski: Czy pamięta pan te scenę w *Królu Learze?* (…): „Nieba sprawiedliwe; z słodkich występków naszych czynią one narzędzie naszej chłosty, owo ciemne pokątne miejsce w którym on cię spłodził, doprowadziło go do ociemnienia" (H 140)

When John argues for the existence of God and his justice, he resorts to the literary example of Edmund and cites passages from *King Lear* from memory to validate his point. His opponent, Mustapha Mond, also quotes from this work proving that the idea of God's justice is irrelevant in the new world. It seems only logical to refer to translations of Shakespeare to make the quotes sound plausible. Again, Baran translates them on his own:

> Pamięta pan ten fragment *Króla Leara?* (…) – „Bogowie są sprawiedliwi i z naszych miłych nam grzeszków sposobią na nas narzędzia kary; w tym samym mrocznym i występnym miejscu, w którym cię począł, oczy postradał." (B 244)

In these cases, due to the introductory phrases, in my opinion, it was essential to resort to Shakespeare's translations, which Hejwowski did, since the readers are informed explicitly that these are Shakespeare's words. Also, Kuszelewska realized the necessity to refer to the existing translations (in some cases at least) since the initial words openly alluded to the bard. They should sound poetic and archaic, which is not the case in Baran's version.

The last group includes implicit quotations which, as noted above, serve the function of linguistic differentiation and foreground the archaic tone of John the Savage's utterances. Arguably, they help him to express the unknown emotions he experiences in the new world. Hence their archaic tone is indispensable to fulfil these purposes.

> Huxley: On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand, may seize
> And steal immortal blessing from her lips,

> Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
> Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin.' (BNW 130)
>
> Kuszelewska: … jej wolno dotykać
> Białego cudu drogiej ręki Julji
> I nieśmiertelne z ust jej kraść zbawienie
> Z tych ust, co pełne pełne westalczej skromności
> Bez przerwy płoną i pocałowanie
> Grzechem być sądzą…
> (Szekspir, *Romeo i Julia*, as translated by Paszkowski; K 169)
>
> Hejwowski: … jej wolno dotykać białego cudu drogiej ręki Julii,
> I nieśmiertelne z ust jej kraść zbawienie;
> Z tych ust, co pełne westalczej skromności
> Bez przerwy płoną i pocałowanie
> Grzechem być sądzą…
> (Szekspir, *Romeo i Julia* , III, 3, trans. Paszkowski; H 87)
>
> Baran: Im wolno na białym cudzie dłoni Julii
> Siadać i boską świętość kraść z jej ust,
> Co chociaż dziewiczo skromne, płoną,
> Nawet w zetknięciu własnych warg widząc grzech. (B 151)

Moreover, these quotes help him to understand and process the new reality and its inventions, for instance that of soma.

> Huxley: - 'Every *soma*-holiday is a bit of what our ancestors used to call eternity.'
> John began to understand. 'Eternity was in our lips and eyes,' he murmured. (BNW 139)
>
> Baran: Każda somatyczna podróż to okruch tego, co nasi przodkowie nazywali wiecznością.
> John zaczął rozumieć. – Wieczność gościła w naszych ustach i oczach – mruknął. (B 162)
>
> Hejwowski: Każde somowakacje to cząstka czegoś, co nasi przodkowie nazywali wiecznością.
> John zaczynał rozumieć. – W oczach, na ustach, wieczność była wszędzie – mruknął (Szekspir, *Antoniusz i Kleopatra* I, iii; trans. L. Ulrich; H 92)

To understand Lenina's promiscuity and willingness to make love, John recourses to the lines from *King Lear* and *Othello*. It is only natural to him to process his condemnation and disgust through Othello's fury at Desdemona's betrayal:

> Huxley: The Savage was striding up and down, marching, marching to the drums and music of magical words. 'The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly does lecher in my sight.' Maddeningly they rumbled in his ears. 'The fitchew nor the soiled horse goes to't with a more riotous appetite. Down from the waist they are Centaurs, though women all above. But to the girdle do the gods inherit. Beneath all the fiends'. There's hell, there's darkness, there is the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie, fie, fie, pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination.' (BNW 177)

> Baran: W pokoju Dzikus chodził tam i z powrotem, chodził, chodził, w rytm muzyki czarodziejskich słów. „Robi to strzyżyk, a mała złota muszka także na mój rozum się łajdaczy. Żadna łasica, żadna wypasiona klacz nie pała większą żądzą. Od pasa w dół centaury, choć od góry kobiety. Do ramion córy bogów. Poniżej szatan rządzi. Piekło, ciemności, siarczana otchłań, ogień, smród, zniszczenie; tfu, tfu, tfu! Uncję piżma, dobry aptekarzu, bym sobie odświeżył wyobraźnię." (B 204)

> Hejwowski: W pokoju Dzikus maszerował wte i wewte do rytmu bębnów i muzyki, jakimi były magiczne słowa. „Tak samo grzeszy pokrzywniczek, maleńka złota muszka w moich oczach grzeszy tak samo." Słowa ogłuszająco dudniły mu w uszach. Żadna klacz, żadna łasica nie jest swej żądzy tak nieposkromiona. Od góry są to kobiety, lecz w dół od pasa – chutliwe centaury. Tylko część górną bogowie dziedziczą, dolna to własność diabła, tam jest piekło! tam są ciemności, otchłań siarki, smoła! Żar i war, fetor i stęchlizna. Tfy! tfy! tfy! Daj mi piżma, aptekarzu, na złagodzenie mojej wyobraźni. (Szekspir, *Król Lear* IV, 6*; Otello* IV, 22; H 117)

Hejwowski's decision to use Shakespeare's translations is by all means the right one since, as we can conclude based on the fragments above, John's words via Shakespeare's phrases convey the power of his emotions while not flattening or shallowing them.[20]

5. Poems and rhymes

As the last issue I wish to discuss poems and rhymes. We can distinguish three types: nursery rhymes, poems, and verses used to hypnotically programme the behaviour of the inhabitants. I will explore the first two categories.

Nursery rhymes are treated as a kind of intertextual allusions by Jolanta Kokot because they refer to the literary system of the original which encompasses a set of texts, motifs or topoi belonging to the common cultural heritage of the author of the original (274). It may happen that the intertextual space referred to in the source text belongs exclusively to the author's culture and has no counterpart in the receiving culture (indeed this is the case of the nursery rhymes

20 There are also quotes from other works by Anglo-Saxon writers. However, their function requires separate discussion. Let me just mention one of the most important ones, that is, the allusion to T.S. Eliot's "Whispers of Immortality" (H 27; Hejwowski and Moroz 166).

present in *Brave New World*). The translator often encounters the dilemma of either impoverishing their version by leaving out certain external references or seeking a substitute within the native culture for the original's frame of reference. The nursery rhymes used by Huxley were popular in nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain and obviously they were addressed to children. The new world evokes a specific intertextual space not only by making the processed works the subject of commentary, but also by their travesty. On the one hand, it proves to be an important type of texts that are subject to processing. It does not matter that most of them are didactic works, while the rest are poems that are strongly conventionalized on the borderline of literature and cultural texts (Kokot 274).[21] These are clearly works recognized by English readers as the type of literature most appropriate for children. Huxley travestied such rhymes as *Georgie Porgie, Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross* and many others. On the other, the travestied versions are addressed to the citizens of the World State, so implicitly this reveals their poor intellectual competence and the power of the state to manipulate its subjects. Let me analyse just one example, namely *Georgie Porgie* because it (or the concept it represents) runs through the entire novel.

The original nursery rhyme:

Georgie Porgie, pudding and pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry,
When the girls came out to play,
Georgie Porgie ran away.[22]

Huxley's travesty:

Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,
Kiss the girls and make them One,
Boys at one with girls at peace;
Orgy-porgy gives release. (BNW 75)

Kuszelewska's variant:

Orgi-porgi Ford i Pan
Bierz dziewczęta, wiedź je w tan.
Chłopak, dziewczę wspólny duch,
Orgi-porgi jedność z dwóch. (K 103)

21 In her insightful analyses Jolanta Kokot refers to the rhymes in L. Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but I find her commentary most apposite for the same type of poems present in *Brave New World*.

22 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgie_Porgie

Baran's version:

> Orgia-porgia, Forda śpiew,
> Wzniecaj w paniach Jedni zew.
> Roztopiony już on w niej,
> Z orgią-porgią dwojgu lżej. (B 89)

Hejwowski's translation:

> *Orgy-porgy*, Ford z radością,
> całuj dziewczęta, uczyń jednością.
> Chłopcy, dziewczęta złączeni w mroku;
> Orgy-porgy przynosi spokój. (H 53)[23]

Hejwowski decided to leave the phrase *orgy-porgy* in the original, and explained that the original name of the ceremony is immediately associated, at least for English-speaking readers (and maybe those Polish readers who are familiar with English nonsense poetry[24]), with the poem *Georgie Porgy* (Hejwowski and Moroz 164). Kuszelewska's version and Baran's, who copied her "orgia-porgia", is unlikely to trigger any associations.

The other type is poetry composed in the World State whose distinctive quality is its poor quality, which may be seen when contrasted with the passages from Shakespeare. This category subsumes song lyrics and short poems composed by propaganda for the citizens, but also poems composed by Helmholtz, who aspires to compose great poetry free from the State's constraints and propaganda. One of them is a well-known song among the inhabitants which is sung during parties and other festivities:

> Huxley: Bottle of mine, it's you I've always wanted!
> Bottle of mine, why was I ever decanted?
> Skies are blue inside of you,
> The weather's always fine;
> For
> There ain't no Bottle in all the world
> Like that dear little Bottle of mine. (BNW 68)

23 Additionally, Hejwowski provides the translation of the original nursery rhyme.

24 Notably, some Polish readers may be familiar with the Polish translations of nonsense poetry and nursery rhymes by Stanisław Barańczak.

Kuszelewska: *Znasz-li ten* słój, gdzie serce me *dojrzewa*,
Rubinów *blask* i winda cicho śpiewa,
Ach tak, ach tak, o butlo moja miła,
Wiem co jest raj, boś ty mnie wykarmiła (K 106)

Kuszelewska remarks in the footnote that this is a free translation, but at the same time she models it on a renowned poem by Adam Mickiewicz. In my view, this is a mistake because the words of the song and its rhymes are trivial, and by reaching for a romantic pattern she elevates the song and infuses it with extra meanings. Below is Mickiewicz's poem which served as a template for Kuszelewska's translation. The words repeated by Kuszelewska are italicised:

Do H* Wezwanie do Neapolu** (Naśladowanie z Goethego)
Znasz-li ten kraj,
Gdzie cytryna *dojrzewa*,
Pomarańcz *blask*
Majowe złoci drzewa?
Gdzie wieńcem bluszcz
Ruiny dawne stroi,
Gdzie buja laur
I cyprys cicho stoi?
Znasz-li ten kraj?
Ach, tam, o moja miła,
Tam był mi raj,
Pókiś ty ze mną była!

Znasz-li ten kraj, gdzie kwitną
Nad grobami piołuny,
Gdzie niebo twarz błękitną
W szare kryje całuny?

Gdzie pola kośćmi siane,
Las szumi pieśń cmentarną,
I rzeki łzami wezbrane
Przez ziemię płyną czarną?

Moreover, to make sure that the readers recognize the model she refers to, in the passage following the song she mentions the original title of Mickiewicz's poem, although in *Brave New World* the incipit is repeated: "How kind, how good-looking, how delightfully amusing everyone was! *Bottle of mine, it's you I've always wanted*… But Lenina and Henry had what they wanted…" (BNW 68).

Kuszelewska: Jakże miły jaki ładny jak niezmiernie zabawny jest każdy i każda. *„Znasz li ten kraj?…”* Lenina i Henryk posiadali to czego pragnęli. (K 106)

Both Baran and Hejwowski recreate the banal content and rhymes, although it seems to me that Hejwowski's solution for "why was I ever decanted" is better that Baran's "skąd się tutaj wziąłem" because it mirrors the new world's rules for the production of children whereas Baran's question sounds more existential. Hence it inscribes the song with extra connotations.

Baran: O moja butlo, ciebie zawsze pragnąłem
O moja butlo, *skąd się tutaj wziąłem?*
Niebo jest w tobie błękitne,
Pogoda zawsze wspaniała;
Bo
Nie ma na świecie drugiej takiej butli
Jak ta droga moja butla mała. (B 81)

Hejwowski: Moja butelko, ciebie zawsze chciałem!
Moja butelko, dlaczego się zdekantowałem?
W tobie zawsze słońce świeci,
Nie spadnie deszczu kropelka,
Bo
Nie ma takiej drugiej
jak moja mała butelka. (H 48)

Finally, I wish to mention a very important component of *Brave New World*, namely culture-specific references. Notably, the novel was intended by the author as a critique of the modern world and the blind march of progress. Hence, Huxley weaves proper nouns (names of well-known scientists, politicians, inventors, names of places) into the text to make the readers reflect on the ideas they stood for. Some examples: Henry Ford, Sigmund Freud, Maurice Bokanowski, Lew Trocki, Lenin, Alfred Mond, H.G. Wells, Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, Thomas Robert Malthus. All this cultural richness was not available in Kuszelewska's translation for obvious reasons, but it is a pity that it was also lost in Baran's version. Obviously, some of the cultural references may be understood by the readers only with the help of the translator. As Peter Fawcett insightfully points out: "the translators themselves are sometimes directly and consciously responsible for exercising absolute power to exclude the reader […]" (177). Assuming that readers will independently verify a reference effectively excludes them "in the name of some ideology of textual purity, or perhaps intellectual arrogance" (Fawcett 178). Arguably, one of the major assets of Hejwowski's translation are footnotes in which he explains the names of the characters, intertextual allusions and the socio-political context of the story written at the beginning of the

previous century. Knowledge of the historical and cultural context enriches the reading of the book, and opens up new paths of interpretation for the readers.

6. Conclusions

The diachronic analysis of *Brave New World* retranslations shows that the Retranslation Hypothesis applies in their case. Stanisława Kuszelewska as a first translator domesticated the novel, and she had almost no access to translatorial aids; Bogdan Baran was in a better position, yet he decided to translate Shakespeare on his own and did not supply it with any explanatory footnotes. Krzysztof Hejwowski's variant may be called a Polish annotated edition, and as such it is worth publishing in the renowned Biblioteka Narodowa series.[25]

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25 Hejwowski's unpublished manuscript which I used for my analysis requires editing.

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Part II

Varia

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Adaption as Self-Representation: The Anthology of Influences in Eavan Boland's *The War Horse*, *Collected Poems* and *New Collected Poems*

Abstract. In The War Horse, Eavan Boland began to hone the distinctive perspective which would define her place in the history of Irish letters. The book is divided into three sections, the second of which consists entirely of translations. Turning to these, both Boland's choice of poems to translate and practice as a translator are examined. In three cases, Boland so significantly alters the original poems that the term adaptation or transcreation is more precise. At a moment when the poet sought to break with the mainline of Irish poetic tradition, both the adapted and translated works can be viewed as integral to The War Horse, providing a foundation for Boland's subsequent poetic evolution. In a subsequent version of Boland's Collected Poems, the volume is reorganized so as to somewhat de-emphasize these pieces, yet two additional translations inserted in Against Love Poetry continue to highlight key facets of Boland's mature poetic stance.

Keywords: Eavan Boland, *The War Horse,* translations, self-representation, Irish poetry

1. Adaptations in Boland's *(New) Collected Poems*: affinities, positioning and self-presentation

Translations have always been the primary means whereby native literary traditions are enriched by innovations in the wider world, yet it may be argued that the specific historical circumstances of Irish literature render the act of the translation particularly significant. By the time of the Irish Literary Revival, due to a history of English colonization, the Irish language had been reduced to "the vernacular of a minority of the rural poor," meaning that any effective reconnection of Anglo-Irish speakers with the island's past tradition would imply a massive campaign of

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Irish education and/or such acts of translation as help to facilitate a "dual tradition" (Kinsella 4). Internally, translations allowed those seeking to resurrect national consciousness with a means of transmitting the Irish canon to those who no longer spoke it; in terms of transcending the dominant (post)colonial linguistic context of British English, translation also allowed for the forging of connections with literary trends from continental Europe. This might be through an appeal to the classical canon (as in the case of William Butler Yeats' and Seamus Heaney's adaptations of Greek plays); alternatively, it might involve contemporary engagement with more modern European languages.

As did many other 20th century Irish poets, Eavan Boland delved into translations, several of which have been the deserving object of critical attention. The present paper does not aim to treat Boland's activities as a translator exhaustively, but limits its scope to a specific set of translations: namely, those which Boland interspersed among her own works in her *Collected Poems* (1995) and *New Collected Poems* (2005). This comprises eight pieces from four languages (Irish, Latin, German and Russian). Importantly, in the majority of cases these differ significantly enough from the originals that the term adaptation becomes more suitable than that of translation. One question raised is why Boland includes specifically these poems, for, while she may well have viewed these pieces as her best translations, this is by no means certain. The perspective adopted herein is one germane when considering *any* volume of a writer's collected works: namely, that of a poet's purposeful act of self-representation.

If translations from Irish had allowed previous generations of Irish readers and writers in English to nevertheless ground themselves in their native tradition, the tactic remains fundamentally viable in Boland's first two books, *New Territory* (1967) and *The War Horse* (1975). By the time of the latter volume, however, Boland had undergone a formative crisis of conscience as regards poetic tradition — particularly that of Ireland — and was seeking to break with the Irish literary mainstream. In *The War Horse*, first and foremost, an Irish translation is used to position herself and to anticipate this rupture. The adaptions of Latin, German and Russian poems included therein, on the other hand, allow the young poet to establish her wider, cosmopolitan credentials. In light of this, it may also be significant that, years later, a more confident and celebrated Boland de-centers the translated and adapted poems in *The War Horse* in her *New Collected Poems*, yet also includes two additional adaptations (*from Against Love Poetry*).

2. *New Territory* and *The War Horse*: anchoring in tradition

A leitmotif of Boland's interviews and poetic memoirs are her complicated relations with poetic tradition; in her early years, the Irish poetic heritage was often experienced either as an encumbrance or as a lack. As an ambassador's daughter, Boland had largely grown up in London and New York; she had no knowledge of Gaelic Irish (Boland, *Object Lessons* 55). Besides the distance resulting from expatriation, she would also become increasingly disconcerted by patriarchal and nationalist proclivities of Irish bardic heritage. This notwithstanding, in her poetic memoirs she hammers home her pressing desire that her own poems would come to be recognized as

specifically "Irish poems" (*Object Lessons* 193). Boland's attempt to position herself in Irish tradition is salient in *New Territory*, which is peppered with references to Yeats, allusions to Irish myths and dedications to her emerging Irish peers. The poems here are competent, and the budding poet was apparently much celebrated (in reminiscences of these years, her university classmate and fellow-poet Derek Mahon opined that Boland had "only to look at a door and it flew open" (24)). In light of Boland's subsequent career, however, it can be perplexing to revisit a collection in which "the only poem […] written from an obviously feminine point of view is [from the perspective of Athena] […] the role model of choice for a woman-poet absorbed into the patriarchy" (O'Conner).

The commonplace of later Boland criticism that in *New Territory* one encounters a poet who had not yet found her own voice is corroborated by Boland herself, who, both in interviews and her poetic memoirs, characterizes the years leading up to *The War Horse* in terms of self-doubt and aesthetic crisis. *New Territory* only narrowly escapes being juvenilia, yet, as with many a precocious but inchoate debut, it serves as an invaluable benchmark for appreciating the poet's subsequent evolution. For the purposes of this analysis, what one should remember is that Boland's lived connection to Ireland had been that of expatriation, and she cogently observes how the breach occasioned by a childhood and adolescence spent abroad had left her bereft of "[a] sense of ownership [of the Irish lyric], [with] no automatic feeling of access" (*Object Lessons* 104). Predictably, her initial attempt to position herself within that tradition is rather conventional, meaning that the decision to adapt "After the Irish of Egan O'Rahilly" is only surprising in light of Boland's later aesthetic stance. O'Rahily (1670-1726) was a poet intimately associated with the origins of the aisling genre, whereby Ireland came to be depicted as a dispossessed female personification. O'Conner does discern in Boland's translation a sense of "cool control in place of the angry lament of the original, male, poet" (1995) yet, if she has tempered the original, she has not repudiated its essential lament for a defeated Gaelic Ireland. Tellingly, Boland therefore first attempts a tried-and-true ingress into Irish tradition, situating in the straightforwardly nationalist and bardic tradition whereby "[the poet's] heart ails / That every hawk and royal hawk is lost". While the notion of a "birthright […] dispersed" (*Collected Poems* 5) likely reverberated with Boland's own feelings of uprootedness, one here encounters her seeking to connect to Ireland via a poet who had popularized the very image of an objectified female Ireland against which her later work was to sustain an articulate invective.

Against the foil of *New Territory*, Boland's sophomore effort, *The War Horse*, can therefore be viewed under the auspices of a new commencement. Jody Allen-Randolph deems *The War Horse* Boland's "transitional volume" ("Private Worlds" 47); indeed, the polemic Boland who critically subverts the bard/muse relation, the elegiac Boland politically committed to depicting history's outsiders, and the lyric Boland of domesticity and suburbia - in short, the Boland her readers will readily recognize - is first field-tested here. That her new poetic stance is deployed with such surety particularly surprises when one bears in mind Boland's reminiscences of these years elsewhere. During what were "[i]n some ways the most formative years of all" she describes the

feeling of "[s]truggling almost every evening to write someone else's poem" (Allen-Randolph "An Interview" 120, 119) and oscillating between "times when [she] felt like a poet, and times when [she] did not" (Boland, *Object Lessons* 106). What sounds redolent of imposter syndrome can be surmised a result of Boland's having outgrown her previous aesthetic, but not yet having seized upon how to transcend it. She had, however, become certain that her route of ingress into Irish poetry would have to be "oblique" and subversive (*Object Lessons* 127, 150). As a poet undergoing a crisis of confidence, Boland would presumably have anticipated at least a modicum of backlash for a new, iconoclastic direction in which she perceived at least a dearth of *Irish* precedents. The dilemma which presents itself is obvious: how does one ground one's poetic authority within the very line of tradition which one has determined to critique and subvert?

Viewed in light of the above considerations, the inclusion of five translations in the middle section of *The War Horse* is by no means arbitrary filler, but rather may be construed as an act of deliberate cunning, whereby Boland gets her own back. This maneuver remains evident in the 1995 *Collected Poems*, where the tripartite organization of *The War Horse* is retained. Both its first and third sections are composed of original poems (political poems and elegiac rumination upon contemporary and historical victims predominate in the first section, whereas scenes from suburbia and domesticity are grouped together in the third). Sandwiched between these are five translations which, like the piece "After the Irish of Egan O'Rahilly", may be coherently considered as an exercise in positioning. In contrast to *New Territory*, however, in *The War Horse* the works translated and adapted are both more various and also more intriguing.

Given her desire for an Irish pedigree, yet her increased uneasiness about the "Irish nation as an existing construct in Irish poetry" (*Object Lessons* 127), Boland's choice for an Irish translation is instructive. Although the patriarchal, male and bardic tradition is henceforth to be subverted in her poetry, the poet is still seeking to ground herself and her work as seminally Irish. In this case, she deftly evades both the nationalist corpus and the oral bardic tradition by invoking an anterior, yet preeminently canonical, text: namely, "Pangur Bán", the eight verses of which develop an extended conceit between the scholarly research of a 9th-century monk and his pet cat's hunting. Instead of the "male and bardic" O'Rahilly, one finds a rapport with an anonymous scribe penning marginal verses. Such monastic isolation resonates with Boland's own "Ode to Suburbia", wherein her cooped-up poet-housewife persona similarly empathizes with a housecat: "The same lion who tore stripes / Once off zebras" but "may / On a red letter day / Catch a mouse". Boland's own red-letter days were increasingly to yield the breakthrough whereby an ostensibly mundane suburbia is poetically metamorphosed: "changed, schooled / Forever by [her] skill, [her] compromises" (*Collected Poems* 44-45). Deliberate or fortuitous, the coincidence lends coherence to *The War Horse*.

Whereas "Pangur Bán" will be shunted to a place of precedence as the first translation in the *New Collected Poems*, in the earlier *Collected Poems*, Boland opens section two by anchoring in the classical world through her version of Horace's ode "O Fons Bandusiae." In a mode analogous to her Irish choice of O'Rahilly or "From the Irish of Pangur Ban", this is a preeminently canonical

choice regarding the wider ambit of Western literature. The immediate impression upon encountering Horace in *The War Horse* is that of a central "cool classicism", and Mary O'Conner duly discerns Boland's need for "an anchor in a lyrically imagined Pax Romana of the establishment" (1999). This is perceptive, but one also presumes that considerably more is in play. Far from being a doughty, 'tried and true' maneuver, in Boland's case Latin poetry is imbued with deeply personal, autobiographical relevance. As is related in the fourth chapter of *Object Lessons*, as a schoolgirl Boland had initially been compelled to learn Latin, but, at a certain moment, what had formerly been rote translation tasks evolved into an empowering experience of control, as well as a formative intuition of "a language which was also a system" (85):

> [O]ne day in my last year[…] I began to understand something. It was something about the economy of it all: the way the ablative absolute gathered and compressed time. One day, again figuratively, it was a burdensome piece of grammar. The next, with hardly any warning, it was a messenger with quick heels and a bright face. […] I began to respect, however grudgingly, the systems of a language which could make such constructs that, although I had no such words for it, they stood against the disorders of love or history. (*Object Lessons* 74-75)

This epiphany, significantly, is presented as having occurred at a moment when the budding author had only theretofore attempted "halting [original] poems and unfinished sentences". Via translation exercises, the act of linguistic expression, which had theretofore been experienced in terms of the exposure and vulnerability of a teenager lacking a native "idiom" and "place", suddenly becomes re-framable under the auspices of empowerment, possession and authority. Boland had not yet come into her own as a poet, but her memoir clearly conveys an intuition of control resulting from her handling and recomposition of Latin texts. Despite the insecurity of her first poetic forays, via translations from "a dead language, which had never been heard on this island, [and] had never been written for women", Boland had gained an intuition of the "protection" of "tak[ing] the unreason of one language and mak[ing] it safe in the grammar of another" (*Object Lessons* 77, 84-85).

This idea of "mak[ing] it safe" in connection with translation may be apprehended in several ways. On the one hand, there is the straightforward act of curation: the translator carries the sense or gist of the original across the counterintuitive syntax of another language. As will be seen, however, Boland's versions often in more significant ways temper the unreason of the original works. O'Conner suggests Boland had moderated O'Rahily's "angry lament" in *New Territory* (1999), and similar impulses can be seen in Boland's treatment of works by Nelly Sachs and Vladimir Mayakovsky. As regards her translation practice by the time of *The War Horse*, Boland unfailingly adopts the approach of a tight form, adapting the source texts into her own poetic idiom. Depending on the poem she adapts, said transposition may be salient or subtle. In the case of "From the Irish of Pan Ban", the term translation remains credible: the eight stanzas of the Irish text are retained, as is the use of a rhyme scheme. In Horace's case, the four unrhymed quatrains

of the original are recomposed into four stanzas of two rhyming tercets, where Boland's meter is shorted to an (approximate) tetrameter, as can be seen on the example of Boland's final stanza:

> With every fountain, every spring
> Of legend, I will set you down
> In praise and immortal spate:
> These waters which drop gossiping
> To ground, this wet surrounding stone
> And this green oak I celebrate. (*Collected Poems* 37)

The choice of "spate" both allows for the final rhyme (and slant rhyme with the first and fourth lines of the preceding stanza) and also slightly subverts the poet's ability to immortalize the spring, yet by and large, both in terms of register and content, Boland's translation does not greatly depart from the spirit of Horace's original.

In the remaining three translations from *The War Horse*, however, the impulse to couch "unreason […] in the grammar of another" is conspicuous, to the point that adaption is a far more apt term than translation. In the case of twentieth century poems by Sachs and Mayakovsky, Boland without fail renders abrupt free verse into her own regular stanzas of the period, complete with at least slant rhyme. Terrence Brown observed of the book's middle section that one sees Boland "discovering possible identities in translations and versions of other poets' work" (37), yet his claim is only anachronistically tenable (that is, presuming one knows Boland will subsequently adopt a curt, aggressive line for 1980's *In Her Own Image*). Here, however, Boland suffuses the adaptions with her style, rather than trying on that of the originals. The foreign language poems are normalized, making her versions more rightly transcreations than translations. As an illustration, one need only compare one stanza from Sachs' "Chor der Schatten" with Boland's version:

> Wir schatten, o wir Schatten!
> Schatten von Henkern
> Geheftet am Staube eurer Untaten-
> Schatten von Opfern
> Zeichnend das Drama eures Blutes an eine Wand. (Sachs 99)

The rhyme between "Henkern" and "Opfern" is an exception rather than the rule, for end rhyme does not reoccur elsewhere in Sachs' original. Boland's version not only makes consistent use of end rhyme, but tends to favor perfect rhyme:

> Puppets we are, strung by a puppet master.
> He knows the theatre of the absurd. He understands

> Murder too well. Outrage. Grief. Disaster.
> He puts the show on in hell. By his permission
> We are moths fired and turned on his obsession.
> And his hands […] (*Collected Poems* 38)

In terms of sense and lexicon, Boland has given herself a free hand here. Such new (if conceptually cognate) elements as "theatre of the absurd", "outrage", "grief" and "disaster" have been introduced—a poetic license which also allows for the extension of Sachs' squat lines so as to approximate Boland's longer verses. Broadly considered, what ensues in a reconstitution of the traumatized, fragile syntax of Sachs' Holocaust survivor: thereby "protect[ed]", one ventures to say, in Boland's own "grammar".

Boland includes two Mayakovsky poems, "The Atlantic Ocean" and "Conversation with an Inspector of Taxes", wherein the potential for deformation implicit in the act of translation is even more pronounced. Whereas her adaptations of Sachs involve expansion, her adaptations of Mayakovsky use compression; in both cases, form is conscientiously imposed upon chaos. When repackaging "Атлантический океан" and "Разговор с фининспектором о поэзии", Mayakovsky's sprawling, Futurist free verse is shunted into regular metrical and strophic units. In the case of the latter poem, "Conversation with an Inspector of Taxes [about Poetry]", Mayakovsky's original consists of over two hundred short, unrhymed lines. Boland's version, a very loose translation yet a *tour-de-force* transcreation, summarily compresses these into thirteen regularly rhymed sestets of a pentameter. What is more, Boland does not merely alter the form but also the substantial content of Mayakovsky, causing his revolutionary rhetoric to morph into a far more humble poetic credo which appears to be her own.

The autobiographical premise of the Mayakovsky's original is maintained: a poet faces a (tacit) Soviet bureaucrat who has demanded he account for five hundred rubles owed in back taxes. Mayakovsky's riposte commences with thinly veiled scorn, before segueing into a protracted, defiant peroration upon the role of the poet in the new communist paradigm. In terms of fidelity, salient features of the original (such as a protracted conceit between rhyming words and promissory notes and a regular recourse to fiscal lexicon) are studiously retained by Boland. On the other hand, as the original is edited down, such details as a quip about the Seine needing a hat, or expansive references to a Broadway and a Bagdad still in need of lyric expression, are dropped. A blink-and-you-miss-it radium metaphor, a scornful remark about rival unoriginal poetic eunuchs, etc., are similarly elided. That being said, the suppression of these ornamental flourishes pales in comparison to the tonal change introduced to Mayakovsky's conclusion, which is so great as to nearly render this not a translation but a rewrite.

If the rhyme of "spate" with "celebrate" ever-so-mildly deflates Horace, Boland's versions of Mayakovsky categorically puncture his bombast. His grandiloquent proclamation that "Слово поэта — / ваше воскресение, / ваше бессмертие, / гражданин канцелярист" (*Stikhotvoreniya* 86) ("The word of the poet / is your resurrection / and your immortality / dear inspector") has

become Boland's muted assertion that the poet's lines will "jerk [the inspector] back" years later to "[ink] [his] signature / on final demands". Any note of triumph is muted by Boland's (original) stipulation the effects of the poet's words will, for the present, be "nil": the poet now voices stoic, longsuffering resignation rather than fury, with Mayakovsky's indignation having become Boland's wry "irritat[ion]" (*Collected Poems* 42).

The translator's (self-)insertion becomes particularly clear from the poem's conclusion, at which point Boland's alterations to the original are so blatant as to be subversive. In Mayakovsky's conclusion, the poet openly defies the tax collector: "А если / вам кажется,/ что всего делов —/ это пользоваться / чужими /словесами, / то вот вам, / товарищи, / мое стило, / и можете / писать / сами!" (*Stikhotvoreniya* 87) ("And if / it seems to you, / that all there is to it—/ is to use / others' / words, / then here it is, / comrades, / my pen, / and you can / write / it yourself!" (Mayakovsky, "A Talk" 108)). In place of bravado, however, Boland accentuates a note of modesty before the weight of one's responsibility to the unexpressed:

> Finally I know myself indebted,
> Beyond anything I can return,
> To the fastness of my winter cradle.
> Because somehow I never celebrated
> Its bleak skies. To this day they remain
> Unsung and my tongue is idle. (*Collected Poems* 42-43)

Mayakovsky's poem ends in a peremptory demand; Boland's ends in an epiphany and self-recrimination. In addition to allowing herself a free hand in terms of style and tone, Boland has essentially penned a new conclusion to the poem, thereby adapting Mayakovsky's manifesto into her own.

That all being said, what is important in the context of this "transition volume" (Allen Randolph, "Private Worlds" 47) is not merely what Boland changes, but also that which she retains. Boland is deeply and transparently attracted to the original's conviction in a poet's mission. "Conversation with an Inspector of Taxes" therefore remains a poem about the power of poetry, albeit one considerably qualified in its scope and tempered by a humility foreign to Mayakovsky's Russian text. When the Russian author proclaims his eternal indebtedness to the yet-to-be-expressed, the effect is that of self-importance; in Boland's adaptation, the poet is instead staggered and weighed down by a sense of beholdenness. Her particular indebtedness would not be to an unexpressed Broadway or Bagdad, but to outsiders and victims, those sidelined "Outside History"; as such, it need not surprise that in Boland's case the deferred victory is pyrrhic, incomplete and maudlin. The poem will indeed survive the bureaucrat, but this will become apparent only "Years after [the poet has] died and lie[s] a pauper - / Crushed not by you bureaucrat / […] but by the vast claims on a poet / I could not meet" (*Collected Poems* 42).

3. New Collected Poems: rearrangement and representation

Recapitulating, a few conclusions might be drawn about Boland's employment of translations early in her career. Firstly, whether through a conventional Irish choice in *New Territory* or an equally canonical but more circumspect choice in *The War Horse*, a translation may be used to establish her Irish pedigree. In the case of Horace, the discipline of Latin translation has deep autobiographical significance and had influenced her development as a poet; at the same time, invoking Horace also grounds the poet's evolving poetics in the venerable context of classical tradition. The themes of the five translations range from (tempered) poetic immortalization (that of the spring in "O Fons Bandusaie" and that of the recalcitrant apparatchik in "Разговор с фининспектором о поэзии") to the bookish pursuit of seeking knowledge/verses ("From the Irish of Pangur Ban"). Other choices signal Boland's future signature themes ("Разговор с фининспектором о поэзии" and "Chor der Schatten"). Finally, notably, "Атлантический океан" introduces the notion of difficult traversals or passages; it is therefore potentially suggestive not only of Boland's poetic development, but also of the initial structure of *The War Horse* itself, whereby the translations might be conceived as a central 'bridge' from the political poems of part I to the suburban poems of part II.

A caveat which might be stressed is that the above analysis rests upon the thesis of Boland's need to anchor and represent herself at an early moment of personal and poetic crisis; in light of this, it bears mention that *The War Horse* is significantly restructured as reprinted in her *New Collected Poems*. While all the above translations are retained, the tripartite structure has been suppressed and, although the pieces remain situated roughly in the middle of the book, two of Boland's originals have been interspersed. "From the Irish of Pangur Ban" is now encountered first, followed by an original poem referencing Irish myth (which has been shunted from its prior location as one of "Three Songs for a Legend" in *New Territory*). Sachs' mournful "Chorus of Shadows", in turn, is now encountered last. The ultimate effect is to dampen the impression of a personal anthology of influences. Possibly Boland, with her poetic stance having long been vindicated, no longer needed to signpost her pedigree so overtly.

This seems credible. In the preface to the earlier *Collected Poems*, the poet explicitly referenced the "growing confusion and anxiety I felt", her "inability to be sure [she] would continue to be a poet" and her inability "[to connect her] womanhood […] with [her] life as a poet" (xi). Such biographical context was apparently thought useful for a correct reading of her works. Further corroborating this is the fact that her memoir *Object Lessons*, wherein Boland's struggle towards her own mature poetics is the primary leitmotif, appeared the same year. In contrast, the "Author's Note" to *New Collected Poems* is strikingly laconic, only giving a modest assurance that her entire body of work is now included, with "Nothing […] left out" (2009). In the later volume, Boland appears more content to let the poems stand on their own merits.

That being granted, translations still play a role in the *New Collected Poems*, although one might argue their presence is somewhat diluted. Via the most recent poetry book anthologized therein, *Against Love Poetry*, Boland includes two additional translations: one is again from

Horace, and the second from Russian literature. Encountering these near the volume's end, one may hazard the thought that Boland has come full circle. Notably, neither translation figures in the 2001 version of *Against Love Poetry*. What is interesting in the present context is to note is how these two translations reiterate and mirror the five pieces in the *War Horse*, but serve as less a covert manifesto and more a calm reiteration of Boland's poetic stance.

As with "Pangur Bán" and Mayakovsky, both of the two translations reference the figure of the poet. As a more pastoral and lyric poet, Horace seems to have resonated with Boland's own parti-pris for domesticity and suburbia; his *Odes* continue to represent her favored point of contact with antiquity. As regards form, Boland's translation of "II:XI" again does not divert greatly from the original, retaining Horace's four line stanzas; indeed, Boland arguably now holds even more closely to the Latin text, as she no longer imposes a rhyme scheme. As with "O Fons Bandusiae" decades earlier, the tone remains traditionally solemn and bucolic. Horace's passing reference to martial threats in the first stanza is toned down to Boland's mere injunction not to "fret" about the Cantabrians and Sychtians across the Adriatic Sea, as "life is short". Yet most telling here is the act of ventriloquism whereby Horace, in the concluding stanza, practically invites Boland (or at least her female poetic avatar) to join the pantheon:

> […] Tell her to hurry.
> Tell her to come, dressed Laconian-style, with
> Her ivory lyre and her hair neatly tied. (*New Collected Poems* 300)

While not quite an overt act of self-inscription, Boland, whose translation once sought refuge in Horace's venerated precedent, now appears to enjoy camaraderie with her favored Latin poet. Presuming the reader identifies Boland with Lyde, the lyre-carrying woman invited to drink with Quinctius and Horace, Boland has come to view the poet she translates as a peer.

The deliberateness of this choice of ode is further underscored by the immediately following piece, a translation of Pushkin's "Эхо" ("Echo"). As with Latin, Russian is hereby revisited, but the mature Boland now turns from the *avant garde* Mayakovsky to the preeminently canonical choice of Pushkin. In contrast to Mayakovsky, Boland declines to stray far from the original—perhaps not perceiving the same surfeit of "unreason" here. The poem is short, and although Boland recomposes six lines into five, the two stanzas are retained:

> Ревёт ли зверь в лесу глухом,Трубит ли рог, гремит ли гром,
> Поёт ли дева за холмом —
> На всякий звук
> Свой отклик в воздухе пустом
> Родишь ты вдруг. ("Эхо")

While some rhymes used, as with ‘air’ and ‘there’, in Boland’s case this element of the form is less stringent :

> After the sound of an animal howling.
> After the thunder. After the horn.
> After the song of a mountain woman
> There is silence and empty air.
> Then you are there.

Other of Boland’s choices also depart from the original text, such as her anaphoric repetition of “You listen. […] / You listen. […] / You answer. […]” in the second stanza. Yet in a Boland-centered reading of the “Echo”, what is particularly striking are the resonances with the prior translations which have preceded it. To see “The waves speaking” in line seven as a callback to “Atlantic Ocean” may be a tad willful, but what cannot be denied is that, as with Mayakovsky’s “Interview with a Tax Inspector” and the ode preceding it, the chief concern here is with the office of being a poet. The “song of a mountain woman” is redolent of the invitee with her lyre. As in the conversation with the bureaucrat, a note of resignation hangs in the “silence and empty air”, and in the speaker’s admission that “no one will ever answer you”. Yet perhaps most notably, whereas every exclamation point in Mayakovsky’s piece was studiously suppressed into a sober translation, in this Russian translation there is an emphatic accent of acquired confidence and surety. Pushkin’s note of exclamatory (self-)affirmation is retained at the end: for “you know […] / […] the same is true for you / - poet!” (*Object Lessons* 301).

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"[T]hese are my slave songs": The Poetics of Transgression and Exorcising the Demon of Racism in Wanda Coleman's Jazz Sonnets

Abstract. The article focuses on Wanda Coleman's protracted series of American Sonnets as a prime example of what I call the poetics of transgression, which the poet worked out and implemented in her "jazz sonnets." The article discusses the reasons behind Coleman's decision to turn towards formal poetry, and argues that her choice of the sonnet form is a transgressive gesture, which means a challenge to the white tradition whose limits are infringed by violating the convention, as Coleman approaches the sonnet as the entirely plastic form in the meaning that Catherine Malabou gives to the term. Through the formal transgression – i.e., breaking the rules and destruction of all the recognizable features of the sonnet, the poet demonstrates her refusal to be its slave, as she actively challenges and reshapes the old form by "jazzing it up." Simultaneously, the formal choice of the sonnet allows her to extend her earlier subject matter concerning black women's experience in the Los Angeles ghetto. Merging "integrity" with "extension" (the features of black writing identified by Craig Werner) provides Coleman with a foundation to discuss larger topics from a black perspective, such as history, identity, culture, and poetry itself. As a result, her American Sonnets series remains the poet's most consistent and subtle strategy of tracing down and exorcising the demon of racism wherever it hides – i.e. in its manifestations in the acts of violence as well as its stubborn presence in American (sub)consciousness.

Keywords: black poetry, Wanda Coleman, sonnet, plasticity, transgression, racism

In a 2006 email interview with Malin Pereira, when requested by the critic to identify in her oeuvre the poems that demonstrate a "special poetic growth in [her] development" (18), Wanda Coleman talks about three series of her poems, one of which is of particular interest to me in this article, namely American sonnets. The series consists of precisely one hundred numbered poems, published in three subsequent volumes: *American Sonnets* (1994), which contains the first 24 lyrics, followed by *Bathwater Wine* (1998), with poems 26-86, and *Mercurochrome* (2001)

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where, together with the 'missing sonnet' 25, the remaining fourteen texts (87-100) appear.[2] Moreover, the idea of launching "the sonnet project" must be strictly associated with Coleman's decision to put more emphasis on form in her poetry since, despite the fact that the "[f]ocus in [her] work had been as much on form … as on content," her "content received the most of any outside attention" (15), which provoked in the poet a desire to "show off [her] intellect" (15), and disentangle herself from being narrowly pigeonholed and dismissed by critics as a late voice of the Black Arts Movement.

This article, by setting up theoretical contexts and observations, and by the application of a close reading method of analysis of individual texts, draws on an assumption that African American literary works are, by definition, transgressive as—from Phyllis Wheatley onwards—black literature in America has been driven by a discreet and intimate relationship with the dominant white culture. It concentrates on Coleman's formal demolition-cum-re/creation work by the implementation of what I propose to call the poetics of transgression that the poet worked out and fully used in her jazz sonnets—mostly in her series of American sonnets, but also in a few occasional sonnets she wrote and placed in the above-mentioned volumes, even though she did not include them in the series. Still, Coleman's radical formal maneuvers and strategic operations on the sonnet's body are not merely examples of writerly virtuosity in demonstrating her poetic skills as she does not experiment with the sonnet form for form's sake. On the contrary, they find a parallel in the radical, uncompromising, and subversive messages that her jazz sonnets communicate, which suggests that Coleman never broke with the fundamental purpose of her writing, namely, as she put it, "to deepen the dialogue on American racism. I am never bored by the subject. I am constantly searching for new ways to illustrate the damage or to exorcise the demon" (Pereira 25). However, if in her first two collections (i.e., *Mad Dog Black Lady* and *Imagoes*) the poet directly explores that subject, concentrating on the here-and-now of black women's lives as she writes about their present-day experiences in Watts, the LA black ghetto, in her American sonnets series she maintains her concern with contemporary matters, yet also extends her interest to larger areas such as the literary roots of racism as well as the black view of American history and culture, which requires a more reflective approach.

It is quite tempting to read Coleman's jazz sonnets as a well-planned and perfectly executed formal transgression, which represents a profound challenge to the Euro-American sonnet tradition and reveals a potential to destroy the sanctified form of the sonnet. The poet's choice of the sonnet means the intentional demolition (in place of emulation) of white tradition and, by letting a black perspective in, a declaration of independence from it, as Coleman approaches

2 However, sonnets 1-24 had already appeared in print in Coleman's collections entitled *African Sleeping Sickness* (1990) and *Hand Dance* (1990). For the first time the poet's complete "American Sonnets" appeared posthumously in 2022 as a separate volume under the title *Heart First Into This Ruin: The Complete American Sonnets*, a fact which emphasizes their originality and importance not only in the poet's output, but also may be regarded as a milestone in the history of the sonnet as a genre.

the sonnet as an entirely plastic form in the sense that Catherine Malabou gives to the term. Clayton Crockett argues that in the French philosopher's concept "[t]he key is that this power to annihilate form is a power of form itself, an autoplasticity, because this is what allows for the possibility of change and transformation" (xiii). Arguably, Coleman uses (auto)plasticity as a transgressive gesture since, as stated by Chris Jenks, to "transgress is to go beyond the bounds or limits set by a … law or convention, it is to violate or infringe" (2).

The purpose of this kind of transgression in Coleman's poetry generally, and in her jazz sonnets in particular, is to express black sensitivity and a black view of the world as it is today from the standpoint of socially marginalized or culturally excluded black women, defined by the hegemonic culture as the Other(s). If we concentrate on the formal procedures employed by Coleman in her jazz sonnets, i.e., subversive reversals, specific challenges, various stylistic, semantic, and metrical irregularities as well as the consistent annihilation of the sonnet form, we come to understand that her method is not merely "a mechanical inversion of an existing order it opposes," but that these procedures are propelled by transgression which, as John Jervis observes, "involves hybridization, the mixing of categories and the questioning of the boundaries that separate categories" (4). Nonetheless, Jervis points to the fact that transgression, by challenging the culture of which it is a part, simultaneously becomes discreetly involved with it. In his formulation, transgression by definition:

> is not, in itself, subversion; it is not an overt and deliberate challenge to the status quo. What it does do, though, is implicitly interrogate the law [or convention], pointing not just to the specific, and frequently arbitrary, mechanisms of power on which it rests—despite its universalizing pretensions—but also to its complicity, its involvement in what it prohibits. (4)

Thus, each and every act of transgression is profoundly entangled in an intimate relationship with the dominant culture and its manifestations. Coleman's jazz sonnets that take to task the whole sonnet tradition do not represent an exception to the rule, especially since the poet decides to turn towards form at the moment when American poetry was moving in a similar direction in the early 1980s when a new, anti-Modernist movement emerged under the banner of "expansive poetry," which included the New Formalism and the New Narrative. Moreover, at the very end of the decade, black poetry also experienced a fundamental, generational change of direction as it attempted to disentangle itself from the limiting constrictions of the Black Arts Movement and its theoretical armed wing the Black Aesthetic, one sign of which was Trey Ellis's essay entitled "The New Black Aesthetic" that promoted the idea of a black artist as a "cultural mulatto, educated by a multi-racial mix of cultures" who can "navigate easily in the white world" (235).

A work-in-progress rather than a properly finished sonnet cycle, Coleman's American sonnets can be classified as a protracted series and her approach corresponds with the work of other

black poets of her generation.[3] Such a—characteristic of postmodernism—way of presenting the poems to the reading public allows for several observations to be made. First of all, a protracted series is not a carefully composed and planned unit,[4] but appears in print in the rhythm at which the larger sections are written. In her interview with Pereira, Coleman talks in detail about how she got the idea for American sonnets and how it developed, pointing out that it was closely connected to the concept of a "jazz sonnet" that emerged as a result of her reflections on her poetry in the late 1970s when she decided to become more openly formal (15). At that time, the poet attempted to get a grant for the jazz sonnets project, but with no success. She had to wait several years to write the first of her American sonnets; it took two more years for the second and another two for the third to emerge. In the early 1990s, the sonnets, to use the poet's own words, "came unbidden with increased and demanding frequency" (18). Thus, unlike in the case of a classical sonnet cycle, the protracted series—especially if written by an African American poet—represents a poetic undertaking that does not aim for perfection in the Platonic sense of the term, demonstrating rather a "lack of concern with 'permanence' in the Western … sense of IDEAL FORM" (Henderson 61)—one of the key points of the Black Aesthetic that attempted to liberate black poetry from Euro-American norms by producing a counter poetics derived from black music, especially from improvisatory free jazz. In the quintessentially European sonnet cycle, individual poems—serving a narrative purpose as they tell a story—are placed in the narrative as if they were chapters in a novel, their position carefully planned and stable, so that to appreciate the full effect of the story told through the sonnets, we must read them in the order determined by the author. A protracted series does not make such demands. Instead, by emphasizing its performative character and openness, it refuses logical development and closure. It also draws on incompleteness and on what Stephen Henderson calls (after Larry Neal) the "destruction of the text" (61), which, in the case of Coleman's sonnets, is quite significant.

In Coleman's American sonnets series, the 'text destroyed' is the sonnet as a genre, as we know, recognize, and identify it. All its formal features are challenged and usually altered; if necessary—annihilated. Coleman breaks all the rules that past and even present-day sonneteers, including other contemporary black authors who have also been writing sonnets recently—for instance, Rita Dove, Natasha Trethewey, Tyehimba Jess, Terrance Hayes, or Jericho Brown—have unanimously respected. All these poets treat the sonnet form—to quote from Dove's introduction to her 1995 collection of experimental sonnets entitled *Mother Love*—as a sort of "talisman against disintegration," beginning her introduction by reminding readers that the sonnet "literally

3 For instance, Nathaniel Mackey, whose series of poems entitled "Songs of the Andoumboulou" was printed in several volumes over a period of more than a decade, and only one of the collections has it reflected in the title (i.e., *Song of the Andoumboulou* 18-20).

4 Even though Coleman's protracted series consists of one hundred sonnets, and the last one is a stylization which pertains to the theme of writing sonnets, the poet never said that she planned to finish the series at that point or otherwise. Her premature death at the age of sixty-seven makes it impossible to verify whether she planned to continue or regarded the series as finished.

means 'little song'," whereas metaphorically, it stands for a "*heile Welt*, an intact world where everything is in sync, from the stars down to the tiniest mite of a blade of grass," Dove points at the significance of any gesture of departure from this fragile balance and stability, claiming that "if the 'true' sonnet reflects the music of the spheres, it then follows that any variation from the strictly Petrarchan or Shakespearean forms represents a world gone awry." Classified as a new formalist, the author of *Mother Love* says further that the sonnet "defends itself against the vicissitudes of fortune by its charmed structure, its beautiful bubble," only to add immediately that "[a]ll the while, though, chaos is lurking outside the gate" (173). Coleman must have been aware of that as she decided not so much to take the sonnet form to task but change it beyond recognition or, arguably, demolish it to the point of annihilation. The lack of presence of any of the features that would allow us to classify her American sonnets as generic sonnets suggests that chaos not so much "is lurking outside the gate" but that it has sneaked inside and is operating within the premises of the "beautiful bubble" like the monstrous presence of racism in America that wreaks havoc and destruction.

Coleman's American sonnets are not sonnets at all if we apply to them even the contemporary, not-so-strict standard categories by which genres are distinguished and if we take them through a litmus paper test. As Eric A. Weil aptly observes in his review of *Mercurochrome*, "they dispense with the expected conventions of meter, rhyme, stanza, and emotional or thematic 'turn' [i.e., volta]". He calls them "nonce sonnets" (695). On the other hand, these poems must be discussed as sonnets as a result of the arbitrary decision of their author since Coleman put them in a chapbook whose title reads *American Sonnets* or included them as separate parts of other collections that followed under titles that inform the readers that they deal with a pretty traditional poetic form (or at least its variation): "More American Sonnets (26-86)" and "American Sonnets (25, 87-100)" in her later collections *Bathwater Wine* and *Mercurochrome* respectively. Be it Coleman's *licentia poetica*, which is an extension of her attitude-turned-strategy as she may be called a "devout ruler breaker", her "Black woman bravado … spilling everywhere" (Browne xviii), or simply the anger-cum-impatience-driven voice of a black poet as "[e]ach sonnet is a rock thrown … against the wall of the status quo" (Weil 696), arguably there is a method in it.

In the introduction to the first edition of Coleman's *Complete American Sonnets* Mahogany L. Browne (xviii) enquires:

> What is a sonnet besides fourteen lines written in iambic pentameter?
> What is an American Sonnet besides fourteen lines, looser in its musicality and inventive in its ability to transform the tradition into a handheld microphone, a makeshift podium, or the people's anthem?

Unfortunately, the scholar does not attempt to address her questions, clearly regarding them as rhetorical. Nonetheless, what needs to be pointed out is the shifting away of attention from the traditional sonnet as a written form to an American (and black) sonnet whose power comes

from its "looser … musicality", its oral orientation, thus redefining the position of the poet who stands as a representative/leader of the people. The very first sonnet of the series makes this clear, starting with a quotation from "the lurid confessions of an ex-cake junkie" (*HF* 3) and moving towards a general reflection on the consequences of the persistence of the color line in contemporary America:

$$\frac{\text{white greed}}{\text{socio-eco dominance}} \times \frac{\text{black anger}}{\text{socio-eco disparity}} =$$

a) increased racial tension/polarization
b) increased criminal activity
c) sporadic eruptions manifest as mass killings
d) collapses of longstanding social institutions
e) the niggerization of the middle class

(*HF* 3)

Still, despite the fact that many poems in the series overtly deal with the contemporary problems of black women who live in the ghetto and with the racism experienced by black people, there are quite good reasons that allow us to situate Coleman's American sonnets in the context of early sonnets written in the English language. The fact that Coleman had her sonnets numbered (like Shakespeare) makes it at least possible to perceive them as rooted in the Bard's 'little songs,' which were quite experimental in their time, especially since Coleman talks directly to Pereira about the importance of this influence. Nonetheless, in her sonnets, she also signals the presence and importance of the connection with English sonneteers of the Elizabethan period. For instance, in sonnet 41, she draws on the tradition of Edmund Spenser and Shakespeare to point to the defining qualities of early sonnets and her departure from that paradigm:

> it is unfashionable to rhyme, to adorn sound with
> pain, content with manner, to spitefully whisper
> in Spenserian ink or Shakespearean blush. it is
> passé to slip into paper/wear parchment's timbre
> stained saffron and rose with splendor's overflow
>
> (*BW* 106)

This excerpt touches on the role played by decorum, which guaranteed harmony between content and the appropriate form for expressing it in modeling the message that allowed poets of the past to explore and discuss the intricacy and complexity of human existence; on human experience and the expression of feelings; and on the phonetic qualities of words used by the

early English sonneteers in their elegantly and carefully crafted poems. All those conventional ways of transcribing human reality into proper correspondences between words and the world—which were essential in the past as they enabled communication through recognition—now seem invalid and "passé." Together with rhyming, which now turns out to be "unfashionable," it leaves contemporary sonneteers no choice but to "collect […] / the leavings of her pillow / and pen [...] her book of stone" (*BW*, 106). The replacement of whatever is left of past poetics (compared to the soft pillow) with the production of the "book of stone" suggests not only the need for entirely different tools the poet has to possess to carve in stone but also implies a necessity to confront a harsher reality, which demands other poetic skills.

Nonetheless, the cancellation of the classical sonnet convention, enforced by changing reality, does not necessarily mean rejection of the conscious effort of poets of the past to refashion the sonnet so that it could suit better the English language and culture. Similarly, for black sonneteers, who work hard in stone to make the old-fashioned form suitable for their own purposes, the example of the Bard experimenting with the Italian fourteen-line love lyric as an important inspiration is essential:

> now bongos play remorse (verse of course)
> …
> requiem for comrade boheme betrayed whose
> remains will never be aired—not on radio or TV.
>
> *rend open this death-row cell that I may flee*
>
> lo! the bard's winged hands transcendent
> split this earth. ancient drums new beats
> (Sonnet 31, *BW* 96)

The sonnet in Coleman's formal conceptualization has the potential to produce sounds that make it possible to express the new and ever-changing reality, as it is compared to "bongos" and to the "ancient drums" which, used by the black poet(s), make "new beats." In a sense, this quality of the "little song" arguably contains within itself what Richard Wright called "the forms of things unknown" (83), which was there within the sonnet from the very beginning or at least from Shakespeare—described half-jokingly as a "comrade boheme betrayed"—who experimented with the sonnet as a genre as well as with the sonnet cycle. Coleman talks here about the Bard's influence on her writing in terms of imprisonment from which the speaker/persona wants to escape, as remaining under such a powerful influence would mean being locked up in the "*death-row cell*" of endless emulation (read: enslavement to the rigid format), a fate that many other poets, including black sonneteers, have shared. Her consciousness of the necessity to transcend the formal constrictions of the sonnet, even if it meant contaminating or breaking

it down into pieces, resulted in launching the idea of the jazz sonnet, and again, in this context, "bongos" and "drums" make much sense as apt and pertinent metaphors.

To clarify what the jazz sonnet is, it is worth going back to and quoting Coleman's remarks from her interview with Pereira. Asked by the critic how she perceives the sonnet form, the poet responds that her approach to the sonnet involves taking a "conventional form and 'play,' 'bust,' and 'shape-shift' it according to the basic dictates of the musical concept," which should result in having her "form and explod[ing] it too." In Coleman's view, her "poetic contribution has been to refresh the sonnet, renew appreciation for it, and to assist in bringing it back to vogue" (Pereira 19). However, this general statement on her approach, which requires demolition-cum-putting the sonnet back together according to entirely new rules, entails a specific technique that rests on the Jazz Principle. The technique was presented in Coleman's theoretical 1988 essay entitled "On Theleoniousism", from which the poet quotes copiously in the interview. In the essay, Coleman lays out "the kind of poetic sensibility yet to achieve recognition, as one which does with language what Thelonious Monk did with music—as if the two were successfully divorced," and moves on to describe the technique, starting from the importance of the rhythm: "rhythm refreshed, beyond style and lyricism, ascends … to its rightful throne along with content and form and copulates with both. That which starts with homage and/or satire, takes on its own independence" (Pereira 22). Next, she asks the reader to imagine "[c]lassical/traditional writing … [as] compared to an apartment (compartmentalization)" in which "[y]ou can move things around …You can buy new furniture and lay down new floors. It is still the same apartment" (Pereira 22-23). Whereas, in contrast,

> [a] Jazz apartment has modular/movable walls, it is an environment allowing for the predictable to coexist with the unpredictable; ape the Classical then suddenly break loose into variation to the point of unrecognizability; i.e., new, alien, and always renewable as the occupant (artist/creator) desires—limited only by the occupant's pocketbook/imagination. (23)

What Coleman emphasizes here is that the jazz sonneteer draws on imitation of the formal paradigm inherited from the historical past. Yet, similarly to a jazz musician playing a standard tune (the equivalent of "conventional form"), poets may take artistic liberty and use their imagination to alter the form with a skillful application of the "rhythm refreshed," even to the point beyond any recognition whatsoever.

Thus, in Coleman's hands, the sonnet reshaped into a jazz sonnet appears to be the most "plastic" of all forms, as Catherine Malabou conceptualizes the term. In the French philosopher's nomenclature, "plasticity" maintains two apparently opposite, yet mutually complementary, meanings, as it entails the ability to receive and give form. If we apply this duality to Coleman's jazz sonnets, we can see that these poems receive their form from the long history of lyrical expression. Simultaneously, they sustain their capacity for giving form to new experiences. This ability to shape-shift draws on the sonnet's "power to annihilate form" (87), as the noun

"plastic" may also denote "plastic explosive … capable of setting off violent detonations" (87). As Malabou puts it, plasticity may refer to "the crystallization of form and the concretization of shape", but it may also describe "the destruction and the very annihilation of all form" (67).

As Coleman maintains in her essay, Theloniousism is "the Jazz Principle applied to verse" (23). And, if we apply the term to her poems and treat Theloniousism as a plastic catalyst for "the annihilation of all form," we must notice that the technique finds full expression in her sonnets. The striking feature of these poems is their irregularity, as they range in length from fourteen to sixteen lines, almost without exception have no rhymes, and their structure does not imitate, or even respect, the classical division into an octave and sestet or into three quatrains followed by a closing couplet containing a punchline, with specific functions ascribed to the poem's parts. It is also difficult or virtually impossible to find a volta/turn in Coleman's sonnets.

Taking a look at a handful of examples may give us an idea of the poet's approach to the form of the sonnet and her experiments with its structure. For example, the fourteen-line sonnet 31 consists of five stanzas of unequal length—two stanzas of a single line, one stanza of two lines (which is not a couplet, by the way), one stanza of four lines (not a quatrain), and a five-line stanza. Sonnet 41 also seems to respect the length of the generic sonnet as it consists of fourteen lines yet is organized as two five-line stanzas and one quatrain. In turn, sonnet 61 is fifteen lines divided into two parts (thirteen lines plus two), whereas sonnet 100 consists of fifteen lines not divided into stanzas. However, the last two lines are indented in Shakespearean fashion, which suggests they are the closing couplet, though that is not the case. We confront the same phenomenon if we look at those poems that have the word "sonnet" in their titles but are not included in the series. For instance, the poem entitled "Off Bonnet Sonnet" (*Mercurochrome* 32) far exceeds the limit as it consists of twenty lines, yet it has rhymes (although irregular) and ends with a rhyming couplet. The poem entitled "Put Some Sex Sonnet" (*Mercurochrome* 183), which is placed in the "Retro Rogue Anthology" section of the collection, consists of only thirteen lines, the last line apparently incomplete as it is broken in mid-sentence. Again, quite provokingly, it is thematically connected with the sonnet tradition since it may be classified as a kind of love poem.

We could go on looking for and finding more and more examples of this kind. However, those provided above exemplify that Wanda Coleman demonstrates high inventiveness in annihilating the sonnet form, suggesting that her formal experimentation should be perceived as a statement of the poet's freedom. Hollis Robbins, commenting on Susan Stewart's argumentation over the phrase "'the master' of the sonnet," which the latter critic uses in her book *The Poet's Freedom*, observes that "sonnets by African American poets make clear that 'mastery' of the sonnet form involves contending with its multiple traditions and histories, including what it means to 'master.'… The sonnet is resilient enough to be battered, knocked about, o'ertrown, broken, untied, ravished, and made new" (Robbins, 61). Apparently, it is precisely as the critic claims, especially that Coleman also unbinds the sonnet form thanks to the multiple transgressions she commits.

A very intriguing, if not the most striking, example of the Jazz Principle in action is sonnet 100—according to Pereira, a poem "particularly incredible …, perhaps the apex of [Coleman's]

sonnet achievement" (19). Here, the connection with Shakespeare's sonnets is not mentioned directly. Yet, the implementation of archaic vocabulary, a generally ornamental style based on striking embellishments, the structure of the text (determined by enjambment and consistent use of rhymes, even though randomly and irregularly placed in the text), the allusions and specific phrases which, arguably, evoke the Bard's sonnets, leave no doubt that the poem represents both praise of as well as a challenge to the Renaissance poet.

The sonnet begins with a persona of undefined gender addressing the reader who supposedly does not find satisfaction anymore in traditional sonnets as love lyrics anchored in the sixteenth-century rules of writing:

> when thou dost find no joy in all famed Erato's
> honeyed breast, wordsport a gangster poet's jest
> (*M* 105)

This message is communicated to the reader through the complex syntax and archaic words, which strike us as outdated, and by mentioning Erato, the muse of love poetry. The first line, which is broken up by enjambment and ends with the word "breast," must strike the modern reader as a bit too wordy and too long, as the word "honeyed" seems to be redundant. In contrast, the second line is disciplined and economical since it contains only the words necessary for communicating the message. In this way, the opening distich illustrates a clash between the florid style of the Renaissance, when the sonnet reached its formal maturity and climax in what is called 'the English sonnet,' and the Imagist—in its origin—demand for using only words necessary for the presentation. Words such as "wordsport" and "gangster poet" have an ironic flavor and belong to the contemporary world, whereas "thou," "dost," Erato" and "honeyed breast" come from the early days of the English language sonnet.

The rest of the poem draws on the contrast established at the very beginning, which makes it an exemplary model of transgression. There is no doubt that due to the internal tensions, we have here a text that evokes a "jazz apartment" from Coleman's description:

> how black and luscious comes each double-barreled
> phrase, like poisoned roses or a maddened potter's
> glaze. words abundant dance their meanings on
> the thrilling floor, the stolen song of ravens and
> purloined harps galore. this is the gentle game of
> maniacs & queens, translations of the highly-souled
> into a dreamer's sputterings where dark gives voice
> to gazer's light and writerly praise is blessed
> incontinence, the spillage of delight.
> (*M* 105)

The strategically placed periods and commas demonstrate the almost traditional attitude toward using the sentences the poem consists of, as if Coleman respected the convention. At the same time, they make the reader realize that the sentences' structure, due to the use of enjambment, remains at odds all the way through with the breaking up of lines. However, if we read the poem out loud, we can hear the rhymes, which are placed at the sentences'—but not the lines'—ends.

It must also be noted that it draws on Shakespeare's sonnets for one more reason: in both cases, the subject matter is concealed behind a linguistic and stylistic virtuosity: the dialectic of surface and depth is set into action. Coleman's poem alludes to the presence of a hidden subject as it points at the ambiguity of some "double-barreled" phrases like: "black and luscious," "poisoned roses," "the stolen song of ravens," "purloined harps galore," "dark gives voice to gazer's light," and "wretchedness that names me brute." What these phrases, strategically dispersed throughout the sonnet, have in common is that they introduce the subject of race and racism in the context of slavery. If literary genres represent the hierarchy of power, it is worth reminding the reader that the first edition of *Sonnets* by William Shakespeare was published in 1609, precisely a decade before the first African slaves were brought into the English colony in Jamestown, Virginia.

Moreover, the sonnet is unique in Coleman's series as it contains an easily identifiable volta that is signaled by the use of imperatives directed at the reader at the very end of the poem, which closes with a note of affirmation:

> sing to me
> the anthem of untasted fruit. slay in me the
> wretchedness that names me brute. liberate my
> half-dead kill. come. glory in my rebirth.
> come. glory in my wonder's will
> (*M* 105)

Like the vast majority of African Americans, at the end of the poem and simultaneously at the closure of the sonnet series, the poet/persona, themselves a descendant of slaves, emphasizes the fact that "the wretchedness" of a past that defines them as "brute" (i.e., black and a slave) has been exorcised through her collection of little songs ("the anthem of untasted fruit"). As a result, the persona, together with other American blacks, is free at last and, having cast off that burden, is born anew. Such a metamorphosis may surprise the reader as Coleman has characterized the poems in her protracted series as often "surreal and ironic."

Perhaps the affirmative tone cancels irony after all. Furthermore, the unspecified gender identity of the persona in sonnet 100 is at odds not only with the female personae in the content-oriented early poems by Coleman. In contrast to the poems from *Mad Dog Black Lady* and *Imagoes*, but along with her jazz sonnets in the protracted series, this might suggest that race awareness dominates over the gender identification of the poet/persona. This is another feature

of sonnet 100, which alludes to the "Sonnets" written by Shakespeare. After all, in the Bard's collection, we encounter many sonnets that explore and play with gender instability.

Inspired by Shakespeare's poetic work containing some general features characteristic of Elizabethan poetry, Coleman's sonnet 100 is simultaneously a tribute poem and a polemical text containing the ideology of the Renaissance sonnets and their political power. Despite this connection, though, Coleman's poem has no openly stated dedication to the Bard, unlike other sonnets in her series, which were written "after" other influential poets of the past—or, as Jennifer Ryan puts it, "poets now considered canonical in the history of world poetry… While some of [Coleman's] pieces draw on the vocabulary and rhetoric associated with a particular writer, many challenge the world-view he or she represents" (419) to "interrogate the problems inherent to … America" (422) and its racist, anti-black attitudes. Ryan's observation seems accurate, especially in the case of those sonnets concerned with history, culture, and black identity, which trace the genesis of racism down to its literary roots, hence being of particular interest to me in this article.

Nevertheless, gender might be a factor that modifies racism and even increases the discrimination against black women. Take sonnet 38, a poem written "after William Blake":

> something in here distaff flies
> bats and dives and falls and skitters
> heart? soul? mind gone foul—
> my eyes all jitters cannot see what Elohim
> imprisons me/has made condemnation of my
> sex/has made my skin my people hex
> (*BW* 103)

Ryan points out that the poem's first line refers to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and, more precisely, to the words spoken by the three witches. Yet, despite the critic's claim (422), this line in Coleman's poem is not a word-for-word quotation but a playful paraphrase.[5] Hence, if we take "distaff" as a metaphor, we can safely assume that it introduces the female component— alluding to and emphasizing the complexity of discrimination against black women regarding their race and gender. This idea finds confirmation in the phrase in the fifth line. In contrast, race as a discriminatory factor comes immediately afterward in line six. Thus, the poem offers an analysis of racism that pertains to black women in particular. Its source is apparently Elohim—the Old Testament God, whose nature, like the nature of the Maker in Blake's poem "The Tyger," seems to be beyond the grasp of the human mind. The persona in Coleman's sonnet wonders, "what Elohim / imprisons me/has made condemnation of my sex / has made my skin my people hex." Thus, Jehovah/Elohim

5 In fact, the observation is made not by the three witches, but by second witch who says: "By the pricking of my thumbs / Something wicked this way comes" (IV.1). William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 106.

must be held responsible for the enslavement of black Africans and for attempting to destroy their culture, stealing or imitating its most valuable elements by turning them into their own parody:

> he loves to strum and "steels" my blues
> cops my licks and slays my muse
> then stretches out my broken wing
> and mocks the song I'm pained to sing

Most probably, the song mocked by Elohim is a blues song, yet it could easily be a sonnet contaminated by the blues, expressing black pain and a sense of misery. In turn, the "broken wing" has devilish connotations and may be associated with the fallen angel. The perception of blacks as devils by the white majority in America was quite common as a result of, as Wheatley wrote in "On Being Brought from Africa to America," the "diabolic die" of their skin color. For this reason, Coleman points at God's cruel partiality; the speaker says, "Nepenthe offers me no drink / as potent as his hatred's stink." These two lines also offer another literary trail; in Homer's *Odyssey,* the word "nepenthe" stands for a medicine for sorrow or the magical potion/drug of forgetfulness (which brings relief from pain) given to Helen by Polydamna.

The poem ends with two questions, the answers to which are not offered by the persona, a strategy consistently implemented in "The Tyger":

> what sport will purchase liberty?
>
> doth he who caged the beast cage me?

Although separated from each other by a hiatus, these lines should be perceived as a couplet that contains a punchline—the first question pertains to the price of freedom, the second to the enslavement of Africans. In Blake's "The Tyger," it is beyond human capacity to apprehend the nature of the Maker if he could have created both the lamb (a symbol of sacrifice) and the tiger (a metaphorical embodiment of evil). In Coleman's sonnet, the disbelief concerns the question of racism. It provokes other questions to arise, among them these: are black people perceived by the Judeo-Christian God as animals? And: is it Elohim who decided to have them kept in cages (read: enslave them)?

Ryan comments on the poem in the following way: "Although Blake did not intend 'The Tyger' as a metaphor for nineteenth-century race relations, the questions he poses give Coleman a means to explore racism's persistence in her own time" (422). The critic seems to be right here, yet at the same time she happens to be completely wrong—Blake in "The Tyger" is not concerned with the demon of racism at all. Since only the closing line of Coleman's poem is a recognizable paraphrase of the Romantic poet's famous "Did he who made the Lamb make thee?" we can say that Blake's epoch-determined, naïve, and instinctive racism can be found elsewhere—for

instance in the poem entitled "The Little Black Boy," in which the black boy confesses: "I am black, but O! my soul is white," and, as he is "bereav'd of light" from God, he quite willingly chooses for himself the role of a servant/slave to the white English boy. Apparently, Coleman draws on the reader's knowledge of Blake's *oeuvre*, his fascination with America, or, more precisely, a vision of America as the land of the free as presented in *America: A Prophecy* included. Furthermore, sonnet 38 also proves that although Audre Lorde's observation that "*the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house*" (112; italics in original) seems to be quite perceptive, there are exceptions to this rule. As we can see, Coleman manages to dismantle/deconstruct the haunted house of European literature with intentionally imprecise allusions to and paraphrases of great works of literature, including "The Tyger," which lead the reader astray but also discreetly point at other texts by Blake himself, texts where the demon of racism dwells.

Sonnet 10, written "after Robert Lowell," unlike sonnet 38, does not paraphrase other canonical literary texts or contain allusions to classical writers' works but draws on an imitation of Lowell's style as it emulates the characteristic syntactic and semantic features of his poems for the purpose of, as acutely observed by Ryan, "protest[ing] the long history of slavery," and taking to task the ideological background they spring from. In this sonnet, Coleman supplements or even corrects Lowell's philosophical comments on the nature of history, expressed in his sonnet entitled "History," by introducing a specifically black perspective instead of his white generalizations. Ryan points out that in her poem, Coleman "argues that his words landscapes do not capture America accurately" (419) as it entirely omits the black role in the process of building the country.

Lowell's poem begins with a general statement ("History has to live with what was here") and emphasizes the role of Protestantism in modeling the mentality of the new nation through brief references to fratricide ("Abel was finished, death is not remote") and to religious frictions ("As in our Bibles"). His poem expresses a hegemonic view of the dominant culture whose whiteness is concealed-yet-revealed in the images that come at the end of the poem, such as: "white-faced …/ … .moon" and "the silver salvage of the mornfrost." Unlike Lowell, Coleman immediately introduces a particular perspective of her and other black women's predecessors: "our mothers wrung hell and hardtack from row / and boll," and this statement makes a gesture of refusal of complicity with the dominant discourse in American white historiography. Instead, she continues her transgressive mission of correcting the public discourse and reminds the reader of injustices, cruelties, and oppressiveness against black people inscribed in the country's history. However, she does not emphasize the victimization of black women but instead their strength and perseverance in opposing the hostile world and surviving in extreme conditions against all possible odds—i.e., enslavement, enforced conversion to the Christian religion, and economic exploitation. In the poem, Coleman draws on literary allusions, although this time not to demonstrate their discriminatory character, but to pay back her debt to her literary ancestors and to nameless black women who:

… fenced others'
gardens with bones of lovers. Embarking
from Africa in chains
reluctant pilgrims stolen by Jehovah's light
planted here the bitter
seed of blight and here eternal torches mark
the shame of Moloch's mansions
built in slavery's name.

(*HF*, 12)

The above passage invokes, firstly, Alice Walker's breakthrough essay "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," which discusses the question of how black women's creativity manifested itself at the time of their obligatory illiteracy; and secondly, the poetry written by Wheatley, who in her semi-epistolary poem "To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth" confesses that she was "snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat," and transported across the Atlantic on a slaver from her "*Pagan* land" to America where, as she says in another poem, she understood that "there is a God, that there's a *Saviour*, too." Also, the nameless black women, who "planted here the bitter seed of blight," are recalled in the poem.

In her essay "An Open Letter to Mary Daly," written in reaction to Daly's book *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (1978), a milestone work of cultural feminism, Audre Lorde says: "I began to feel my history and my mythic background distorted by the absence of any images of my foremothers in power" (67). This complaint is not repeated in Coleman's poem, in which black women's power and ability to survive is celebrated, even despite the price they have had to pay, as their marching towards equal civil rights has been marked by "the blood--soaked steps of each / historic gain," and as they are consumed by "a yearning / yearning to avenge the raping of the womb / from which we spring." Anyway, despite the "raping of the womb," Coleman's sonnet 10, in its tone and theme's resolution, reminds us of Lorde's poem "A Litany for Survival," as both inspire passionate anger and hope, and in this respect situate themselves on an opposite pole from Lowell's "History," so intensely focused on determinism and death. Coleman's poem, by mentioning the wrongs done to black women by white America during slavery, whose consequences have had a lasting effect, ends on an optimistic note since, despite all those atrocities, there have come new generations of black women, more conscious of themselves at that, women like Lorde and Coleman herself. Their self-awareness and strength come from digging not only for the historical truth about white oppression but also from discovering their power located in their "mythic background," which allows them to transgress the limits imposed by a white American culture relegating black women to the realm of non-existence. Lorde managed to break through the invisible border—which, in the sphere of access to the mainstream culture, seems to be identical with the color line—with her poems such as "Coal," "Black Unicorn," or, generally, the Orisha poems that draw on Dahomeyan mythology.

Coleman does not explore any specific myths of empowerment, but the African inspiration is strongly present in her sonnets; for instance, in the brilliant sonnet 61 where the persona says:

> reaching down into my griot bag
> of womanish wisdom and wily
> social commentary, i come up with bricks
> with which to either reconstruct
> the past or deconstruct a head. dolor
> robs me of art's coin
> as i push, for peanuts, to level walls and
> rebuild the ruins of my poetic promise. from
> the infinite alphabet of afroblues
> intertwinings, I cull apocalyptic visions
> (the details and lovers entirely real)
> and articulate my voyage beyond that
> point where self disappears
>
> (*BW*, 126)

Arguably, this is one of the most impressive poems in Coleman's American sonnets series. Its brilliance lies in its transgressive virtuosity, whose components are the structural clarity, wry irony, and twisted sense of humor that work together to lead to a few astonishments, and the immediately communicative quality connected with respect for meaning, which always results from attempts, as Adrienne Rich puts it, to never "abandon meaning" (7). Still, the emphasis in the poem is on the poet/persona's "womanish wisdom and wily / social commentary" understood as inheritance-cum-experience passed on to her from past generations and as the sources of knowledge about facts—facts as hard as bricks. The bricks are taken from her "griot bag," so it should not surprise the reader that they are a metaphor for the material used in the reconstruction work on the past. Such reconstruction will be necessary as the poet/persona is going to demolish the "walls" that symbolize the imprisonment or enslavement of black people to realize her poetic commitments. As the actual phrase used in the poem (i.e., "rebuild the ruins of my poetic promise") is a distant echo of T. S. Eliot's "these fragments I have shored against my ruins," the bricks may be transformed into concrete objects which are hard enough to "deconstruct a head"—due to the use the verb "deconstruct" the phrase implies not an act of physical violence, but a careful reading of the content of the head, arguably analyzing the space of American (sub)consciousness where the demon of racism has its lair. This argument finds support in the fact that the sorceress's "griot bag" contains something more than bricks—the linguistic potentiality of a universal language from whose particles ("intertwinings") the poet/persona can create meanings capable of destroying "apocalyptic visions" such as those in *The Waste Land*. At the same time, this language is plastic enough to tell what Toni Morrison calls

"a story [not] to pass on," such as being transported across the Atlantic as cargo to the auction block in the land of the free. The closing two lines of this sonnet, which read

> *mis violentas flores negras*
> these are my slave songs
>
> (*BW*, 126)

might be understood as providing a meta-commentary on the whole series of sonnets, whose undeniable beauty and black woman's wisdom are compared to "*mis violentas flores negras*" (in English translation: "*my violent black flowers*"). These words come from "Dregs," a poem by Peruvian Modernist poet César Vallejo, who, according to David P. Gallagher, was acutely aware that

> it is precisely in the discovery of a language where literature must find itself in the continent where for centuries the written word was notorious more for what it concealed than for what it revealed, where "beautiful" writing, sheer sonorous wordiness was a mere holding operation against the fact that you did not dare really say anything at all. (Gallagher, www.)

There can be no doubt that Coleman, whose sonnet 66 was written "after Vallejo,", is also aware of that fact. As her sonnet series or her poetry in general demonstrates, no matter how complex, rich in tones, and allusive the poems are, she never abandons meaning and, daring to tell the truth of the oppressed, remains loyal to "the artistic imperative to make it as clear as possible" (Paul Goodman quoted after Rich 7). Moreover, "[her] slave songs"—and let me repeat that the literal meaning of "sonnet" is a "little song"—are formally undisciplined, rebellious, and disrespectful of the white tradition, as they track down the demon of racism in order to annihilate it to the very heart of darkness, a darkness full of atrocities whose purpose was/is the dehumanization of black people for the sake of satisfying the greed of the New World and its economic needs.

In her protracted series of American sonnets, Coleman breaks away from the whole sonnet tradition, twisting her jazz sonnets formally so much that they are beyond generic recognition. Nevertheless, as Rich (5) points out in her commentary on "the poetry of emerging groups,"

> variations on form may be greater or less, but what really matters is not line lengths or the way meter is handled, but the poet's voice and concerns refusing to be circumscribed or colonized by the tradition, the tradition being just a point of takeoff. In each case the poet refuses to let form become format, pushes at it, stretches the web, rejects imposed materials, claims a personal space and time and voice. Format remains flat rigid, its concerns not language, but quantifiable organization, containment, preordained limits: control.

In the light of Rich's distinctions, Wanda Coleman's choice of form rather than format (and its methodical annihilation), and, in consequence, her practicing what I propose to call the poetics of transgression, demonstrates the poet's original and innovative approach to the sonnet form. She succeeds in making her jazz sonnets utterly non-assimilationist and difficult, if not entirely impossible, to co-opt. What is more, her mature voice gains even more power when she is singing her rebellious "slave songs"—in this way efficiently exorcising the demon of racism in America.

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"What Kind of an Ending is That?" Adapting Shakespeare for a Young Audience: The Case of *Gnomeo and Juliet* (2011)

Abstract. The article discusses adapting William Shakespeare's plays for young viewers. It aims to present the adaptive strategies taken up by the creators of an animated feature film based on *Romeo and Juliet* and to discuss how the production engages its audience in a cultural dialogue. One of the main points of consideration is that adaptations of literary classics into film productions addressed to young audiences can be analyzed as enriching the source texts with new dimensions, which might shed a sometimes surprisingly new light on the source text. The genre-change-induced modifications and intertextuality of *Gnomeo and Juliet* (2011) are discussed, focusing on how the production maneuvers between the source text and requirements of the genre, on the dialogue it involves its viewers in, and on its possible cultural role.

Keywords: adaptation, *Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare, animated feature film, intertextuality

1. Introduction

William Shakespeare's plays belong to the literary classics most frequently adapted into film and television productions. Among film adaptations, we can find those that transpose the play into a new medium without any significant modifications to the setting, plot, characters, or the language of the play, and films that draw inspiration from the source text, explore the original central conflict, but alter the setting significantly and markedly modernize the characters and the language they speak. The latter group includes numerous productions, some of which do not even retain the titles of the source texts: e.g. *Kiss Me Kate* (dir. G. Sidney, 1953), *Throne of Blood* (dir. A. Kurosawa, 1957), *The Bad Sleep Well* (dir. A. Kurosawa, 1960), *West Side Story* (dir. R. Wise, J. Robbins, 1961), or *10 Things I Hate About You* (dir. G. Junger, 1996). Surprisingly or not, among the adaptations we can also find animated feature films. In 2011, Touchstone

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Pictures released a 3-D computer-animated film titled *Gnomeo and Juliet*, classified as a "romantic comedy," and loosely based on William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.* It is one of numerous examples of adapting one of the Bard's plays into an animated film addressed to young audiences. However, *Romeo and Juliet* is the only tragedy that, in such an adaptation, turns into a comedy with a happy ending. Shakespeare's play about the star-crossed lovers, which in *Gnomeo and Juliet* features garden gnomes and other garden ornaments as members of the feuding communities, goes through a genre and medium change, acquires a different addressee but remains recognizable even to a moderately knowledgeable viewer. Robert Geal, in *Anamorphic Authorship in Canonical Film Adaptation: A Case Study of Shakespearean Films* (2019), calls such an adaptation an "állagmic" one since the modification concerns, in this case, location (the setting changes from "Shakespearean" to "ostensibly non-Shakespearean"), language (only minute parts of Shakespearean dialogue are preserved), and character. My considerations herein form an attempt to discuss the genre-change-induced modifications and intertextuality of the 2011 production, focusing on how it maneuvers between the source text and requirements of the genre, on the dialogue it involves its viewers in, and on its possible cultural role.

2. *Gnomeo and Juliet* in the context of other animated film adaptations of Shakespeare

Shakespeare's works have been introduced to young audiences and readers in various ways – through adaptations into comics, graphic novels, and films, including animated ones. The most popular animated films loosely based on *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet,* respectively, are Disney's *The Lion King* (1994) and *The Lion King*: *Simba's Pride* (1998). An interesting case is that of *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* (also known as *The Animated Shakespeare*), a series of animated television films broadcast by BBC2 and S4C between 1992 and 1994, which includes twelve 25-minute adaptations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, Richard III, The Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Julius Caesar, The Winter's Tale,* and *Othello.* Despite presenting abbreviated versions of the plays, the productions were critically acclaimed and have been used in schools as teaching aids. *Romeo and Juliet,* definitely one of Shakespeare's most popular plays, has three full-length animated feature film adaptations (besides the already mentioned Disney *The Lion King*: *Simba's Pride*), and those include *Romie-0 and Julie-8* (Canada 1978), *Romeo & Juliet: Sealed with a Kiss* (US 2006), and *Gnomeo and Juliet* (US 2011). Other plays of the Bard seem to be less popular among adaptors willing to address young audiences. Still, there is a Swedish-Norwegian 1989 animated adventure fantasy film titled *The Journey to Melonia: Fantasies of Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'* (in Swedish: *Resan till Melonia*) directed by Per Åhlin, and a 1959 Czechoslovak animated puppet film, *Sen noci svatojánské,* directed by Jiří Trnka, which is an adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The latter play has two more animated adaptations, namely *Strange Magic* (US 2015), described in one of the reviews as "a madcap fairy tale musical inspired by *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with popular songs from the past six decades used to help tell the tale of a colorful cast of goblins,

elves, fairies and imps, and their hilarious misadventures sparked by the battle over a powerful potion" (Graser), based on an idea by George Lucas, and *Bottom's Dream* (US 1983), an animated short directed by John Canemaker, showing events of the play from the point of view of Bottom.

Gnomeo and Juliet, the production on which this discussion focuses, was directed by Kelly Asbury, with the script authored by seven writers (the reason why some critics noted a certain excess in the content). It went a long way from the original idea of Rob Sprackling and John Smith, who sold the initial script to Disney. Due to several factors that complicated the production process, it took nearly ten years and seven more writers for the film to see daylight. The final product tells the story of two feuding communities of garden gnomes and other garden ornaments (identified as the blues and the reds), with the expected romantic storyline of the love at first sight sparked between Gnomeo Bluebury and Juliet Redbrick. Labeled by one of the internet reviewers ("Shakespeare Geek") as "West Side Toy Story," the film has a stellar vocal cast, including James McAvoy (Gnomeo), Emily Blunt (Juliet), Michael Caine (Lord Redbrick), Maggie Smith (Lady Bluebury), Patrick Stewart (William Shakespeare as an animated statue), Ozzy Osbourne (as a plastic deer), Jason Statham (as Tybalt, the bully) and Dolly Parton (as Dolly Gnome). Elton John was the executive producer and composed part of the music score, including the song "Hello, Hello," nominated for the Golden Globe Award for Best Original Song.

3. *Gnomeo and Juliet* as an "állagmic" adaptation: Modifications to the plot, setting, and characters

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as a tragedy ends with six deaths, including both protagonists. In the case of the animated adaptations of the play mentioned above, addressed to young viewers, a major change is that of the ending (except for the 1992 *Animated Tales*, which is a faithful but condensed retelling of the play) since their creators had to "keep daggers and poison and suicide out" (Asbury in Eisenberg), so as not to distract the young viewers. In her review, Roth Cornet sums up the concept of the ending as "the redirection of the hand of destiny (toward a more desired result) [that] is meant to lead us to an alternate, and more children's-film-friendly ending to the narrative—an ending which the filmmakers hope that some adults may also secretly prefer" (Cornet).

In *Gnomeo and Juliet,* the setting is contemporary Stratford-Upon–Avon, where the conflict is recreated between two feuding neighbors, Ms. Montague and Mr. Capulet. Their garden gnomes are the Blueburys and the Redbricks, and their feud mirrors that of their owners. Eventually, the conflict between the blues and the reds is aggravated so that both gardens are completely demolished with Terraferminator, an advanced lawnmower, whose functions include digging, clearing, mowing, and destruction. However, the very ending, showing a wedding-like scene, the feasting characteristic of the happy endings in Elizabethan comedies, shows the garden in a reconstructed shape. Although the demolition ends the feud between the communities of gnomes, we do not learn whether the owners buried the hatchet or not.

The modifications introduced in the process of the adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in this adaptation are determined, first of all, by the film's target audience. Instead of the adult audience for whom Shakespeare was writing, the recipients are primarily children. However, since the film has been advertised for family viewing, there is a level at which the message, the jokes, and numerous references to other texts of culture are addressed to adult viewers. It is worth noting that Shakespeare's play does have a comedy-like mood up to Tybalt's death in Act III, with some bawdy jokes that should not find their place in a production for young viewers. The adaptation remains in the comic mode throughout. Most of the jokes in *Gnomeo and Juliet* are created for the production and are addressed to children; all characters have comic features. Some of those features, such as Nanette's (the Nurse's equivalent), are rooted in the original play, where the Nurse brings certain comic relief (if only up to a particular point); others result from the fact that the characters are garden gnomes, with certain inherent limitations. Actual quotations from Shakespeare's play are used to amuse the knowing adult audience, and these will be discussed in detail later on.

Gnomeo and Juliet, despite being a 3-D computer-animated feature film, opens with a brief theatrical introduction, referring the viewers to the source text and giving them an illusion of being among the audience of an actual theater. The first scene shows a garden gnome introducing the story from the theater stage (we can see the curtain being drawn behind him and hear sounds coming off-screen—the unseen audience coughs, orchestral instruments are tuned up). Eventually, he is removed from the stage and thrown into a floor trap to prevent him from reading the whole Prologue. The gnome starts his speech with the following words:

> The story you are about to see
> has been told before. A lot.
> And now we are going to tell it again.
> But different.
> It's about two star-crossed lovers
> kept apart by a big feud.
> No one knows how this feud started,
> but it's all quite entertaining.
> Unfortunately, before we begin,
> there is a rather long, boring prologue,
> which I will read to you now.

He starts reading the actual source text, but interestingly enough, his disappearance prevents him from providing information about the star-crossed lovers' fate: the text of Shakespeare's Prologue is interrupted just before the fact that the lovers take their lives is revealed. Such an introduction alludes to the genre of the source text, refers directly to the story, and gives the film proper general context concerning the feud, but at the same time promises an alteration.

Once the unfortunate Prologue-reader is removed from the stage, the story proper begins, with the shift in the setting being introduced, as we see a semi-detached property located at Verona Drive in contemporary Stratford-Upon-Avon (the town name being confirmed later on by the destination board on a bus). In the new setting, the division between the feuding neighbors and their garden ornaments is conspicuously marked with red for Ms. Montague, her house decorations and garden ornaments, and blue for Mr. Capulet and the decorative elements of his property. The colors assigned to the feuding communities and the numbers of the two houses open a long list of intertextual references in the production. The division between the reds and the blues derives from the way Frank Zeffirelli used those colors in the costumes in his 1968 adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* (the same colors are used to differentiate members of the two families in *The Animated Shakespeare* of 1992).

The plot of the animated film centers on the conflict in the way the source text does. There are elements of the source text plot that remain unchanged: Gnomeo and Juliet meet for the first time in disguise (although not at a ball as Romeo and Juliet do), and members of the conflicted communities engage themselves in quite violent lawn mower races, which become an equivalent of the brawls the Montague and the Capulet male youth are involved in. Most of the source text's characters can be found in the adaptation: in addition to the two protagonists, there are their overprotective parents, though they are single (Lady Bluebury—Gnomeo's mother, and Lord Redbrick—Juliet's father), Tybalt, Paris, Benny (an amalgam of Mercutio and Benvolio), and Nanette (a frog fountain, an equivalent of the Nurse). Featherstone, a pink plastic flamingo found by Gnomeo and Juliet in the "old Laurence," the abandoned garden next door, can be read as a reference to Friar Laurence from the source text.

Similarly to the source text's Verona, the world of the garden gnomes is primarily male. However, Lady Bluebury is the head of the community of the blues, and, as in Shakespeare's play, it is a world in which the masculine concepts of honor, revenge, and pride are vital and lead to conflict and destruction. The same consistency with the world created by Shakespeare can be found in Lord Redbrick's urge to protect Juliet. Eventually, her father symbolically glues her to the pedestal she should be standing on as a garden ornament, from which she used to escape. Also, the secret union between Gnomeo and Juliet, signified by their plan to cultivate the abandoned garden together (the old Laurence), resembles Romeo and Juliet's union, followed in both stories by a tragic event (Tybalt's death) that ignites the feud and leads to open conflict. However, there is only one actual death in the animation, and it is Tybalt's: he is accidentally smashed during a mower race, competing against Gnomeo. There is also the motif of exile and assumed death, first of Gnomeo, then of both him and Juliet, but no suggestions of suicide are present. Hence, at the story level, Shakespeare's source text has been transformed into a story about the secret lives of garden ornaments, but also about requited love that blooms despite all obstacles.

As mentioned earlier, the adaptation modifies all the characters, but the way it modernizes Juliet to make her more relatable for the young viewers requires special attention. The heroine

is transformed into a modern, self-confident, and defiant girl, who strongly opposes her father's urge to protect her, stressing that she is "not delicate!" and cannot be imprisoned on the pedestal. Her adhesion to it results in her near destruction, as she cannot escape when danger comes. She is very fit, Gnomeo's equal both intellectually and physically, or sometimes even better than him (she manages to start the old mower while he cannot). Juliet's monologue (originally in Act II, Scene 2) is longer than in the play and other adaptations, and not interrupted by Gnomeo, as it is in the source text. She appears as a modern, rebellious girl who is eventually grounded by her father and saved by accident, not by Gnomeo, because even he cannot separate her from the pedestal to which she is glued. Paradoxically, it is the total destruction of the construction that frees her.

The adaptation offers an interesting variation on the ending of the source text. The Bard statue mentioned above becomes animated to get involved in a conversation with Gnomeo, who, exiled after Tybalt's being smashed, accidentally lands on the head of the statue. Gnomeo retells the events that have separated him from Juliet, which reminds the statue/Shakespeare of "another story," which shows "remarkable similarities" to that just presented by the gnome. The conversation between the two provides an opportunity for the statue to recount the original, tragic ending to Gnomeo and the viewers by Shakespeare's representative in the film. However, the tragic ending, with the two lovers dying, is criticized by the young gnome:

> Gnomeo: They both die?! What kind of an ending is that?
> Shakespeare: My dear boy, this is a tragedy.
> Gnomeo: Yeah, you're telling me, mate. It's rubbish!
> Shakespeare: "Rubbish"?
> Gnomeo: Gotta be a better ending than that!
> Shakespeare: I suppose that he could've made it back in time to avert disaster, but I like the whole death part better.

Due to the statue's vivid gesticulation, Gnomeo falls off but is saved by plastic Featherstone, and, informed by him about Juliet being in danger, he rushes to save her, bearing in mind the story told by the Bard as a warning. The adaptation's ending is a happy one, and, as Gnomeo stresses when he kisses Juliet, he prefers it that way. Thus, the conversation with the Bard provides information about the major change in the plot, in case young viewers might be tempted to treat *Gnomeo and Juliet* as a faithful introduction to the original play. The conversation between Gnomeo and the Bard's statue is analyzed by Peter Kirwan in his article "Framing the theatrical: Shakespearean film in the UK," with the conclusion that "[t]he staging by *Gnomeo and Juliet* of a negotiation between the cinematic interpretation and the statuesque tradition of Shakespeare offers a pleasing synecdoche for the history of UK Shakespeare film" (187).

4. *Gnomeo and Juliet* as "a mosaic of quotations"

As mentioned above, the animated adaptation includes many references, either direct or modified, from the source text and other plays of the Bard. The former connect the production with the source text and the latter amuse careful adult viewers. Two of the most memorable citations from *Romeo and Juliet* appear in the adaptation. The first one is unchanged, but first, we find it in an altered context: "Parting is such sweet sorrow" is said ironically by Nanette to Gnomeo when she pushes him out of the garden of the reds for his safety. The statement is repeated by Gnomeo while saying goodbye to Juliet later in the story: "The frog was right, parting is such sweet sorrow," which resembles the original context of the utterance from the source text.

Another element of the script that comes from the source text is a combination of two of Juliet's original speeches; in the animated film this takes the following form:

> O Gnomeo, Gnomeo,
> are we really doomed, Gnomeo,
> to never see each other again?
> Why must you wear a blue hat?
> Why couldn't it be red like my father,
> or... or green like a leprechaun?
> Or purple like, um... like, uh...
> like some weird guy?
> I mean, what's in a gnome? Because
> you're blue, my father sees red,
> and because I'm red, I'm feeling blue.

The above monologue precedes the scene which includes a visual reference to the balcony scene: Juliet is on the keep (her "pedestal") by the pool, in which Gnomeo eventually finds a temporary hiding place. Including the pool in the scene can be read as an allusion to "the balcony scene" in Baz Luhrman's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996), in which Romeo (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Juliet (Claire Danes) fall into a swimming pool. Romeo has to stay underwater for some time to avoid being detected by the guards. Gnomeo finds himself in the same situation.

The script includes passages or phrases from other plays by the Bard. One of them comes—in a modified form—from *Hamlet.* When Nanette says goodbye to Gnomeo as he leaves the reds' garden, her words echo those of Horatio to the dying Hamlet:

> Good night, sweet prince,
> and flights of angels ...
> or pigeons or sparrows or whatever.

Another example can be found in Lady Bluebury's order when the conflict between the reds and the blues aggravates: "Unleash the dogs of war!" The phrase "the dogs of war" is used by Marc Anthony in Act III of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar.*

For a careful, knowledgeable adult viewer, *Gnomeo and Juliet* becomes "a mosaic of quotations," to use Kristeva's phrase (37). The film provides multiple traces of other texts, references to Shakespeare's plays, as well as texts and representatives of popular culture.[2] The numbers of the warring neighbors' houses—one is marked 2B and the other 2B crossed out, presumably indicating "not 2B"—allude to the famous phrase from Hamlet's soliloquy. In the shed of the Laurence garden, where Gnomeo and Juliet secretly meet, there is a ticket stub from *As You Like It.* Juliet is glued to the keep with a substance called "Taming of the Glue." We can see trucks of "Rozencrantz & Guilderstern Movers" and "Tempest Teapots." There are references to the film *American Beauty* (1999, dir. Sam Mendes) when Nanette dreams of Paris, bathing in rose petals, and to *The Graduate* (1967, dir. Mike Nichols) when Featherstone, suffering the impact of Gnomeo's fall, cries: "One word! Plastic!" Some of the background characters look like the actors who voice them (for example, Tybalt, voiced by Jason Statham, and Dolly Gnome, voiced by Dolly Parton); the advertisement for Terrafirminator, the destructive lawn mower, is voiced by Hulk Hogan, a well-known American wrestler, while the statue of William Shakespeare speaks with the voice of Patrick Stewart, a well-known member of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

5. Conclusions

In his Introduction to the 1964 edition of *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, J. A. Bryant wrote: "Among professional scholars, the play has sparked less enthusiasm. … More than one scholarly critic has expressed misgivings about the emphasis on pathos, the absence of ethical purpose, and what appears to be a capricious shifting of tone…" (xxiii). When we look at the 2011 animated adaptation from that angle, we can be tempted to conclude that the modifications—the shift in the genre, with the story ending with "the triumph of young love" and a union between the two protagonists, and with "forgiveness and feasting all around," characteristic of Elizabethan comedies—make *Gnomeo and Juliet* appear more consistent in its tone than Shakespeare's play, which from the light tone of the first two acts turns into a grim tragedy in Acts III and IV.

It is interesting to reflect upon the potential impact of the film on its target audience. Children constitute, in this case, "the unknowing audience," to use Linda Hutcheon's term (390), becoming, through the film, introduced to the source text. The film was recommended, in the materials provided by Film Education within National Schools Film Week, for classroom use at Key Stages 1 and 2 (age 5-7), and as Abigail Rokison-Woodall puts it:

2 Discussions can be found on internet fora in which viewers exchange information about the references found, see e.g. https://www.filmboards.com/board/p/81334/

> It may be difficult to imagine children at Key Stage 1 discussing dramatic genres or having any interest in researching the life and times of a writer whose plays they are unfamiliar with; however, it is possible to see how an awareness among children that what they are watching is an adaptation (albeit a loose one) of a story by William Shakespeare may help to inspire a greater enthusiasm for, and interest in his drama when they do actually encounter it. (214)

The film does introduce two concepts that have general cultural or psychological significance: star-crossed lovers and love at first sight. The moral of the story is connected with the devastating effects of a feud, while the way the story resolves shows that the masculine urge for revenge (represented by Tybalt and Benny, and also by Gnomeo until he meets Juliet) brings destruction. The story could also provide the context for a classroom discussion of the harmful effects of prejudice. Therefore, we can assume that the production could become a gentle, albeit potentially challenging, introduction to the Bard's tragedy.

Eckart Voights-Virchrow, in his introduction to *Janespotting and Beyond: British Heritage Retrovisions Since the Mid-1990s,* refers to Shakespeare films as "crossover products" which are "syncretic in the sense that they fuse supposedly incongruous genres in a new blend" (20). *Gnomeo and Juliet* is a syncretic production that combines tragedy with comedy, and stage drama with animation. In Geoffrey Wagner's (1975) typology, the film would be classified as an analogy. The title suggests inspiration rather than reproduction, and from the very beginning we know that the well-known story will be told differently. In Wojciech Wierzewski's typology, suggested in *Film i literatura* (1983), that would count as a creative adaptation, creatively enriching the source text with variations. Whichever typology we decide to apply, *Gnomeo and Juliet* remains an apt example of an adaptation that, in a new form, emphasizes the cultural position of Shakespeare's play. Criticized by many adult viewers (55% of negative reviews out of 127 on Rotten Tomatoes) but enjoyed by children, the production remains an interesting example for analyzing and discussing the extent to which an adaptation can depart from the source text and still be considered its "version."

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