First On-Line International Colloquium on Translation: Intercultural Transfer

Abstract. *First On-Line International Translation Colloquium*

During the month of March 1997 the Facultat de Traducció i d'Interpretació of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona held its first on-line international translation colloquium, dedicated to the subject of intercultural transfer. A dedicated Web site was established to house invited position papers on the subject by Doug Robinson and Anthony Pym, and a response by Michael Cronin. An electronic mailing list was established to permit discussion of the position papers, and messages received were also housed at the Web site. Some 160 participants from 35 countries took part in the colloquium. The extracts published here include the position papers and a selection of responses elicited by the discussion.

Key words: translation, translation theory, traductology, intercultural communication.

Resum. *I Col·loqui internacional en línia sobre la traducció*

Al llarg del mes de març de 1997, la Facultat de Traducció i d'Interpretació de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona va dur a terme el seu primer col·loqui internacional en línia de traducció, amb la transferència intercultural com a tema principal. Es van publicar en pàgines *web* les ponències convidades de Doug Robinson i d'Anthony Pym, i una resposta de Michael Cronin. Es va crear una llista electrònica per fomentar el debat, i es van publicar els missatges rebuts al mateix lloc. Hi van participar unes 160 persones de 35 països. Aquí es publiquen les ponències i una selecció de les respostes que es van produir al llarg del debat.

Paraules clau: traducció, teoria de la traducció, traductologia, comunicació intercultural.

First On-Line International Colloquium on Translation: Intercultural Transfer

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During the month of March 1997 the *Facultat de Traducció i Interpretació* of the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona* held its first on-line colloquium on translation, organised by Seán Golden, with technical assistance from Joan Parra. The following are very slightly edited extracts from the official position papers by Doug Robinson (author of *The Translator's Turn,* Johns Hopkins UP, 1991 and *Translation and Taboo,* Northern Illinois UP, 1996) and Anthony Pym (author of *Translation and Text Transfer. An Essay on the Principles of Intercultural Communication.* Frankfurt/Main etc.: Lang, 1992, and *Epistemological Problems in Translation and its Teaching,* Calaceite: Caminade, 1993), and the official response by Michael Cronin (author of *Translating Ireland: Translation, Languages, Cultures,* Cork University Press, 1996), and, in an attempt to maintain some of the flavour of the event, a very limited and slightly edited selection of some of the more theoretical responses that appeared during the 'virtual' discussion, as well as some of the 'housekeeping' messages that commented upon the evolving nature of the colloquium. Hypertext links that appeared in the originals are indicated by [link]. There were more than 160 particpants from some 35 differnt countries, and the flow of messages was heavy. Many of the messa-ges were quite dense with information and/or reflection. It is not be possible to do full justice to the detailed interchanges that took place in the space available here, and as a result many of the most active participants are not represented in these extracts. The complete selection of position papers, responses and messages may still be consulted at http://cc.uab.es/~iuts0/colloquium.html. (Please note that the address iuts0 ends with the number zero, not with the letter 'o'.)]

[Contents of the original Home Page of the On-line Colloquium]

Welcome to the first on-line international colloquium on translation to be organised by the *Facultat de Traducció i Interpretació* of the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.* This is a pilot project for future on-line seminars, symposia, colloquia and congresses in the fields of translation practice, translation teaching, translation theory and translation studies.

We [invited] Doug Robinson and Anthony Pym to present position papers on the subject of intercultural transfer; and we [invited] Michael Cronin to respond to their position papers in order to begin a debate on this subject.

As frequently happens with a «live» colloquium, the invited speakers [began] to debate among themselves the contents

of their respective position papers. The position papers by Doug Robinson and Anthony Pym, the Response by Michael Cronin, and Robinson's and Pym's «virtual» debate are all listed below.

The more general debate [was] carried out over the TRANSFER-L list [created for that purpose]. Participants [were] invited to subscribe [free of charge] to this list… Subscribers [sent] their questions, comments and suggestions to the authors by means of this list, and the authors [responded] directly to the list. In this way all participants [received] all of the relevant messages. (Messages received [were] published on a specific Web page on an accumulative basis.)

The *On-line Translation Colloquium* [was to] open formally on 5 March 1997, and [to] close formally on 14 March 1997. [In the event, it opened, spontaneously, a bit earlier, and closed a bit later, when TRANSFER-L, which had been created for this purpose only, was closed down.]

The Invisible Hands by Doug Robinson [extract included here]

Translation as a Transaction Cost by Anthony Pym [extract not included here: a version of this text appeared in *Meta* 40/4 (1995), 594-605.]

Transferre non semper necesse est by Anthony Pym [extract included here]

Hand over Fist?, Michael Cronin's Response… [extract included here]

Guiding the Guiding Hand, Anthony Pym's response to Doug Robinson [extract not included here]

Making Sense of the Chaos, Doug Robinson's response to Anthony Pym [extract not included here]

Of Excluded Middles and Fine Lines, Doug Robinson's Response to Michael Cronin [extract not included here]

Messages received [some extracts included here]

The Invisible Hands That Control Translation

Doug Robinson

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This paper is part of an unfinished book-length project; I have provided hypertext links to some snippets from that project to give you some sense of the bigger picture. Basically, however, the project is an attempt to explore the nature of the «agencies» that control translation (the individual translator? the source author? the target culture, in the form of the marketplace? technology?) by looking closely at an analogy that has not been explored before: that between translation and spirit-channeling —communicating with and/or mediating for others the spirits of dead or «discarnate» people. When translators say that their job is to «step aside and let the original author speak through them», I'm suggesting, that is close enough to what is traditionally thought of as spirit-channeling or psychic communication with the dead to make the analogy potentially worth exploring. The translator is a «medium» or mediator who channels the «spirit» or voice or meaning or intention of the source author across linguistic and cultural and temporal barriers to a new audience that could not have understood that source author without such mediation. The translator does not speak in his or her own voice; s/he speaks in the voice of the original author. The translator does not convey to the target audience his or her own ideas, meanings, arguments, images; s/he is a neutral and noncommittal conduit to the target audience of the ideas and meanings of the original author. (For a short history of spirit-channeling [link].)

The analogy suggests both

(a) that the source author has the power to initiate communication with the target audience through the translator (the author is active, the translator is passive, or at the very most active only in the act of surrendering his/her activity to that of the author), and

(b) that the translator possesses some means of gaining access to the author's voice and meaning, of reliably «opening up» to the intentional speaking of a person who is almost invariably other (sometimes translators translate source texts they wrote themselves, but usually the source author is another person), most often distant in time and place, and not infrequently dead.

(For more detailed philosophical ruminations on these two claims in terms of the unknowability of the Kantian *Ding-an-sich* [link]. For a discussion of the problem in terms of universalism and relativism [link].)

And indeed historically many translations have been presented as explicitly channelled from the spirit world. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians that when they speak in tongues (what we might call spirit-channelled foreign-language skills) they

should also pray for the ability to interpret what the glossolalists speak; this latter would be spirit-channelled conference interpreting. The belief that certain Bible translations are «divinely inspired» is fundamentally a belief that they were spirit-channeled. (For further discussion of spirit-channeled translations and interpretations in Christianity [link].) Joseph Smith also claimed to translate *The Book of Mormon* [link] from the ancient Egyptian through spirit-channeling.

What interests me here, however, is the range of ways in which this idea has been secularized in Western thought as an expression of our continuing sense —despite two-plus millennia of emerging rationalism and the now-dominant belief that we are the captains of our own souls— that there are forces both outside us and inside us that wield us as their tools. In the rationalist model that prevails in most translation theory (indeed in most theory period), the translator is a rational agent in control of his or her actions, including speech and thought; when the translator must make a decision, at whatever level —whether to translate a text, how to translate a text, what word or phrase to use, etc.— s/he acts as a single unified being under the command of a single unified ruler, reason. Reason gathers intelligence, charts a course of action, gives a series of commands, and carries them out. There are no competing forces inside the translator's head. Nor is reason an external force, wielded by God or spirits or other people: it is the translator, the translator's mind, the truest core of the translator's professional being. Other people can exert coercive influence on the translator, but the translator only surrenders to such coercion if reason decides that this is the wisest course.

Clearly, the spirit-channeling model flies right in the face of this rationalist tradition. It posits an entire army of what Adam Smith famously called «invisible hands», which shape, direct, regulate, control translation. Indeed, one of those «invisible hands» would be reason itself, which ideology theorists beginning with Friedrich Nietzsche would identify as an internalized form of ideological mastery, the voice of external social control that commands the individual from inside his or her own head. Just as the spirit seizes or possesses the channel and speaks or otherwise operates through the channel's willing body, so too does ideology and its agents —including reason— seize or possess the ideological subject and wield [link] that subject's body as (virtually) its own.

In fact Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* offers an early, powerful, and extremely influential statement of the shaping of the individual by collective forces. Nietzsche's work was complicated in influential ways by the French neomarxist theorist Louis Althusser [link], in what he calls «interpellation» or hailing: just as the spirit hails the channel through whom he or she wishes to speak —appearing before for the clairvoyant, welling up inside her head a verbal like pressure begging to be released for the clairaudient— so too does ideology hail the translator as translator, the critic as critic, any other subject as subject. How did we learn what to do when we first began to translate? Readers, editors, users, teachers gave us feedback; channeling that feedback, we were channeling ideology. Our «helpers» channeled it to us; we channel it to others. They hailed us as translators; we hail others. Translators know certain things: how to regulate the degree of «fidelity» with the source text, how to tell what degree and type of fidelity is appropriate in specific use contexts, how to receive and deliver translations, how to charge for them, how to find help with terminology, how to talk and generally act like a professional, and so on. Translators are those people who know these things, and who let their knowledge govern their behavior. And that knowledge is ideological. It is con-

trolled by ideological norms. To know what those norms prescribe and act upon them is to submit to control by them. To become a translator is to be hailed or interpellated as a translator by what Althusser calls ideological state apparatuses, or what Adam Smith would call the «invisible hand» of the market. (For Jacques Derrida on Marx and capitalist spectrality [link].) If you want to become a translator, you must submit to the translator's submissive role, submit to being «possessed» by what ideological norms inform you is the spirit of the source author, and to channeling that spirit unchanged into the target language. What you are then channeling, in this ideological perspective, is no such thing, of course; Althusser at least would certainly want to insist that there are no spirits in the occult sense of discarnate persons, disembodied beings who once lived on this earth; this is all a myth propagated by societal authorities who want to fill that myth's empty husk with their own author-functions (to invoke a Foucauldian term), their own generalized «intentions» for transmission from language to language.

Let's now take a closer look at Adam Smith's references to an «invisible hand» [link]—that mysterious force that leads merchants in a free market to promote collective interests while intending only to satisfy self-interest. As Emma Rothschild notes, Smith used the phrase twice in economic contexts. The first mention comes in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), where it is used sardonically to describe rapacious entrepreneurs for whom the common good is the last thing on their mind, but who nevertheless in the pursuit of their own «vain and insatiable desires» (quoted in Rothschild 319) do provide work to thousands: «They are led by an invisible hand to… without intending it, without knowing it, advance the interest of the society» (quoted in Rothschild 319). The second and more

famous mention comes in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776): «he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which is no part of his intention» (quoted in Rothschild 319).

But as long as economic historians and theorists have only read those two passages, the invisible hand has remained a puzzle. Did Smith, a religious sceptic, mean God, or some other deistic spirit? If not, what did he mean? What «invisible» force wielded economic agents to ends other than their own?

Rothschild works to answer these questions by tracing what amounts to a logology [link] of the invisible hand, beginning with a naturalistic context in Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* where one hero stabs his opponent in the back: «twisted and plied his invisible hand, inflicting wound within wound». Here the hand is invisible not because the body to which it is attached is spiritual, ghostly, supernatural, but because it is behind the victim's back and so cannot be seen. The next context, rather more spiritualistic, is in Shakespeare's Macbeth:

> Come, seeling night
> Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
> And with thy bloody and invisible hand
> Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
> Which keeps me pale! (3.2.46-50)

Here «seeling night» is personified as a violent spirit invoked by Macbeth to calm his conscience: his thoughts of the men he has murdered, which «should indeed have died / With them they think on» (3.2.10-11), live on to torment him.

The third context, then, is Smith's first: in *The History of Astronomy,* probably written in the early to mid-1750s, a handful of years before *The Theory of Moral Sentiment* (and only published posthumously in 1795). «He is talking», Rothschild writes, «about the credulity of people in polytheistic societies, who ascribe 'the irregular events of nature',

such as thunder and storms, to 'intelligent though invisible beings —to gods, demons, witches, genii, fairies'. They do not ascribe divine support to 'the ordinary course of things': 'nor was the invisible hand of Jupiter ever apprehended to be employed in those matters' […]» (319). Here the invisible hand is clearly spiritualistic and divine, almost monotheistic: Jupiter as the greatest of the gods has often been made a figure (or logological precursor) for the «supreme being» of monotheistic Christianity. Later, also, between *The Theory of Moral Sentiment* and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,* in a lecture series delivered in 1762-1763 —the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*— Smith referred to «fairies, Nymphs, Fawns, Satyrs, Dryads, and such divinities» as «invisible powers» (quoted in Rothschild 320). The logological movement is clearly from naturalistic human hands that are invisible because hidden from the eyes, through the unseen controlling influence of animistic or deistic spirits, to some sort of unspecified economic force.

Working out just what that economic force was, what Smith could have meant by the market's invisible hand, has in the twentieth century become an entire cottage industry in political economics —as Rothschild notes, Smith's commentators paid little attention to the invisible hand before the twentieth century (319), possibly because before Marx, Darwin, and Freud there was no secular model of disaggregate agency that would account for a locus of regulation outside that secular avatar of God, the rationalist self. Indeed as Rothschild shows, «the invisible hand is un-Smithian» [link] (320). Smith too sought to purify the rationalist model of the self of any supernatural or otherwise unexplainable or unmasterable influences. Rationalism must be just as monotheistic as the Platonic Christianity out of which it largely emerged: thou shalt have no other selves before me. Economic agents should be the sovereign masters of their own fates. The only forces acting on them should be other economic agents who are similarly masters of their own fates. Certainly there should be no incursion of «invisible hands» from supernatural or psychological realms whose very existence, if it could be proven, would shake the foundations of rationalism. As Carl Menger wrote in 1883, in *Untersuchungen über die Methode der Soczialwissenschaften und der politischen Oekonomie insbesondere* («Investigations into the Method of the Social Sciences and Political Economics In Particular»), Smith and his later followers viewed «the institutions of economy […] [as] the intended product of the *common will* of society or of positive legislation […] The broad realm of unintentionally created social structures remains closed to their theoretical comprehension» (quoted in Williamson 323).

It was Menger's view, in fact, foreshadowing a whole host of twentieth-century theories of the almost infinite diffusion of control in both society and the psyche, that «law, language, the state, money, markets, […] [the] prices of goods, interest rates, ground rents, wages, and a thousand other phenomena [are] to no small extent the unintended result of social development» (quoted in Williamson 323). As Menger posed the key question for the social sciences: «How can it be that institutions which serve the common welfare and are extremely significant for its development come into being without a common will directed toward establishing them?» (quoted in Williamson 323). Or, as Robert Nozick has most influentially reframed that question for late-twentieth-century political economics, «what decentralized competing processes within an individual» —and, by sociological extension, within groups of individuals or an entire society or economy— «would give rise to a (relatively) coherent decision-maker?» («Explanations» 314).

Drawing on the work of the philosopher Daniel Dennett *(Consciousness Explained,* 1991), Nozick calls his model a «disaggregated theory of the self» [link]: whether we imagine the relevant economic agent as an individual translator (say, a freelancer or an in-house person) or as a group of people who make a variety of contributions to the final translation product (say, an agency, including freelance translators, the translator's expert helpers [link], freelance editors, in-house editors and project managers, even in many cases the end-users [link] themselves), the assumption is that there is no single unified rational control of the translation process. The various agents and part-agents in this process all «channel» other significant forces —not spirits, necessarily, but for the most part those other forces are just as «invisible» as spirits, because we are typically connected to them through various virtual/prosthetic communication channels, including telephones, faxes, and e-mail, which do not bring us into the physical or even visual presence of the other.

Indeed the main unwritten part of this project will deal extensively with the figure of the cyborg in translation —the cybernetic organism or human-machine interface that relies heavily on the ghostly presences of virtuality and prosthetic sociality. This would be the field normally described as «machine translation» (MT), except that MT researchers despair of ever programming a machine to produce a translation of professionally usable quality without human assistance. All MT systems are, in fact, already cyborg translation systems: they all require a human-machine interface. The imagination of the cyborg translator comes, of course, from science fiction [link], where the linguistic complexity of space travel is often bypassed with various translator prosthetics that operate like technologically channeled spirits: just as Paul's glossolalists open their mouths and interpretations of their colleagues' foreign words come out, channeled from the Holy Spirit, so too do various sf space travelers open their mouths and utter words in languages they do not know, or open their ears and understand words in similarly unfamiliar languages. The prosthetic devices turn them into cyborg translators who become able to «channel» foreign speech into the target language of the (usually monolingual) sf writer and reader. In fact, the Urim and Thummim was a prosthetic device that made it possible for Joseph Smith to translate *The Book of Mormon* [link] from the ancient Egyptian; during the 45 days during which he dictated the translation, without even looking at the ancient Egyptian golden tablets, Smith was himself a cyborg translator.

But then, in a broader sense, so are we all.

Works cited [link]

Transferre non semper necesse est

Anthony Pym
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«In which it is argued that there is too much translation in Europe, that effective integration depends on degrees of nontranslated communication, and that an exclusive focus on translation seriously obscures our vision of a unified future».

A few months ago I attended a translation-studies conference where the official programmatic text began as follows:

> La communauté européenne qui est en train de se construire possède cette caractéristique unique d'être multilingue et de prétendre respecter les particularismes linguistiques et culturels par l'usage de toutes les langues lors de ses débats, c'est dire que la traduction y occupe une place de choix *(Colloque Europe et traduction,* Artois, March 1996).

If I may translate (and I don't intend to outlaw the practice):

> The European Union that is being constructed is unique in that it is not only multilingual but also seeks to respect its linguistic and cultural specificities through the use of all languages in its debates. This means that translation has pride of place.

The main features of this text can be found in the speeches of virtually all well-interpreted members of the European Parliament, in the glossy brochures of vir-tually any translation school in Europe, in the introduction to several hundred well-meaning publications on European translation. Nothing new here: Europe means translation, and the more we have of both, the better.

Speaking at the conference in question I had the bad taste and worse manners to point out that although the conference itself was certainly in Europe, and although it was ostensibly a space for a European debate, the languages accepted for use were restricted to two (French and English) and there were no interpreters in sight. So much for respecting «l'usage de toutes les langues»! In practice, European multilingualism in a specific domain meant a restriction to two languages, and two is often pragmatically reduced to one.

Don't get me wrong: I am not particularly upset that there were no interpreters feeding my words into a dozen or so languages at that conference. I simply wanted to point out that the practical alternative to translation was a local language policy, a restriction to two, and a supposition that the conference participants knew enough of two to make do. I spoke goddam awful French and trusted the French could follow me; others spoke English and hoped for the same; and communication proceeded, as much as it merited to do so, largely thanks to the

preselection of participants willing and able to negotiate the vicissitudes of bilingual exchange. This was indeed a practical and effective regime, none the least because the added cost of interpreting services would have meant that I, along with any other unsubsidized soul, could not have afforded to attend. Translation is expensive and often unnecessary; nontranslation is cheap and can be effective. Yet this concerns more than efficiency.

Of course there is a minor paradox here. A conference on translation, precisely, should need minimal translating. Indeed, translators and their academic representatives could be defined as the group of people requiring least recourse to translation. They tend to be actively at least bilingual and passively polyglot. We could picture this roughly as follows:
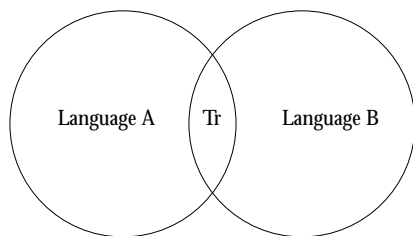
The drawing is crude, to be sure. Yet if I repeat it often enough, someone might eventually see what I have to say. In the middle is this Tr standing for Translator, living and working in an overlap, a middle ground, an intersection formed by two languages (we might say the same for cultures). This intersection might have a certain geopolitical basis, perhaps the twelfth-century Toledo of the Jewish and Mozarab intermediaries, the island of Pharos where 72 rabbis supposedly produced the Septaguint, the Central Asian regions where 176 equally legendary monks transmitted the Buddhist sutras from India to China, even the Brussels that now houses the world's largest ever translation bureau. Thanks to such over-

laps, with or without underlying soil, translators can translate. And because of the same overlaps, at least in term of lingual competence, they can often do without translation. Let's call the overlap «interlingual space» («intercultural» if we want to talk about cultures), insisting that the «inter-» refers to shared space; it is not blithely qualifying any old movement from one side to the other (the prefixes for which should be «cross-» or indeed «trans-»). The intersecting circles might thus be the glasses I use to look at translation, and the interlingual place and role of the translator is, for me, as plain as the nose on my face. Not everyone can see their own nose, which is why I hold up this mirror.

I want to make two general points about the model:

First, the discourse of translation denies it. More exactly, that which makes a translation a translation (the general assumption that A 'translates as' B) omits or jumps over possible intersections, presupposing from the outset that A and B exist in separate languages, texts, worlds, cultures, whatever. The discourse of translation, no matter what kind of translation, projects initial separateness; it draws a border; it conceals the position of the translator. You can see the border in paratexts (references to two titles, two languages), in translator's footnotes (separated by a line from the translation proper), in inserted foreign words *[Wörter]* (the lines are shorter and vertical, but lines nevertheless), in interpreters' booths (input and output are not supposed to meet), not to mention the hundred or so theoretical models that show a lot of A and B but rarely leave room for an interlingual Tr. As for active concealment of interlingual positions, ask yourself why translators cannot say and mean «I» when translating, since every «I» they pronounce automatically refers to someone else, somewhere else, on the other side of a lingual border, a division that exists in translation but vir-

tually nowhere else. I don't care how much fancy theory can be cited in defence of translations as hybrids, decentring and subversive purveyors of difference, pathways of unity and understanding, all things to all people. Translation itself builds the lingual borders it then claims to transcend; it separates, and in so doing makes us overlook the interlingual noses on our faces.

Second, the above model concerns more than translation conferences. Almost any European conference in the sciences, and increasingly in the humanities, will have a local language regime limited to one or two. Where there are two (say, English plus the local language), interpreting services may be available, and hard-working interpreters are often bemused and occasionally dismayed to leave their booths and find conference participants conversing quite freely in bad English and associated mixes. More generally, the interlingual position of the translator is increasingly that of anyone with recourse to international exchange: diplomats, negotiators, travellers, academics, teachers, journalists, scientists, explorers and traders of all kinds, high-class prostitutes, top-flight footballers, occasional football coaches, politicians. Although not necessarily agents of international peace and understanding, such people do increasingly work between languages. The list of intermediaries might also include more dubious figures like spies, traffickers of drugs and arms, unscrupulous tourist promoters, experts in ecological dumping, political insurgents, hegemonic colonizers and occupying armies. True, these are the people that occasionally create work for translators. Yet they do so because they are formally in the same interlingual position as translators. Further, if and when they choose to learn from their situation, these same people can often *do without* translation. The paradox of the translator concerns more than translators.

Let me briefly pursue this logic. When do these interlingual figures actually require translation? When do they not need it? A rationalist answer, based on cost-benefit analysis (on which, see my paper on 'Transaction Costs'), would have to focus on the time factor involved. If the exchange relation is short-term, perhaps a one-off visit to a foreign country or an international negotiation designed to resolve a transitory dispute, then it is clearly more beneficial to employ translators than to make everyone learn enough languages to be their own translator. If, however, the exchange relation is long-term, perhaps an established trade relation or repeated contacts as a part of a profession, it is simply much cheaper to learn languages than to keep employing translators. The question of needs is essentially a question of time. One should thus ask if «the European Union that is being constructed» is a short-term or long-term project. One should ask if it is leading to greater or smaller degrees of interlingual spaces. One might even ask if the enormous translation costs currently involved could actually prevent our exchanges from becoming substantially long-term. Coulmas estimated that some 40% of the administration budget of the EC of 12 was due to its language policy; one shudders to calculate the theoretical added percentage for each new official language in the expanding EU.

To ask such questions is to go beyond the logic inscribed in the discourse of translation. If one is to believe in translation, in the people who support and live from translations, translation is always necessary and that's the end of the story. But if one begins by looking at interlingual space, the only real question is how we ever came to believe in translation so much. How did we ever get to this ideal *usage de toutes les langues* and the associated theories?

Several reasons:

First, there is a wide gap between the official discourse and what actually hap-

pens on the ground. Despite claims to respect multilingualism through translation, the European Commission deploys what is called a «real needs policy», which basically incorporates use of a *lingua franca* or the use of passive competences wherever possible, as happened in the French-English conference cited above. This tends to mean that the more specialized the meetings, the less there are interpreters present. The official discourse on translation is thus largely produced for external consumption, to keep the masses and academics happy.

Second, because the official discourse exists, many translations are carried out for purely symbolic purposes. Here, for example, I have the minutes of a meeting of financial experts to discuss the implementation of company registers in Europe. The meeting took place three months ago, in English, with all sorts of exotic calques and deviances indicating a rather non-English interlanguage through which the specialists understood each other. And yet now, three months later, these minutes have to be translated into French, even though all the potential readers obviously already have passive competence in English. If this kind of translation is necessary, it is for political rather than economic reasons: the French, at least, can claim that their language is still of some importance in this particular field.

Third, there is a certain cynical interest invested in maintenance of the official discourse and its symbolic translations. Some, for example, openly justify unnecessary translations on the grounds that they at least keep translators employed. As much as job creation is a very noble and necessary political objective, few serious professionals would like to see their goal in life as the mere maintenance of their employment. Far better, I suggest, to envisage future intermediaries doing more than just translation. Far bet-

ter, I believe, to train our students to do more than translate.

Fourth, much of the academic discipline of translation studies, institutionally based on a massive increase in translator-training programmes, is structured to exclude interlingual positions from its field, either by applying linguistics to texts or by looking at systems rather than translators. In so doing, translation studies remain a faithful reflection of translation itself by surreptitiously excluding the various communicative possibilities of nontranslation, notably the many modes and degrees of language learning. The notion of interlanguage, which revolutionized second-language acquisition theory, has scarcely progressed beyond the odd metaphor in translation theory.

Fifth, if one looks carefully at the development of translator-training programmes, a key moment appears in the 1950s, when French initiatives laid the foundation of European unity and French diplomacy sought importance on the world stage. Following the creation of the *Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs* in Paris in 1953, the two main French translator-training institutions were set up in Paris in 1957. Not wholly by chance, the French language dominated the first international network of institutions, the *Conférence Internationale des Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes* (CIUTI), which met informally from 1960 and has long brought together independent schools that are concerned almost exclusively with translation (as opposed to language teaching) and focus on the training of conference interpreters. From that moment on, I suggest, European translator training has vigorously rejected nontranslation and has been dominated by the figure of the invisible conference interpreter, providing magically instant cross-language communication in a Europe prepared to pay for such services. French political institutions, and more recently Germany, have

indeed been prepared to pay highly for maintenance of their linguistic status with respect to English. Hence their ideal of translation as a national rather than individual necessity. Hence, also, peculiar traits like the margination of liaison or community interpreting in translator-training programmes. This means the margination of situations where translators are very present, languages are never entirely separate, and the communication needs are painfully more human than symbolic.

Sixth, since the 1950s, whole classes of European intellectuals have been prepared to follow or adapt this initially French discourse, converting the defence of French into a defence of each and every language spoken in the entire territory of nation-states (bad luck, just quietly, any forlorn stateless languages). These are what Hobsbawm has called the «examination-passing classes», the social groups that get ahead by studying state languages rather than inheriting or producing material wealth, the people that institutionalized the idea of the national language. That could be us, you and me! We have every interest in promoting and defending state languages, official languages, the kind that governments get translated and thus must create jobs for. All the more so in central and eastern Europe, where the category of the nation was doggedly maintained by the cultural policies of real socialism and can still be manipulated as chimeric liberation. Who wouldn't want to defend an official national language? More work for us and our students! More social prestige! If only there were listeners or readers who really needed us all that much. If only we weren't committing some of our more critical brains to unseen reproductive tasks, as if there were nothing more important to be done.

Seventh, and finally, the maintenance of a largely illusory discourse on the need for translations is now entering a phase where the institutional aims fall slightly out of kilter, for want of hard cash. As long as the political ideals hold firm, translation is free to wallow in the slough of Europe's subsidies, a perpetual *exception culturelle.* But when the economists start to calculate and 'real needs' sew up deep pockets, the believers in translation can only play on troubled consciences, repeating and repeating the multilingual ideals until someone pays them to shut up. At base, this *usage de toutes les langues* might be a desperate demand for funds.

I have nothing against ideals. It's just that the official discourses on translation are full of hollow ideals and impossible promises building up naïve expectations. I humbly suggest it would be far better, in this day and age, to accept a dose of realism and to build our Europe accordingly. Concretely, this would mean abandoning translation as a restricted field of inquiry, associating translator training with all the dimensions of language learning, and training people to make a long-term Europe work from within vastly expanded networks of interlingual spaces. More specifically, it would mean forgetting the implicit assumption that translation is always necessary.

The real question should not be how to translate but whether to translate. Answers to that question require more than translation studies.

My arguments will meet with objections. Let me address a handful:

Some might say I can't see beyond my nose, that I consider only the middle position, that I remain insensitive to the role of translation in the defence and development of Europe's minor languages. Reply: Yes, a fair enough criticism: defend and develop where you will, but please don't confuse nationalist aims with those of intercultural communication or integration; many Romantic ideals will have to be renounced.

Next: Democratic participation, say good politicians, requires that all citizens

have access to information in their own language. Reply: Yes indeed, all the laws and regulations to which people are subject must be accessible to them; they must indeed be translated where required. And I would go further in this regard: such texts should be translated into all the 40 or so languages of our Europe (depending on how you want to define 'Europe' and 'language'). Yet actual laws and regulations are not produced with overwhelming frequency; the translation they require need not extend to all the committee meetings, discussion papers, surveys and conferences by which they are produced. Not by chance are European lawmakers, the ones with the full panoply of information, increasingly working in interlingual spaces, using just one or two languages or interlanguages.

Perhaps more seriously: The mixing of languages, say millenarians, will lead either to a grey non-language of limited resources or to the hegemony of just one imperial language, the English of our day. Reply: The ability to speak and understand two or more languages is surely a source of cultural richness, opening a space of creative play and invention, necessarily beyond what Barthes termed the fascism of monolingual grammar. And we now have many Englishes. As for imperialism, yes, I regret the passing of medieval Latin, which depended on the Roman Empire just as little as European English depends on Hollywood, and did not, it seems, kill off too many vernaculars. More important, no *lingua franca* is all-purpose; it does not permeate our kitchens and bedrooms, our hearts and being, since intercultural communications are just as narrow and specialized as countless other domains. As for imperialist technology, it now allows internatio-

nal converse in all kinds of minor languages (the internet *encourages* the use of minor languages). The mixing of languages simply means that no one language can be truly all-purpose, and this need not be dangerous in itself.

Finally: Literary and philosophical texts, say a row of Schleiermachers, require full command of the rich complexities of a language; they must be translated, and translated fully and faithfully, so that transcendent value can be made available to all; a culture that does not translate the great foreign texts will close in on itself, offering less quality of life to its members, so they say. Reply: Thus do the examination-passing classes pretend to have sole access to universal values, manipulating great texts as a matter of national pride, seeking to control the knowledge and language of their dependents, producing subsidized translations so that monolingual receivers finish up *needing* subsidized translations. Where a foreign work or culture is the object of an initial or one-off demand, by all means translate, and do so as carefully as you can. If, however, what is at stake is a long-term relation with another language, then teach that language or send your students and children there, so that their quality of life will involve the ability to go out and discover value for themselves.

In sum, if you want integration beyond the nation, bring people into interlingual space; use initial translations to do so if and when necessary. But do not pretend to condemn Europe to eternal dependence on translations. And do not believe that the *usage de toutes les langues* is a promise that translation can or should fulfil, not for Catalan, not for Irish, not for Hungarian, not even for colloquial Australian.

Hand over Fist?
A response to Anthony Pym and Douglas Robinson

Michael Cronin
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Debates are possible on the assumption that the participants are not slaves to positionality (class, race, gender) and that we are not simply repeating preordained institutional scripts. If that was the case then an on-line translation colloquium would be void of meaning. It would appear to me, however, that in two different but related ways, Anthony Pym and Douglas Robinson may in fact foreclose the very debate that they want us to begin. Anthony Pym borrowing Hobsbawm's concept of the «examination-passing classes» suggests that translation theoreticians' defence of the role of translation in the maintenance of national language is dictated by pure self-interest, «Who wouldn't want a national language? More work for us and our students!». There is of course in all institutional strategy an element of self-promotion (a point strangely ignored by some of the less self-reflexive postmodern theorists) but a reductive notion of self-interest is a rhetorical procedure whose only outcome is silence. To deny the charge of professional egotism is to be brought before the Higher Court of the Unconscious where the more serious charge of Repression is leveled against the accused (of course you deny you are motivated by professional self-interest, one of the tricks of hegemony is to pretend it does not exist). The self-interest claim can only invite assent as any other response is evidence of incurable bad faith.

Douglas Robinson's notion of the translator as channel has the potential for inducing another form of paralysis, ideological overdeterminedness, that is reminiscent of the metanarratives of system and structure in the 60s and 70s which promised liberation and delivered powerlessness. «Readers, editors, users, teachers gave us feedback; channeling that feedback, we were channeling ideology. Our 'helpers' channeled it to us; we channel it to others». If the «ideosomatics of language is the voice of social mastery internalized in the workings of our own bodies» and ideology works at microcosmic, electrochemical levels then the translator becomes the idle plaything of ideology. She becomes invisible once again. Currents of ideology pass through this diaphanous creature who once again finds herself subject to the mastery of Language, Law and Ideology. The Foucauldian thesis that power is everywhere can often lead to the sorry conclusion that resistance is nowhere (if only because as any progressive critic of nationalism will tell you the powerless reproduce the paradigms of the powerful). Thus, ideological critique which initially is powered by a radical, demystificatory, anti-hegemonic impetus can give way to

the fatalism of the panopticon where post-Kantian subjects in a parody of Stephen Dedalus struggle aimlessly to free themselves of the nets of Knowledge, Power and Discourse.

Robinson is of course right to underline the translator's ideological entanglements (though it would have been useful to have a definition of ideology in the piece, when I last looked at theories of ideology I found fifteen different definitions of ideology), a fact borne out by even the most cursory examination of translation history. However, it appears to me that the erasure of the subject can in fact be a deeply reactionary move and lead to a depoliticisation of the translation process. The feminist political scientist Nancy Hartsock once noted that the postmodern view that truth and knowledge are contingent and multiple is in itself a truth claim and more importantly that the claim undermines the ontological status of the subject at the very time when women and non-Western peoples have begun to claim themselves as subject. This is why Pym in my view is correct to stress the intercultural/interlingual space of the translator as the position occupied by the translation subject. Studying translation from the point of view of the agent, to use Daniel Simeoni's term, allows for the possibility of a certain epistemic unity in translation studies rather than what Simeoni sees as the endless fragmentation of an object-centred, positivistic notion of translation as science (Daniel Simeoni, «Translating and Studying Translation: The View from the Agent», *META* 40/3, 445-460). The eternal *sourcier/cibliste* debates tend to render the translator invisible though feminist theories have repeatedly stressed the «positionality» of the translator. A study of the translator using some of the conceptual tools of intercultural theories of communication, psychoanalysis and ethnopsychiatry could indeed be quite illuminating for a theory of translator as intercultural

agent. The interlingual space that the translator occupies is indeed based on lingual separateness but the interlingual can only exist if there are lingual differences otherwise it would be a *non-sens.* Translation does not create differences, it merely makes them explicit. Rather than seeing translation as the enemy of the interlingual, one can argue the opposite, that it is by looking at the social, pyschological, cultural and linguistic difficulties faced by the translator that one can map out the complexity of that intercultural space and draw on the millenial experience of translators rather than translations in seeking to overcome the problems of intercultural communication. A proper analysis of this experience could indeed provide a useful basis for the study of interlingual spaces that Pym recommends for translator training schools in Europe.

One of the problems of intercultural communication is of course asymmetry. Anthony Pym may argue in his *META* article that `hegemony, conflict, exploitation' do not infiltrate everything but in institutional arrangements they infiltrate a great deal. More specifically in his theory of translation as a transaction cost, the notion of `mutual benefits' remains somewhat nebulous. English speakers typically see little mutual benefit in translation because they speak a world language. Any effort invested in translation is seen as wasteful (viz. *Sunday Times* critique of EU literary translation schemes) and is only grudgingly granted. The mutual benefits to non-dominant languages are much greater but they typically have less political power and therefore are less able to insist on the necessary social effort being made to ensure a mutually beneficial interaction. Abandoning translation could, rather than opening up interlingual spaces, lead to unchecked positive feedback where the cumulative benefits of monoglossia for the linguistically dominant lead to the

emptying out of the interlingual space. That the `mutual benefits' for Europe's weaker languages would approximate to zero would be irrelevant as linguistic interaction would be seen as primarily driven by monolingual pragmatism. This latter would be seen as the basis of successful cooperation not the mutual benefits to weaker parties. The symbolic (in the full not the shambolic sense) value of languages has a cost that is disproportionately high for the powerful and is disproportionately important for the powerless. Costs reflect this asymmetry and are a necessary element in the maintenance of diversity (language learning is of course another one). One could of course argue that the problem with the EU is not that it is spending too much money on translation but that it spends too much money on the wrong kind of translation. Pym's contention that for proper appreciation of works of literature in other languages, students should go to the countries where the literature is produced and immerse themselves in the language and culture that produced the literature is eminently sensible. However, it becomes eminently impractical once the student has the temerity to read widely in the literatures of several countries given the inordinate amount of time it takes to get properly acquainted with a language and culture. For this reason, it is unfortunate that so much of the EU budget goes on administrative translation when the real, long-term needs of the citizens of the EU are in the area of literary and cultural translation, an area that is at present woefully underfunded. Are translators master forgers? Is the rise in translation activity to do with a new faith in fakes? Spiritual mediums were notoriously associated with fraud in the nineteenth century and it would be interesting to speculate on the link between translation and forgery in this context —the medium and the ego-massage. Douglas Robinson does not mention Michel Serres, yet his work on the angelic tasks of annunciation and communication in *La légende des anges* can be usefully related to Robinson's own concerns with guiding hands and spiritual channels, particularly Serre's concept of the fallen angels, the messengers who loom larger than the message (the stars of the mass media). Are cyborg translators the new seraphs or the mutinous vanguard of translators who would be God?

Opening Day

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It is now 10:00, local time in Barcelona, on 5 March, and the On-line Colloquium, which is already in swing, may be informally declared officially open, and enter into full swing.

At the moment there are more than 130 subscribers from the following countries:

Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey, UK, USA, Yugoslavia, plus many addresses ending in <.com>, <.edu>, <.net>, <.org> that I cannot place geographically.

Some «housekeeping» details: 1) this on-line colloquium is itself an example of intercultural transfer —at the same time that we are observing and observing upon the questions involved in intercultural transfer we are also engaged in the very process we are observing; 2) language usage is not ideologically neutral— «English» is being treated as the *lingua franca* of the colloquium, and this decision is open to debate as well (personally, I have no objection to other languages being used in the discussion, nor have I any personal commitment to the English language (my parents spoke to me in Irish when I was a child), but the use of other languages could restrict the intercultural transfer we are trying to carry out (some people will not be able to follow the discussion, depending on the language used) —that is, in itself, an interesting component of the debate, I think; 3) there are many people working in the field of translation who are doing many interesting things and who have many interesting things to say— if people want to announce on this list that they have material that may be of interest that is stored at their home Web site(s), then I would have no objection to such announcements being sent out across the list; on the other hand, I would refrain from sending a great deal of documentation across the list, because we cannot yet predict the volume of daily messages that may appear that are directly related to the debate at hand (if anyone on the list would like more documentation from individuals, they could contact those individuals directly, at their own e-mail address, which appears in each message, instead of across the list); 4) we will have to accustom ourselves to the global nature of this colloquium —each afternoon at 17:00 Barcelona time, I load the messages I have received during the day onto the «Messages» Web site— participants in the Americas become active that same day after I have gone home, and while participants in Asia and Oceania are already

asleep, and viceversa; 5) this on-line colloquium is an experiment in chaos as chaos is currently understood by scientists — emergent behaviour based on a limited number of predefined conditions (we will all learn about «virtual» organisation and «virtual» communication as the colloquium unfolds, in addition to learning about translation and intercultural transfer); 6) it may also be an example of game theory— we may discover how to carry out communicational «transactions» that are «cost» efficient in a «disaggregate» virtual time-space continuum (i.e., we may learn how not to «overload» the «virtual» time-space continuum with too concentrated an information load per message, because that might put off efficient communication, nor to «underload» the virtual continuum to the point where it loses interest); 7) translation is a form of communication, so translators would be communicators, and that should help us; 8) even though the initial topic might not have had a direct appeal for every participant, I think we are already seeing how the initial topic facilitates debate in a number of related areas without losing sight of the initial topic.

Keep up the good work.

Disaggregated agency

Daniel Simeoni

York University. Canada

I haven't read Dennett's *Consciousness Explained* (1991) and therefore will not comment on the way Robert Nozick first, then Doug Robinson, draw their notions of «disaggregated self» and «disaggregated agency» from that book. What seems clear however is that the potential connections implied between hermeneutics, social science (of which I take translation studies to be a component), cognitive research and beyond that perhaps, neurological studies, suggest the need for a repartitioning of the disciplines. I mention this in passing, only to hint that the form taken by the present debate —much to the credit of Doug Robinson— makes it worthy of interest far beyond the confines of translation scholarship. I could not help noticing also how the exchanges cross over with a number of ongoing debates, for example around the theme of cultural «identity».

The notion of disaggregated agency, whether applied to a «single human being», an «ephemeral conglomeration» of agents, or even a «nation», is indeed a productive metaphor. Its scope reaches far beyond the task of the translator, to encompass the destiny of all social agents. Although Doug Robinson assigns the genealogy of the expression to a need to «deal with the new complexities» he saw after writing his professional «declaration of independence», it can just as well be

read as a generalized reaction against the (to some, debilitating) ideas of social disaggregation, fragmentation, chaos deprived of agency. A sign of the times perhaps, as much as a personal stance.

Ideas float at certain times to be seized upon by different people, unaware that others are working along the same lines. We have all had this strange feeling of being part of an invisible cohort (again the spirit-channeling metaphor may be useful here, if we are not afraid of admitting that theoretical constructs themselves, including the most rational-looking, are just that: constructs elaborated by the scholar's imagination on the basis of other imaginative constructs). It so happens that my personal history and positionings have made me particularly responsive over the years to the work of Pierre Bourdieu. «Disaggregated agency» could not fail to remind me of the concept of *habitus,* a stenograph for a reality that is both structured (being the result of multiple determinations) and structuring (i.e. agentive). [Should anyone be unfamiliar with Bourdieu's work on this and related matters, see e.g. *The Logic of Practice,* in particular Part 1, tr. by Richard Nice. 1990, Stanford: Stanford U. P. The publisher for Europe is Polity Press, Cambridge. The original in French —*Le sens pratique.* 1981. Paris: Editions de Minuit— is not bad either…]. I believe Bourdieu

also refers somewhere to the notion of «habitus clivé» (split habitus). Habituses are incorporated, «embodied» to the point of being instantly recognizable in the course of social relations. The notion as such is hardly new (Aristotle, St.-Augustine, Elias and Panovsky among other old-hat? figures have used it productively) but it was promoted to pivotal theoretical status as part of a rich network of concepts by Bourdieu. Like Robinson's disaggregated agency, the habitus applies differentially to the individual agent and his/her life story, *Lebenslauf,* etc., to groups of interest, and most notably to nation-states (or «state-societies» in Elias's wording). Habituses are highly specific. The concept translates nicely in the different ways in which language is used, in daily life as in more restricted fields.

I am currently working on the very same notion of habitus as it applies to the translator (conceived as a «single human being»). Just as Doug Robinson refers to disaggregated agency, I came out recently with the notion of a «mosaic habitus». I found the term useful to express: (1) the particular brand of habitus required of the human being a.k.a. translator. All social agents have more or less «mosaic» habituses but the translator must cultivate this pluri-identity and modulated submissiveness, or at least make do with it willingly. This feature may provide a bridge for Anthony Pym's notion of an intercultural space or «interculture» defining the peculiar position of the translator, although it is still not clear to me how an interculture could stand off in a balanced way between regular cultures. The prefix does not quite evoke the astounding complexity of the domain; (2) the tension felt while translating (not only intellectual but physical); (3) the faculty of adaptation which is a distinguishing trait of the profession.

In this no doubt biased and partial and summary reading, the two cons-

tructs —disaggregated agency and mosaic habitus— strike me as fairly compatible. Perhaps the former is less affirmative than the latter, due to the deprivative morpheme *dis-.* But again, what matters is the way they can (and ought to) be made to function in case studies, to enlighten descriptions of intercultural transfer from the point of view of the agent.

A quick footnote to explain why I think it is important to rehabilitate the status of the translator in translation studies and why I view Doug's and others' efforts as positive for the discipline as a whole. In the field as I see it sedimenting these days, I can identify three main branches which I label, for convenience, «hermeneutic», «culturalist», and «empirical-mentalist». If the distinction makes sense, then it is plausible that one common pole around which productive exchanges may develop and the (inter?)discipline preserve some coherence, is precisely, the persona of the translator. This does not mean that other approaches focussing on, e.g., the larger structures bearing on the task, processes, products of translation, etc., are mistaken or should not be pursued. In fact, I take Gideon Toury's recent DTS and beyond to be the most formidable effort to date, and a highly successful one at that, to deal with the notion of intercultural translation systemically. I see also his model as flexible enough to allow for a reprioritizing of the translator's disaggregating agency (or mosaic habitus, whatever we choose to call this passive-agentive complex), by mere topological 'translation' of its structure.

While recognizing indeed the risk that an objectivist angle entails, to fragment the field into reductive specialities and therefore, to fall short of providing the conditions for a truly integrative theory of translation (such an angle would exclude, presumably, the hermeneutic branch as merely «speculative»), I am also wary of discarding all structural-systemic

attempts as distant echoes of the 60s and 70s, as might be (wrongly?) deduced from Michael Cronin's Response. As a matter of fact, and even though this may have no other value than a personal anecdote, I can vouch that reading closely Bourdieu's systemic case studies helped me better understand where my location was and why, in the particular context of the French society where I come from. I see the effect on me to have been that of a true «socioanalysis». Far from being disempowering, the model —because it was flexible and refined enough to precipitate the variety of forces moulding society, through a process of internalization, into the single concept of habitus— helped me gain confidence in proposing my own imaginary take on issues I view as important.

Interlanguage

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I'm going to try to outline some theoretical considerations related to intercultural transfer that depend on graphics —on visual representations of the theoretical models— without using graphics.

Model One: an adaptation of Karl Popper's Three World model —three mutually interlocking circles (forming a triangle, like three-fifths of the symbol of the Olympic Games). One represents the material world (physical world, Nature), another represents the social world (Culture), the third represents the world of the individual.

In this model the material world overlaps partly with the social world and also with the individual world; the social world overlaps partly with the material world and also with the individual world; the individual world overlaps partly with the material world and also with the social world.

There is a zone in the centre of the image where all three worlds meet, and there is a part of each of the three worlds that does not overlap anywhere.

Let us read «to overlap» as «to condition» or «to overdetermine».

To some extent the material world conditions (overdetermines) the social world and the individual; to some extent the social world intervenes in (modifies the conditions of) the material world and conditions (overdetermines) the individual; to some extent the individual can intervene in (modify the conditions of) the material world and the social world.

Now let's adapt the model further.

For social world read «language» and «language usage» (including rhetoric, registers, literary traditions, text types, styles, etc. —the poststructuralist notion of «écriture»/writing); for individual world read «writer».

Repeat the model, so that there are now two models side by side. In the second model replace «writer» with «reader» (and «écriture» with «lecture»/reading).

Now we could ask ourselves to what extent these two models MUST overlap in order for «understanding» to occur. To what extent must the reader and the writer share the same material and social worlds, including the same language and its usages? To what extent is each individual too isolated to «really» understand the experience of another?

(I won't answer that question here, but I think that the answer lies somewhere in the realm of «imagination» or «empathy» —the ability to create a real experience through an imaginary one; the «hermeneutic circle» also comes to bear on this.)

Enter Model Two: an adaptation of Hans Georg Gadamer's notion of a cultural «horizon» of understanding shared by the members of the same cultural

group at the same point in space and time.

Let it be a new circle which englobes the two Three Worlds models —to that extent there is intersubjectivity and some guarantee of mutual understanding between reader and writer.

Let this new circle, that englobes my two Three Worlds models of reader and writer, be the left-hand circle of Anthony Pym's diagram of three interlocked circles that represent two different cultures with the translator situated in an inter-language space between them (his are arranged horizontally, mine have formed a triangle).

Repeat this process to produce the right-hand circle of Pym's model.

For the moment, leave out Pym's middle circle.

We now have two independent worlds, each with its own cultural horizon, each separated from the other, no overlap.

Now let us add in Pym's third circle —the translator or the intercultural mediator.

Enter Model Three, «No-Man's Land»: the translator or intercultural mediator has gone through a process of «endocul-turation», of socialisation in his or her own native culture, through which he or she has acquired his or her «native» cultural horizon. He or she «belongs to» one of the two worlds.

To achieve the status of intercultural mediator, he or she must go through (have gone through) a process of «accul-turation», of assimilation, through contact, of the cultural horizon of the second culture, or of as much of that cultural horizon as may be possible for a non-native to assimilate (and depending on the amount of time and effort involved).

This person resides, for me, in a «no-man's land» between the two cultures.

For me, if not for him, Pym's middle circle includes that no-man's land.

The intercultural mediator shares some things with Culture One and some things with Culture Two, but neither the writer (or communicator or negotiator or agent) from Culture One, nor the reader (or communicator or negotiator or agent) from Culture Two share these things.

In terms of Pym's diagram, part of the translator's circle overlaps with Culture One, and part overlaps with Culture Two, but there is a zone of the translator's circle that does not overlap with either —it does not belong to either of the two cultural horizons, it is outside of the cultural «ken» of either of the two worlds, it is a horizon shared only by the intercultural mediator.

I think that, for Pym, this does not matter, because the circle is, for him, I think, a continuum that carries elements of one culture over into the other and viceversa.

From my point of view it does matter.

There is an aspect of intercultural mediation that cannot be shared between the two worlds —exactly that part which corresponds to the process of accultura-tion that the intercultural mediator has undergone, and that neither the reader from Culture Two nor the writer from Culture One has undergone.

That reader is looking for the writer, not for the translator.

The translator understands much more than he or she can communicate to the reader of the translation, because the translator shares the horizon of the author, but the reader does not.

(Of course the translator also shares the horizon of the reader, which helps the translator to find ways of communicating some understanding of the other hori-zon.)

Perhaps this is another reason for advo-cating a long-term policy of «accultura-tion» rather than a short-term policy of translation? Perhaps this is the short-term status of the translator —perhaps pro-longed intercultural transactions would bring about this acculturation to some extent.

In this context, the contrast between Pym's and Michael Cronin's priorities could become more clear. My description of the translator in no-man's land might correspond much more to the role of the purveyor of culture, someone who is trying to further the acculturation of the reader of a translation, trying to broaden the reader's cultural horizon, whereas Pym's description might correspond to the purveyor of commodities, someone who is trying to facilitate socio-economic transactions, which might not require such a broadening of cultural horizons.

(Of course the question of what «cultural» means here has gone begging —let's say it refers to Pym's row of Schleir-machers…) Perhaps the introduction of new terms, such as «intercultural mediator» might avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. «Purveyor» is not the nicest of terms, I suppose, but it does imply a marketplace somewhere in the process. Otherwise my description of the translator trying to broaden cultural horizons comes dangerously close to the role of a «missionary», which is no neutral term either.

The Respondent Responds

Michael Cronin
Dublin City University. Ireland

I had considered delaying my response until the end of the colloquium but such is the volume of information that it seemed wise to make an early provisional response before data overload led to amnesia.

In the two position papers and my response the focus has largely been to date on the translator. The debate opened up by the colloquium has focused on *a)* the translator as (disaggregated) agent and *b)* the notion of interculture. If we conceive of the translator as a person inhabiting an intercultural space it is important that due account be taken of the risks and difficulties that such a position implies.

André Makine in *Le testament français* describes the return of the Russian protagonist to the town in the steppes where his French-born grandmother lives. The young man is full of resentment at the French elements in his identity which he feels isolate him from his Russian peers, «Je voulais qu'elle s'explique, qu'elle se justifie. Car c'est elle qui m'avait transmis cette sensibilité française —la sienne—, me condamnant à vivre dans un pénible entre-deux-mondes». The notion of difficulty, risk emerges in a different though related context in an article by Daniel Simeoni that I mentioned in my initial response, «Translating and Studying Translation: the View from the Agent» where he argues that «the translating agent straddles the borderline between cultures. Although various pressures associated with practice force him/her to "stay home" —on the target side— s/he cannot afford to ignore the source field a long time without being at risk».

Translation is a profoundly paradoxical operation. In order to respect the integrity of the source text the translator is duty-bound to have as full an understanding as possible of the source text, an understanding that is at least comparable to that of a competent (in the domain) native speaker of the language. I say at least because in many instances due to poor formulation the translator has to be even more sensitive or ingenious than the native speaker to arrive at a suitable basis for transferable meaning and this applies as much to promotional material for trade fairs as it does to poetry. Thus, effective understanding requires extensive travelling into the other culture, regular contact, often long periods of residence. Travel must not however become exile. Translation only makes sense if Ithaca is in sight, if there is homecoming in the target language. Translators must be alive to the full emotional, cognitive and referential range of their mother tongue. The danger for the translator as Descartes warns in the *Discours de la méthode* is that «lorsqu' on emploie trop de temps à voyager on devient enfin étranger en son pays». The translator must become the Other

while remaining the One (one here is used oppositionally rather than essentially). There must be proximity without fusion, distance without remoteness. The translator must embrace the analog mode of both/and rather than the digital mode of either/or. The terms are taken from Anthony Wilden's 1980 work *System and Structure* which still has a great deal to teach us in case people mistakenly think that I have somehow consigned structural or systemic thinking to the ash-can of history through some misguided chronological snobbery. This intrinsic paradox of translation, being simultaneously a and not-a, can be intolerable. In Gregory Bateson's terms, translation can be a double bind where the contradictory demands generated by the two languages lead to considerable stress as the translators find that they are unable to satisfy either demand. They are trapped in no man's land with no homes to go to. This is why in my current work-in-progress I am particularly interested in the Translator as Nomad. There is further the critique of essentialist notions of identity that underlies translation. In Henri Meschonnic's words, «La traduction est cette activité qui permet mieux qu'aucune autre, puisque son lieu n'est pas un terme mais la relation elle-même, de reconnaitre une altérité dans une identité». The critique usually takes the form of celebration as translation is seen as the enemy of the sectarian hatred that finds solace in reified notions of identity. It must not be forgotten, however, that the psychic investment in identity is enormous and that fragmenting, destabilising, undermining fixed identities can often generate resentment and resistance. The experience of *étrangeté* or *unheimlichkeit* in translation may correspond to a post-modern delight in the relative but the experience is nonetheless unsettling. This means, in effect, that translation schools must resist a pressure related to specificity. The specificity of translator training is often defended

post hoc, ergo propter hoc, i.e. students must already possess a very good command of their source and target languages before we teach them translation. Therefore, translator training is a separate enterprise from language teaching. It assumes language rather than teaches it. I would defend the specificity differently arguing that the paradoxical and analog nature of the *entre-deux* of translation means that it is radically dissimilar from the either/or world of the language learner. This is not to say that the dichotomies are so distinct in language learning that there are not elements of interculture and interlanguage in the language learning experience but my contact with students over the years has taught me that there are excellent linguists that turn out to be woeful translators. They can function very well in the foreign language or in their own language but the major problem is that in-between space, the analog continuum of translation.

The debates around Anthony Pym's transaction costs theory still fail to address the argument advanced in my response, i.e. who defines «satisfactory cooperation» in asymmetrical situations. The long-term benefits of cooperation for the linguistically dominant are a function of their power. They may tolerate translation for the sake of linguistic/political peace but the stronger the language, the more attractive assimilation is over a cooperation that makes any concession to difference. The problem is related at a fundamental level to the debate about «l'Europe des patries». A Europe without Frontiers can be a multicultural love-in or a monoglossic camp. As Pascal Bruckner pointed out in *Le vertige de Babel* (1994) «La grande saveur des frontieres, une fois reconnues et garanties, c'est qu'on peut les franchir, jouer à leurs marges, exercice autrement plus exaltant que leur abolition pure et simple. Seuls les conquérants rêvent d'effacer les frontiéres, surtout celle des autres». I am not

always convinced that the liberatory discourse of post-nationalism will deliver on processes of harmonious and mutually beneficial integration. It could instead feed one (French/English/German) form of linguistic ethnocentrism that posits itself as supra-ethnic and that the ensuing 'cooperation' will be more the submission of the vanquished rather than a joyful embrace of the superior logic of language convenience. Again to quote Bruckner, «Aller vers les autres implique donc une patrie, une mémoire qu'il faut cultiver (même si on les relativise): je n'accorde l'hospitalité à l'étranger qu'à partir d'un sol où je peux l'acceuillir».

The practice/theory debate seems to be the TS equivalent of Banquo's ghost that haunts every single discussion that takes place in translation theory. It is one of the most dispiriting debates I know because the terms of the debate are almost invariably the same: theoreticians have nothing to offer to practitioners or theoreticians have lots to offer practitioners. There seems to be a recurrent confusion about the aims or purposes of theory. Some theoreticians do have practical/prescriptive/didactic purposes and they say so (Newmark/Hervey/Higgins etc.). The purpose of other theoreticians is to study what translation tells us about how we know the world, language, culture. Its purposes are not to tell translators what to do but to use translation as a form of epistemological or ontological enquiry. No amount of literary criticism will tell you how to write a good novel but good literary criticism can in Kermode's words allow us to make sense of how others make sense of the world. A further function of theory is to consider gender, class, race dimensions to translation and though they will draw inductively on translation experience again the purpose is not to teach anyone how to translate. The endless theory/practice debates seem to go nowhere in particular and are generally based on a misapprehension of purpose.

The debate as to whether TS is a distinct academic field is interesting and I suspect it will run and run. However, I must admit to being less concerned about the survival of TS as a discipline than I am about its seeming peripherality to many debates in other disciplines. We talk among ourselves which is a good thing but do we do much talking to others? It is striking that in the course of the present colloquium, ideas have been imported from sociology (Daniel Simeoni), economics (Anthony Pym), cognitive psychology (Doug Robinson) but how many ideas from translation studies have been imported into these disciplines? I am still astonished to see the extent to which areas of study like anthropology, ethnography, travel literature, literary historical studies, political science, history of science remain largely unaware of the insights of translation theory. The discipline would appear to be absolutely central to an understanding of (post)modernity but yet apart from our own busy corner I wonder whether anybody out there is listening?

Three points - Feminist Translators - Positionality - Interculture

Luise Von Flotow
University of Ottawa. Canada

After reading through the reams of material that have been posted over the last few days, I am glad that information and commentary on specific translators/translation situations is surfacing (the translator in the Hawaiian courtroom). Long «theoretical» texts that discuss «the translator» or «translation» as though they were entities that can be taken out of their specific contexts and generalized about get a little tiresome…

1. On subversions of texts or text situations that are actually verifiable and not just thinkable (as in the anecdote on the translation of the Japanese term), people might consider feminist translators' activities. This is a case where the context of feminist political action, a broad grassroots women's movement, and massive interest in and therefore translation of women's writing caused a «feminist translator» to emerge, and to fashion herself as a (pro)active, self-confident, powerfully subversive manipulator of texts who draws attention to her work and the influence she has and exerts as a rewriter. The translations and essays of women such as Susanne de Lotbiniere-Harwood and Barbara Godard in Canada or Diane Rayor, Carol Maier, Sharon Bell in the USA are good examples of translators taking a clearly political stance and either 'subverting' a text they find problematic, or simply demonstrating the empower-ment that translators can derive from a particular political/cultural movement.

2. These and other women working in feminist scholarship and translation have also addressed the «translating subject» (one of Pym's topics, I think). They do not generalize about all translation, or all translators, however, but start from the particular context of feminist activism, feminist responsibility and the self-assurance that comes with participating in and being supported by a relatively powerful group in contemporary Anglo-American culture. One of the terms that is important is the 'positionality' of the translator (or writer, or theorist) —Michael Cronin referred to it briefly— in other words that person's position in a particular culture (what is the status of a translator at that particular time? and is the translator perhaps also an academic? a writer? etc.), the position they themselves assume (are they confident and activist? do they work within a certain political framework? for or against or just in sympathy with a particular cause? are they relatively independent?), and do they declare their position?

I think analyses of translators' situations and contexts along these more limited lines may be more productive and more interesting than theorizing about «the translator» as some kind of monolithic entity.

3. About intercultures: The «divided» cities of the world may be a place to observe and research interculture —I wonder whether residents of Jerusalem or Montreal or Berlin or Nikosia could describe living in intercultural environments where at least two languages are useful/necessary. (In Berlin it would not be an exaggeration to talk about two languages).

Big multicultural centres such as New York or Los Angeles or Vancouver may also be centers of interculture, especially when the once dominant Anglo/European residents are quietly yet continuously being displaced by «visible minorities».

Luise von Flotow Ottawa, Canada

[Final] statistical and geographical distribution [data] of participants in TRANSFER-L:

(.edu) [presumably USA] 26, (.com) [could be anywhere] 19, Canada (.ca), Spain (.es) 18, Brazil (.br) 11, (.net) … 8, Australia (.au) 7, Sweden (.se), UK (.uk) 5, Italy (.it), South Africa (.za) 4, Netherlands (.nl), Portugal (.pt) 3

Belgium (.be), France (.fr), Greece (.gr), Ireland (.ie), Yugoslavia (.yu) 2

Armenia (.am), Argentina (.ar), Chile (.cl), China (.cn), Germany (.de), Denmark (.dk), Finland (.fi), Hungary (.hr), Iceland (.id), (.int), Korea (.kr), Luxembourg (.lu), Malaysia (.my), (.org), Poland (.pl), Turkey (.tr), Taiwan (.tw) 1

Closing Day

Seán Golden

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As the afternoon of 14 March comes to a close in Barcelona, it is obvious that the volume of messages has fallen off, and that participants are starting to go home (i.e., unsubscribe to TRANSFER-L).

I would like to thank all of those who have participated, actively or passively. Special thanks to Doug Robinson and Anthony Pym and Michael Cronin for taking on the role of «invited speakers» in this experiment, but equal thanks to everyone else who participated as well.

This has been an experiment that we should be able to learn from. I would be very interested in receiving «feedback» from participants that might help us to design future on-line activities better.

I think we have seen that the information load of many messages ran the danger of being an information overload. Perhaps we were mid-way between a «live» colloquium and an exchange of learned articles in journals, at times.

I was not able to introduce either of the two elements that might have made possible an interactive element in «real» time: «chat» or videoconferencing. Those are areas to be explored.

I think we have not resolved the problem that formed one of the bases of the colloquium itself —intercultural communication via a «lingua franca». I suspect that there are people who were happy to «look on», or «listen in», without participating actively, but I suspect that there were participants who might have participated more actively if the colloquium had been more multilingual, if we had created more of an «interculture» in this «cyberhall» where we held the colloquium.

I think that the emergent behaviour we have been observing over the last two weeks does show that the TRANSFER-L messages were different from TRANSLAT messages or LANTRA-L messages.

I am particularly interested in being able to establish where that difference lies. I am interested in trying to establish what an «on-line» colloquium allows us to do that a «live» colloquium does not. This INTERNET environment should help us to improve what we already do in other communications media (including live, face-to-face interaction). To do so I think we have to discover more about the emerging nature of this medium of communication.

TRANSFER-L will not go on much longer. I will keep it open for another few days in order to allow the people who are just beginning the morning of the last «official» day to make their contributions, and also to allow all participants to offer their opinions about the experience itself, about

how it could be improved, about possible topics for future on-line activities, etc.

Personally, I am pleased with the result; and I hope that all of the other participants will have enjoyed the experience and that it may have stimulated thought on the practice, teaching and theory of translation across disciplinary and experiential lines.

Thank you for being with us.

Re: Closing Day

Jonathan Hine
University of Virginia. USA

>This has been an experiment that we should be able to learn from. I would
> be very interested in receiving «feedback» from participants that might
>help us to design future on-line activities better.

Seán —You asked for it. Live colloquia (in physical halls) are often sleepy affairs, sometimes enlivened by an occasional curmudgeon, but often poorly understood because someone mumbles, another gets on his soap-box, while a third repeats the question that was just answered. Sometimes the *lingua franca* is more shackled than *franca* for some of the participants.

1. The best description I have for what you achieved with Doug, Anthony and Michael was this: I sat in a room with almost 200 other interested people. Everyone could hear every word that everyone else said. No one was interrupted. And almost all the comments were articulate, well-composed and thoughtfully contributed to the discussion. (Most of us do read the screen before pressing the SEND button.)

2. There is no way you can achieve that kind of clarity and intellectual effectiveness except with the on-line colloquium. Congratulations on passing a historical and incredibly important milestone in the pursuit of knowledge. Scholarly exchange will never be the same, and you proved that we don't have to be lavishly-funded scientists to enjoy the benefits of technology.

3. I do NOT favor the «chat-room» format, even if you do overcome the technical hurdles. We simply won't all be equally able to enjoy the format. And I very much appreciated the depth of the postings. A chat room would include less helpful material and I would not want to wade through that. The list-serve format allowed me to download the discussion and read it at my leisure (important when most of the people in the «room» have to come and go to work). I do not mind the one-day delay in seeing the effects. All we have to do is allow the colloquium to run long enough. I think you did that with a ten-day event.

4. You might consider posting a how-to guide of your lessons learned and any helpful feedback. I have been so impressed by what you have done that I have recommended it to dozens of scholars, including social scientists, evaluators, and anthropologists. Let us know (on ATSA-L, LANTRA, FLEFO, etc.) if you do.

5. It was as exciting to watch the colloquium take shape as it was to participate. The apparently «accidental» early opening was a positive feature. Having the presenters post their back-and-forth preparations for their papers can be illuminating and exciting to the audience.

6. By current standards, graphics played a small part, but I recommend you never rely on them in the papers. Although I enjoy the latest browsers here at the University of Virginia, I never did see any of the circles. Fortunately, the texts described them well enough that I did not need the pictures. A planetary colloquium will always include participants who are using telnet and ancient text-based e-mail systems to participate. Re-posting the texts on the list-server was an excellent idea. I would not have been able to read «transferre»… otherwise. For some reason, the link to it was broken when I was perusing the Web site 5-10 March 1997.

7. I thought the thread «listening to the Portuguese» turned out to be entertaining, enlightening, and prophetic of the possibilities of the medium (no pun on Doug's material here!). It was a marvelous, real-life example of many of the very issues we were discussing! I recommend there always be a *lingua franca.* Those who wish to post in their favourite tongues should feel free to do so, either providing a translation or synopsis in the *lingua franca* or inviting a colleague also at the colloquium to provide it. In the latter case, the cooperating participants could agree ahead of time or before the posting to do that. Obviously a «chat room» could accommodate this even less easily than your on-line colloquium. On the other hand (OTOH - I know!) we could let events unfold as they did with Haroldo, Joao & Co. …