

## **1. Translating in a Visual Age. Transdisciplinary Routes.**

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### Abstract

This chapter discusses the new texts in our multimodal visual culture. Contemporary languages include different semiotic orders. Communication and translation appear today in contexts which go beyond traditional languages. Translation Studies is becoming aware of the need to build new transdisciplinary research methodologies that will help us to solve the challenges presented by texts created with images, sounds, or bodies. Such texts provide as much or more meaning than texts solely composed of words. However, their translation is infinitely more complex. This chapter focuses on the “outward turn” in Translation Studies as a methodology to expand the definition of translation by taking it into an area in constant movement between the blurred limits of a discipline in continuous approximation to others.

### **1.1. From language to languages. The new texts.**

In *Styles of Radical Will* (1966), Susan Sontag claims that the history of art is a sequence of successful transgressions. No doubt, it is. Transgressing boundaries between disciplines allows us to observe all the worlds that fill our surroundings. These worlds are different from ‘our world’ that sometimes alarm us with the strange differences of the ‘Other’<sup>1</sup>.

We live in a global visual culture<sup>2</sup> where verbal language is but one component of multilingual, multimodal, and multisensory repertoires. In this context, communication implies an inevitable combination of words, images, sounds, movements, bodies, and

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<sup>1</sup> “Vision is a cultural construction [...] it is learned and cultivated, not simply given by nature [...] It is deeply involved with human societies, with the ethics and politics, aesthetics and epistemology of seeing and being seen” (Michell 2002: 166).

<sup>2</sup> “Visual culture involves the things that we see, the mental model we all have of how to see, and what we can do as a result. That is why we call it *visual culture*: a culture of the visual. A visual culture is not simply the total amount of what has been made to be seen, such as paintings or films. A visual culture is the relation between what is visible and the names that we give to what is seen. It also involves what is invisible or kept out of sight. In short, we don’t simply see what there is to see and call it a visual culture. Rather, we assemble a worldview that is consistent with what we know and have already experienced” (Mirzoeff 2016: 10).

shapes. There is no single disciplinary framework that can successfully offer an adequate approach to this multimodal world. If we want to understand how meaning is produced, expanding the idea of language helps us to attend “not only to the borders between languages but also to the borders between semiotic modes” (Pennycook 2017: 270)<sup>3</sup>. Stories are no longer constructed with words alone but also employ a wide range of semiotic resources. Thus, “could we not say the same of texts or writing? On this conception, a text is constituted not by language alone, but by loose clusters of features—the language (by no means a homogeneous entity), of course, but also the material-body of the text, its inscription technologies (typography, orthography, color), the affordances of the media spaces it traverses, and so forth” (Lee 2021b: 9).

This book is thus based on the idea that we live between boundaries, materialities, modalities, and semiotic orders. The transgression of boundaries between disciplines makes it possible to question solidity. Seen in this light, translation “is no longer about moving a work from one discrete language system to another (cf. the code-view to multilingualism). It is about distributing a work through semiotic repertoires, where features from one resource cluster (encompassing and exceeding the source language) synergise with and re-embed in resources from another resource cluster, including but not limited to the target language” (Lee 2021b: 9). Translation is now recognized “not only as an interlinguistic process but also as an intersemiotic activity across cultures and languages” (Wilson and Maher 2012: 2).

Jakobson’s intersemiotic translation is hardly a new concept. It has been applied to audiovisual translation, advertising, book illustration, and other fields. However, the approach taken here is different. Our point of departure is Madeleine Campbell and Ricarda Vidal’s (2019: xxix) observation that we translate “not just with the eyes but with all other senses” and Susan Bassnett and David Johnston’s (2019) “outward turn in translation studies”. Consequently, our aim is to analyze the connections and parallelisms between translation and contemporary art and to show how contemporary art sees and uses translation.

From this standpoint, the definition of *text* broadens considerably<sup>4</sup>. Many years ago, visual studies and cultural analysis expanded the interpretation of the concept of text (Bal 1985/2009). From this perspective, a text was conceived as something that was not only linguistic but which also incorporated other sign systems such as images. In her seminal work, Mieke Bal (2002) speaks of “travelling concepts” in the humanities and includes the concept of meaning and its journey between words and looks. According to

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<sup>3</sup> Contemporary languages on signs in the public domain “include greater contextual (ethnographic) and historical understandings of texts in the landscape – who put them there, how they are interpreted, and what role they play in relation to space, migration and mobility” (Pennycook 2017: 270), because these signs are in many cases multilingual, as shown by Pennycook’s ethnographic observation at a Bangladeshi-owned corner shop in Sydney, where not only words but the distribution of space, objects, goods, food, and other “semiotic assemblages” turned the whole situation into a translingual cosmopolitan space.

<sup>4</sup> From the definitions of Brinker, Halliday and Hasan, De Beaugrande and Dressler, Van Dijk or Petöfi, among others, we have reached those of scholars who, based on the semiosis of Charles S. Peirce, understand that the text is an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary concept and consequently includes non-verbal phenomena, images and culturally specific visual or musical references. Since the 1960s onwards, the concept of “text” “has been redefined and reconceptualized to include meaning structures comprised of varying semiotic codes” (Desjardins 2008: 48).

Bal, the boundaries between disciplines are not dividing lines but territories in themselves or negotiation spaces. In the global era, concepts are kaleidoscopic, and they must be approached from the different disciplines that they traverse. Translating means travelling across borders (Campbell and Vidal 2019).

In today's world, images, sounds, sensory perceptions, nonverbal communication, spaces, linguistic landscapes, cities, and even bodies are considered texts because they communicate. Images have their own grammars (Kress, Gunther and van Leeuwen 1996). Visual design, oil paintings, photographs, sculptures, drawings "make meaning in different ways [...] they bring their own unique semiotic resources into play" (van Leeuwen 2021: 3). Virtual spaces and times should also be considered. "Communication happens on many levels, the gestural, the olfactory, the visual" (Campbell and Vidal 2019: xxv), apart from the linguistic (see also Finnegan 2015; Lee 2021b). Linguistic landscapes do not refer simply to language displayed in public spaces but also include images, smells, clothes, food, and graffiti. In the pandemic era, they even include masks with different kind of messages. Applied Linguistics is also beginning to subvert traditional boundaries between language and the arts (Lee 2015b; Bradley and Harvey 2019). We attach meanings to colors (van Leeuwen 2021, 2010) and to light (Kim-Cohen 2013). Meanings are also linked to signs that look like writing but are not words. This is the case of "asemic writing", which "asks us to conceptualize what we are seeing - not reading" (Schwenger 2019: 7), for instance, Man Ray's *Poem* (1924) or Cy Twombly's *Letter of Resignation* (1967) or "black board canvases" (1970).

Sounds rewrite spaces through aural images (Blessner and Salter 2009). Sounds have political and spatial meanings that need to be interpreted and translated (Voegelin 2018; Barenboim 2008; Barenboim and Said 2003). This is also true of classical and popular music too (Kaindl 2020; Mateo 2012; Hutcheon and Hutcheon in Page 2010: 65-77; McClary 1991/2002; Minors 2014; Susam-Sarajeva 2018, 2008; Vidal 2019, 2017, 2016b). Noise (Serres 1982; Lingis 1994; Attali 1997/2011; Barthes 1982/1986) and silence (Serres 1983; Cage 1979, 1961; Steiner 1976) are both forms of communication, as is voice in its different forms (Barthes 1982/1986, 1986; Neumark *et al.* 2010). Contemporary hybrid and conflicted identities "manifest themselves through different uses of shape, colour, texture, timbre, and movement" (van Leeuwen 2021: 5). Even the body communicates through dance and its gestural interplay (Minors 2020; Bennett 2019, 2007; Aguiar and Queiroz 2015; Queiroz and Atã in Salmose and Elleström 2020; McCartney in Campbell and Vidal 2019: 293-309). Examples include the movement of bodies such as those in the choreographies of Matthew Bourne who translates Bizet's musical stories (Vidal 2020), or Dada Masilo's translations of *Swan Lake*.

Other examples are skinscapes, the body with its tattoos (Peck and Stroud 2015); the corporeality in physio-cybertexts of polymorphic fictions in relation to physical space, which rewrite previous stories, emotions and feelings (Ensslin 2010). There is also the body metaphor as a semiotic system, which translates linguistic representations of the contemporary (Federici and Parlati 2018). Furthermore, contemporary art offers new ways of translating the world through painting, media art, net art, and dance (Campbell and Vidal 2019; Rizzo 2019; Mazzara 2019; Schramm 2019; Dot 2019; Connelly 2018; Di Paola 2018a).

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is a growing recognition of discourse beyond the traditional fields. For instance, landscape and geography are understood as semiotic sites or as texts whose meanings have to be first conceptualized and then translated (Harvey 2006; Jaworski and Thurlow 2010). Museums are now regarded as translation zones

(Neather in Bielsa and Kapsaskis 2021: 306-319; Sturge 2007; see also Ahrens 2021, especially the chapter by Monika Krein-Kühle for an analysis of the translation of art discourse in the exhibition catalogue essay).

Architecture relates to language through “the semiotics of architecture”, developed in Roland Barthes’ 1967 lecture “Semiology and the Urban” and in Umberto Eco’s “Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture” (published in *The City and the Sign*. Gottdiener and Lagopoulos, eds. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). Also interesting is the analysis of spatial texts -the study of how the built environment means- through Spatial Discourse Analysis (Ravelli and McMurtrie 2016) as well as the semiotics of movement in space, how movement may change the meaning of a particular space, the role of movement in the meaning-making process of interacting with an exhibition in a museum (the so-called “visitor studies”), buildings and other spaces (McMurtrie 2017). Language understood as a spatial practice appears in Deleuze and Guattari’s *Mille Plateaux*, in Lecerle’s *The Violence of Language* and in some of Heidegger’s essays (Rabourdin 2016a: 2-3). In Auster’s *City of Glass* Stillman’s body spells the sentence “The Tower of Babel” through the streets of New York (Rabourdin 2016b: 225-226). Architecture is therefore a discipline closely connected with language and with translation (Evans 1997). A building, Esra Akcan argues, is a text that offers cultural meanings which need to be translated (Akcan 2018, 2012). More specifically, architecture asks, “What makes different languages interchangeable, and different places compatible with each other? How do products and ideas pertaining to visual culture, art, and architecture get translated, and what are the ethical and political consequences of these translations? [...] Is the ethical translation the one that resists the implementation of a new set of standards in the local context and appropriates the imported artifact into the local conditions, or the one that refuses to assimilate the foreign into the local and intentionally manifests the foreignness of the translated artifact? Who speaks and who cannot speak during the process of translation?” (Akcan 2012: 6). In this venue, cities have become new translated/translating texts (Lee 2021a; Lee 2013a; Simon 2019, 2012; Pennycook and Otsuji 2015)<sup>5</sup>. Moving through these spaces, “[w]e construct meaning by the incremental experience we have of words” (Rabourdin 2016b: 230). The relationship between “linguistic translation and spatial translation [...] offers a complex and fertile relationship” (Rabourdin 2020: 3). “Writing” (and I would add, translating) “involves the whole body” (Rabourdin 2020: 3). Translating across borders creates new connections between cultures and media “by perceiving and experiencing non-verbal media through visual, auditory and other sensory channels” (Campbell and Vidal 2019: xxvi).

Signs are transposed into different semiotic forms (Pârlog 2019). Our contemporary semiotic landscape is more complex than ever because we communicate within a context where globalization has boosted technological development. Literacy has moved into the digital age and transformed the humanities in the postprint era (Hayles and Pressman 2013) of non-physical spaces (Mitchell 2003). Since the expansion of television in the 1970s

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<sup>5</sup> Some artists urge us to look at cities through the lens of translation -for instance Canan Marasligil, herself a translator, in her project *City in Translation*, based on the traces people leave in urban spaces (Lee 2021a). In fact, when Iain Chambers refers to “the grammar of the city”, he does so in terms of translation. In this regard, he defines the city as “a translating and translated space” since language is always a plural concept, not merely a linguistic matter. Architecture, music, painting, dance, are ways to speak “in the vicinity of other histories and cultures, proximate to others who may refuse our terms of translation” (Chambers 2018: 33).

and video in the 1980s, cultural habits have shifted from books to audiovisual media. Evidently, books no longer occupy the cultural place they once held, now that reading media have diversified from paper to digital. The texts/images with which we read the world today appear in places that were previously unthinkable, such as Facebook, Google, blogs, YouTube, Twitter or Instagram.

Many new modes and genres are used as new ways to tell stories where words are no longer so prominent as they once were. Graphics and animation have transformed the visual richness of these texts into a challenge for translators. These new texts have altered the traditional conceptions of plot, structure, temporality, originality, and agency. At the same time they are vivid proof that words are only one of many semiotic systems which may be used to communicate (Jewitt 2009: 14; Page 2010: 3-10; Page and Thomas 2011: 1-4).

Communication today includes the new textual condition and digital metroliteracies (Dovchin and Pennycook 2017). In these new contexts, it is necessary to envisage the full range of communication forms used and their interrelationships, which appear in Web-based homepages, digital fiction, born digital hypertexts narratives, gaming, hyperlinked words, electronic literature, the photo-sharing application Flickr, and YouTube. There are also sites that use WordPress where individuals narrate their stories on blogs, journals, and discussion boards, or Facebook, with its collaborative storytelling ventures, wall posts, comments, and microblogging.

In the era of multimodality, in which “semiotic modes other than language are treated as fully capable of serving for representation and communication [...] language, whether as speech or as writing, may now often be seen as ancillary to other semiotic modes: to the visual for instance. Language may now be ‘extra visual’. The very facts of the new communicational landscape have made that inescapably the issue” (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 46). This panorama has given way to a constant translation of the verbal into the visual and vice versa (Clarke 2007), to a visual representation of information, to new audiovisual messages - in short, to the transition from monomodal to multimodal texts (Kress 2003, 2010; Kress and van Leeuwen 2001).<sup>6</sup>

Given this situation, new scholarship about language, cognition and communication opens new venues for research (Pennycook 2018) in translation. Translators need a nonlinear, complex, interactive way of thinking (Morin 1990/2008; Marais and Meylaerts 2019), beyond binarisms. Translation is a tangible, daily, necessary, and indispensable experience of contemporary life. “I link, therefore I am” (Mitchell 2003: 62), says the nodular subject. In such a changing, interwoven, mobile, cosmopolitan, and liquid society, translation has ceased to be merely interlinguistic, because the new surroundings in which it takes place force the translator to continually cross spaces and forge new *topoi* from familiar *loci*.

In short, communication and translation appear today in contexts which go beyond traditional languages (Marais 2019). Communication studies, sociolinguists and others include new terms, such as intermediality, intermodality, multimodality, and multimodality, transposition, transmediation, transmodality, translanguaging, transmedia

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<sup>6</sup> A good example of this venue is the excellent series on multimodality at Routledge, edited by Kay O'Halloran which aims “to advance knowledge of multimodal resources such as language, visual images, gesture, action, music, sound, 3-D artefacts, architecture and space, as well as the ways these resources integrate to create meaning in multimodal objects and events” (web page).

navigation, transcreation, adaptation, semiotranslation, interart, voice description, respiratory narrative, body metaphor, cinematization, gamification, metafilmic, kinephrastic, transideology, interfigural, etc. (Elleström 2021, 2019, 2010; Salmose and Elleström 2019; Clüver 2019, 2007; Ensslin 2010; García and Li 2014; Lee and Li 2020; Federici and Parlati 2018). Hence, communication “is not just about going *between* languages. It is also about going *within*, where the intralingual and interdiscursive dimensions of text and talk complement the interlingual, as well as going *beyond* (language as such), hence beyond the code-view of multilingualism, encompassing various other material and sensory modalities” (Lee 2021b: 6. See also Kress and van Leeuwen 2001 and Jan Bloomaert’s publications for the social semiotics view of language and other modalities as mobile semiotic resources).

The very facts of this new communication landscape have made the question of exploring the limits of language and representation an important issue. It is necessary to acknowledge the power of the invisible, and to discover ways to grasp the possibilities of the new texts which include “the real unseen that opens and gestures towards the idea of alternatives” (Voegelin 2018: 5). This does not mean avoiding the politics of everyday life but finding innovative pathways to access the new ways we communicate via sounds, bodies, gestures, images, colors, and forms. In other words, this book is about a new and enlarged definition of translation or translation as a successful transgression of boundaries between disciplines, to say it with Susan Sontag (1996). In this sense, translation is a transdiscipline that keeps us moving by creating tensions and dialogues that explore those fragments of creative productions which trigger our curiosity. It offers new responses “to the failings of a complete and reasonable world” (Voegelin 2018: 5-7).

## 1.2. Expanding Translation

As suggested above, in our global and cosmopolitan world the possible range of codes and sign systems has multiplied. This diversity highlights the need to consider the new forms of communication that have emerged. In the transnational society, translation moves along borders, in multilingual spaces, in post-colonial hybrid environments where languages struggle to overcome asymmetry within cosmopolitanism (Bielsa 2016a). The globalization of markets, but also the globalization of fear, violence, and poverty in a liquid society (Bauman 2016, 2007, 2006, 2000), have made it impossible to ignore translation. As a result, in these new multimodal contexts, Translation Studies moves beyond strict textual analysis to broader research paradigms. The new texts (including videogames, Web sites, song covers, illustrations, icons, tweets, films, graphic novels, dance performances, songs, and many others) demand new composite and heterotypical translation processes across various media.

Expanding the field of Translation Studies is thus an urgent goal, since the stories told through non-traditional modes need to be translated in novel ways. Within this new semiotic landscape, translation must broaden its scope. It is beginning to expand beyond the verbal (Pérez-González 2014). Developments in multimodal studies (Boria et al. 2020) have already begun to change our idea of what translation is. In fact, many scholars claim that in our global culture “the question of what constitutes a translation is under radical review” (Gentzler 2015: 2; see also Bassnett and Johnston 2019). The task of the translator is no longer between two languages but rather between “many contemporary parts of social life [...] From this perspective, it is possible to view all language use as a process of translation, thus questioning the assumption that translation is a mapping of

items from one code to another [...] all communication involves translation” (Otsuji and Pennycook in Lee 2021a: 59).

In this context, translation is ubiquitous. It means reflecting “on much larger issues, such as meaning, sense, and purpose; identity, sameness and similarity; the relationship between part and whole; between the message and its medium; between ideas; between texts; between individuals; between individuals and texts; between communities; between texts and communities; between different times and places; between what is fixed and what is dynamic; between exercising force and experiencing influence, and so on. Translation takes us into a surprisingly broad range of territories and confronts us with the most fundamental of questions [...] to me, translation is -at least potentially- everywhere” (Blumczynski 2016: ix, xiii).

As Blumczynski argues, when we translate translation into other areas, translating creates a surplus of meaning by opening horizons of possibilities. It offers “a different way of facing the great epistemological questions of what we know and how we know” (Arduini and Nergaard 2011: 9). From this perspective, sense can only be met in our complex and diverse world through “interdisciplinary connections” (Gentzler 2003), through a methodology *sans borders* which blurs its boundaries in order to find new openings for translation (Brems *et al.* 2014: 2).

Translation is a way to displace institutionalized forms of recognition with thinking: “To *think* (rather than to seek to explain) in this sense is to invent and apply conceptual frames and create juxtapositions that disrupt and/or render historically contingent accepted practices. It is to compose the discourse of investigation with critical juxtapositions that unbind what are ordinarily presumed to belong together and thereby to challenge institutionalized ways of reproducing and understanding phenomena” (Shapiro 2013: xv).

The assumption is that the translator’s task is to *think* in Shapiro’s sense, to create juxtapositions beyond media borders (Elleström 2021) in dynamic contexts which exist between and across boundaries, and also beyond monolingual spaces and exclusionary practices. The contemporary translator’s repertoire is composed of “different semiotic orders” (Baynham and Lee 2019a: 18), and within the new spaces, s/he needs to move from language to consider the materiality and affordances of “the visual, the gestural, and what can be communicated with the body or, to be more precise, by the body” (Baynham and Lee 2019a: 97). This involves translanguaging into the intersemiotic, multimodal domain, which obliges translators to use a spectrum of semiotic resources to extend their repertoire.

Translating today is a heterotopic activity that exists between different spaces and epistemological times. It is an activity that crosses, not only all contemporary arts, from music, painting, and dance to literature, but also every moment of our life, from birth to death. This book proposes that the same concept is present in different epistemological areas and thus leads to decentred, aterritorial translation. This is translation as a series “of created relatedness, between embodied selves, interacting with different cognitive, affective and sensorial environments, and other equally embodied selves for whom those environments are, to a greater or lesser extent, other” (Johnston 2013: 369).

Within this context, translation becomes a way of exploring our relationship with language(s) through its physical and sensory effects on our bodies. Translation allows us to access meaning as *becoming*, in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaux* and in the *Anti-Oedipe*. From this perspective, *becoming* is the point at which two different entities connect by means of a network of infinite relationships. This is why the *becoming* is a frontier phenomenon, an experience of/between the limit of both physical and emotional spaces. According to Edwin Gentzler (2015: 2), “rather than thinking about translation as a somewhat secondary process of ferrying ideas across borders, we think beyond borders to culture as a whole, reconceiving translation as an always primary, primordial, and proactive process that continually introduces new ideas, forms or expressions, and pathways for change into cultures: translation without borders.”

By taking visual literature, dance, painting, and music as new territories where translation is defined, we set off on a journey through disciplines which do not contradict each other but improve on one another by crossing thresholds. Thus, in these new texts, translating is a concept that not only travels between the lines, from words to paintings as in ekphrasis<sup>7</sup>, but also between sounds, colours or dancing bodies. With this transversality of disciplines, “each of us is a bundle of fragments of other people’s souls, simply put together in a new way” (Hofstadter 2007: 252), that we are strange loops where everything is interrelated, and this gives us “a deeper and subtler vision of what it is to be human” (*ibid.*: 361).

Our contemporary world does not only translate with words because, as Douglas R. Hofstadter (1997: 44) points out in *Gödel, Escher, Bach*, “it is all about translation”. The concepts of similarity, paradox, self-representation, identity, and meaning are always present on this journey and will take us into the unknowns of the different semiotic systems when we reach the limits of self-reference. In fact, this is what happens when two mirrors facing each other are forced to reflect each other indefinitely (Hofstadter 1979/2013: 182-185).

Hofstadter analyzes all these concepts in Gödel’s mathematical logic, in Escher’s drawings, and in Bach’s music. He demonstrates that the three addressed the same notions in fields apparently far removed from each other. His work highlights the fact that they express continuity in the discontinuous as well as alternation and simultaneity with the discontinuous in the continuous. In this respect, Gödel’s incompleteness theorem stems from the same principle as Escher’s “picture within the picture”. For example, with its concave or convex architectural spaces, the question is whether his characters are going up or down. The theorem is also based on the Epimenides paradox or the Moebius strip, that unorientable loop.

Especially impressive is Hofstadter’s analysis of the palindrome which is Bach’s so-called “Crab Canon”, and how it relates to Escher’s “Crab Canon” and to Gödel’s Typographical Number Theory (TNT), all based on the concept of self-reference

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<sup>7</sup> As is well-known, the interrelationships between literature and painting based on *ut pictura poesis* and ekphrasis have been widely explored (e.g. Venuti 2010; Bal 1991; Drucker 1997; Krieger 1991; Hollander 1995; Robillard and Jongeneel 1998). Other publications include *The Sister Arts* (1958) by Jean H. Hagstrum, *The Color of Rhetoric* (1982) by Wendy Steiner, *Pictoria Concepts* (1989) by Göran Sonneson, *The Gazer’s Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art* (1995) by John Hollander, and *La imagen compleja. La fenomenología de las imágenes en la era de la cultura visual* (2005) by Josep Catalá.



(Hofstadter 1979/2013: 222ff). In this sense, the most outstanding example of Bach's counterpoint is found in the final "Contrapunctus" of *The Art of Fugue*, the last fugue he composed, where his name is hidden in the last part (using the 'translation' of letters into notes: B flat, A, C H natural). Not surprisingly Bach, occasionally, also created acrostics. In fact, the B-A-C-H melody if played backwards is exactly the same as the original (Hofstadter 1979/2013).

Also intriguing is the relationship that he establishes between Bach's wonderful "Canon per Tonos", from *The Musical Offering*, and Escher's *Waterfall* (1961) or *Up and Down* (1947). As Hofstadter says in a much later work, music is "a direct route to the heart or between hearts –in fact, the most direct. Across-the-board alignment of musical tastes, including loves and hates [---] is a sure guide to affinity of souls as I have ever found. And an affinity of souls means that the people concerned can rapidly come to know each other's essences, have great potential to love inside each other" (Hofstadter 2007: 250).

Composing is a desperately difficult task, says the Devil in *Doktor Faustus*. The same is true of creation through painting, music, the body, and words. In all these cases, the work only reveals its meanings when we interpret it, or when we use it to express our passions, fears and desires, in the limbo between the creature born from the solitude of the artist and our own self. Against the monotony of the verb *be*, the translator is a Heideggerian *being* in the world. In the face of permanence, constant flux, movement, unlimited transferal of words, images, or music allow us to see to what extent translation is the phenomenon at the root of all these practices.

This new "Translation Zone(s)", as proposed by Heather Connelly (2018) explore the nature of translation between disciplines which are always "in-translation". She is referring to disciplines that belong "to no single, discrete language or single medium of communication" (Apter 2006: 6). This is a zone cast by artists, musicians, dancers, painters, photographers, and translators, which extracts us from the comfort zone of monolingualism and transforms translation into a medium of political and social change. Connelly's "Translation Zone(s)" is a polyvocal project where she "researches the non-linguistic aspects of translating and vocalising a foreign language's basic phonic constituents, thereby challenging the semiotic representation of sign systems to achieve new and enhanced aesthetic and cultural understanding. In a step-by-step account of her intersemiotic translation process, she eschews the symbolic aspects of a language's written alphabet or script, to embrace its sensory and affective dimensions" (Campbell and Vidal 2019: xxxv; 217-246).

As is well known, the initial prescriptivist vision of translation which defended absolute equivalence and neutrality was rejected because of a widespread dissatisfaction with traditionalist views of translation as an objectivised empirical enterprise in which the translator is impartial and invisible. This vision of translation gradually changed, thanks to a number of factors such as the following: (i) the polysystem theorists of the 1960s; (ii) books such as *Translation Studies* published by Susan Bassnett in 1980; (iii) the concept of manipulation resulting from Theo Hermans's seminal anthology published in 1985; (iv) Mary Snell-Hornby's interdisciplinary turn in 1988; and (v) the cultural turn introduced by Bassnett and Lefevere in their influential "Proust's Grandmother and the Thousand and One Nights" (1990). This was followed by André Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992), which applied Michel Foucault's concept of power to translation, and was the first exploration of power relations within textual practice. In 2002 in another seminal anthology, Maria Tymoczko

and Edwin Gentzler established what they called “the power turn in Translation Studies”, which eventually led to the development of postcolonial translation studies and feminist translation theories.

All of this meant that translating was no longer understood as a pure, neutral activity, in the same way that writing is never innocent. The translator thus became an increasingly visible agent within the translation process rather than a faithful servant. The “sociological turn” (Wolf and Fukari 2007) is closely connected with the cultural turn (Zwischenberger 2019). The next “turn”, the so-called “translational turn” (Bachmann-Medick 2009), reveals the expansion and relevance of the processes of cultural translation in multicultural societies. Building on Bhabha’s conception of cultural translation, the proponents of the translational turn use the concept in two ways. The first way is to convey ideas, values, behaviours, and patterns of thought, and the second is to denote inter- or transdisciplinary translation. In this second sense, it is closely connected to Mieke Bal’s “travelling concepts” (Bachmann-Medick 2016a: 119-136; Blumczynski 2016). Subsequently, the “technological turn” (Cronin 2010) appeared, followed by “post-translation” (Gentzler 2017) and the “outward turn” (Bassnett and Johnston 2019).

Certainly, the changes in our discipline, especially since the 1980s, have been spectacular. The incorporation of concepts such as manipulation, ideology, power, asymmetry, representation, etc., initially seemed to indicate that Translation Studies could become a subversive field, attentive to the power games between the cultures of our global world. However, for some years now, perhaps because of the institutionalization of the discipline, Translation Studies have focused on being recognized as an independent degree in the university curriculum. After the successive turns, there is now danger that it will be embedded in the universities as part of the syllabus and become a “self-contained discipline with its own models and paradigms”. This could result in a kind of isolation that can only become complacency, in a discipline that is “marketable”, “chic” and “sexy”, “the term of the moment” (Bassnett 2011: 72):

Perhaps we have concentrated too hard on becoming respectable, on claiming to be a discipline, that we have lost our cutting edge. Nothing leads to complacency faster than success; the time has come for those of us who would like to think of ourselves as translation studies scholars to rethink not only how we have come to be here, but where and with whom we want to go next (Bassnett 2014a: 25).

In this venue, Cornelia Zwischenberger ensures that translation may be considered as a prototype of Bal’s previously mentioned “travelling concept”, as it has travelled to numerous disciplines in recent years. Even though she also points out that “translation” is used “as a very broad metaphor in neighbouring disciplines and fields of research of Translation Studies, this mobility also reveals the potential and high polysemantic value of the translation concept. What is missing, however, is a ‘translaboration’ between translation studies and the various other disciplines that employ translation studies’ master concept” (Zwischenberger 2017: 388). She goes on to say that, although ethnography, anthropology or sociology, among many other disciplines, have already adopted the concept of translation in a broad sense - something that Bachmann-Medick (2012, 2009) pointed out a few years ago - our discipline has not yet been able to make the leap into other territories (Zwischenberger 2017). In contrast, both in art and in many other disciplines, translation has been used, often without explicitly naming it: “...it is rather us, both as translators and translation researchers, who travel through these

disciplines—only to discover that certain kinds of translational thought and practice are somehow already present in the territories we visit” (Blumczynski 2016: 2).

Indeed, there are still many types of translation that have not gone as far as the art world has. Perhaps the most obvious sign that much remains to be done is that in many non-specialized contexts, the translator is still a mere transmitter of meanings and is expected to be invisible. Something similar happens for example in the case of certain foreign language teachers who use translation to show their students that the meaning of the original text is closed and that a single univocal translation can be made of it. What is even worse is when this occurs in institutional and legal contexts, where it is especially dangerous to persist in the idea that the translator or interpreter can achieve absolute equivalence. When institutions expect interpreters to transmit the “truth” in a neutral way, the failure to take into account the social, cultural or political issues of each situation or the differences between the different judicial systems is, at the very least, problematic. Fortunately, there are now many excellent studies that have incorporated concepts from other disciplines into legal and institutional translation (see Martín Ruano 2018).

For this reason, Yves Gambier (2016: 887) states that “translation has more often than not seemed to serve the powers that be, ostensibly beholden to established authorities” and that “many sponsors, amateurs, self-translators (including scholars translating their own articles), and engineers within the language industry continue to consider translation as a mechanical process, a word-by-word substitution, a problem of dictionaries, or simply an activity that accrues no apparent prestige and which can be handed off at any moment to a bilingual relative or colleague.” And if we add the complacency, the “inward turn” of Translation Studies as a discipline, it seems urgent at this point to rethink translation processes and begin to actively discuss the conditions for an “outward turn in translation studies”, or “a greater openness towards interdisciplinarity”, as understood by Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer (2014: 5). Furthermore, this necessary “interdisciplinary turn” of translation studies referred to by Gentzler (2003: 22) must lead to a “translational turn” in other areas.

What Bassnett and other authors fear is that there has been a step backwards, and that instead of looking outward, Translation Studies has begun to look inward, prioritizing its own curricula, high-impact journals, publishers, and series whose focus is on translation, international conferences, and increasingly institutionalized meetings. Although the pioneers of this shift towards more revolutionary definitions of translation initially were the key to great progress, they realized just in time that, given the current state of the art, we cannot afford to inhabit an isolated conceptual space but rather just the opposite. Translation Studies, which is now recognized as a discipline, must emerge and embrace other areas of knowledge and research methodologies in order to become a truly interdisciplinary field. This is a basic and necessary characteristic in a hybrid, complex, mestizo world such as ours.

From this new starting point, the constant indefinition of translation is promising. The new definition of translation - “‘indefinition’ should be functional and emergent (in a constant state of Deleuzean becoming), rather than static, more about what it does than what it is”, as Madeleine Campbell argues (personal communication). It should also aim to overcome the dangerous and impoverishing Eurocentrism that was beginning to characterize our field (Dollerup 2008; Tymoczko 2007; van Doorslaer and Flynn 2013). The next step should be to draft a new map of power relations and

multicultural dialogues in an increasingly wide range of domains, from the legal and scientific to literature and the arts. The status of translation as an independent discipline should not come at the cost of a dangerous isolationism (Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer 2014: 9-10). An interdisciplinary perspective will allow us to better analyze those multilingual and multidisciplinary spaces (Simon 2019, 2012; Lee 2021a; Vidal 2012) which the global world has become.

The methodology, point of view and the very definition of translation is thus what must begin to change (Hermans 2002; Gentzler 2003). This is the best way to move towards other epistemological fields, beyond traditionally established boundaries, undermining the paradigms previously accepted as valid. Consequently, translation will focus “on broader translinguistic aspects and transcultural processes” (Bassnett 2011: 72) to become an open and dynamic discipline, a field of research in constant movement, capable of covering “an impressive spectrum of topics approachable by means of a no less impressive set of tools or methods” (D’hulst and Gambier 2018: 1). These tools and methods, which are no doubt shared with other disciplines, will give our field an intellectual dynamism and an interdisciplinarity with plural, kaleidoscopic visions, very consistent with the hybrid cosmopolitan world of our activity. Movement and travelling concepts are the unstable foundation on which the new way of understanding translation will be established because movement is related to the questions that we ask and how we ask them. The journey creates new landscapes, as well as innovative and enriching ideas. If we want to think critically, we need to move, because static thinking is usually a covert form of control. Movement precedes thought, according to a Tibetan saying:

...when movement initiates and opens thinking we are not only courting the possible advent of the unknown [...] but we are also putting ourselves in a humble or learning relationship to the knowledge and experiences of others. We bring, we test, we transmit, but we also change and allow ourselves to be changed (Breytenbach 2009: 6).

Translation is the ideal space for these interactions in movement with other cultures, “[a]nd when one says *movement* one is talking rhythms and patterns, contrasts and contradictions and contestations, maybe conflict, hybridism and survival consciousness, the intensified interaction between the known and the unknown” (Breytenbach 2009: 6).

Translation Studies is becoming aware of the need to build new transdisciplinary research methodologies that will help us to solve the challenges presented by texts created with images, sounds, or bodies. Such texts provide as much or more meaning than texts solely composed of words. However, their translation is infinitely more complex, because it is necessary to take into account what is and what is not an image, the perspective from which the text has emerged, the colors used and what those colors and bodies mean in different cultures. In a constantly changing world, “translating has become a notion to be negotiated instead of being a ready-made concept” (Brems *et al.* 2014: 11). This is precisely what translation studies is becoming. Transcending Roman Jakobson’s structuralist framework, Translation Studies highlights the need to be aware of surroundings as well as the context of social and technological change in which the translator currently works. It reflects the fact that translation is no longer only a written task, but now involves painting, dancing, listening, watching: “...not just source to target, but to target and beyond, west to east, north to south, linear to non-

linear, text to images, and forward in time and space through multiple languages, cultures and genres” (Gentzler 2017: 112-113).

Translation unveils the world around us and is able to make important contributions to those surroundings that inevitably surprise us, both positively and negatively, every day. Broadening the limits of translation is an urgency that many theorists have long argued for (Hermans 2001; Gentzler 2003; Tymoczko 2007; Gambier 2014, 2006; Gambier and van Doorslaer 2009; Bassnett 2011; Johnston 2017; Marais 2019). Of course, they are aware that this involves incorporating new concepts, disciplines, and challenges (Delabastita 2003). The only way forward is to “wander around different areas [...] change the way of thinking by asking unusual questions or that [we find] in foreign territories” (García Canclini 2014: 31).

Many publications and conferences<sup>8</sup> are beginning to move in this direction (Dam et al. 2019; Campbell and Vidal 2019; Ott and Weber 2019; Gambier and van Doorslaer 2016; Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer 2014). There are also interesting initiatives, such as that of Madeleine Campbell on intersemiotic translation<sup>9</sup> or the so-called “translaboration” of Alexa Alfer and Cornelia Zwischenberger, which has led to various publications (Alfer 2017, 2015; Zwischenberger 2019, 2017) as well as a monographic issue of *Target* (2020). These new ways of understanding translation are broadening its definition by considering that a text is not only created with words but also with multiple semiotic systems. This is reflected in the monographic issues of Translation Studies journals (*JoSTrans* 35 January 2021, *The Translator* 25, 3, 2019, *Target* 2020, *Punctum* 6, 1, 2020, *Translation Matters* 1, 2, 2019, *Art in Translation* 10, 1, 2018) that specifically focus on this topic. Translation has become multilayered, heterotopical and heterotypical, and is “understood as practices of adaptation that amalgamate cultures and transform meaning. In this sense, translation does not simply occur between two languages or cultural spheres. Instead, it is shaped by a continuous process of cultural and media transformation that takes place between different semiotic registers” (Ott and Weber 2019: 7).

Some decades ago, scholars like Peeter Torop<sup>10</sup> (1995) applied the concept of translation to any type of cultural communication. Culture was defined as an infinite process of *total* translation, where texts composed of one substance, for example, the verbal, are translated to other semiotic systems. Gambier and van Doorslaer (2016) propose “border crossing” by charting the intersections of translation with other academic fields such as biosemiotics, cognitive neuroscience, sociology, gender studies, and military history. Scholars such as Piotr Blumczynski (2016) examine the role of translation in fields like anthropology, philosophy, and theology, whereas others question the semantic effect of images and multimodality on an increasingly transnational,

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<sup>8</sup> For instance, “Transmedial Turn? Potentials, problems and Points to Consider”, 8–11 December 2020, University of Tartu, Estonia. This second conference in a series of academic gatherings dedicated to the study of intersemiotic processes in culture concentrated on “the cultural shift from logocentric to increasingly intersemiotic, intermedial and transmedial processes and in its impact on disciplines that study textual transfers, relations between semiotic systems or media and new media practices” (<https://transmedia.ut.ee/>). It is also worth mentioning that such institutions as The Center for Translation Studies at the University of Texas have offered a transdisciplinary approach to translation for decades.

<sup>9</sup> On the ETN website at the following link: <https://experientialtranslation.net/>

<sup>10</sup> Arlene Tucker’s artistic project *Translation is Dialogue: Language in Transit (TID)* applies Torop’s approach to translation: see Campbell and Vidal 2019: xxxvi.

multisemiotic and multimodal communicative landscape (Oittinen *et al.* 2019; Olteanu *et al.* 2019; Weissbrod and Kohn 2019; Dicerto 2018; Desjardins 2017; Gardner and Martín Ruano 2015; Kaindl 2013; Gardner 2010).

The multimodal approach to communication is also generating a considerable number of publications in Translation Studies to respond to the challenges of the new texts<sup>11</sup>. Translation, traditionally centered on the verbal, needs to develop “appropriate investigation instruments for non-language modes” (Kaindl 2013: 266. See also Lee 2012; Pérez-González 2014; Adami 2016; Ramos Pinto and Adami 2020; Dicerto 2018; O’Sullivan and Jeffcote 2013; Jiménez Hurtado *et al.* 2018), since meaning “is a multifaceted, context-dependent and mutable phenomenon which inevitably dissipates and alters during the translation process, losing some layers and gaining others, and occasionally transmuting into something altogether different” (Bennett 2019: 1).

Some scholars understand intersemiotic translation as adaptation (Giannakopoulou 2019; Raw 2012) whereas others describe translation as a valuable art form (Malmkjær 2019) or as transcreation (Katan 2016; Spinzi *et al.* 2018). All these approaches, together with new modes of translations, such as transduction, recreation, intericonicity, multimodal and intermedial translation, fansubbing (Massidda 2015), crowdsourcing (Jiménez Crespo 2017), and collaborative translation (Cordingley and Manning 2017), challenge the traditional structure of the translation market, or the agency and ethics of the discipline. They problematize translation (Marais 2019) and encourage new research in Translation Studies (Spinzi *et al.* 2018). In line with this book, some clearly associate translation with the ways of looking at the world from/with contemporary art in all its forms, namely, painting, photography, dance, music, films, media art, etc. (Boria *et al.* 2020; Campbell and Vidal 2019; Ott and Weber 2019; Dot 2019; Di Paola 2018a and 2018b, 2015; Vidal 2019, 2017; Rizzo 2019). Translation is a multidirectional activity that “necessarily shifts the focus toward artistic productions, as they frequently constitute cultural and media composites [...] an interplay between not just different languages and their modal forms of expression but also between different media articulations, between image, tone, and sound, between material installation, a given spatial ambience, and patterns of reception, and between configurations of protagonists and viewers” (Ott and Weber 2019: 8).

All these scholars and many others warn against univocal definitions of translation and urge us to bear in mind the new surroundings that translators explore in search of future lines of research. Now is the time to look back in order to move forward. This means starting from the first of the turns, the cultural turn, which contributed so much to understanding new ways of translation, and going all the way to the technological turn. It also involves a reflection on how the contemporary world has changed, which points to the need to reexamine “conventional understandings of what constitutes translation and the position of the translator” (Cronin 2010: 1), and from there to the most contemporary turn, the “outward turn”.

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<sup>11</sup> The multimodal perspective draws on the concept of social semiotics that derives from Halliday and his functional view of language and, from his ideas, the multimodal social semiotic approaches generated by Kress (2010, 2003), van Leeuwen (2021), Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, 1996), Bezemer and Kress (2016), Jewitt (2009), Jewitt *et al.* (2016) among others. Contemporary meanings are best dealt with through the semiotic category of mode (Kress in Boria *et al.* 2020: 47).

In what follows, I will focus on the latest turn in Translation Studies, the outward turn, as a methodology to expand the definition of translation by taking it into an area in constant movement between the blurred limits of a discipline in continuous approximation to others. This is also a way of further enriching those spaces, which are more and more *sans borders* (Gentzler 2015), where translation has settled. Since this will no doubt generate new ethical questions (Spinzi *et al.* 2018; Baker 2014: 21ff; see also Folaron in D’hulst and Gambier 2018: 127-133), the translator’s response will also have to be new. As observed by Delabastita (2003: 9), “Translation Studies had to be invented, apparently, to show how blurred and how elusive a concept translation really is”.

### 1.3 Towards the “Outward Turn”

The origin of the “outward turn”, this new way of understanding translation as an activity open to other disciplines, was an article by Stefano Arduini and Siri Nergaard, “Translation: A New Paradigm” (2011), published in *translation: a transdisciplinary journal*. The subtitle of this journal clearly expresses the new conception of translation that encourages transdisciplinarity as a way of going “beyond the traditional borders of the discipline”, and opening up to art, architecture, ethnography, studies on memory, psychology, philosophy, and economics. It is also revealing to look at the term ‘transdisciplinarity’. Compared to ‘interdisciplinarity’, which is based on the ‘what’, *trans* is based on the ‘how’, a how that invites paradox, tensions, discontinuity, and which recognizes deconstruction and the dissemination of limits.

Interdisciplinary is arboreal, whereas transdisciplinary is rhizomatic in Deleuze and Guattari sense<sup>12</sup>. It is in this way that Arduini and Nergaard (2011: 9) understand translation. In other words, transdisciplinary research “cannot follow linear paths that conceive of structures as trees, but must rather walk along rhizomatic paths”. For these authors, the need to redefine translation is not negative but quite the opposite. “While some express concern about an ill-defined and delimited concept, we are of the view that such an approach is a strength and that any premature and a priori definition of the limits and borders of translation prevents us from evolving new theories and changing our assumptions and directions” (2011: 12).

The “outward turn” (Bassnett and Johnston 2019; Bassnett 2016, 2014a, 2014b, 2011; Johnston 2017, 2013) emerges in this context. The aim of this turn is to see translation “taught in programmes across the board, integrated into studies of all kinds, including Medicine, Law, Business, the sciences, and not just within the Humanities or as an add-on to foreign language learning” (Bassnett 2017b: 146). Bassnett shares a concern about the state of Translation Studies as a field, about its inability to move forward and its failure to have much impact on other disciplines. In her view,

we have missed an opportunity to form an intellectual group that would be concerned with promoting translation as a creative act, one which always involves language and is also political, but which above all is a process of discovery. We learn through translating- we learn about our own language as well as about the language from which we are translating. We learn what cannot be said, what is unsayable, and we also learn

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<sup>12</sup> Madeleine Campbell has written about translation as “exhausting” the possibilities of the rhizome, drawing a parallel with Beckett’s instructions for the Quad dance piece: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/poroi/vol13/iss1/2/>

about compromise, manipulation, negotiation. I go so far as to believe that it ought to be possible - indeed essential - to teach translation to people who have no foreign language, because in a way everyone engages in intralingual and intersemiotic translation, to go back to good old Jakobson, even if they don't have a foreign language. I think this is what Gentzler is trying to say through his post-translation studies stuff (Bassnett 2017b: 150).

What Bassnett means by “outward” is a combination involving two directions of outwardness: “firstly, Translation Studies needs to reflect on why so much of Translation Studies thinking has not made its way into other disciplines and also why so much innovative thinking is coming from world literature and comparative literature not Translation Studies; and secondly, Translation Studies needs to engage more with other disciplines rather than, as we fear has been happening, with Translation Studies becoming introspective and scholars only talking to one another” (personal communication).

The outward turn is necessary because even though there are already indicators of change as reflected in relevant publications, “translation studies practitioners have not managed to reach out sufficiently to other fields and all too often talk only to one another” (Bassnett in Gentzler 2017: ix). Translating outwards calls for the expansion of the discipline’s self-imposed boundaries. It shows that “all translation is a vivid demonstration of interdependency” (Cronin 2003: 3). The new turn broadens the limits of the discipline to the point of understanding that image, music, cinema, sculpture, painting, dance and architecture are, as previously mentioned, texts in movement that involve “visual translations” (Akcan 2012: 7). Such texts are transformations of meaning with non-linguistic elements which are ultimately translations of the Real:

Definitions of language are changing, challenged by proliferating semiotic codes and sign systems, informed by new technologies for the construction of texts, and complicated by factors associated with dialects and emerging languages. Definitions of what constitutes a text are also changing, as more oral and performative texts are included in studies. Lines between translation, adaptation, abridgement, paraphrase, and summaries are blurring (Gentzler 2013: 11).

The outward turn may be a useful way to approach translation in the era of multiplicity of semiotic systems since they allow us to widen horizons to a changing, mobile definition of our task (Gentzler 2014: 23):

Translation scholars need to look beyond the linguistic and literary to music, lights, set, costumes, gestures, make-up, and facial expressions to better understand this new intercultural and intersemiotic age of translation. As the media changes, so too do the performance options increase, and more dynamic theories of translation and internationalization are needed for the future (Gentzler 2017: 217).

Translation is today a phenomenon that appears in all languages through very different forms of communication, not only in written texts. Translation is now present in all areas:

...every discipline derives from and depends upon translation, a dependency that will only increase in the future. Contemporary and increasingly interdisciplinary studies of translation suggest that the borders transgressed in translation tend to be more multiple and permeable than traditionally conceived [...] What if translation becomes viewed less as a temporal act carried out between languages and cultures and instead as a *precondition* underlying the language and cultures upon which communication is based? What if we consider the political, social, and economic structures as built upon translation? What if we view the landscape -the parks, buildings, roads, memorials,



churches, schools, and government organizations- not as solely monocultural, but also as a product of post-translation effects? (Gentzler 2017: 5).

Gentzler puts his ideas into practice by analyzing the post-translations that have been made of Shakespeare, Goethe, or Proust. This book will show that it is indeed possible to erase the boundaries between disciplines and take the concept of translation to the extreme by analyzing contemporary works of art as artistic forms that communicate, as semiotic systems that transmit information through interwoven channels. One example is Sherrie Levine, a photographer who “copies”, post-translates, Walker Evans or Joan Miró without any attempt to disguise it in a way reminiscent of Yedda Morrison’s translation of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on climate change. This type of graphic text might be compared with Marcel Broodthaers’s edition of/rewriting of Stéphane Mallarmé’s *A coup de dés*, “which replaced the poem’s lines with solid blocks of rectangular black” (Dworkin and Goldsmith 2011: 451). Levine does not photograph women or landscapes but rather pictures of them. It is her belief that we can only approach such subjects through their representation, “for what is offered to the gaze of the other is always a purloined image, a double or fake” (Owens 1992: 215). Subsequently, Hermann Zschiegner, an artist who participated in the *From Here On* exhibition (Fontcuberta 2013: 94-95), post-translates Levine’s post-translation in a series of photography projects in the Google era. Thus, *+walkerevans+sherrielevine* is made up of twenty-six images of Allie Mae Burroughs that are the result of a Google search with the title of the series as a parameter. Levine is one of the most explicit examples of Gentzler’s post-translation and of the outward turn: “[t]oday I suggest that all writing is rewriting, or better said, a rewriting of a rewriting of a rewriting, and translation [...] plays a significant role in that process” (Gentzler 2017: 10). In Levine, “copying becomes a new form of creativity; modifying a text becomes a new form of authorship” (Gentzler 2017: 14).

Thinking (and translating) *with* art (Chambers 2018: vi) is a pervasive theme throughout this book. Accordingly, art and translation are viewed as two critical and sometimes disturbing acts of meaning-making. Both are regarded as instigators of thinking which are more closely interrelated than previously thought. Translation and art can be defined as disciplines that are essentially restless and in movement<sup>13</sup> (Blanchot 1971/1976: 23). Different contemporary artistic languages have long discarded the outdated notion of borders between disciplines and of one absolute interpretation. The last chapter of this book shows that both in theory and practice, art has been aware for decades that it needs translation. In fact, many artistic manifestations are created from and with the idea of rewriting. Art is way ahead of translation when it comes to understanding the urgency of transgressing limits and boundaries between disciplines. It is thus possible to construct a(n) (in)definition of translation based on the novel reflections that art put forward decades ago on concepts such as the real, representation, the original, similarity, repetition, identity, margins, and many others.

Painting is a way of representing reality, of translating the real, in short, of rewriting. In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger (1972) argues that between 1500 and 1900, what painting offered the viewer was one look, one translation of what the artist saw. It

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<sup>13</sup> Blanchot dedicates the fifth chapter of *The Laughter of the Gods* (1971/1976) to translation, which he understands as an *original* activity by translators, whom he calls “writers” (Blanchot 1971/1976: 54, 55 and 57). Classical Works “are only alive because they are translated” (*ibid.*: 57), but above all he points out that translation does not erase but is based on difference, “it is the very essence of difference” (*ibid.*: 56).

was a univocal homogeneous rewriting of the real that coincided with the patron's view of the world. In its origins, translation also offered univocal readings of the world. These readings, as seen in the colonial era, for example, (evidenced by the studies of Vicente Rafael, Roberto Valdeón, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Tejaswini Niranhana, Homi Bhabha, Marie-Louise Pratt, among others), painted the world according to the ideology of the person in charge of the translation. In contrast to this view of the world, the new looks of translation (Bassnett 2017, 2014a, 20117; Johnston 2017, 2013; Gentzler 2017, 2015, 2003; Lee 2021b, 2015a, 2015b, 2014a, 2014b, 2013b; Baynham and Lee 2019a, 2019b) point to a space that connects creative forms, initially far removed from each other, but which have strong links to the cultural practices they address. They can be regarded as a migration of signs between different formats, the change from one alphabet to another within dynamic referential frameworks, in constant transformation, always open to loans, resonances, and to blurred boundaries between genders and disciplines:

Studies in semiotics suggest that the borders tend to be more multiple and permeable than traditionally conceived. What if we erase the border completely and rethink translation as an always ongoing process of *every* communication? Translation becomes viewed less as a speech-act carried out between languages and cultures, and instead as a condition underlying the languages and cultures upon which communication is based. This paper discusses research in translation, cultural studies, and semiotics and suggests a new model for translation studies, which includes related languages, overlapping sign systems, shared discourses, and multiple meanings (Gentzler 2015: 1).

Gentzler's words perfectly summarize the aim of this book, which is to eliminate borders between disciplines, specifically between the world of art and translation with a view to implementing his new definition of translation, which transcends any boundaries between ways of representing the world. This all takes place "in a translation culture, or better said, translational cultures, always in an ongoing process of movement and maneuvering, invariably traversing boundaries, changing and adapting" (Gentzler 2017: 8). From this perspective, translation is no longer a secondary process but has become "one of the most important processes that can lead to revitalizing culture, a proactive force that continually introduces new ideas, forms or expressions, and pathways for change" (Gentzler 2017: 8).

This attitude favors translational or artistic creation understood as transliteration, in a world in which global symbols are asymmetrically exchanged between cultural mythologies that sometimes overlap and take advantage of positions of power. They reveal the urgency of looking at texts differently so that all meanings can be heard and all colors rewritten. Complicity between the various disciplines thus becomes an ethical question: "The pursuit of thinking with artistic texts rather than generating and testing explanations is neither a retreat into abstractions that lack contact with the world nor an avoidance of ethical and political concerns. It is a practice of critique that should be understood both as a challenge to epistemological certainties and as a positive engagement with actual experiences and issues pertaining to them" (Shapiro 2013: xv). This is reminiscent of Gertrude Stein's translations of Cézanne and Picasso's cubism, Kandinsky's translations of Schoenberg, Morton Feldman's musical translations of Abstract Expressionism, contemporary dance pieces that translate Stein (Aguar and Queiroz 2015), Wayne McGregor's dance translations of Virginia Woolf's novels, and those well-known traditional ballets that translated Greek pastorals like *Daphnis and Chloe*, Shakespeare's plays such as *Romeo and Juliet*, novels like *Don Quixote*, and folktales like *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty* (Bennett 2007). All these movement-based

corporeal texts embody communication through kinesemiotics (Maiorani 2021) and translate previous originals outwards by understanding dance as a language.

The translator, like the artist, has the power to create an image, and that image reflects his/her view. In other words, it reflects how s/he perceives what s/he translates, in the same way as the painter represents what s/he sees depending on his/her perspective or that of the person who has commissioned the painting. The methods used by the translator and painter to represent the original are many. In the case of the translator, they include the words chosen and their order as well as the nuances, connotations, smells (Grijelmo 2000), and noises (Vidal 2016b). In the case of the painter, they encompass perspective, chiaroscuro, chromatic contrasts, figuration, abstraction, and the impressionist brushstroke. However, the important thing is that both paint spaces. The fact that the painter and translator have a variety of procedures to represent what they see is not a trivial matter. What is of interest here is that both must deal with problems related to the representation of origin and its implicit copy, how this representation is carried out, and the references used to do so.

In short, the question is how the translator establishes the relationship between words and things, how s/he does things with words, and how s/he looks at, paints, and listens to the world through translation. Since art has been asking these questions for centuries, this will help the translator to understand that representation is not imitation but interpretation. Blurring the boundaries between disciplines will help us understand translation “as an ongoing process that is present in each communicative act, as an underlying condition for languages and cultures, able to resist particular social constructions, introduce new ideas, and question the status quo” (Gentzler 2008: 3).

We thus need new rules for new translation contexts if we want to understand, not only what the original text says, but *what the translation tells us*. This means understanding its processes, views, and perceptions of the outside world. Translation is a tool that moves between multiple conceptual and affective spheres, even when it moves within the contours of a single language. In this way we become aware of the contemporary need to write “the biography of translation” (Apter 2013: 266).

Writing the biography of translation signifies understanding translation as Paul Klee understood a drawing, a simple line that goes for a walk. “When the translator takes a walk to that point through languages and cultures, what emerges is not a line drawing a fixed relationship between naked meanings but rather a kind of provisional mapping of that complex issue that is living. Thus, in the beginning was the word; but then translation took it for a walk” (Johnston 2017: 11). Translation should be perceived as an instigator of mobility, as an opening to alterity, in a museum without walls like Malraux’s, in a possible world where the original goes for a walk to suddenly become a surprisingly new image.

Translation is thus an inevitable process, one to which the human being is subjected from birth to death. Translating is interpreting. Every act of our existence is a translation, and our translations say a great deal about us. They betray us. They bring us closer to the other or take us away from them. In other words, they form us as human beings. We live translating, which means interpreting things into words and words into words. It is then when translation allows us to overcome the lethargy of our very self and becomes a stimulus, a creative process. “Translation as a form of writing, writing as a form of translation” (Bassnett 2011: 76). The translator as traveler (Bassnett 2004).

The first step would be to define translation from the look. Look to translate. Translate to look at the world. This means considering how images work. Images are visible ways of thinking, feeling and, above all, ways of looking at the world. At the same time, my starting point is the fact that images speak to translate different realities. Images observe us and talk to us about their relationship with us, but they also speak of our relationship with them. Images touch the real (Didi-Huberman 2018). Translating from the translator's gaze or looking through our translations invites us to reflect on what images say when they speak (to us), on how words touch (us), on what words and images do, but above all what they do to us and what we do with them.

Indeed, on this journey outwards, across borders, through entanglements that produce critical palimpsests, we seek to know what translation *does*. This means what its performative value is, how a text "communicates translational aliveness" (Apter 2006: 219). Translation can answer Mitchell's (2005) question about what images want, in that he treats them almost as living beings. Translating with art will reveal what the text says without saying. It will show the walls that others have built, walls that are sometimes obvious, but which, on other occasions (the most dangerous) are not visible. By thinking through/with images, the translator will also think of the form and context in which these images are immersed and thus go beyond "the Kantian pact that guarantees the sovereignty of the Occidental subject" and the fact that the others "refuse to be othered" (Chambers 2014: 244). In that sense, images "point to a relational and constructed reality" (Guasch 2016: 352). Translating with art will allow us to counteract essentialisms and binary oppositions. Translating in motion taking images into account will create spaces for dialogue and debate, *donner langue* to be able to

...learn and relearn how to *see* the world, how to *live* in the world, how to *behave* in the world. Maybe we should remember that our art forges tools for change and constitutes objects encapsulating change, that it indicates ways of becoming other and making other; and as well that our art is perhaps a way of losing possession of useless certainties (Breytenbach 2009: 17).

Translation thus becomes a way of giving back to the other the right to look<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> The right to look, according to Nicholas Mirzoeff (2011a, 2011b), or, on the other hand, the right not to be looked at, as advocated by Kevin Coleman ("The Right Not to Be Looked At", *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* 25, 2, 2015: 43-63).