Literary Metatranslation:
Understanding the Multiple in Post-Communist Poland



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Short abstract

This doctoral thesis introduces the notion of 'literary metatranslation', a self-reflexive literary strategy in which the translator (or a group of translators) exposes the process and act of translation by producing different parallel variants, placing them next to each other as legitimate versions of the original, and presenting them jointly as an artistic work. Pointing to its artistic and ethical relevance, I first identify the gesture of multiplying possible readings of an original text in the contemporary Anglophone context and then discuss it in much more detail in the Polish translation tradition. I argue that the ethical task of such multiplied translations can be compared to the one of metaliterature: alerting the reader to the creative transformation occurring in the process. I briefly discuss this idea with reference to multiplied translations of poetry in English (e.g. Weinberger, Paz 1989, Hofstadter 1997, Waldrop, 2000, Bergvall 2000, Cobb, Coleman 2003, Carson 2012). Then, in the three core chapters of the thesis, I focus on literary translation practice in the Polish post-1989 context and show how a multiplicity of interpretative angles could also be read in pluralist terms: as opening a forum for discussion about the original, introducing different viewpoints through translation, and undermining the authoritative legacy of the Communist literary order. At this juncture, I analyse three key examples against the background of socio-cultural phenomena, publishing practices, and translation debates of that time: Stanisław Barańczak's translation polemics and multiple translations of the early 90s; Robert Stiller's double/triple rendering of *A Clockwork Orange* from 1999; and Andrzej Kopacki's quadruple Brecht from 2012. In discussing the ethical ideas underpinning these works, I demonstrate how literary metatranslations and their gesture of acknowledging more than one view and line of thinking could also undermine totalised discourses and put forward a more democratic agenda.

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Long abstract

This thesis stems from an interest in the creative potential of literary translation and its infinitely multiple nature. The practice of translating and retranslating the same original text has been present in many literary cultures for centuries, sparking a range of debates and polemics over differing approaches and distinctly rendered textual shapes. Apart from the most controversial cases, such as translations of the Bible whose multiplicity remains foundational to European culture, a plethora of other canonical and less widely promulgated works keep being retranslated for a number of different aesthetical, ideological, and legal reasons. Although the artistic phenomenon I have approached in this thesis takes similar observations to a completely new level, its artistic quality still hinges on their basic premises. These are: the inevitably multiple nature of translation with its different possible fidelities; the fact that literary translation has always come in series throughout history; as well as the assumption that approaching the same original text and recreating it anew is something fundamental to the reception and interpretation of any foreign literature in a given culture.

As more and more poets and literary translators start recognising these tendencies in the literary realm, they also come to appreciate the potential of translation multiples and even employ them as an artistic device in their own works. The idea of 'literary metatranslation' as approached and discussed in this thesis, therefore, pertains to a self-reflexive literary strategy in which such artists deliberately multiply different renderings of the same work and then present them jointly as a literary work to readers. By producing and placing these different translations next to each other as legitimate versions of the original, as I argue, they not only expose the process and act of translation, but also undermine the notion of one true equivalence

between the original and its rewriting in a different language. Identified as a relatively recent and unknown phenomenon on the border between literary and translation practice, literary metatranslations will be explored in this thesis within the methodological framework of literary and translation studies. As this artistic technique, reflecting on the creative capacity of translation, goes beyond simply celebrating and illuminating the inherent multiplicity of translation, its aesthetical implications have invited further research questions. The aim of this doctoral work is thus to discuss in depth why this type of artistic practice comes into being and what broader cultural and even ethical significance it can entail.

To this end, I map a range of similar meta-critical translation projects in two literary and cultural milieus: first, briefly with reference to the contemporary Anglophone context and then, in much more detail, within the post-1989 Polish translation tradition. The first part, spanning a range of individual examples from 1987 to 2012, serves as a pretext for providing the cultural and intellectual background against which literary metatranslations as such could be placed and analysed. I then move on to discuss the Polish examples from roughly the same period (1990–2012), and these three major case studies constitute the core analytical part of my thesis. By drawing on the previously introduced theoretical understanding of the problem, I attempt to investigate further implications and specific features that the analogous practices of multiplying translations in the Polish context may have.

Undoubtedly, the literary strategy of producing more than one rendering of the same text is not a very widely practised and mainstream translation technique in either of these two traditions; and in fact, it will be exactly its experimental and subversive edge that will eventually come to the fore in the following discussion. However, it is also worth noting at this point that the conceit of translation multiples has been featured in a number of recognisable projects that have been reviewed and identified in wider scholarly criticism. These include, most notably, Douglas Hofstadter's *Le ton beau de Marot* (1997), and Caroline Bergvall's

'VIA' (2000) in international scholarship; as well as Robert Stiller's double project of *A Clockwork Orange* (1999) in Polish translation criticism. Still, regardless of such dispersed studies on single cases, it is this thesis that for the first time attempts to bring together a wider range of similar examples in order to identify and single out literary metatranslation as an aesthetic category, as well as approach and discuss it critically. There admittedly exist a number of preliminary recent studies referring more broadly to a similar literary phenomenon, for instance: Matthew Reynolds' ideas around 'prismatic translation' (2014) and 'translation variorum' (2016), Rebecca Walkowitz's epilogue 'Multiples' to her book *Born Translated* (2015), and Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz's chapter on conceptual models of translation in her *Modernist Translation: An Eastern European Perspective* (2015). In contrast to these approaches to the problem, however, this thesis also attempts to present the bigger picture of the origins of this artistic phenomenon as well as discuss the cultural significance of multiplying different readings of the same original. While bridging the Anglophone and Polish examples, I therefore aim to suggest that the practice of acknowledging more than one viewpoint about the original can be of broader relevance to the international audience as it influences their general awareness of what the art of literary translation entails.

In trying to understand the idea of constructing literary works out of translation multiples, I have set out to investigate potential reasons for and implications of similar artistic gestures. As the timing for their recently intensified production could not be coincidental, I have tried to search for the twentieth-century literary trends and developments in translation thought and practice that could inform the understanding of such works. On the one hand, I have linked them to other experimental translations challenging the notion of equivalence in literary translations as well as growing critical awareness among translation scholars of how the art of translation has become an artistic idiom in its own right. On the other hand, I have placed the self-reflexive nature of literary metatranslations among corresponding aesthetic

ideas underpinning other artistic metaworks; especially the postmodern genre of metaliterature which alerts the reader to the mediating subject and the act of creative transformation in the process. And thus, literary metatranslations, as I have construed them, transpire to combine both of these strands: firstly, they involve an experimental or artistically subversive element opposing mainstream translation production, and secondly, they introduce a meta-critical component into translation practice, or rather what Marjorie Perloff has called 'the Oulipo Factor', i.e. a kind of procedural poetics in conceptual writing. At the same time, the combination of these key features points to the ethical undercurrent of metatranslations. As I try to argue, these works question the authority of translation equivalence and the neutral and authentic relationship between the original and its translation. They also alert readers to the mediating self in the process, as the same source text gets reinterpreted over and over again into a number of equally legitimate renderings.

The method of approaching consecutive Polish instances of such translation multiples differs to a great extent from the initial theoretical presentation of the problem and focus on the Anglophone examples. The three major analytical chapters are devoted to chronologically ordered examples of Polish metatranslations: Stanisław Barańczak's multiple translations of the early 1990s; Robert Stiller's double/triple *Clockwork Orange* from 1999; and the quadruple Brecht volume from 2012, respectively. On the one hand, these case studies are meant to concentrate on single translators (or a group of translators), examine their rationale for multiplying translation variants, and present literary metatranslations as a natural continuation of their own aesthetic inclinations, artistic positions, and other authored projects. On the other hand, in selecting these prominent, praiseworthy, and often controversial translation figures in the Polish post-1989 literary translation arena, I have also intended, at least partially, to depict the cultural landscape of literary translation thought and practice as it emerged from their artistic activities and broader socio-political contexts.

Although the strand of literary metatranslation is not a widely recognised literary phenomenon, it is the fact that and the way in which the Polish creators chose to employ it as an artistic device that still points to a number of important mechanisms governing the translators' decisions, ethical dilemmas, and intellectual stances of that time. After all, it is also not without reason that translation multiples appeared in the translation oeuvre of poets, authors, and writers strongly invested in Polish translation culture. In fact, they not only had their say in forming it through their own translation works, essays, and polemics, but it is also fair to say that their artistic personas have embodied some of the most representative features of this tradition. And so, in taking a more in-depth look at their individual projects, I have treated them as touchstones of broader problems in the Polish cultural context. In this respect, I have proceeded as follows: firstly, I have attempted to explain the background and origins of the concept for each of the translators as well as understand their rationale for multiplying different translation variants; secondly, I have analysed respective literary metatranslations with special reference to their individual aesthetic preferences or other potentially related projects; thirdly, I have linked all of these to other contemporary translation-related, as well as literary and cultural trends; and finally, towards the end of each chapter, I have tried to flesh out the ethical and humanist relevance of their individual translation-related ideas for the Polish socio-political context more broadly.

And thus, when placed specifically against the backdrop of the discussions, arguments, and anxieties that came into being in the wake of the political and economic transition of 1989, the Polish projects manifest a more historically entangled aspect. Although I have still approached them as works conceptually overlapping with the Anglophone projects, I mainly focus on how they modify and extend their artistic relevance to the local and culturally specific context. Of course, these cases continue to emanate from a meta-critical recognition nourished by their creators' long-standing translation practice and reflection on the nature of translation.

Likewise, they also turn the language of translation into an artistic idiom in its own right; even though this time it is an idiom responding to the Polish cultural tradition that has been co-shaped specifically by those literary figures. Nonetheless, besides such mutually shared strands, what this thesis mainly aims to demonstrate with reference to the Polish post-1989 context is how the idea of translating in multiple ways has additionally been conceptualised in social, ideological, and humanist terms.

With an eye to these issues, I have endeavoured to investigate how the Polish multiplied projects deal with the Communist past, often by taking an ethically engaged stance towards Poland's socio-political situation at the turn of 1989 and beyond. The themes I have particularly looked at included: ethical suspicion with regard to language and the urge to pursue individual perspectives against totalising ideologies, attitude towards Poland's post-dependency discourse, resistance to the manipulation and instrumentalist interpretations of literary works, and many other related issues. By tracing them in the intellectual and artistic stands of the analysed translators, this thesis thus also brings to the fore a common thread in their ethical treatment of translation multiples. Namely, what the Polish examples altogether appear to suggest is that a multiplicity of interpretative perspectives could also be read as an open forum facilitating discussion about the original and introducing different viewpoints through translation. In other words, the parallel I establish here could in sum read as follows: while defragmenting the original into multiple readings and dispersed voices, the Polish translators challenged the Communist literary order that favoured canonisation, authors deemed classical, and authoritative translations. Moreover, as they treated different translation variants on a par with one another, they also, conceptually or symbolically, questioned the idea of totalitarian monopoly on a single truth or one authentic vision of contemporary society, and instead espoused a more democratic agenda in their artistic projects.

Finally, what I also suggest with regard to this idea is that translation multiples not only serve as an inclusive pluralist platform for dialogue, but also embrace the more interventionist task of multiplying diverse renderings. By making different interpretations confront and complete one another, similar projects could simultaneously verify and unmask the limitations of single ideological propositions and point to their own totalising assumptions. This pedagogy and ethics of multiplied translations, as I have construed them in this thesis, has therefore to a large extent redefined the usual critical approaches to the ethics of translation. It no longer focuses on translations being faithful to original authors and source texts and the translator's role in mediating between the source and the target culture. Instead, my understanding shifts the emphasis to the communication process between translators and their audience; in doing so, it also points to the lesson which multiple translations can teach readers about their surrounding reality – rather than explicitly about the foreign culture.

And so, besides subverting norms and expectations relating to the production and circulation of literary translations, Polish literary metatranslations also alert the audience to the limitations of what they have so far taken for granted as one fixed totalising vision of Polish society, history, and cultural identity. As a remedy to such cognitive blinkers, meta-critical translation projects are instead meant to: for one thing, open the floor for a discussion on the competing ideological interpretations; and for another thing, provide similar conditions for a larger number of such interpretations to be voiced without imposing any hierarchies or ideological orders. And thus, yet another broader problem that this thesis eventually manages to address is the way in which the act of accepting more than one interpretative variant translates into our attitude towards other readings and the different opinions of other people. As the pluralistically-oriented projects of literary metatranslation thus successfully demonstrate, the notion of translation multiples ultimately reflects how different worldviews and ideas can co-exist in one society.

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Introduction

'I know not who was the first lying author to construct the seventy cells at Alexandria, in which they were separated and yet all wrote the same words,' wrote Saint Jerome in 'Preface to the Pentateuch' of his Latin translation of the Bible, the Vulgate (Jerome 1997: 30). Referring to the famous case of the Septuagint, the erstwhile primary Greek version of The Old Testament commissioned in the third century BC to a group of seventy Jews of Alexandria, Jerome debunked what later became the core element of its myth: namely, the claim that all the learned translators would under divine inspiration come up, word after word, sentence after sentence, with entirely identical translated texts despite working simultaneously and independently in seventy isolated cells. There are surely more caveats to the legend as known and subsequently circulated. In fact, the number of Jews was not a round seventy but seventy-two (six men of each of twelve tribes); they did not translate into Greek but its spoken vehicular variant *koine*; they originally did not render the entire Old Testament but only its first five books (*pentateuch*), and so on. However, the crucial aspect of this widely shared lore, questioned by Jerome in the 4th century AD, is the alleged convergence of seventy translation solutions that were said to be produced individually and in isolation. 'For it is one thing to be a prophet, another to be an interpreter,' soberly argued Jerome (1997: 30), being himself in the know of the translator's convoluted chains of decisions and arduous work. To his mind, rather than being the result of miraculously synchronised interpretations from dozens of different people, the eventual Septuagint came into being thanks to the translators' collaborative work, a scenario that actually corresponded to the earliest known record of the legend, a letter by Aristeas. It was only centuries later that Philo Judeus – the 'first lying author' at whom Jerome pointed the finger – tacked the

image of separate cells onto the story in order to strengthen the claim of the translation's divine inspiration (cf. Robinson 1997: 13). And it indeed made quite a difference to say that a few dozen translators did not cooperate over the final product, but somehow their individual readings cohered into what could be nothing else but one true and authorised translation of the Bible.

Besides its obvious scriptural significance, what was accomplished by this meeting of seventy translation minds into one? What consequences does it have on translation history and practice? It is safe to say that it could be one of the first moments in translation history when the 'equivalence' between the source and target text is firmly established, legitimised, and justified with sufficient rhetorical power. Since a few dozen authorities, seventy competent interpreters approaching one text, reached exactly the same conclusions in their renderings, the identical fruit of their work must constitute the only faithful and authentic translation, supported by the highest authority imaginable. Radical as this case of imposing Equivalence with the capital 'E' might sound from today's perspective, it is by no means an isolated one in translation history. In principle, it finds its solid continuation in any institutional, political, and cultural mechanisms of establishing the one and only translation equivalence in different historical contexts. These occurrences range from bilingual dictionaries with fixed interlingual one-to-one equivalents, to sworn authorised translations, to broader publishing practice and audience expectations making translators merge all potential variations into one ready-to-go translation product: a single finite text substituting the original.

This doctoral thesis will revolve around literary translations that do not conform to such norms and embody the exact reversal of the Septuagint's story. Instead of demonstrating how seventy translation attempts coalesce into one sanctioned rendering, the following discussion will engage with quite the opposite: its aim will be to show how a

source text can possibly diverge into seventy different variants and how the act of embracing such an unconventional multiplicity can still be read as a coherent literary work, be it by one translator or a team of several. This is of course not to say that the diversity of interpretations as such is something very unconventional. In fact, any revised version by the same translator and every single retranslation of one work in a given language by different translators proves otherwise. There are translators who could ponder over alternative variants of their own rendering *ad infinitum* unless put under some external pressure (time, financial situation, next project, etc.) to cast what should ultimately be its final version on paper. Consecutive re-translators, too, tend to approach and reinterpret the original text differently to their predecessors; their varied readings of one work fork into multiple different paths depending on their personal and cultural background, interpretative lens, ideology, individually projected audience, and many other factors.

Partly for this reason, David Bellos humorously remarked (2011: 5): 'Give a hundred competent translators a page to translate, and the chances of any two versions being identical are close to zero.' This assumption clearly jars with the Septuagint-like convergence, shaking and turning the concept of one true equivalence upside down. It is rather the infinite and inevitably multiple nature of translation that comes into play and ought to be treated as a default option. But still, even though such multifarious outcomes are in theory recognised or even taken for granted by translation critics, the actual norms of translation production are a completely different matter. Hardly ever do several different renderings of the same work appear in print simultaneously, alerting the readers to various possibilities and alternative translation solutions, as well as manifesting how tentative and arbitrary each of them is. With a minor exception of scholarly editions and critical anthologies, the status quo rather leans towards the Septuagint convergence. For a range of reasons it is more convenient to pretend and nourish the illusion that a given translation wholly and completely

represents the original it stands for. As Matthew Reynolds (2012: 19) rightly pointed out, criticism of translations 'cannot simply ignore the mode of being they largely have in culture: to be made and used as substitutes for their originals.' And so this cultural role for translations, along with the respective pursuit of translation equivalence, governs prevailing praxis, apparently leaving little room for multiple variants and divergent readings of the original.

In the following chapters, however, I will discuss a number of unconventional literary works which, against all odds, present different translations of the same source text both in parallel to and on a par with one another. These multiplied renderings consciously brought together by one translator, poet or a group of different authors within one artistic work came into existence relatively recently; they have started appearing alongside the critical awareness of how the art of translation has been gradually becoming an artistic idiom in its own right. And therefore, the examples of such translation practices primarily span the last few decades; in analysing their multiplied composition and any ethical implications it entails, I will try to set these instances against the backdrop of recent literary, cultural, and political phenomena.

In the first chapter, I will introduce the idea of multiplied renderings – or what Matthew Reynolds visually described as 'prismatic translations' (Reynolds 2014) – in the Anglophone context, placing them alongside other experimental practices in Modernist and contemporary translation tradition. Whereas some experimental translations, in Sawako Nakayasu's words (2014), 'behave, or "pass" as normal, traditional translations', the genre of creative multiplications and reiterations does not follow suit, resisting easy or passive reception. By subverting the usual one-to-one relationship between the original and its translation, it rather tends to knock the readers out of their routine of equating these two and taking one for the other. As these unique multiplied renderings expose the process and act

of translation by producing different parallel variants, their self-referential nature will also inform what I identify as the notion of 'literary metatranslation'. Drawing on OuLiPo-inspired ideas, I will try to argue that the task of such metatranslations is in accordance with the one of metaliterature: alerting the reader to the mediating subject and the act of creative transformation in the process.

In this respect, my understanding of 'literary metatranslation' will stay closer to its meta-literary lineage, even though the term – within the realm of translation – has arrived at the intersection of two[1] existing ideas that stress its self-referential aspect. The first one appeared in Theo Hermans' *The Conference of the Tongues* in which he employed the notion of 'metatranslation' to test self-reflexivity in translations more discursively. By highlighting the textual markers of the translation's speaking subject, Hermans argued that 'self-reference lies dormant in every utterance' (Hermans 2007: 37) and so it activates itself during close reading of translations. The other usages of 'metatranslation' made their way into Anna Cetera's analyses of consecutive Polish retranslations of Shakespeare. As classical authors have become more intensely retranslated, they have invited new radical reinterpretations to differentiate themselves from previous efforts. Owing to such repeated renderings within an already crowded translation space, some of the recent ones shift Shakespeare's recreation to the meta-dramatic and meta-theatrical level, revealing the rules of such translation communication to the viewers (cf. Cetera 2005: 239-252; 2008: 178-211). These two coinages have in a sense cross-fertilised within my approach. In the case of 'literary metatranslations' composed of translation multiples, their self-referential nature – analogous to the one spotted by Hermans – meets halfway with their creators' self-awareness of the

[1] The term has also been used by Effim Etkind (*métatraduction,* 1986: 17–22) for lyrical translations focusing only on the sound and prosodic form of original poems and by Patrick Zabalbeascoa and Monte Corrius who coined it for the translation of a work containing a scene or passage about translation (2012: 268). None of these ideas inform the notion of 'literary metatranslation' as discussed in this thesis.

previous and other translation variants, as informed by Cetera's examples. As translation spreads out into multiple series, it is their simultaneity, multiplicity, and parallel existence of equally legitimate variants that are acknowledged, put in dialogue, and demonstrated to the audience.

The idea of translation ethics that underpins this understanding will therefore have a slightly different twist than usual. A lot has been written about ethics of translation understood as fidelity towards original authors and source texts; this time, however, ethics of the multiple will pertain almost exclusively to the receiving end of translation production: the reader. Instead of asking how to be 'true' or 'faithful' to the original, this thesis will open up literary translation to a range of reformulated questions testing how multiplied translations can be valid for the readers: is it possible for the translator to be honest to their audience and explicitly signal the infinite spectrum of possibilities and so the tentative nature of one's single translation choice? How can the translator break through the long-cherished illusion of treating translations as providing direct access to the original meanings? What does it mean to translate differently from someone else and accept the other reading, and what do these distinct interpretations of the original tell us about our own position in the world? How does acknowledging more than one legitimate reading of the original change the way we think about language and society?

Especially with an eye to these issues, I will move on to discuss in much more detail three instances of literary metatranslations in the Polish post-Communist literary context in the second, third, and fouth chapter, respectively: Stanisław Barańczak's multiple translations of the 1990s; Robert Stiller's project of a double/triple *A Clockwork Orange* of 1999; and the quadruple Brecht volume of 2012 approached by four translators from *Literatura na świecie* [Literature in the World], the Polish leading magazine on literature in translation. These three case studies, outlined chronologically, have made their way into this

doctoral thesis for a number of reasons. Firstly, they are particularly compelling manifestations of Polish literary metatranslation with its core idea of reading one original text from multiple angles. Secondly, they map out the most prominent, merited, and controversial figures and translation experiments in the Polish literary translation arena of the last decades. Thirdly, their creators have strongly been invested in Polish literary translation culture. As such, they had their say in shaping it through their own translation works, debates, and criticism, and their artistic personas have incarnated some of the most interesting and representative features of this tradition, which will also be discussed on this occasion. Finally, all these translators and authors have in one way or another dealt with the Polish Communist past, often taking a stance through their translation practice to Poland's political and cultural situation at the turn of 1989 and beyond. It is probably no coincidence that their metatranslation projects came to fruition in the post-Communist world and often served as a form of artistic liberation and critical re-evaluation of the past. At this juncture, I will thus suggest how in each of these cases a multiplicity of interpretative perspectives in translation could also be read in pluralist or democratic terms: as opening a forum for discussion and introducing different viewpoints in opposition to the Communist legacy. Depending on the case, the idea of translation pluralism manifest in Polish metatranslations will also put forward agendas pertinent to recent cultural discourse in Poland: an ethical suspicion of language and an urge to pursue individual perspectives against totalising discourses; a critical engagement with different political systems and cyclical nature of history; an intellectual protest against binary political categories, a revision of ideologically encumbered images, and a pedagogical role of acknowledging multiple voices and viewpoints. These themes one by one permeate consecutive translation multiples, but they also nourish the notion of metatranslation as such. With special reference to them, I hope to demonstrate that similar translation experiments, besides simply engaging with multiple

artistic articulations, manage to activate and respond to broader social and ethical issues. Above all, they may also suggest how every act of translation and retranslation, reading and interpreting in different ways, is just inherent to the human condition and co-existence in society.

1. Why Metatranslations, Why Now? Multiplied Translations in English

A poem should be equal to:
Not true.
(*Ars Poetica*, Archibald MacLeish)

1.1. The Conceit

The question in this title paraphrases the one Kenneth Goldsmith a few years ago posed in his and Craig Dworkin's anthology of conceptual writing, *Against Expression:* 'Why Conceptual Writing? Why Now?' (Goldsmith 2011: xvii). In his introduction, Goldsmith argued that the strand of uncreative writing which uses and reworks texts by others, translates and itself metamorphoses translations, has found a particularly fertile ground after the emergence of the internet and digital media in general. From then on, what he identified as a much faster and technologically versatile 'cut-and-paste scenario' has paved the way for reimagining forms of appropriation, transformative rewriting, and literary replication. In the same vein, Rebecca Walkowitz's 'epilogue' entitled 'Multiples' to her *Born Translated* anointed digital publishing as a promising area for multiplying translation variants. For Walkowitz, such 'serial and comparative' renderings of the same poems are particularly emblematic of two online literary journals: *Asymptote* and *Telephone* which have published various takes on multilingual poetry. Such translational multiples, in her words, 'are certainly easier in the digital medium, where extra pages do not generate extra shipping costs' (2015: 240). Though she admits there are a few book versions of such multiplied translations as well, they are confined to 'rare projects' and their publishing format attributed principally to scholarly compilations of translated poetry released by university presses. In this sense, it might sound as if, owing to this technological advancement, we are about to witness a breakthrough in artistic translation as it enters a new

digital age of visual comparisons, juxtapositions, and multiplications. In fact, the ongoing project *Translation Arrays* (Cheesman 2013) already uses digital tools to this end, namely to visualise how originals branch out into such serial and comparative translation variants. Taking one scene from Shakespeare's *Othello* and its thirty-seven German renderings published between 1766 and 2012, the project set out to examine the widest array of different variations which are highlighted and put together in diversified clusters. Aside from elucidating the fragments that are most prone to reinterpretation through translation, this technologically-driven strategy clearly has an added value over traditional comparative studies of translation series. It makes it possible not only to analyse and describe but to *see* and show to students and non-professional readers of translations in a clear and efficient format how the same original words can be played out in so many ways in a different language. Such an image, instantly prompted thanks to its digital back-up, definitely works to the advantage of serial multiple translations which can easily be brought together at one go.

Reformulating Goldsmith's question with regard to literary metatranslations, however, I would like to look for other potential catalysts to, and inspirations for, such experimental translation projects. As much as I support the idea of digital media facilitating multiplied translations, it does not exhaustively inform the examples I am about to discuss in this thesis and which all have appeared in the traditional medium of print. Surely, their creators in some sense attempted to overcome publishing conventions and constraints that a traditional layout entails. Nonetheless, their artistic intuition to construct their works with such a richly differentiated palette of translations has clearly originated elsewhere. And so this begs more fundamental questions relevant to the strand of literary metatranslations discussed in this thesis: to what end did their creators multiply renderings of the same original work and place them next to each other? Why did they compose their poems or

books out of various inter-lingual readings of a given source text? How to read such works and what is so special about them as opposed to other instances of experimental translation or conceptual writing?

First of all, if we look at translation history, translations of literary works are quintessentially multiple – as long as translators decide to approach the same source texts and retranslate them or revise their own previous attempts, different renderings will keep coming in series over time. Very rarely, however, are they brought together in this diverse spectrum and presented simultaneously in print. In this respect, Walkowitz rightly singled out a more university-oriented practice of collecting different variants of translated works; it has indeed long been present in scholarly publishing, for instance in critical editions devoted to particular authors or works with more than one rendering in a given tradition. In such books, it is usually a third party that collects and edits different versions without the knowledge of the translators involved in order to either illuminate the original from different angles or to trace the history of its reception. This focus is especially redolent of whole critical series such as the Penguin Classics *Poets in Translation*, which demonstrate how the readings of classical and canonical writers (in this case, Horace, Ovid, Virgil, Dante, Charles Baudelaire, and others) changed over the centuries. Collections of this kind often serve as, in Matthew Reynolds' words, 'variorum translation' editions (Reynolds 2016). Whereas typical variorum editions (e.g. of Shakespearean plays or the Bible) keep track of any textual instabilities, processual changes, and editorial decisions in production of original works, multiple translation editions work analogously by displaying a range of available translated variants of one text. In face of these scattered viewings, the notion of one fixed translation equivalence can no longer be taken for granted. Variorum editions destabilise the original textual base – and the idea of text more broadly – by revealing any glitches, reworkings, and manipulations in the process of its making and delivering. Translation variorum books, by

the same token, complicate yet another step of bringing these texts across two different literary languages. They show how their rewritings refract them through the stylistic and interpretative lenses of various historically and culturally situated translators.

Still, the idea of shedding light on the original from as many perspectives as possible and providing more than one translation as a means of scholarly commentary often starts at a more individual stage of working critically with foreign literature. Literary scholars might recollect having such deconstructive instincts when in need of quoting a passage from a different language to corroborate their argument. Their decision not to cite it in the original, but in the target language of writing might involve some extra effort: probing alternative renderings in search for the one that feels closest to one's point and particular reading lens, or even coming up with one's own version in case no existing translation appears fit for purpose. Either way, a given framework and specifically identified trait of the original text often dictates the terms of combing through possible variants and considering other translations than the one at hand. As a result of this procedure, a visible track record of different measures and multiple trials may be smuggled into the text as alternative propositions placed in brackets, enlisted in footnotes, divided by slash, et cetera. A sense of intellectual dissatisfaction with a single equivalent follows any in-depth exegesis whose findings have to be packed into one formula; even more so, as they boil down to a combination of words and phrases, in which each constitutes a mere approximation of the original, being written in a literary language systemically incongruous with the source language.

One of the most well-known and radical protests against such automatic matchings in literary criticism came in 1932 from I.A. Richards. In his work *Mencius on the Mind,* he objected to translating the Chinese thinker's terms one-to-one and instead suggested an experimental comparative technique of 'multiple definition'. Providing a 'scheme of

possibilities' (1932: 13) and parallel translation variants for different original expressions such as *hsing* ('nature', 'human nature', 'man', etc.), he ostentatiously resisted reading fixed concepts of the English language into the text. For Richards, outmanoeuvring one-to-one equivalences and getting around the source text by producing numerous alternatives resulted from his methodological attempt to 'understand and translate a work which belongs to a very different tradition from our own' (86). This perceived remoteness of Chinese culture concurred with the intuitions shared by some anthologists of Chinese lyrics, most explicitly by David Hawkes in *A Little Primer of Tu Fu.* In this 1967 introductory book for non-specialist readers Hawkes, too, provided more than one translation variant for some passages; this solution was due to what he saw as original ambiguities and numerous possibilities of resolving them – each time only partially (Hawkes 1967: 82-83). Although it was often the perceived difficulty and indeterminacy of the oriental language that led other anthologists and translators to similar conclusions (cf. Prynne 2010: 163), the distance between cultures could not be the only driving force for cases like Richards or Hawkes. Otherwise, it could be hard to explain the analogue endeavours of grasping a complexity of meaning in multiple ways occurring in pairs of more closely related languages. Annotations, glosses, commentaries with alternative variants have in fact been present in European exegetic and philological traditions for centuries. The practice of translating has often been intertwined with the task of explicating the original, illuminating it for the readers from different angles, and commenting on it exhaustively. And if so, is there a clear boundary between the long-standing scholarly craft of translation glosses including alternative approximations of the original and contemporary 'serial and comparative translations', as Walkowitz called them? Is an artistic act of unpacking the original verse in multiple ways through creative reworkings any different from the scholarly exegesis, translation glosses, and commentaries tackling its potential polysemy?

What seems an intuitive distinction from today's perspective might have been less transparent centuries ago, as evinced by one of the most puzzling acrobatics of multiple translation: the 1636 rendering of the Latin *Distichs of Cato* by an English chronicler and religious writer, Sir Richard Baker. Criticising the attempt of his predecessor John Penkethman, Baker argued that 'the words of one language cannot alwaies be reached by the very same words of another' (Baker 1636: n.p.). As a remedy to that incompatibility of English and Latin, he invented an alternative method in his *Cato Variegatus*. Translated with 'variations of expressing in English verse', as the subtitle had it, this seventeenth-century rendering dismantled Cato's original couplets one by one through multiple English variants; in a number ranging from two to eighteen and with all enlisted one after another as 'paraphrases or Collateral Conceits'. In justifying his unconventional technique or the 'conceit of the Expressing' as he labelled it, Baker praised the potential of multiple translation referring to the aesthetic ideal of pleasantly harmonious diversity in the world:

> This kinde of writing seems […] not only an Exercise, but a Dillating of Invention; and if there were nothing else but the Variety; we see how much the Eye is delighted with varietie of colours in the same object; the Eare with variety of Descant upon the same Plaine song; & even Nature herselfe seemes delighted with it: […] shee takes a pleasure in the variety of Formes.

Possibly nourished by poetic conceits typical of seventeenth-century verse, Baker's variations on original lines reveal the complex process of negotiating between different interpretative choices and their literary realisations in the target language. Centuries later similar exercises in multiple translation styles would also appear in collections modelled after Baroque manuals for poetics, such as *Das Wasserzeichen der Poésie* [The Watermark of Poetry] written by Hans Magnus Enzensberger under the pseudonim of Andreas Thalmayr (1985), and *Pegaz zdębiał* [Pegasus Fell Dumb] by Stanisław Barańczak (1995), which will

be analysed in this thesis's second chapter. Conceptual variations and exercises in translation multiples such as *Cato Variegatus* make the scholarly and the literary merge into some hybrid borderland genre: in Baker's case, the aesthetically pleasing 'variety of Formes' turned into a metacritical commentary on *The Distichs of Cato* and its multiplied illumination; and likewise a multi-threaded lesson about the original works became inseparable from the act of indulging in different styles of verse translation. Reading multiplied translations as conceptual artworks therefore marks an essential transition in their status. They no longer consist of dispersed unrelated commentaries and approximations of original meanings. Instead, they become clustered together around the author's artistic conceit and a coherent narrative about their multiple nature. Openly spelled out in some cases and more implicit in others, this conceptual quality, fuelled by a broader critical intuition about the potential and role of translation, equally characterises more recent literary metatranslations. Although labelled 'rare projects' by Walkowitz, a range of multiplied renderings of the same original passage, work, or author's selected output brought together within one poem, cycle, or book, has still been created over the past few decades. What such contemporary translation multiples principally bring to the fore is the very process of fragmenting or reiterating the original. In doing so, as I will argue, they also construct a self-reflexive narration about the nature of translation and possibility of interpreting one text in various ways.

1.2. The Multiples

The multiplied rendering that Walkowitz actually mentioned in her book was the 1987 volume *19 Ways of Looking at Wang Wei: How a Chinese poem is Translated* authored by Eliot Weinberger and Octavio Paz. Completely redefining the scholarly convention of translation variorum editions, this compilation traced what Weinberger called '19

incarnations' and 'a nomadic life' (Weinberger, 1987: 1) of a four-line verse by the eighth-century Chinese poet Wang Wei. The poem's title itself is already difficult to quote in English translation as it ranges from transliterations in the Latin alphabet to poetic phrases such as 'The Form of the Deer', 'Deep in the Mountain Wilderness', and 'Deer Forest Hermitage'. In a sense reformulating Walter Benjamin's understanding of translations as the original's afterlives into Buddhist categories, Weinberger explained in his part how 'great poetry lives in a state of perpetual transformation, perpetual translation: the poem dies when it has no place to go' (1987: 1). As that journey unreeled, it spanned a phonetic transliteration, character-by-character translation, fourteen different verse renderings in English, as well as a Spanish and a French version – the eponymous '19 ways' of approaching the original that become the book's actual theme; even more so since, as Walkowitz rightly pointed out, 'no original "way" is presented' throughout the volume (2015: 240). The act of 'looking', on the one hand, brings to the fore the visual aspect of Chinese script with its 'spatial relationships concretely portrayed' through the pictographic nature of ideograms (Weinberger 1987: 3). On the other hand, it also echoes Wallace Stevens' cubist exercises in his imagist poem 'Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird' and follows its technique by transposing the art of multiple viewing perspectives onto literary translation. Differently framed, zoomed, and cropped snapshots of the original metamorphose the text analogously to the cubist's grammar of visual deconstruction, showing at the same time, as Baker wanted, 'how much the Eye is delighted with varietie of colours in the same object.' And so with a similar 'Eye' metaphor at the back of his mind, Weinberger constructed a narrative around how different takes on the original couplet transform the perception of this short text and, in some cases, he also allowed the translators themselves (e.g. Octavio Paz and Gary Snyder) to present their point of view.

In one of the stories, Weinberger recounted his impression of Gary Snyder's translation, especially how he was puzzled by the word 'above' referring to moss growing in the forest (Weinberger, 1987: 43). After his correspondence with the translator, it became apparent that Snyder (along with his Chinese teacher) visualised the original moss as growing up in the trees rather than on rocks on the ground. For Weinberger this elucidatory case of 'a reimagining of the poem' proved how it 'continued in a state of restless change' as various translators filtered it through their individual lenses. This reiteration clearly debunks the idea of reaching one congenial translation; to this end, Octavio Paz in his essay in the same volume referred to Ezra Pound tradition of translating from Chinese: 'Do Pound's poems correspond to the originals? A useless question: Pound *invented*, as Eliot said, Chinese poetry in English' (Paz, 1987: 46). Likewise, the goal of the 1987 multiplied translation book was not to answer the 'useless' question of whether the presented translations were in any sense equivalent to the original. In the postscript, Weinberger (1987: 51) explicitly caricatured this approach by mentioning a letter received from a 'furious' professor who responded to this literary account of translation. According to Weinberger, the accurate, 'philologically correct' crib of the Chinese poem to which the professor referred resembled 'Gerard Manley Hopkins on LSD' and was in a gesture of protest never included in the main body of the book as the twentieth legitimate 'way of looking at Wang Wei'. Though symbolically rejecting 'the strangest of the many Weis' as a product of a too philological approach, Weinberger still presented it in full towards the end of his book as yet another fragment of Wei's convoluted route through various minds.

While Weinberger's ways of looking at Wang Wei cherished, in Baker's terms, the variety of the Eye, then Douglas Hofstadter's book on translating Clément Marot's verse eighty-eight times principally explored the connection between the Eare and the Forme. First published in 1996 as *Rhapsody on a Theme by Clément Marot*, with roughly half the final

number of translations, the project then expanded into the full version of 1997, titled *Le Ton beau de Marot: in Praise of the Music of Language.* Having previously received the Pulitzer Prize for his *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (1979), which explored the common themes of symmetry, self-reference, and form across mathematics, art, and music, Hofstadter took up his next ambitious project with an eye to similar interdisciplinary relations. His 1997 volume consisted of eighty-eight completely different translations of a short poem by the seventeenth-century French poet Clément Marot, created by either Hofstadter himself or by others he invited to contribute. The original text, 'A une Damoyselle Malade' [To a Sick Damsel] or 'Ma Mignonne' [My Sweet], was treated there as musical notation that could be performed in at least eighty-eight different ways thanks to 'the music of language' mentioned in the subtitle. Whether emulating the structure of a 'rhapsody' inspired by Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme by Pagianini* (Hofstadter 1996: xvi) or 'the rondo form, in which a given theme recurs periodically throughout a work' (Hofstadter 1997: 12), Hofstadter's book used a musical narrative to construct a range of variations around the original 'pattern' or set of formal constraints he predefined. This music of translation often ostentatiously went against semantics as Hofstadter strongly criticised the camp of translators prioritising the literal meaning, a manifesto which was perhaps most wittingly anticipated in the pun on *tombeau* (a grave) and *ton beau* (a beautiful tone) encoded into the book's cover. The image placed there (Marot's grave, *le tombeau de Marot*) reimagining the actual grave of the poet which no longer existed (1997: 4) only seemingly clashed with the book's title (the beautiful tone of Marot, *le ton beau de Marot*); it was in fact the beautiful tone of Hofstadter's translation exercises reviving the original forms that also symbolically restored Marot's memorial.

When constructing his narrative around multiple renderings, Hofstadter explicitly treated all of them on a par with each other as equally fascinating products of the mind's

creativity: as he stated, the question of 'which one is the very best' and which ones should be rewarded with 'gold, silver, and bronze medals' were 'certainly not the point of the book – far from it' (1997: 13). These attempts ranged from various 'literal' attempts debunking the notion of literalism in translation (2b-5b), to archaic and modern takes, to indirect renderings amidst what he called the 'hall of mirrors' (50b-54b), to different takes by people with different professional backgrounds (French-English translators, colleagues, university students), his family members (mother, wife), as well as machine translators (65b-69b). In his commentary running in parallel and introductory chapters, Hofstadter also signalled a few interpretative keys for reading his multiple experiment. He demonstrated how tentative each element of a translation series could be; in fact, knowing later attempts or versions by other people might have completely changed the original train of thought and translation process from the beginning of the project. In this sense, Hofstadter hinted at the most essential thesis of the book (1997: 345): 'that every poem in [the] entire collection of *Ma Mignonne*'s is a translation of every other one' and that any single translation was never abstracted from others. One version can inspire another or influence it negatively by making the translator avoid overlaps in words (352), but either way, the multiples are still all integrally interlinked. Finally, *Le Ton Beau de Marot* displayed how each of Hofstader's serial translations was embedded in life and often depended on serendipity: his somewhat verbose and meticulous stories gave a backdrop to the origins of different variants as they got intertwined with single occurrences, ideas, and decisions. As the project progressed, some of them became tributes to, for instance, his mother ('Mom in Yon'; 1997: 70b) and, most poignantly, his unexpectedly deceased wife ('Carol Dear'; 1997: 71b). It is especially the latter that influenced the book's construction since, according to Peter Dayan (2012: 13),: 'the sense of the importance of pattern, and of the preservation of pattern through the loss of the original matter in translation, is clearly wedded, in the book (just as content is

wedded to form), to the way in which his wife, for him, remains alive, despite her physical disappearance.' His reverence for a pattern in translation solidified through recurring multiples gave Hofstadter a smattering of continuity, a pretext for revivifying the form through repetition and reiteration; and a hope that the original is never lost as long as the creativity of mind keeps resurrecting it over and over again.

A life journey along multiple twisted paths of different translations was also made by Caroline Bergvall, a poet and a multimedia artist whose work has often engaged with the idiom of translating, reworking, and rewriting. In her conceptual piece 'VIA: 48 Dante's Variations', first published as a sound performance in conjunction with the composer Ciáran Mahem in 2000 and then in her poetry collection *Fig* (2005), she compiled forty-seven different English translations of the first three lines of Dante's *Inferno*. The title featured forty-eight versions, rather than forty-seven, as Bergvall treated the whole poem, the very act of placing different translations next to each other and its performance (2005: 48) as the forty-eighth legitimate variation on Dante. She put the versions in alphabetical rather than chronological order, suggesting that the 'via', the road, does not lead *via* the history of reading Dante, but through the language itself: each of the versions reveals the inherent complexity of the art of translation and illuminated the uniqueness of each translator's work. Furthermore, the actual fragment which was reiterated and reenacted over and over again by different translators featured a speaker who admits to being halfway through the journey of life and to have lost the right path. As the translator's name and the date of publication followed each version, all these differently articulated statements appeared to be voiced by different people with different dates marking the middle points of their own journeys (Bergvall 2005: 67), for example:

> 5. Halfway along the journey of our life
> I woke in wonder in a sunless wood
> For I had wandered from the narrow way

(Zappulla, 1998)
6. HALFWAY on our life's journey, in a wood,
From the right path I found myself astray.
(Heaney, 1993)
7. Halfway through our trek in life
I found myself in this dark wood,
miles away from the right road.
(Ellis, 1994)

The sense of being lost was expressed by a plethora of possibilities; even in the fragment quoted above, three translations juggled completely different images. Elio Zapulla described the sudden realisation of having lost one's way using Romantic poetics: the lyrical 'I' in his translation 'woke in wonder' as if experiencing an epiphany, waking up from a numb dream into spiritual recognition. This image was then confronted with Seamus Heaney's sober and transparent version in which even the forest dropped its symbolic darkness. The poem moved on with Steve Ellis's slangy version, whose perspective extended the journey spatially, placing the temporary stop in the long and arduous 'trek' as far as 'miles away' from the right 'road' (rather than 'path'). In Bergvall's own variation on Dante, her forty-eighth journey through all the previous re-enactments and feelings of getting lost in the middle of different lives also became a private act of comparison and recapitulation; thirty-seven herself at the time, Bergvall stressed that the date of the poem's publication coincided with 'Dante's 35th year or so-called point of mid-life'. Nonetheless, it is still the recurring reading of Dante and following his steps along multiple different paths and poetic images that remained the theme and the actual object of Bergvall's reflection. Curiously, in 2004 an Italian artist, Alejandro Cesarco, probably independently came up with the idea of juxtaposing ten different English translations of *Inferno*'s opening passages in his series of prints *Untitled [Dante/Calvino]*, later displayed at the 2012 Deutsche Guggenheim's *Found in Translation* exhibition. Each of the prints was headed with the title of one chapter from Italo Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, a novel with a blatantly

self-reflexive narrative composition. By bringing these two Italian classics together, as Nat Trotman (2012: 7) observed, Cesarco refracted 'Calvino's postmodern understanding of an activated reader on the role of Dante's translators'. And in fact, this notion underpins both his and Bergvall's artistic intuitions about literary translation, with its evocative and creative potential coincidentally expressed on the wide-ranging English journey through the same Italian work.

Another classic, this time the Ancient Greek poet Ibycus, made his way into the multiplied poetic translation by Anne Carson, a Canadian translator known for her creative renderings of other Classical poets. Her other projects included a comic-book translation of Sophocles' famous tragedy titled *Antigonick* (2012), as well as renderings of Sappho's poetry in which she transposed the original's fragmentation and missing passages into free spaces and brackets. In her work titled 'A Fragment of Ibykos Translated Six Ways' (Carson 2012: 42-43), later included in the book *Nay Rather* (2014), she rendered a passage of Ibycus' poem, first literally, and then by employing various limited vocabularies as verbal filters, such as: a poem of John Donne, Bertolt Brecht's FBI file, signs in the London Underground, and the manual for her microwave. Commenting on this poem in her essay 'Variations on the Right to Remain Silent', she argued how one language cannot be rendered into another and so her exercise in travelling between these distinct lexicons entailed translating inevitably into 'wrong words' (Carson 2014: 32). As Rosalind Harvey commented in her review (Harvey 2014), 'the arbitrary act of shifting from one sign system to another – here made beautifully explicit – is a deadly serious game with no right answer.' And so, Carson's experiment of making Ibycus employ multiple limited vocabularies and poetic dictions might question the congruity of any process of translating between distinctly arranged systems: be it intralingual rephrasing, interlingual communication, intersemiotic or intermedial transposition. By trying to rewrite a work with the use of different lexicons,

Carson also posed the question of reading temporarily remote authors nowadays; after all, which discrepancy is larger: the one between Carson's interlinear translation in English and the one filtered through John Donne's and others' poetics or between expressive means belonging to the Ancient Greek and contemporary English? In one way or another, all of these mutually incommensurable dictionaries are doomed to be 'untranslatable' in the traditional sense of the word, and the ostentatious multiplication of such mismatches through Carson's 'six ways of translating' aimed to reveal that reckoning.

In a sense, a similar poignant reckoning was taken beyond the linguistic domain by Allison Cobb and Jen Coleman in their collaborative multiplied project: 'Come Out of Works: A Physical Translation' (Tzu, Cobb, et al. 2003: 45-50) which appeared in the 2003 issue of the *Chain* magazine titled *Transluccinación* edited by Jena Osman and Juliana Spahr. In it, the translator duo focused on a fragment from the Chinese philosopher Chuang Tzu and with the help of Burton Watson's 1964 translation, they transformed it into six English poetic renderings, each time approaching the original differently 'through the fog of physical world' (Cobb & Coleman 2003: 50). Their series of Chaung Tzu translations therefore involved different senses in the original's reception and generated multiple veiled readings, for instance 'with the Noise of the Shower Running', 'from Behind Smeared Glasses', and 'Hearing Chuang Tzu While Not Looking at the Writing Page', to mention a few. For one thing, the translators creatively embraced the lessons of the Chinese philosopher who saw the Tao through the world's physical features such as animals and landscapes. In taking his original ideas as a starting point, Cobb and Coleman transposed them into their own 'physical translation' by means of their own bodies: hearing, sight, and physical movement. For another thing, as they argued, the multiple boundaries of sense obscured their translation insofar as 'the lessons of Chuang Tzu were shaped and obscured by the passing of time and boundaries of language'; it is thus the multisensory reading of

the original fragment that epitomises the inevitable process of blurring the original text and filters it through the translator's own cognitive and sensual apparatus.

To a certain extent, this idea questioned the possibility of reaching a 'somatic equivalence' in translation as postulated by Douglas Robinson in his book *The Translator's Turn* (1991: 25); by the same token, it might partly echo Clive Scott's long-standing agenda of sensual and phenomenological variations of French and German poetry (culminating in: Scott 2012a, 2012b). However, whereas for Scott the experience of reading a poem in a different language could be dismantled in various ways, including the focus on prosodic, rhythmical, and visual qualities, and then creatively translated into various graphical, spatial, and sensorial markers (e.g. doodles, bolded font), Cobb and Coleman treated their exercise in senses to a more sceptical aim. In a multiplied reading of Chuang Tzu, their 'physical translation' no longer provided various artistic means of recording the richness and variety of experiencing a poem. Instead, its fragmentation obscured it, symbolising the boundary between the text and the interpreter, and doomed whoever approaches it – whether translator or reader – to failure in having any access to the original meanings in abstraction from their own body, senses, and mental situatedness. In this respect, Cobb and Coleman's phenomenological take on Chuang Tzu became an intentionally limiting paradigm of various highly subjective and never exhaustive impressions of the original, transposing it further into their own artistic categories and sensitivity.

The unconventional technique of multiplying interpretative perspectives might appear more radical in the metatranslations of classical works presented so far than, for instance, in the case of serial attempts at more experimental and multilingual poetry. The reason being that translators might often perceive that the form and linguistic difficulty of experimental literature welcomes and allows for creative experimentation. Likewise, such literature might often generate less normative expectations in readers' eyes and thus justify

a dose of formal innovation. In her book, Walkowitz mentioned examples such as digital serial variations on Uljana Wolf's bilingual *Falsche freunde* [False friends] or Augusto de Campos' concrete poetry in the 2010 and 2011 issues of *Telephone* journal, but one could also think of earlier and other concurrent projects along those lines: for instance, the 2000 book volume *Reft and light: Poems by Ernst Jandl with Multiple Versions by American Poets* edited by Rosemarie Waldrop; the aforementioned 2003 issue of *Chain* magazine featuring poets such as Charles Bernstein, Caroline Bergvall, and again Waldrop who engaged with chains of translations, multilingual juxtapositions, and variations on the OuLiPo works, as well as a more recent book volume by Sawako Nakayasu entitled *Mouth: Eats Color. Sagawa Chika Translations, Anti-Translations, & Originals* (2011) dealing with the multilingual idiom of a Modernist woman poet, Chika Sagawa.

In the first publication, Waldrop explicitly argued that series of different versions were a method of coming to terms with the original's linguistic experimentation; Jandl's poetry appeared so condensed and 'engrained in the German language' that it was allegedly untranslatable and so multiple translation needed to come to rescue: 'here is an experiment: several American poets respond to each poem so that the original is encircled by multiple English analogues' (Waldrop 2000: 8). Tackling the original from different angles, according to Waldrop, could at least make it possible 'for the procedures to be imitated'; and so it is also striking how the repetition of different 'encircling' attempts interacted with the layout and graphic space within the volume, a formal trick staying with the experimental spirit of Jandl. For instance, the German poem titled 'reihe' [row/series], consisting of ten misheard consecutive numerals (from one to ten) shaped in a word-per-verse column, entered a multiplied 'series' on its own – a translation series – as various poets reiterated it in their own variants (Jandl 2000: 20-22). Three of these different renderings placed next to each other were each titled 'series' (Benjamin Friedlander, Laynie Browne, Martine Bellen),

another one misheard the ‘series’ into ‘cherries’, ‘ceres’, ‘seers’, ‘jerries’, ‘cerise’ (Ray diPalma) providing five respective sequences of translation, and others extended the potential renderings into 4x4 or 9x10 tables (Julie Patton, Lytle Shaw), making a host of misheard words resonate with one another in numerous directions. In ostentatiously multiplying the original ‘series’ of misheard numerals, Waldrop’s team also implied that their generated series of translations will contain similar instances of mishearings that occur in the translation process; namely, the chains of ‘mistranslations’. In the same vein, in producing their twisted multiples, the translators often took advantage of the original minimalist form and transposed its material shape into the texture of metatranslation; for instance, they spread their miscellaneous renderings all over the page, assembling the translation multiples into ornaments and textual patterns, and thus producing a form of visual translation poetry in its own right (Jandl 2000: 39-40, 55, 57). In other words, cases such as *Reft and light* ‘imitate the original procedures’ and make use of the translation’s multiplied composition in order to dismantle and extend the original poetics.

Similarly, Sawako Nakayasu in her 2011 volume approached Chika Sagawa’s multilingual poetry leading to multiple creative outbursts of original senses, most spectacularly in her lyrical cycle ‘Promenade’ encompassing seventeen translations of the same poem (enlisted as versions 1-9; A-C; and five others). In Nakayasu’s own words (Nakayasu 2016), she ‘blew up’ the idea of multilingualism because she was ‘interested in multiple versions of translations’ as well as abstracting herself from ‘certain established ideas about translation’. Her multiplied cycle in the volume spanned different language combinations mixing English, French, and Japanese; different forms of conveying the same point in time (‘three o’clock afternoon’, ‘3:00pm’, ‘three-time meridian’, ‘15:00’); different versions of the title originally in the Japanese phonetic script used for foreign (French) pronunciation (‘Promenade’, ‘Puromunaado’, ‘Puromenaado’; two in Japanese scripts); and

a series of different ways of capturing the impressions of what happened during the walk on the titular promenade. Just like in Bergvall's 'path' or Weinberger's 'nomadic life', Nakayasu's 'promenade' stretched out into its own journey through translation. She composed her cycle of over a dozen variants reflecting repeated experiences of the same place every day at the same time, but each time evoking completely distinct elements and extracting their unique twists and impressions. In one of the 'Promenade' versions (Nakayasu 2011: 55), a prose poem modelled after a meticulous report, she also smuggled in a self-referential question giving a cue of her translation procedure: 'why take things so literally'? Allowing herself to not pack the translated poem into one exact finite version this time, Nakayasu thus treated the recurring possibility of expressing the poem anew as a leeway for multiple alternative scenarios. As she remarked (Nakayasu 2012), 'it's nice to sometimes let go of the need to stick to the established modes (translation plus footnotes or endnotes or introductory notes), a one-to-one relationship: one translation per poem.' Instead, the multiplicity of translation variants opened the original poem up to the whole of her creative potential as she was no longer constrained by the usual relationship of substitution between the original and the translated text. And this liberating opportunity, fuelled by a self-reflexive narration on literary translation, has paved the way for Nakayasu and other poets-translators to multiply their different versions – intentionally and against all odds.

1.3. The Metatranslation

In all these translation multiples, the very fact that the poems or books were composed of more than one version of the original became a starting point for a new conceptual quality and further reflection on translation. Weinberger's idea of tracing the

poem's cubist 'reincarnations' exercises different ways of looking at the same original text as it travelled across languages; Hofstadter's collaborative project of filtering Marot's *Ma Mignonne* through different readings and creative minds tested his ideas about the form and music of language; Bergvall took her 'via' through a few dozen diversified expressions of the original sense of loss as reiterated by different translators across centuries and continents; Carson questioned the possibility of matching limited vocabularies across languages unless consciously employing different creative poetics; Cobb and Coleston transposed the original Taoist lessons into their multiplied physical approach in translation; Waldrop and other poets used their renderings to toss around a few ideas about visual and spatial potential of translation multiples; and finally Nakayasu extended her walk on Sagawa's promenade and unpacked the original poem in various multilingual ways to unleash her full creative capacity. In one way or another, translation multiples got intertwined with the lyrical texture of the conceptual frame and metacritically commented on the wide-ranging spectrum of possible translation variants. This unique self-awareness informs my idea of literary 'metatranslation'; each of the clustered serial translations looks at its own inevitably multiple nature and, dissatisfied with the usual practice of producing single finite versions, goes beyond what Nakayasu called the 'one-to-one relationship' between the source and translated text. What is so special about a gesture of fragmenting the original in multiple ways rather than substituting it with one finite compact text? What does the act of overcoming the standard mode of circulating translations reveal to the readers? And why do such conceptually subversive translations keep coming into being and what do they have to offer now?

First of all, the unconventional technique of literary metatranslations is definitely not an isolated case in the twentieth-century history of translation. In fact, some 'experimental' translation procedures revisit the legacy of the avant-garde; the Modernist translation

innovations under the aegis of Ezra Pound, the OuLiPo with their notion of constrained writing, the Fluxus movement with their chance operations, and the American L-A-N-G-U-A-G-E poets with their focus on the uses of language. In her *Unoriginal Genius,* Marjorie Perloff argued that the current 'unoriginal' creative writing became the new rear-guard (*arrière-garde*), renewing previous avant-garde discourses and trying to complete their mission especially by the poetic means of reinvention, rewriting, citation or, indeed, translation (Perloff 2010: 53). Translation at the service of literary production in the new age would therefore serve as a fully-fledged artistic idiom that tests our assumptions about language, creativity, and originality in an equally critical and self-conscious manner as Modernist literature itself. So whereas literary metatranslations question the one-to-one relationship between literary works and their translated representations, other techniques of the kind have attempted to test further boundaries, expectations, and definitions related to literary translations and the so-called originals. For instance, homophonic translations (such as in Ernst Jandl's 'oberflächenübersetzung', 1964; Zukofskys' *Catullus*, 1969; and David Hawkey's *Ventrakl*, 2010) have complicated the distinction between semantics and sound in poetry, and accordingly threw doubt on the fetish of literal accuracy in translation; chance operations in translation (such as in Jackson Mac Low's experiments and David Cameron's *Flowers of bad*, 2007) have debunked the belief that translation is always the coherent and determinate series of conscious and independent decisions made by the translator; chains of recursive translations also known as the 'telephone' or 'Chinese whispers' game (such as Walter Arndt's 'chain of traducers' in his *Pushkin Threefold*, 1972; and Adam Thirlwell's *Multiples*, 2013) have explicitly put literary texts in the state of constant interlingual metamorphosis exposing the translation's inevitably transformative nature; erasure techniques (from Jen Bervin's *Nets*, 2004; and Christian Hawkey and Uljana Wolf's *Sonne from Ort*, 2012) have played on the fading memory of older texts and cast doubt on any

possibility of resurrecting them in the modern context through linguistically neutral translation; and intralingual translation projects (such as Paul Legault's English-English translations of Emily Dickinson, 2012; and of Shakespeare, collaboratively edited with Sharmilla Cohen, 2012) have challenged the notion of how translation is understood, between what kind of 'languages' it occurs, and what it means as opposed to translating 'the Other'; artistic pseudo-translations (e.g. Jack Spicer's *After Lorca*, 1957, and Christopher Reid's *Katerina Brac*, 1985) have dismantled the notion of authorship and easy distinctions between creative writing and translation, as well as revealed how translations are read as representations of some translated self despite in fact constituting a kind of literary simulacra.

Of course, some of these unconventional techniques had been anticipated before Modernism: for instance, homophonic translations by macaronic verse, parodist adaptions of the Bible, humorous puns and presumed misunderstandings of foreign phrases, all dating back to the early modern period (Horáček 2014: 109; Dembeck 2015: 9-10); pseudo-translations with their long-standing tradition of literary hoaxes, *fakelore*, and apocryphal writing (cf. Robinson 1998: 183-185; Rambelli 2009: 208-2011; Apter 2005: 162-164; Tahir Gürçağlar 2014: 518); and what is now referred to as intralingual translations by many other earlier instances of paraphrases, retellings, parodies, adaptations, transformations, and so on. As demonstrated earlier in this chapter, even contemporary and digital serial and comparative translations had their unwitting harbingers much earlier; scholarly and literary intuitions of translators such as Baker or Richards also resulted in what we might see from today's perspective as translation multiples. Nonetheless, it is the increasing self-reflexivity and self-consciousness in coherent conceptual narratives and approaches – openly questioning what passes as 'standard' modes of translation – that makes current non-standard translations lean towards Perloff's rear-guard.

In fact, some of their creators have thought of themselves as contributing to a new and somewhat subversive culture of translation. For instance, the aforementioned Christian Hawkey himself positioned his *Ventrakl* in relation to other experimental translations (2013: 6-8), which is also what Paul Legault picked up on in his review of the book (Legault 2011): 'The nonstandard translation has its own traditions as Hawkey, in his introduction, points to the work of Jack Spicer, Louis Zukofsky, Anne Carson, and David Cameron.' By using the umbrella term 'nonstandard translation', Legault connected the dots between different unconventional occurrences in the recent American translation history – pseudo-translations, homophonic translations, fragmented rewriting, chance operations, respectively – and grouped all of them in one vaguely sketched but probably intuitive category. The historically and culturally defined notion of what is seen as 'standard' translation at a certain moment in time has usually clearly marked and widely accepted boundaries. All other types of translation practices are thus doomed to be jettisoned beyond it and placed into a residuary subset evading or opposing expectations about what a translation should look like. The proliferation of various labels for this strand of translation practices also indicates how critics and translators themselves have struggled to find proper terms to classify it, a situation that Nakayasu subtly mocked by her verbal compound: 'what I might call experimental-radical-innovative-what-have-you translations of poetry' (Nakayasu 2014). Nonetheless, apart from the rather generic 'creative translations', a few other descriptions have appeared in various places including the 'avant-garde' and 'experimental' translations transposed from relevant literary currents as well as the slightly edgy strand of 'transgressive translations' (Jacobs 2014: 480), 'radical translations' (Draesner 2000), and 'sensationalist translations' (Göransson 2015). Searching for accurate terms, Josef Horáček also proposed to call the Zukofsky's *Catullus* a 'difficult translation' (2014: 107) – a term aligned with Leonard Diepeveen's *The Difficulties of Modernism*

(2013), but at the same time remotely echoing Charles Bernstein's 'attack of difficult poems' from his 2011 book's title. Some creative translators have also stressed the previously signalled subversive nature of their works that in practice function as misfits within the 'proper' translation paradigm. While Hawkey wrote about 'wilful mistranslations' (Hawkey 2013: 6) and Cameron called his poems 'false translations' (Cameron 2007: 211), Sawako Nakayasu almost took it a step further. In her self-founded press tellingly named *Rogue Factorial*, she released her translations and 'anti-translations' of Sagawa's poems, as the book's subtitle hinted: *Translations, Anti-Translations & Originals* (Nakaysu 2011). Such negations and contrastive metaphors might add to overall attempts to debunk the prevailing idea of literary translation. As Nakayasu explained in her interview with Thomas Fink (Nakayasu 2012):

> My subtitle is a gesture towards acknowledging that some of the pieces here would make (some) people nod and say, 'This is a translation.' And some of the pieces here would make (some) people shake their heads and say, 'This is not a translation' or, 'This is doing something that a translation should not do.' Those are the anti-translations.

Regardless of how well-grounded these binary oppositions actually are, the translators still have an inkling of their renderings being incongruous with predominant translation models. Nonetheless, they are willing to produce such experimental works against the current, even if this has to be via independent publishing presses (e.g. Ugly Duckling Press, Factorial Press, Action Books, Telephone Books, Portobello, etc.). Such avant-garde spirit goes far beyond mere provocativeness. It rather emanates from a more profound aesthetic stance, namely that 'non-standard' translations are meant to critique certain assumptions and beliefs about the medium of translation and its cultural significance.

Literary metatranslations composed from multiple versions of the same original text have also emerged on the wave of increasingly frequent translation experiments. As has been suggested, many other twentieeth-century renderings of poetry derive their translation techniques from recognisable Modernist poetic models, including the impressionist, constructivist, cubist, conceptual ones, to mention a few (cf. Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz 2016). In this respect, metatranslations seem no different as they could be seen as reconstructing the OuLiPo multiplicative procedures and treating translation as a special type of constrained writing, namely, writing constrained by some correspondence to the original. This idea definitely lays the foundations for *Le ton beau de Marot* by Hofstadter; it is probably not without reason that the author devoted a large portion of his narrative to English, German, Dutch, and Italian translations of Georges Perec's *La Disparation* and Raymond Queneau's *Exercices de style*. For Hofstadter, the formal constraints he identified in Marot's original poem moulded a creative matrix for multiple translation castings or, following his own metaphor, uncovered a 'mineralogical display featuring sparkling crystals' that glowed with different colours and took on an array of shapes (Hofstadter 1997: 13). Similarly, Marjorie Perloff diagnosed 'the OuLiPo factor' in the procedural poetics of Caroline Bergvall's 'VIA', especially in her desire to demonstrate 'the power of the poetic word' (Perloff 2003). According to Perloff, the poem could be easily interpreted alongside artistic works such as Christopher Bök's *Eunoia* (2001) and Harry's Mathews '35 Variations on a Theme from Shakespeare' (1999). In the first case, Bök wrote each chapter exclusively using words with one particular vowel, a constraint reflected in the titular 'eunoia', apparently the shortest English word containing all five vowels and literally meaning beautiful thinking. In the other one, Mathews transposed the famous 'To be or not to be, that is the question' into a series of what he labelled as 'amplified', 'reductive', 'permuted', 'isomorphic', or 'interfered' versions (Mathews 1999: 90-101). In the same vein, Perloff

would probably also agree about further similarities with a more recently published poetry collection by Paul Hoover, titled *Sonnet 56* (2009), which consists of fifty-six versions of Shakespeare's sonnet of that number in different forms, including a villanelle, ballad, prose poem, and epitaph, to mention a few.

Although Perloff is correct in establishing this conceptual relationship with the OuLiPo writing, it is important to question the implications of such a correspondence for the very fact of translation, which clearly distinguishes Bergvall's case from the latter ones. Metatranslations are not only about rewriting the same work in different styles with a range of formal constraints; they also act as bearers of some still concealed truths about translations that are inaccessible at first glance. Here, translations which are conventionally believed to accurately represent an original and reach its equivalence in a foreign language fragment the source text into dozens of splinters and multiple 'equivalences'. As things fall apart, the equivalence cannot hold. It is revealed that all these different variants equally stand for the prototype and have actually functioned as legitimate translation equivalents in different contexts as a result of constantly changing interpretative approaches and artistic stances. Likewise, their inevitable multiplicity could emanate from one creative mind as a translation is in the making: the process of pondering and probing different translation possibilities and then showing them all without prioritising any single final version lies at the heart of the 'procedural poetics'. Referring to her multiplied 'Promenade', Nakayasu (2012) admitted that she expected her readers to follow her act of 'shifting the emphasis from product (the complete, perfect, final translation) to process (everything that happens on the way to the product).' But although juxtaposing and comparing different versions recorded 'the considerations and questions going through a translator's mind in the moment of translation, which was definitely an intended effect,' she was not sure 'if the average reader is interested in doing that kind of work.' Perhaps irrespective of the hermeneutical effort behind any

comparative analyses of different constituent translations within metatranslations, it is still the mere fact of bringing them all together and dismantling the one-to-one relationship with the source text that does the trick and gives 'average readers' a mild shock therapy.

After all, when Raymond Queneau wrote his *Exercices de style* (1947), the concept was also quite simple: the anecdote about a man on a bus who gets into an argument with another passenger was told ninety-nine times, each time emphasising different parts of the story and describing the event from various angles in radically different styles (including metaphorical, oneiric, epistolary, emphatic, first-person or third-person narrative, the passive voice, different tenses, and so on). As Queneau focused on the variety of expression with different narrators leaving an individual imprint of their fabular styles on each of their versions, all of their perspectives deconstructed the putative original story in ninety-nine completely different texts. Such a multi-threaded performance in Queneau's narrative collage, as Karen L. Taylor remarked (2007: 326), 'was supposedly inspired by a symphony that gave him the idea of writing variations on a theme.' The notion of exercises in various narrative styles might indeed have been fuelled by analogous musical practices, both classical and modern ones. Hofstadter similarly composed his translation multiples around the notion of rhapsody and musical rondo; he compared different translations variants to 'performances of Chopin's etudes in the media of string quartet, woodwind quartet, brass quartet, and barbershop quartet – each one faithful and unfaithful in its own way to the original' (Hofstadter 1997: 246); and reminded of the metaphor of translations as individual piano interpretations of composed masterpieces, just like in Horowitz's own take on Chopin's works (1997: 353-359). In the same vein, the emergence of jazz and improvised music in the twentieeth century paved the way for a range of alternative of the same musical piece by one musician. Some available recordings would offer more than one equally legitimate variant simultaneously, such as Charlie Parker's famous session of May 1, 1951

with two alternate master takes on 'Un Poco Loco', both of which featured in the 1951 album *The Amazing Bud Powell* (*Vol. 1)*; and two alternative albums with different improvisations of the same musical pieces by Ornette Coleman titled respectively *Sound Museum: Hidden Man* and *Sound Museum: Three Women*, both released under the same record label in 1996. Similar instances and productions making it possible to track more than one musical interpretation or improvisation of one piece open up the institution of 'the original score' for performing it differently and anew. At the same time, the score itself is actualised in performance; without individual musicians trying their hand at playing it over and over again, the score would not be brought to life and thus remain inaccessible to the auditors. This is also the case with any original which can be mediated and brought to a wider audience only via other parties involved, especially by means of their own performances, interpretations, testimonies, and translations. And likewise, in Queneau's ninety-nine exercises in recounting one story, the readers do not have a choice but to observe that they lack access to the original default story and to what has actually happened. In fact, the 'naught' or 'hundredth' version that waits to be reported and round off the odd number of exercises ostentatiously goes missing in the thick of narrations as it has already been filtered by different interpreters and subsequent retellers of the event. It would not be of much help either if those on the receiving end of the story had witnessed the actual occurrence themselves; their account would still differ from the previous ones in terms of proportions, emotions, and emphasis.

Such a literary reflection on the way of observing and narrating of what passes as the original object is of course redolent of many twentieeth-century metaworks, belonging to the genres of metadrama, metafilm, and metaliterature. In deconstructing the 'essence', these self-reflexive works have questioned the neutral mediation of narration, often by exposing what has lately been called 'the Rashomon effect' after Akira Kurosawa's 1950 film,

namely, the non-overlapping and even contradictory interpretations of the same event by different witnesses. Similarly, these non-identical accounts could vary within one interpretative mind depending on the sensual impression, contextual setting, mode and position of observation, such as in T. J. Clark's *The Sight of Death* (2000), in which he recorded his constantly shifting responses to the same painting by Poussin every day for a year. Conceptually affiliated with Queneau's exercises, similar metaworks juggling multiple points of view dismantle and reconfigure the notion of what functions as the original object, occurrence, and text. In doing so, they boldly alert the readers to the mediation of the narrator in the process as well as question the neutral relationship between reality and its representation in art and literature. Likewise, the task of literary metatranslation is aligned with such metacritical reflections on unreliable, biased, framed, and contextually situated narratives. In this instance, translation multiples make the readers more sensitive towards analogously self-reflexive features within the domain of translation. By offering more than one legitimate translation variant, they reveal the translator's mediation and active part in retelling the original. At the same time, they also undermine the only sanctioned truth about the source text; as a consequence of that dispersion, what so far appeared as a straightforward, neutral, and objective relationship between the original and its rewriting in a different language and literary culture can hold no more.

For many translators as well as translation critics who have experienced this process at first hand, appealing for multiple possibilities and subjective interpretations in translation might sound like preaching to the converted. Alongside the emergence of Translation Studies as a separate discipline with its contextual and target-oriented methodology, the academic awareness of translation's complexity has gradually changed; especially literary translation is no longer perceived and analysed in terms of mechanical matchings, a calculus of losses and gains, normative linguistic equivalence, or one-to-one representation. One of

the best pieces of evidence for coming to terms with the creative and transformative aspect of translation comes from the recurring critical categories of substitution and contiguity in translation, coined after Roman Jakobson's modes of language: metaphor and metonymy, with the latter clearly winning critics' favour. These notions have slipped into a range of texts on translation by authors such as Octavio Paz (originally in 1971; 1992: 154-155), Douglas Robinson (1991: 141-163), Maria Tymoczko (1999: 278-299); Stephen Yao (2002: 232-233), Theo Hermans (2007: 100-101), Clive Scott (2012a: 3), and Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz (2016: 254-260), who argued that there are two ways of thinking about translation. According to the metaphorical notion, translations are expected to be presented as equivalent substitutes and one-to-one representations of the original, whereas the metonymic one, in Tymoczko's words, valorises 'the creation of connections, contiguities, and contextures in and through translation' (Tymoczko 1999: 280) and so does not claim translated texts embody the originals in their totality. This rhetorical distinction also manifests itself in how translators conceive of their works; according to Douglas Robinson, 'when the metonymic translator seeks to follow the SL [source language] writer, the metaphorical translator seeks to be the SL writer' (Robinson 1997: 163), or in Clive Scott's terms, there are translations that 'try to co-author with Baudelaire' and those which 'purport to be Baudelaire' (Scott 2012a: 3).

Admittedly, translation critics have come to appreciate the metonymic element to the art of translation and contiguous relationships between the originals and their creative rewritings in different languages and literary cultures. Nonetheless, the metaphorical mechanisms still creep into translation production as most literary renderings are still made and read to represent, substitute and 'become' the originals. According to James Holmes, although translations have been overwritten on other texts, the target readers still perceive them as 'primary literature' (Holmes 1970: 93); and – following up on this line of argument

with Stephen Yao's remark – the most tangible symptom of such an ever-present, lingering metaphorical approach to translation is the common practice of publishing translations without accompanying source texts (Yao 2002: 232). As literary translations typically stand on their own to replace the originals, it is difficult to trace any continuous and transformative relationship between them and source texts. Only an extra exegetic effort and comparative analysis of both versions could reveal their metonymic lineage – and that only on the condition that the reader has some command of the original language. Apart from this practical reason, the metaphorical paradigm might still sound more appealing for its alleged epistemological value: after all, it is more convenient to rely on translation as an actual window on the original rather than bother oneself with the thought that a given rewriting is only its partial, incomplete, and subjective reading. Paul de Man once gave an explanation for such cognitive and aesthetic 'superiority of metaphor over metonymy': metaphorical substitution is complacently believed to encompass the 'identity and totality' of the replaced object, unlike metonymy, whose contiguity and combination seem arbitrary and unjustified ('an *element of truth* is involved in taking *Achilles* for a *lion* but none in taking Mr Ford for a motor car;' de Man 1979: 14).

This might explain the discrepancy between what is taken for granted by translation professionals and the awareness of 'average readers', as Nakayasu had it, who tend to be less trained to embrace the metonymic, individual, and tentative streak of the rendering they deal with. Translation metonymy can remain uncovered and stay behind the scenes even for the most experimental attempts such as homophonic, sensual, and multimedial translations; albeit they all *per se* prioritise an arbitrary element of the original text to explore the creative potential of contiguity, the practice of judging them only by their final fruits and ignoring the metamorphosis in the process can by no means do them justice. Without understanding the way any translations have refracted the originals in their own specific ways, the readers

are still unable to trace single metonymies and individual transformations as they occur. Observing the end of a refracted ray does not reveal the angle by which it has veered off from the source milieu; and so reading translation products as one-to-one ready substitutes and totalising metaphors of the originals obscures the tentative, incidental, and historically situated paths they have travelled from.

Certainly, para-textual markers such as translator's introductions, footnotes, and commentaries often fill this gap by exposing the translator's persona and their subjective reading. However, taking the translator's word for granted may easily seduce the audience to the specialist's persuasion, interpretation, and individual point of view. Such a totalising mechanism about what translators at a given point argue to be the best 'equivalent' reading works even more effectively when it provides the sole existing access to a foreign text for the readers unable to compare the original with its translated substitution. Arguably, the danger of metaphorical translation was most poignantly illustrated in the celebrated Greek film by Yorgos Lanthimos, *The Dogtooth* (2009), which hardly qualifies as a film about literary translation as such, but still shocks by a range of tellingly parabolic depictions. In the film, a despotic father who invented an entirely closed society for his long-imprisoned oblivious children would constantly control them by 'translating' the foreign world for them into his own infantilised categories. In one of the scenes, he exercised a simultaneous translation of Frank Sinatra's song *Fly Me to the Moon* into Greek and reinvented all the lyrics one by one, pretending that the vocalist was the children's late grandfather expressing love to the family and convincing them all to stay strong together. Enjoying his monopoly for truth and equivalence, the father clearly manipulated his translation to further his evil goals and took advantage of his children's lack of command of the English language. Unless confronted by other interpreters with their alternative readings, he could cherish the

uncontested and exclusive license for translation and keep the children in the dark blinded by his totalising illusion.

Deconstructing such a monopoly for one totalising point of view lies at the core of what I understand to be the ethical aspect of literary metatranslation. Only when having a host of refractions at their disposal, the readers are finally exposed to the 'translation prism' with its multiplicity, variety of colours, and differently deviating interpretations. In *The Dogtooth*, too, listening to other voices eventually proved the only way out and slowly started fracturing the father's authoritative kingdom; a turn of events which followed the visit of a guest from outside who intruded the family and planted a seed of doubt in the children's minds. Similarly, having been exposed to more different interpretations, the readers of translation multiples have no choice but to revise and suspend their belief about one true representation of the original senses; even though they unchangeably lack direct access to the source text, they are henceforth themselves capable of noticing the impossibility of reaching it holistically by means of translation. As multiple readings break the magic spell of the one-to-one substitution of the original, the translation metaphor gets dismantled and fragmented into various metonymic transformations and individual voices. Forcing the reader out of their comfort zone and the usual passive reception of translations as the authentic equivalent representations of source texts is thus what amounts to the task of literary metatranslations. Whether classified as Jiří Levý's 'anti-illusionist' techniques (1963; 2011: 19), a part of Lawrence Venuti's 'foreignising' ethical agenda (1995; 2008b: 18), or Theo Hermans' 'representations by *displaying*' (as opposed to *replaying*) coined after Cecilia Wadensjö's distinction (Hermans 2007: 33), literary metatranslations definitely continue a similar mission. In alerting the audience to the translating self, they lift the veil on the process of metonymic reconfiguration and the very fact of dealing with the texture and discursive dimension of translation.

In a sense, the following Polish examples of literary metatranslations all of which came to being after the symbolic date of 1989 also had their own despotic patriarch to overturn. Since they all in one way or another needed to deal with the legacy of the former Communist regime, its echoes still haunted their translators as they multiplied different readings of the original texts and engaged with alternative viewpoints. In the cases discussed in the following three chapters, the desire to dismantle the metaphorical norm of producing only one translation equivalent follows a broader ethical agenda emerging from the post-Communist reality. The act of producing, welcoming, and recognising more than one metonymic interpretation and point of view opens the original up in a pluralist gesture. Metatranslation thus provides an open forum for multiple stances and critiquing different ideas such as the authoritative notion of literal translation, surrounding political reality, cyclical course of history, and many other aspects of the present and the past. And therefore, translation multiples embrace yet another mission: as they break through the illusion of one-to-one equivalence, they also test the medium of translation to challenge the belief in one totalising truth, one authentic ideology, and one ideal system.

In the Polish context, similar translatorial gestures carry larger cultural resonances. Contrary to the English-speaking world, translation and reflection of translation with their rich and extremely varied traditions occupies a more central space within the literary and cultural discourse. And thus, it comes as no surprise that the act of debunking the translation metaphor in favour of multiple metonymies has become yet another form of artistic expression practiced by well-established translator figures. This idea could perhaps be most explicitly reflected in Stanisław Barańczak's categories of *pars pro toto* versus *totum pro parte* and his metatraslations of poetry of the early 1990s introduced in the next chapter. The poet's long-standing agenda of merging ethics and poetics in literature and translation will then find its counterparts in two consecutive projects born of the same premise. The double

or even triple translation of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* in Robert Stiller's translation (1999) will unmask a vicious circle of recurring totalitarian systems and so act as a bearer of bad news about the ongoing political reality. The project of translating Brecht in four ways by a quartet of Polish translators (2012) will eventually transpose the ethics of the multiple into an openly dialectic discussion about the original author. By overtly acknowledging four diverging ideas about Brecht's poetry, this metatranslation will attempt to discard his previously manipulated and biased readings. With similar broader and humanist issues at stake, I will discuss in the three next chapters how the pluralist undercurrent of the following Polish multiples adds yet another layer to the ethical task of literary metatranslation. In the post-Communist Polish cases, undermining the canonised authority of translation equivalence by accepting other possible interpretations becomes a more democratic gesture targeted at the totalitarian legacy. By opposing what a tyrannical father has instructed, literary metatranslation in this context has also the potential of acknowledging other individual points of view and teaching how to co-exist in society with full responsibility.

2. Stanisław Barańczak's Artistic Liberation through Translation (1990s)

IOSIF BRODSKY: The boy is a genius, Stasiek, ya?
CZESŁAW MIŁOSZ: Fantastic.
IOSIF BRODSKY: What he does in translation rates absolutely remarkable.
(Brodsky & Miłosz 2006: 117-118)

2.1. Introduction

As an oft-quoted anecdote has it, when the Polish theatre critic Jan Kott phoned Stanisław Barańczak from his house in Santa Monica, the poet's wife picked up the call to apologise for Barańczak's unavailability. Upon hearing that his friend was at that moment busy translating *Hamlet* into Polish, Kott was said to reply: 'That's fine. I'll wait on the phone then' (Gorczyńska 2015: 112).[2] However tongue-in-cheek this story is, it actually hints at something that granted Barańczak almost a cult status as a literary translator in contemporary Poland: his unique knack for creative translation, his great finesse and ease in finding the least obvious solutions as well as the terrifying speed with which his renderings of Shakespeare and Anglophone verse proliferated in the early 1990s. Having been banned from printing in Communist Poland, Barańczak re-entered the literary scene soon after 1989 with great panache: publishing (besides his own poetry and essays) a variety of artistic translations and translation criticism, often in the unconventional form of playful translation books and thematic anthologies. It is also partly due to the scope and abundance of his translation activity that Barańczak became an iconic figure of English-Polish intercultural transfer throughout the last two decades. He may also be the only translator in history with such a recognisable and characteristic literary translation output that it was possible to turn

[2] All translations into English are my own unless otherwise stated.

this into a theatrical play in its own right. Staged for the first time in 2013 (*Teatr Nowy w Poznaniu* [Poznań New Theatre], dir. Jerzy Satanowski), the play *Mister Barańczak* has a very telling title: it presents the poet with an English form of address, which alludes both to his American literary persona as well as the crucial role he had in his mediation between Anglophone and Polish literary traditions. At the same time, Barańczak's renderings and texts devoted to the art of translation have triggered much scholarly and literary debate on translation theory and practice. What particularly stirred up controversy in the early 1990s was his unfavourable diagnoses of Polish translations of poetry to date, even more so as they constituted a critical voice from the 'outside'. This somewhat polemical attitude and subversive tone stemmed not only from Barańczak's particular aesthetic preferences, but also, more importantly, from his entire understanding of what literary translation is and what it entails for the reader. In the end, some of his texts, if not revolutionary, then at least challenging, provided a refreshing perspective on the relationship between the original and its creative rendering in the Polish literary translation tradition.

In this chapter, I will take a closer look at Barańczak's essays as well as a few examples of his unconventional translations in order to establish a link between his understanding of translation and ethical approach to artistic practice. In, particular, I will attempt to read his curious practice of multiplying translations in different variants as a form of artistic liberation and continuation of the New Wave language-oriented poetics. His experimental projects such as homophonic metatranslations from his 'private' anthology of experimental literary genres *Pegaz zdębiał* [Pegasus Fell Dumb] (1995) discussed later in this chapter will thus be placed alongside his translation multiples from the collection of Anglophone nonsense verse titled *Fioletowa krowa* [Purple Cow] (1993) as well as many other subversive translation techniques. As I will argue, the ostensibly insignificant, but also unprecedented, idea of multiplying different renderings accords with Barańczak's earlier

texts on the ethical role of poetry, his understanding of translation as literary communication with the readers, and his artistic strategy of presenting translations from multiple individual angles. Bringing these aspects to the fore, I will focus on a range of translation ideas and procedures providing the backdrop to Barańczak's practice of literary metatranslation. In his unconventional translations of poetry, Barańczak most radically attempted to test and push the boundaries of the standardised one-to-one relationship and semantic equivalence between the original and its rendering. What seems especially salient in the case of his two aforementioned collections is the fact that the translator's experimental gestures have not gone unnoticed among the readership, including many critics and poets who commented on its importance for the general reflection on translation.

Although Barańczak's transition to writing and translating nonsense verse and publishing playful translation books was at large received with surprise and even slight condescension,[3] he himself found this genre of no lesser importance. In fact, he quite often compared it to the metaphysical poetry he translated throughout the 1980s, and not only by pointing to the conceptual aspect of the two. In the interview entitled 'Z trzech stron barykady' [From the Three Sides of the Barricade], he elaborated on this parallel as follows (Barańczak 1991d: 111):

> I will only repeat the hypothesis from my introduction to *Fioletowa krowa:* a metaphysical poet differs from a nonsense poet perhaps merely in the fact that the latter has nothing else left but laughter. I am not sure myself if this is true, but it is definitely certain that these days Poland lacks a bit of sense of humour; and it is the feature that we should nourish as it will quite often come in handy in the near and far future.

[3] This inclination of literary critics to underappreciate Barańczak's nonsense poetry and creative experiments by treating them as interesting and aesthetically pleasing, but otherwise unchallenging, was critiqued by a range of commentators: Leszek Szaruga (1996: 138), Janusz Drzewucki (1996: 14), Beata Śniecikowska (2000: 243), Tomasz Fiałkowski (2006: 32). Czesław Karkowski even insisted that: 'the unserious accomplishments of the serious poet are always serious' (Karkowski 1996: 16).

Barańczak's cautious response to the new reality after the 1989 transition emanated from his oft-repeated belief the poet's mission does not terminate with the end of political 'pressure'. According to him, the introduction of democracy did not automatically solve all human problems (Barańczak 1995b: 367) and individual members of the society were confronted with both new challenges and old dilemmas: whether mundane and practical or of an ethical and metaphysical nature (Barańczak 1991a: 3). Like in the case of the Polish lyricist and cabaret performer, 'Jeremi Przybora, whose light nonsense verse helped millions of people walk away almost without a scratch from the few decades of heavy nonsense that constituted the Communist reality of Polish People's Republic' (Barańczak 1995c: 8), Barańczak's own nonsense verse translated after the 1989 transition also had its own mission to fulfil. Not so coincidentally, this milestone in Eastern European history also ushered in the period in which Barańczak produced most of his translations from English: thousands of poems from almost all epochs, distinct literary traditions, and in various thematic combinations, collections, anthologies which included intersemiotic translations, translations riddles, and other experimental genres. For one thing, introducing such a scope of Anglophone authors in 1990s Post-Communist Poland could fill plenty of literary gaps remaining after a relatively limited circulation of Western writers in general. For another thing, it compensated for Barańczak's previous absence in the Polish official publishing scene and finally gave the poet vent to his artistic expression, additionally fuelled by his experience of emigration and constant need to translate and mediate between cultures.

2.2. Against the Spirit of Generalisation

Before the fall of Communism, Barańczak was labelled as a 'dissident' poet and belonged to what is called the New Wave or Generation of 1968. This literary movement was formed by the experience of anti-regime protests of students and intellectuals in March

1968, followed by workers' riots in December 1970 and resulting in a range of oppositionist initiatives: strikes in 1976, an establishment of uncensored underground publishing in the same year and finally the emergence of the 'Solidarity' movement in 1980. Barańczak, as a co-founder of the human rights group KOR [Workers' Defence Committee], a lecturer at the independent educational institution called the Flying University, and one of the key anti-communist activists, soon became an officially banned author. Indeed, his poetry targeted any form of the oppression exercised on the individual and attempted to expose the hollowness, uniformity, and totalising force of the newspeak and propaganda by 'calling every word as a false witness' (*każde słowo wzywając na fałszywego świadka*; Barańczak 1970a) and examining 'the word in the state of suspicion' (*słowo w stanie podejrzenia*) (Barańczak, 1975: 85). In principle, he formulated the New Wave program in his 1970 manifesto when he appealed for poetry that is a system of distrust and gets into critical and inquisitive confrontation with the political and linguistic discourses (Barańczak 1970b). For such a dissident activity, Barańczak's texts were intermittently prevented from appearing in official print from 1977 onwards, and so they would be usually released in the so-called 'second circulation' (underground press) or by publishing houses abroad, especially in London or Paris. In this way, Barańczak and many other intellectuals of the anti-regime faction tried to operate in a grey area and somehow 'breathe under water', as the poet called that later in the title to his essays published in the United States (Barańczak 1990b). After the enforced dismissal from his university position in Poland, he was supposed to take over a temporary academic post at the Harvard University. However, the authorities of the Polish People's Republic tried to hinder the process of issuing his passport and tediously delayed it for a few years. Finally, in 1981 Barańczak managed to emigrate to the United States and became a lecturer at Harvard. After the imposition of Martial Law in Poland in December

1981 and the university offering him a permanent position in 1984, he taught there until the late 1990s and continued to live in Massachusetts until his recent death in 2014.

Although Barańczak himself did not approve of the 'émigré' pigeonhole, his writing from the 1980s onwards was very much influenced by the experience of living abroad, especially the need to self-translate and express himself by means of a different cultural sensitivity. In his own poetry collections, such as *Atlantyda* [Atlantis] (1986) and *Widokówka z tego świata* [A Postcard from This World] (1988), as well as essays, for instance in *Tablica z Macondo* [A License Plate from Macondo] (1990), he included first testimonies and concerns about the incongruity between different linguistic and literary systems as well as the impossibility of belonging in a foreign language. These experiences and the process of estranging himself from the naturalness of his own language by approaching it through the prism of another language and culture made Barańczak a very self-conscious translator and critic of language. Combined with the previous New Wave-grounded ethical approach to language, his awareness and reflexive insight fitted squarely into the new interlingual context. What he could place 'in the state of suspicion' was the very act of translating two different literary worlds that can never match each other completely and therefore it is the translator's active role to mediate between them for the sake of his readers. Of course, Barańczak was interested in literary translation much earlier: he tried his hand at this art during his studies, incorporated a slim selection of translated poems into his poetry book *Jednym tchem* [Without Stopping for Breath] in 1970, wrote a paper on translating poetry in the 70s (Barańczak 1974: 47-74), published the first shorter version of his anthology of metaphysical poets with an underground press in 1979 (Barańczak 1979a). But it is only in the first years of the Post-Communist Polish reality that he could truly invest the unprecedented amount of volume and energy to intense translation activity. In that time, he both promulgated translated Anglophone poetry and initiated

controversial, heated-up translation polemics from the position of a fully-fledged practitioner and critic.

In the early 1990s, Barańczak's sharp sting of critique swept away almost the entire scene of literary translators whose work he debunked for a range of generalising misconceptions. Although in his scathing analyses Barańczak would generally set the artistic bar really high and accordingly dismiss some solutions, it is essential to see his discussions and responses to attacks beyond his aesthetic preferences and within a broader understanding of how he generally approached poetry translation. His early essays, later collected in the canonical *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu* [Saved in Translation] (1992, expanded in 2004), as well as series of polemics over that time, however multi-threaded and meticulously argued, often seemed to revolve around one key issue: how too literalist and philologically-oriented an approach to the original can lead to a blind alley and how its products by no means classify as communicative texts, let alone good poetry. Barańczak equally disapproved of, for example, Andrew Marvell's poems rendered in prose by Adam Czerniawski, whose focus on the semantic aspect led him to producing worthless 'cribs' (Barańczak 1990c: 32); Jerzy Sito's translations of John Donne which clumsily aspired to simulate old texts and did not sound intelligible for the contemporary reader (Barańczak 1990c: 39-45); and Maciej Słomczyński's historically-oriented reconstructions of Shakespearean verse at the expense of Barańczak's postulated 'comprehensibility', 'poetical value', and 'theatrical potential' (Barańczak 1990d: 14-16). During his polemic with Grzegorz Musiał (Barańczak 1994a, Musiał 1994, Barańczak 1994b), he sarcastically advised him to throw away an English-Polish dictionary to avoid thoughtless and mechanical transferring words into his renderings of American poetry. In his response to Andrzej Sosnowski and Bogdan Zadura's unfavourable reviews (Sosnowski, 1994; Zadura 1994) of his own collection of W.H. Auden's poetry, he parried the accusations of infidelity to the original by ridiculing the

critics' captious 'finger method'. According to him, their approach consisted merely in pointless matching and verifying consecutive words one by one in the source and target text (Barańczak 1994d: 377-78).

Although this list does not really exhaust Barańczak's discussions carried on throughout the 1990s, it gives an idea of how openly he would protest against staying too close to the letter of the original or confining poetry to its literal or 'semantic' aspect as disastrous to the artistic quality of translation. What is also worth noting, regardless of whether his diagnoses of the literary translation were actually judicious and well-calibrated, they still rhetorically aided him to construct a more or less consistent figure of the lyrically inapt and 'literalist' translator. Of course, Barańczak targeted his critique at his few favourite whipping boys, such as Maciej Słomczynski who technically cherished the exclusive rights for translating Shakespeare in the Communist period; and he clearly avoided hurling insults at others. In this way, however, he could take a strong critical stance towards what he diagnosed as the main disadvantage in Polish literary translation activity and subsequently crystallise his own translation doctrine in strong opposition to it.

His campaign against reductionist literalism was presented at its fullest in his 'Mały, ale maksymalistyczny manifest translatologiczny' [A Small, but Maximalist Translatological Manifesto] (Barańczak 1990c) with a provocative and witty subtitle playing on the double meaning of the Polish verb *tłumaczyć* (translate, explain): 'Tłumaczenie się z tego, że tłumaczy się wiersze również w celu wytłumaczenia innym tłumaczom, iż dla większości tłumaczeń nie ma wytłumaczenia' [Explaining yourself that you translate poems also in order to explain to other translators that for the majority of translations there is no explanation]. Like in his New Wave manifesto (Barańczak 1970b), he articulated his creed in opposition to the prevalent discourse, this time protesting against oversimplified preconceptions about literary translation as well as the ubiquitous practice of reducing poetry

translation to an unreflective treatment of literalism and inept recreation of a poetic text. He set out by dismantling some hackneyed metaphors about translation, for example the 'chauvinistic' and 'clichéd aphorism' (1990c: 11, 12) to the effect that translation is like a woman: either beautiful or faithful. He argued that although this binary opposition in fact holds for neither of these, it still creates a powerful dogma that 'fidelity' is an absolute and ungradable value in poetry translation. Instead, according to him, what people usually think of as 'faithfulness' to the original sense very much depends on the approach pursued by an individual interpreter (1990c: 12).

Becoming aware of this selective take on the original poetic sense could therefore serve as a remedy for the *status quo* in poetry translation in Poland. To this end, Barańczak introduced the concept of 'semantic dominant' (previously, 'stylistic dominant'; Barańczak 1984a):[4] the aesthetic principle according to which an original poem is structured and which a translator focuses on in their rendering. What added up to the 'semantic' for Barańczak, however, goes far beyond the poem's literal meaning. For example, Barańczak argued that for some poems 'music *is* the meaning' (1990c: 24) and sometimes a translator can decide to prioritise the melody or prosodic quality of a poem. No matter if a translator sees the 'dominant' in the poem's original conceit, set of rhymes, humour, and a combination of various features, the starting point for their creative translation is defined more subjectively than it seems with the more general philological equivalence. In Barańczak's view, there exists not only one literal 'truth' about the original poem and since the meaning in poetry cannot be separated from the form and other elements, it encompasses much more than the original message transferred verbatim. As a result, the translator's task is to identify the

[4] The term itself was probably taken from the Polish Formalist Kazimierz Wóycicki or Russian Formalists who adapted it from the German theorist Broder Christiansen (cf. Karcz 2002: 80-82; Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz 2016: 117-118).

qualities which appear most important for the relevant interpretation and then, trying to retrieve them against all odds, create an artistically valuable poem in Polish.

In his translation manifesto as well as in further texts published in *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu* [Saved in Translation] (1992b/2004), Barańczak himself demonstrated this creative procedure to his readers and convincingly justified his own choices of respective semantic dominants with compelling interpretations of poetry. Piotr Wilczek comments that contrary to Barańczak's auto-ironic claims (Barańczak 1990c: 7), the powerful appeal of these essays and polemics does not stem from the poet's conceited approach, but rather from the persuasive argumentation of his translation strategies (Wilczek 2007: 208) that the readers can ponder and evaluate on their own. Barańczak clearly objected to imposing his authoritative voice without any textual support; instead, he tried to win the reader's favour, by promoting his own view on what semantic dominant in discussed cases amounts to and how it should be saved in translation. Furthermore, in his translation manifesto, he stressed the gesture of opening the forum for discussion, also with other translators, while suggesting quite an opposite, more individual and therefore subjective, approach (Barańczak 1990c: 31):

> In other words, my private normative translation poetics is maximalist in the sense that I would like to pose maximal requirements on myself as well as on other translators; and that I sometimes feel immodestly certain I have outmatched other translators; but it does *not* assume that the same poem could not be rendered in a better way. This can be done by another translator who will introduce a reading that is polemical to my own, that is different, fuller or more apt, and will convincingly make it work in Polish.

Whereas the literalist or philologically-oriented renderings of poetry, which can be more easily verified by the 'finger method', leave less space for discussion, the notion of semantic dominant every time hinges on acts of establishing individual holistic readings of the original and then trying to recreate them accordingly in translation. In this sense,

Barańczak's project opposes the authoritative, but in the case of poetry vaguely defined principle of 'fidelity' and instead invites more dialectical, though at the same well-argued, readings that inspire translations of the highest artistic quality.

There are a few important points to be made about Barańczak's intellectual and ethical stance in his translatological manifesto, essays, and polemics over the early 1990s. In his recent study on the New Wave poets' translation practice, *Przekraczanie obcości* [Overcoming Foreignness] (2013), Arkadiusz Luboń quite rightly drew a parallel between Barańczak's 1990 manifesto and the New Wave agenda of distrust to language which opposed the totalising propaganda discourse and inflated slogans. On numerous occasions, in his essays on the role of poetry, Barańczak would protest against capacious generalisations and abstract myths, calling for an explicit and concrete idiom of poetic expression. In his key texts, the manifesto 'Parę przypuszczeń o współczesnej poezji' [A Couple of Conjectures on Contemporary poetry] (1970b) and 'Pokaż język' [Show Your Tongue/Language] (1975), later placed together in his famous book *Etyka i poetyka* [Ethics and Poetics] (1979b), he established an opposition between collective beliefs, sentiments, or hysterias, and individual thinking as an active resistance to vast uniformity. According to Luboń (2013: 101-121), the bridge between the poetic and translatological agenda can be noticed on a few levels. Firstly, as he argued, Barańczak's suspicious attitude to language resulted in his consecutive urge to translate, to comment with his translation on the original text, and to take a stance to other renderings. Then, his lyrical inclination to concrete language would be reflected in the way he supported all his arguments with very specific examples of individual renderings; and the demand for unveiled, straightforward speech would influence his particular focus on clarity and communicative expression in translation.

As much as Luboń is correct in identifying all these similarities, I believe that Barańczak's category of 'ethics and poetics' intersects even further with his translation

criticism and practice. In opposing the unhelpful notion of 'fidelity' in poetry translation, which was commonly believed to be accomplished through what he saw as reductionist literalism, Barańczak again refused to support the prevailing discourse and decided to take the side of the individual and the particular. To this end, he suspiciously examined further generalisations and myths – that of fidelity in general, as well as the mutually exclusive quality of either faithfulness or beauty in translation – which are particularly prone to manipulation and easy to enforce by means of philological apparatus or the 'finger method'. But although the products of these abstract categories only pretend to be telling the entire truth about original poems, they in fact oversimplify a range of multiple distinct works by fetishizing semantics as their most important quality irrespective of the particular case. As this misconception blurs the common understanding of what 'meaning' in poetry really amounts to, in the practical aftermath, most translators tend to prioritise the literal aspect in their renderings. As a remedy for this, Barańczak spoke in favour of the individual perspective in literary translation and pursued this argument on a few levels. In the fragment quoted before, he introduced his ideas by calling them his '*private* normative poetics' and throughout the manifesto, he always stressed his historical situatedness and specific artistic preferences. Thanks to these self-reflective observations, in addition to meticulous discussions of particular translation examples, Barańczak did not aspire to reveal some objective truth about translation. Instead, he himself stood up against the impersonal and generalised discourse on fidelity in poetry translation, which reduced the multi-faceted complexity and individual element in this task, and called for what is private, particular, and relative. When proposing the 'semantic dominant' approach, Barańczak articulated also something that was perhaps already salient and intuitive: the subjectivity of interpretation preceding every act of translating a literary work. However, what transpires to be more important for his 1990 translatological manifesto and his entire project henceforth was the

awareness of different possible readings and equally legitimate translation strategies, of course on the condition that: they were convincingly argued, their tentativeness, multitude, and arbitrariness made explicit to the readers, and the aesthetical tasks accompanying them aptly performed in translation.

The manifesto was later reprinted in his *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu* [Saved in Translation] (1992b, 2004), a collection of essays as well as 'a little anthology of problem translations', in which the recipient was invited to read translations as riddles or '40 puzzles in the form of 40 poems to translate, each supplied with a commentary explaining in detail why this task is practically impossible, and 40 solutions to the puzzles in the form of translations done nevertheless.' The book was organised in such a way that it presented the original poem first, followed by Barańczak's commentary and the pointed 'Zadanie' [Task] of the translator with regard to the previously identified semantic dominant in this specific literary work. However, the 'Rozwiązanie' [Solution], which is the Polish translation of the poem, did not immediately accompany these texts, but was found after the whole collection of 'tasks'. Naturally, conceptualising the process of translation as 'a task', with its 'solution' placed some pages later, becomes a persuasive rhetorical device: Barańczak identifies the dominant and formulates 'the task' in a way in which he would later solve it, pointing to the most important issues he himself considered crucial for the interpretation of a poem. The rules of this translation game, however, are entirely explicit: Barańczak would display his translation, only after openly lobbying for his reading and fighting for his audience's favour about a particular semantic dominant. Despite the alleged 'characteristic swagger' and 'braggish tone', as Barańczak called them in the book's teaser for *Harvard Review* titled 'Saved in Translation…: Well, Part of It' (Barańczak 1992c: 42), he would always support his claims with well-informed and meticulously argued analyses of the dominant artistic features. At the same time, these investigations still remain his individual and tentative takes

on the original; in the announcement to the sample of his forthcoming project in the Parisian *Zeszyty Literackie* he would state that: the tasks are 'what *in my opinion* constitute the semantic dominants' (Barańczak 1991c: 33, my emphasis) and 'the Reader is invited to attempt to solve each of these 40 cases on their own' (33). The idea underpinning his reticular editorial arrangement is, therefore, that the reader participates in the moment of recognition and follows Barańczak's steps to discover how elements of the puzzle gradually form the final image. In this sense, the poet invited the reader to enter his *private* translation gallery, simultaneously revealing the backstage of the craft. Such an individualised way of approaching translation semantic dominants could be also traced in Barańczak's further translation *oeuvre*, especially in his introductions to translated poetry collections. In his series of various Anglophone poets published throughout the 1990s as *Biblioteczka poetów języka angielskiego* [A Little Library of English Language Poets], Barańczak always included a translator's foreword with a theme or interpretative key determining the reading of a particular selection in his Polish version: for example, *intensely sad* for Philip Larkin's 44 poems (1991), *some hope* for Thomas Hardy's 55 poems (1993), *to love one another or die* for W.H. Auden's 44 poems (1994), *the music of what happens* for Seamus Heaney's 44 poems (1995), and so on. In this way, he would signal the semantic dominant alongside which the poems were interpreted and the readers could subsequently trace how his particular line of thinking would permeate his translations.

Barańczak's resistance to totalitarian generalisations, to all intents and purposes, definitely stood the test of time as he would claim in his lectures published as essays in the early 1990s. In one of them, titled 'Poezja i duch Uogólnienia' [Poetry and the Spirit of Generalisation] (1992), he alluded to the fragment from Czesław Miłosz's 'Sześć wykładów wierszem' (Six Lectures in Verse): *prawdziwy wróg człowieka jest uogólnienie* ('The true enemy of man is generalization', trans. Czesław Miłosz and Leonard Nathan, 1987).

Through this reference, he argued that the spirit of generalisation would not disappear after the fall of Communism and would still haunt every society, regardless of the geographical location and time period, as it had for past centuries. According to him, taking broad ideas and ideological 'isms' for granted leads to some interest groups advocating the notion of the collective and replacing the truth of the individual with false generalisations. He also allusively referred this remark to rising nationalisms in the Balkans, in a sense heralding the ethnic conflicts later to unfold in the Yugoslav War: what legitimises killing is the situation when a human no longer sees oneself as an individual, a unique being with a particular name, but as a 'Serb shooting a Croat, or the other way round' (Barańczak, 1992a: 256). In opposition to this, poetry should be the voice of the individual, not dictated by any of the manipulative umbrella terms; and so it can also trespass the boundaries of the 'nationalisms' through translation: the act of transferring a foreign tradition to a local one means that it is possible, if not to share, then at least to situate the experience of a specific individual in relation to someone else's in a different part of the globe. At the same time, however, the speaking self needs to be clear about this 'concrete' situatedness in place and time, and point to the particularity of their critical position in every artistic act. Therefore, similar to his earlier anti-systemic essay on the 'generalising and concretising words' (*słowo-powszechnik* and *słowo-konkret*; Barańczak 1975: 75-80), Barańczak postulated that 'concrete' language should oppose the mechanism of *totum pro parte*, taking a part for a greater whole, by practically favouring *pars pro toto*, a poetical synecdoche that zooms into a portion of a panoramic entity (Barańczak, 1992a: 255-257). This ethical ideal emanating from Barańczak's creed, as Hanna Trubicka remarked in her 'Stanisław Barańczak jako krytyk języka' [Stanisław Barańczak as a Critic of Language] (2011: 139), needs to be read with regard to any possible utterance in language, either in a written or spoken form; and is,

indeed, in accordance with what Barańczak claimed in his 'translatological manifesto' about the semantic dominant and the individualised framing of translation.

The most important implication of the 'part for the whole' approach, however, is that it implicitly assumes multiple different fragmentations that can be possibly generated at the same time as a result of various 'partial' readings. In yet another essay titled 'Człowiek, Który Za Dużo Wie' [The Man Who Knows Too Much] (1995), Barańczak praised the poetic imagination for 'not seeing the forest from behind the trees' and focusing on certain single species as opposed to overwhelmingly exuberant projects and what George H. W. Bush called 'the vision thing' (Barańczak 1995b: 360). Hanna Trubicka interpreted this text in slightly Bakhtinian terms as the call for polyphonic language and pluralist diversity of individual stances. As she stated, in Barańczak's philosophy of language, the alternative options 'not necessarily get into conflict, quite often being on a par with or complimentary with one another. […] Polyphony fosters the respect for what is concrete, and its opposition, monophony, can easily take on the form of generalised speech' (Trubicka, 2011: 145). These conclusions sound very pertinent for Barańczak's post-1989 poetry, collected in his last book *Chirurgiczna precyzja* [Surgical Precision] (1998), which was quite often praised for its lyrical density and multiple meanings packed up into relatively minimalist form. Thanks to the eponymous 'surgical precision', Barańczak attempted to inspect and stretch the potential of every single word by playing on its polysemy, etymologies, idiomatic connections, ambiguities. Depending on different contexts, Barańczak would hint at its wide-ranging connotations and complexity, an artistic gesture that Jerzy Kandziora interpreted in the light of Barańczak's ethics as the *imperatyw wieloaspektowości* [the imperative of many-sidedness]: the urge to dismantle what is one-dimensional and unilateral by garnering different meanings and 'truths' within one poem (Kandziora 2007: 360). In this way, without excluding one another, various particular readings and equally legitimate

interpretations could safely nest and co-exist in one lyrical area in order to contribute to its diverse imagery. In an interview a year after the collection's publication, Barańczak admitted that thanks to his rich translation experience he could 'acquire the ability to speak in multiple different voices' in his own poetry of that time (Barańczak, 1999: 9). *Chirurgiczna precyzja*, the book of poems musically woven from 'elegies and songs' and written from 1995 to 1997, resounded in its polyphony also as Barańczak engaged with different foreign authors he translated in the 1990s. Clare Cavanagh commented on this collection humorously: 'I can hear the echoes of familiar poets speaking unexpectedly with the Polish accent: naturally, Donne and Dickinson, James Merrill, Philip Larkin and Seamus Heaney. This is a multilingual performance or a terrifying nightmare about taking an oral exam in a wrong language' (Cavanagh, 1999: 154). But it is exactly through this many-sided and multi-voiced texture in his late poetry that Barańczak could continue his ethical project and pursue a suspicious approach to the monochromatic, totalising language expressed consistently in different forms of writing: whether it be essays, poetry, or translation.

In addressing the question of whether Barańczak's ethical *pars pro toto* principle with its consequent polyphony of individual perspectives can be also noticed in Barańczak's art of translation, I will need to add a caveat from the outset. Just as in the case of Barańczak's notion of semantic dominant and his explicitly 'private' readings of the original in the Anglophone poetry series and translation puzzles, I am more interested in how the poet constructed and presented his translations on a conceptual level, rather than in his linguistic translation choices influenced by his poetic inspirations and aesthetic preferences. The latter have so far been extensively studied in a range of articles and even monographs (e.g. Rajewska 2007b; Kaczorowska 2011); and perhaps there are some conclusions to draw from a debate over how and whether Barańczak upheld his declarations in his translation poetics that are worth mentioning in that respect. It would be, nonetheless, definitely difficult

to establish unequivocally whether Barańczak's idiom of translation, with all its creativity, diversity, and flexibility, would for example make the translated language more 'concrete' and specific in relation to the original one. It has been argued that Barańczak quite often additionally fleshed out some details and made the imagery more precise, explicit, and sharper in his renderings, for instance, of poetry by Edward Lear and Emily Dickinson (Kaczorowska 2012: 138-141; 166-169) and Shakespearean verse (Cetera 2008: 178-211). However, more unfavourable critics at the same time accused him of the exactly opposite propensity: reinforcing too figurative a language and upgrading simple words to overly lyrical phrases, for example in his translations of Seamus Heaney and Philip Larkin (Jarniewicz, 2001: 217). Furthermore, asking specifically about polyphony in the case of translation language, which in its quintessence engages in a dialogue with a different text, might not bear any relevant fruit for this case either. So instead of trying to establish anything definite on this front, I will rather point to the way Barańczak's publishing practice of multiplying translation variants could be read alongside his artistic campaign against the totalising and seemingly objective literalist notion of fidelity. This differentiating strategy could undermine the authority of the original (the *totum*) by breaking this ostensibly monolithic textual whole into various dialectic readings (*partes*). All this also corresponds to his gesture of opening to discussion poetry with all its polysemy, looking for individual semantic dominants, and performing them in translation. As Barańczak conceptualised the art of poetry translation in terms of approaching the original along an individually adapted methodology and invited other translators to challenge his own reading by polemical interpretations and renderings, he also implicitly assumed the existence of a platform for pluralist approaches and different possible variants in translation.

This tension between potentially multiple renderings and the inevitably one final product has been challenged in a few aspects of Barańczak's translation practice. According

to his friend Irena Grudzińska-Gross, having been asked to prepare a poem's renderings serving her own purposes, the translator would indeed quite often offer her multiple different variants 'to choose from', depending on which met her needs, which she liked best, which accentuated the relevant notions, etc. (Grudzińska-Gross 2016). Also, in his translatological manifesto, Barańczak explicitly remarked that different translation solutions might be not only proposed, but actually performed by the translator himself (Barańczak 1990c: 31): 'after some time, as it were, in the polemics with oneself; and that happened to me plenty of times, I will quote some examples of such a situation further on in this screed.' The idea of Barańczak's polemics with oneself has been in fact recorded in print beyond the said essay discussion of different possibilities. In the late 1990s, almost all of his collections of translated poetry published previously over the 1980s by *Znak* press appeared in reeditions, in parts changed or rewritten by the translator. When analysing the two respective versions of all those renderings (metaphysical poets: John Donne, Henry Vaughan, George Herbert; G.M. Hopkins, E.E. Cummings, and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*), Monika Kaczorowska (2011: 105-135) drew the conclusion that Barańczak very often freely replaced his first choices with other creative options. According to her, rather than correct earlier solutions, Barańczak would only juggle equally accurate, though alternative poetic devices, paraphrase earlier fragments with synonymic variants, and break down the original polysemy into other plausible meanings. By creating second legitimate versions of his translations and launching them into circulation, Barańczak would refuse to make a final choice and in this way he would save the multi-threaded potential of the original. Treating this strand as a characteristic feature of Barańczak's own poetics of generating multiple variants (*wariantowość*), Kaczorowska even opted for a certain editorial solution (2011: 135): 'It would be sensible if not only critical editions, but also popular versions presented all the variants of Barańczak's translations.' This suggestion definitely gives some food for

thought, especially given that it is in accordance with Barańczak's ethical line of thinking: the polyphony of partial readings and polemics with one's own solutions. Moreover, despite their chronological sequence, the translator's alternative variants are treated as equals in his act of recreating new editions for the post-1989 book market. In this sense, the transition in Poland's publishing context might also inform Barańczak's creativity in introducing new variants and changes to his work. The liberation of the publishing market entailed greater circulation of various retranslations, simultaneously existing different versions, reeditions and other forms of the kind, as opposed to the previous state-governed production of foreign renderings, whose selection and shape had often been subject to censorship, control, and restricted publishing opportunities. Recreating some fragments anew and launching other versions into circulation in a sense happened on the wave of Barańczak's artistic liberation from being technically banned from print to letting out a torrent of translated Anglophone poetry and Shakespearean plays, translation books and thematic anthologies. In the wake of this shift, Barańczak could take the chance to multiply variants in a creative polemic with oneself in practice and present a different way of re-enacting the same original in his reeditions.

2.3. Purple Cow and Pegasus vs. the Literal

The publishing situation played an equally significant role in the case of Barańczak's unconventional translation books. Editorial solutions such as the intricate arrangements from *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu* would probably not have appeared in that particular form, had it not been for *a5* press, an independent institution founded in 1989 and run by Barańczak's New Wave fellow poet Ryszard Krynicki together with his wife. Thanks to this press with its avant-garde profile and particular attention paid to typographical qualities, Barańczak could

also publish his *Fioletowa krowa* [Purple Cow] (1993), the anthology of nonsense verse with his renderings of '333 most famous specimens of English and American non-serious poetry from William Shakespeare to John Lennon' in his self-designed format. The title of the book and its scope sketched in the jocular subtitle already give away Barańczak's approach to literary translation. Firstly, the Polish rendering of Gelett Burgess' poem 'Purple Cow' becomes the name for the entire book not only because of its nonsensical import. Containing an internal rhyme (*fiolet-owa kr-owa*) absent in the English original, it actually becomes a more rhythmical and lyrical phrase in Polish. In a way, this anticipates the translator's creativity: it is the poetic aspect of the original works that he will focus on and use as a canvas for his own artistic superiority over language. Secondly, neither Shakespeare, nor John Lennon announced in the subtitle can really be classified as non-sense or light verse in the English or American original context. In addition to excerpts from Shakespearean plays and The Beatles's songs, Barańczak also included poems by such authors as Philip Larkin, E.E. Cummings, W.H. Auden, John Donne, and Andrew Marvell, who not necessarily fall under this category either. The rationale for anthologising their poems in *Fioletowa krowa* anticipates Barańczak's more complex translation-oriented approach than the chosen genre would perhaps indicate at first glance. Having taken the poems out of their original context, he placed them within a book of translations arranged according to a particular pattern and presented them as displays of his translator's craft and finesse. In other words, it was no longer important for Barańczak's reader to know what a fragment of Shakespearean verse represented in the source culture and what purpose it served in the play; instead, what the translator will explicitly foreground is the way it has been translated and how it now reads in Polish. What legitimised his focus on the process of translation here was also the genre of light verse that determined the way of presentation and of reading his version in a completely new context. As some of these renderings redefined the original's message by

enhancing its humorous potential, their textual shape in Polish became an excuse for tracing how the humour itself has been translated throughout the volume.

Similarly, in his review titled 'Przekłady i przykłady' [Translations and Examples], Adam Poprawa (1996a: 117-121) analysed how some of the translations in the collection transpire to be 'examples' or 'translatological problems' rather than literal representations of the original. Focusing on the Polish renditions of three songs by the Beatles ('When I'm 64', 'Rocky Racoon', and 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer'), Poprawa noticed that each of them ceased to be simply the original product of mass culture and instead became 'a translatological problem posed by the distinguished translator of poetry' in itself (Poprawa 1996a: 118). Therefore, again, Barańczak's goal was not exactly to recreate what a Beatles piece might have meant as a pop song, but rather a suggestion of how it can be interesting as a translatological example if we try to redefine its semantic dominant and look at it from a different angle. For similar reasons some critics and reviewers of the book struggled to find proper terms for what was happening in those translations. Tomasz Fiałkowski, for instance, remarked that for the sake of humour, 'translations in this volume tend to be paraphrases' (Fiałkowski 1993: 11) of the original poems; others would emphasise its creative language and frivolous tone. Barańczak, however, already in his introduction stressed the partly didactic role of his translation book and discouraged the readers from thinking of translation in terms of literal substitution (1993: 21):

> The reader of this book should not automatically assume that, for instance, Edward Lear actually wrote in English limericks beginning with the words: *Pewien rybak z greckiej wyspy Korfu w jamę ustną wtłaczał bryły torfu* [A fisherman from the Greek island Corfu was packing into his oral cavity the cubes of turf].

On the contrary, when reading any literary translation, the reader should be aware of the fact that although the text is preceded by an original, it is actually created in the target

literary language according to an individual translation strategy. For Barańczak, such a strategy again opposed the reductive norm of prioritising the literal meaning as he ostentatiously diverted from the option of verbatim equivalence in his renderings. It is not without reason that in order to achieve this, he also occasionally chose to engage with musical pieces in his 'translatological examples', especially in the instances of homophonic translations including the most recognisable 'Leć w duet' [Swing into a duet] based on Ella Fitzgerald's piece *Let's Do It*, which would be later performed in the theatre play *Mister Barańczak*. But even in the short fragment of the limerick quoted above Barańczak already unsettles the readership with what would be conventionally classified as intentional departures from the original. As the English version begins with: 'There was an old man of Corfu,/ Who never knew what he should do,' there is technically no verbatim justification for Barańczak's nonsensical variation on the Greek fisherman's peculiar food preferences. The translator rather treated the original verse as a starting point for his individual variation on the original semantic dominant and he openly expressed this creatively subversive attitude in the introduction without any fear of potential criticism, actually anticipating Fiałkowski's sceptical label of the original's 'paraphrases' (1993: 21-22):

> One may say that they are neither translations nor even so-called free translations, but some paraphrases or loose variations in the style of the original or even next to this style. Let it be so.

In taking a stance towards the reader's expectations, Barańczak actively played with fixed categories and aimed to redefine the usual relationship between the source text and its translation in one way or another. The most essential shift aligned with his *pars pro toto* approach to the authoritative notion of literalism manifested itself in the series of multiple 'loose variations' fragmenting the original according to single different readings or possible inventive re-enactments. Among his evidently playful translations, to which he attributed

numbers, there are five particularly interesting cases of this kind. Although treated as single works and each presented under a title and a number, they in fact broke into multiple versions which were placed next to each other and often illuminated each other in translation. These creative chains 'in the style of the original or even next to this style' span the following positions on the list: '58. O mułach' (after Ogden Nash's 'Mules'); '101. O niemowlętach' (Ogden Nash's 'Reflection on Babies'); '118. Monotonia' (Langton Hughes's 'Ennui'); '157. Doniesienie' (Dorothy Parker's 'News Item'); '263. Refleksje na temat przełamywania lodów przy nawiązywaniu stosunków towarzyskich' (Ogden Nash's 'Reflections on Ice-Breaking'). Some of them were presented in a hierarchy of relevance according to the translator's commentary, but in most cases they were placed next to each other as equally legitimate, parallel versions of the original. It is also partly due to this multiplicity of options actualised in translation and no categories of better or worse translations that Arkadiusz Luboń called *Fioletowa krowa* 'a play with the dominants of the original' (2013: 340). Driven by a creative power, Barańczak ostentatiously juggled various images and humorous solutions, but in doing so, he also instructed the readers and demonstrated how to open up the original poems for different interpretative takes, fittings, montages with regard to the original semantic dominants.

On top of that, Barańczak's parenthetical narrative on the entire process and act of producing more than one variant disturbed the conventional transparency of translation. In his commentaries given in square brackets to each of these multiple translations, he explicitly reached out to the readers to inform them about the translator's 'wilful addition' (Barańczak 1993: 116) or numerous variations that prove the original's 'great inspirational power' (73), in a sense establishing a knowing literary communication of what is happening on the way between himself and his readers. In her analyses of other translations from *Fioletowa krowa*, Kathryn Northeast also noticed that Barańczak would also insert the same

kind of suggestive brackets in the text of his translated poems, winking to the readers and signalling some translation problems and other possibilities during the process (Northeast 2014: 40-41). This could even entail some instances of apologising for particular metaphors chosen in translation: *(wybacz, że w żałobne smutki/ Pcham kalambur)* [(pardon my pushing this pun into mournful sorrows)] (Barańczak 1993: 134) or hesitating about different forms: *gdy dobiegnie (dobiegną?) do celu* [when it reaches (they reach?) the aim] (77), all of which were smoothly interwoven into the lyrical text and rhymed with relevant verses. In this way, *Fioletowa krowa*'s ludic zone could legitimise the playful potential of translation, but simultaneously also serve as a creative springboard for more metacritical reflection. In other words, Barańczak's chains of multiple variations from the book would be presented as a literary procedural spectacle for the reader to watch and to participate as the translator plays with the original's semantic dominants.

The most well-known experiment is perhaps Barańczak's series reiterating twelve translations of Ogden Nash's short quatrain 'Reflections on Ice-Breaking'. This dashing gesture was linked by Monika Adamczyk to the poet's conscious display of talent, but principally to his urge to explain the act of translation to his readers and place it on a meta-discursive level (Adamczyk 1995: 192):

> So, Barańczak with delight gives us twelve versions of the same poem (e.g. *Milk cocktails/ Are ineffective./ But vodka/ Works miracles*. or: *Soda water/ is a method too./ But what leads you quicker to the goal/ Is scotch.*) […]. Moreover, he does not only translate those various poems, but he also needs to describe his own work, to prepare true puzzles for his readers, to make diagnoses, to show off his own achievements and to compare them with versions by other translators […].

What is, however, most striking about Barańczak's variation on Ogden Nash's verse: 'Candy/ Is dandy;/ But liquor/ Is quicker' presented in a form of multiple parallel translations (1993: 216-217) is the fact that none of those 'twelve translation variants' (216) in fact use the Polish words for 'candy' or 'liquor'. Instead, the first half of the variants mention snacks

or soft drinks, such as coffee, tea, cacao, orange juice, milk cocktails, a bottle of Perrier, banana melba, tonic, a cake served on a tray, soda water, bananas in mazagran, and grapefruit juice. The others mention vodka (both *gorzała* and *wódka*), martini, a hundred grams (of drugs), Bloody Mary, a hundred grams of mushrooms, gin, whisky, and scotch. In this way, by proliferating different solutions and refraining from a literal translation, Barańczak ostentatiously manifested the creative potential dormant in a wide range of non-literal possibilities. As this diverse pallet actually moulded an entire poem approaching the original semantic dominant in different ways, he successively enumerated suggestions with a connective *też* [also], thereby linking all the previous instances with each other, for example:

Herbata	[Tea
***Też** zbrata;*	Will **also** unite;
Ale maritini	But martini
Szybciej to czyni.	Will do it more quickly]
Kakao	[Cacao
***też** by zdziałało;*	Would work, **too**;
Ale szybszy program	But a faster programme
Sto gram.	Is a hundred gram]
[…] Sodowa woda	[Soda water
*To **też** metoda;*	Is a method, **too**;
Lecz prędzej do celu dotrzem	But we will set the goal quicker
Scotchem.	With scotch.]

As the translator treated all the variants as a continuous sequence on the original leitmotif, he also hinted to its musically polyphonic nature with the Polish title: 'Refleksje na **temat** przełamywania lodów przy nawiązywaniu stosunków towarzyskich' [Reflection On (The Theme of) Ice-Breaking]. In Barańczak's version, therefore, these reflections are not only 'upon' [*refleksje o*] ice-breaking; they also become reflections on 'the theme of'

[*na temat*, e.g. variations in music] the original ice-breaking, translation exercises musically orchestrated around the semantic dominant. Apart from resisting the notion of literalism and subordination to mere semantics, Barańczak's playful sequence, as Magda Heydel suggested, forced the readers to revise 'invisible ideological rules governing' translation (Heydel 2015: 72) and its definition. In particular, Barańczak would openly negate the norm commanding that 'a translation should be of the same length as the original' (Heydel 2015: 72) or of what Eugene Nida would call a 'formal equivalence' between the source and target text.

This artistic objection to fixed expectations about literary translation additionally helped Barańczak put its transformative force on the table. In his translation variations, he explicitly invited his readers to see how different approaches focus on particular features in the source text and introduce distinct viewpoints depending on the speaker's perspective. In his translation of the witty couplet 'Reflection on Babies' by Ogden Nash 'A bit of talcum/ Is always walcum,' Barańczak exercised taking these different trajectories with three parallel versions (Barańczak 1993: 101). Whereas the first of them stretched on a triple rhyme in a more elaborate and descriptive coverage of the imagined scene:

Już pierwszy ich wrzask zza szybki,	[Their very first scream from behind the glass
Mówi ojcu, że nie był za szybki,	Tells the father he wasn't too fast,
Nabywając na zapas zasypki.	Buying baby powder as a spare.];

he then decided to frame it along with the remaining two by a humorous comment that they are 'two separate variations on the above theme created by the translator, which are based on the same rhyme, but at the same time present opposite perspectives of the two interested parties and, subsequently, form a dialectic parent-baby diptych'. And indeed, he presented one of the two renderings from the viewpoint of the father under the subtitle

‘RODZIC ŚWIADOMY POTRZEB NIEMOWLĘCIA’ [Parent Aware of The Baby’s Needs]:

Wie, że po pudrze	[He knows that after using powder
Szkrab mniej mu się drze.	The toddler less cries to him.];

and the other one is from the perspective of the baby, subtitled as ‘NIEMOWLĘ ŚWIADOME OBOWIĄZKÓW RODZICA’ [Baby Aware of The Parent’s Duties]:

Gdy zapomnieć o pudrze,	[Forgetting the powder means that
Do utraty się tchu drze.	He/She will cry until blue in his/her face.]

In the original, it is not clear whether the bit of talcum is welcomed by the child or the parent and these two possible readings broke into two concretised versions in Barańczak’s translation, negotiating the needs and obligations of the both parties. However, although the source poem simultaneously generated three different texts, all of them became equally valid variants of the original, three individual parts standing for one whole. By completing and illuminating each other, this nonsensical multiplication of *pars pro toto* mechanisms could create a consistent ‘triptych’ of mutually complementary and polyphonic perspectives.

In an analogous way, he took two different angles when trying his hand at Langston Hughes’s light verse ‘Ennui’: ‘It’s such a/ Bore/ Being always/ Poor’ (Barańczak 1993: 116). Besides a more general statement about being penniless (or more specifically: having no *grosz*, i.e. the Polish monetary equivalent of a penny):

Nuda aż wyć,	[It makes you bored to death
Najgorsza:	In the worst way
Bez przerwy być	To be all the time
Bez grosza.	Penniless];

Barańczak also included a more historically situated and politically coloured interpretation of the original, hinting at the context shared by him and his readers, and making the image more specific within this common ground:

Nudziarstwo	[Boredom
Do kwadratu	Squared
Być warstwą	Is to belong to
Proletariatu.	The Proletariat class.]

When breaking the originals into pieces of different shapes and sizes, Barańczak also attempted to stretch the capacity of poetry translation and test its creative potential as an artistic matrix for generating further translation variations as well as poems in their own right. In the set of translations at number 58, titled 'O mułach' [On Mules], he started with the original poem on the left and three variants on the right. Ogden Nash's simple couplet: 'In the world of mules/ There are no rules' became a template for Barańczak's series of translations taking the reader on a journey through potential reincarnations of the poem in Polish. Despite the fact that the initial version at first glance seems like it is rendered literally, Barańczak actually played a trick with the idea of verbatim translation:

W świecie mułów
Nie ma regułów.

Alhough technically meaning the same, the phrase is rendered ungrammatically: coined against the rules of Polish inflection (the correct translation should be: *W świecie mułów/ Nie ma reguł*) and bent under the final rhyme (*-ułów*). By showing how the language of literal translation is defeated in favour of aesthetic values, this witty translation becomes a self-referential poem: the readers can see the original on the left-hand side, and then the effect of translation, which has indeed been effected according to 'no rules', that is, those of

grammar. But this perhaps also pertains to the rules of translation, as this piece would again counter usual translation norms by going beyond the one-to-one relationship with the original and extending the number of variants placed next to the funnily unsuccessful literal attempt.

The next rendering titled ‘O bliskim wschodzie’ [On the Middle East] reiterates the previous one by means of a tiny addition, one letter that shifts the entire setting of the poem:

W świecie mułłów	[In the world of mullahs
Nie ma regułłów.	There are no rullahs.]

The difference lies in the similarly inflected word *mułła* [mullah], which imposes the doubling of the consonant *ł* in the rhymed word *reguła* [rule], making it sound oriental and exotic. In doing so, it also subtly alludes to the political situation in the Middle East of the early 1990s or at least what Barańczak believed represented the attitude of the Western countries towards the total chaos and *ciągłe chryje* [constant tiffs] (Barańczak 1995c: 126) involving Yasser Arafat at that time. The added value of this experiment is that this next rendering, completely distinct thanks to the spectacular shift by only one letter, directly builds on the previous translation: without the first version, the procedural poetics of the entire succession and the eastward trajectory within such a translation game could not be visually demonstrated.

Barańczak takes this jump cut technique even further as the last close-up zooms into the imagery through a microscope. Titled ‘O mikrobiologii’ [On Microbiology], the final variant slightly twists the original rule breaking and transposes it onto a micro scale:

W świecie żyjątków	[In the world of microorganisms
Nic prócz wyjątków.	There is nothing but the exceptions.]

And indeed, Barańczak's own variations are nothing else but exceptions to the usual rules of translation as their multiplied nature dismantles the semantic dominant and, as Ewa Rajewska would have it, executes 'a significant shift of the original's borders' (Rajewska 2007a: 166). When the playful chain was reprinted in a more extensive collection of Ogden Nash's nonsense poetry titled after the initial ungrammatically rendered phrase *W świecie mułów nie ma regułów* [In the world of mules there are no rules], Rajewska stressed the particular importance of this translation experiment. In her afterword to that volume, she stated that by first zooming the original out to the complicated macro scale of 'political and religious reality governing the mullahs', and then back to the specificity of microorganisms, Barańczak broadened 'the narrow horizons of the original animal world' and generally stretched Nash's poetry to a multidimensional whole.

In a literary response to Barańczak's translation exercises included in the article 'Oryginał i tajemnica' [Original and Mystery], Leszek Szaruga presented his own alternative variant provoked by Barańczak's *pars pro toto* procedure. As he pointed out: 'This is, of course, about playing, but it is also not devoid of any deeper significance. After all, we know that such translation series come into being, that new translators take up the challenge (and the risk) of creating translations anew' (Szaruga 2014: 108). Thus, what lies at the heart of Barańczak's project is the recognition that creating translations anew and multiplying them happens somewhat naturally in the literary act of taking different angles by various translators. Similarly, Edward Balcerzan created a multiple chain of translation variations in Barańczak's style, which were based on the theme from a Russian humorous song, *chastushka*. He entitled his playful work 'dekonstrukcja' [deconstruction] and referred to

the process of fragmenting the original poem in the translation's last self-reflexive verse as a *Czastuszkowy Derrida* [Derrida made of *chastushkas*] (Balcerzan 2014a).[5]

In this way, inspiring others to contribute with their own artistic takes, Barańczak's spectacle of tailoring various perspectives and dismantling the original's literal meanings also opened the poetic text up for discussion about their semantic dominants and interpretations. His invitation for polemics 'with oneself' was therefore extended to creative polemical approaches proposed by other translators, but also alternative interpretative perspectives by, broadly speaking, his readers. In this context, Magda Heydel (2015: 73) identified Barańczak's activity in terms of 'socialising' the art of translation and integrating it into the public sphere:

> With the beginning of the 90s, Barańczak's university lectures in Poznań and Kraków would gather crowds, translation seminars were being formed and distinguished literary scholars had their say in translation debates in the most significant cultural newspapers. You just needed to have an opinion on Barańczak's translations so you would study them carefully and critically. Thanks to discussions and polemics around his translations the art of translation became an important topic, something that it is necessary and worth disputing, that opens room to operate not only for professionals, but also the reading audience, and that constitutes a space to wrestle over not only with arguments, but also emotions.

In other words, Barańczak's literary translation activity, in all its innovative aspect, would at the same time entail a public license for alternative approaches and an open invitation to read the original anew, as long as their products are on a satisfying aesthetical level. Polemics about the art of translation, especially about different, though equally legitimate literary strategies, could therefore be practised alongside Barańczak's artistic 'plays' with semantic dominants, zooming the original imagery in and out, and reshuffling different translation versions.

[5] I do not discuss here the influence of Edward Balcerzan's theoretical concept of 'translation series' (Balcerzan 1968) on Barańczak's variations. In this sense, Barańczak's and further translation multiples could be partly seen as its practical application or, in Balcerzan's words, 'translation series *sui generis*' (Balcerzan 2014b).

The absolute highlight of Barańczak's practice of challenging the reign of literalism, however, was still yet to come two years after he cut his teeth on nonsense verse in *Fioletowa krowa*. In the book titled *Pegaz zdębiał. Poezja nonsensu a życie codzienne: Wprowadzenie w prywatną teorię gatunków* [Pegasus fell dumb. Nonsense poetry and everyday life: introduction to a private theory of genres] (1995), the poet performed a range of controversial translation experiments escaping standard genre classifications. Although the work originally alluded to the Polish-Jewish poet Julian Tuwim's collection of literary curiosities *Pegaz dęba, czyli panopticum poetyckie* [The Prancing Pegasus: Poetical Panopticum] (1950), Barańczak used his own translations, poetic miniatures and playful pieces to compile different 'genres' in this rather peculiar guidebook. As has been noticed, however, his 'private genre theory of nonsense verse only ostensibly resembled light-hearted wordplays' (Michniewicz 2010), as it in fact very consciously and critically engaged with the *status quo* and surrounding reality. In probing the tie-in between nonsense verse and everyday life, the book constituted a direct response to and means of coming to terms with what Barańczak saw as the overwhelmingly absurd existence, let it be under Communism or after the 1989 transition. As Barańczak executed what he called the 'negation of negation', this principle of double negation attempted to undermine, 'cancel' or 'at least defuse' the absurd reality (Barańczak 1995d: 8). By employing the poetics of nonsense against the everyday nonsense to this end, the translator thereby once again alluded to the tradition of Julian Tuwim. It was in fact Tuwim's satirical and grotesque *Bal w operze* [Ball at the opera] (1936/1946) and *W oparach absurdu* [In the Fumes of Absurd] (with Antoni Słonimski, published in 1958), besides the *Pegaz dęba* collection, that he particularly praised and found influential (Barańczak 1984b: 234-250; Barańczak 1995c: 8).

This time, however, what was even more crucial for Barańczak's project and hinted at its individualised perspective was the 'private' element in *Pegaz zdębiał*'s subtitle –

especially that it paradoxically referred to something as authoritative and normative as 'theory'. In coining inventive names for a range of experimental genres and presenting them within a book as an alternative model, the poet attempted, in Maria Tarnogórska's words, to re-evaluate the authoritative and 'pompous literary studies' (Tarnogórska 1998: 134). This statement can refer to more than one facet of Barańczak's project. Firstly, his telling gesture could be partly targeted at the Structuralist paradigm prevailing in Polish studies for decades and setting theoretical standards for interpreting literature. With what was perceived by some as an impersonal academic framework aspiring to present objective truths about literature, precisely describe literary genres and define all artistic devices, theory of literature in the Polish context could rarely present a 'private' perspective. In the light of this legacy, Barańczak's act of confronting his 'para-scientific work' (Sowula 2008: 17), or 'private theory' with the literary scholarship of that time could have an even stronger partisan undertone. Secondly, Barańczak might have also tried to undermine, by and large, the academic urge to classify something that does not match any categories; even more so that it concerned 'nonsense' verse, a genre that is quite often not taken seriously by majestic theories and literary studies, and pigeonholed as 'poetry of second category' (Barańczak 1995c: 8). Therefore, as it has been argued (Szaruga 1996: 138, Śniecikowska 2000: 243–253), Barańczak's *Pegaz zdębiał* aimed to reveal the critics' blinkers and what escaped their notice already in reference to his New Wave writing: that he had always tried to blur the line between what is serious and unserious, and undermine similar easy classifications in such a complex and artistically diverse field as literature.

For these reasons the readers of *Pegaz zdębiał* could easily identify some familiar threads and forms of presentation, most of which were, however, presented *à rebours* in Barańczak's literary parody of an academic guidebook. This poetic mockery manifested itself throughout the text in numerous instances: terms coined by twisting Latin and Greek

morphemes (*alfabeton*, *turystych*, *onanagram*); an academic biographical note ticking the most important facts (date of birth, university education, list of publications); a ridiculous number of different indices and frequency lists at the end of the book. Most importantly, Barańczak also rather explicitly linked this perversely personalised claim to a theory of poetic genres to a very social context of 'everyday life'. As Adam Poprawa signalled, the book assumed a specific socialisation of an individual theory (1996: 12), which in a sense opposed the abstracted and inaccessible notion of normative poetics. By displaying some of the poems in the form of postcards or explaining the private and quotidian context of their creation, such as New Year's Eve games or bathroom singing (Barańczak 1995c: 125), Barańczak would again make the poetic craft more individual and approachable. Just as in the case of *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu* inviting the readers to follow his steps, this time demonstrating the applicable character of *Pegaz*'s experimental genres aimed to persuade the audience not to remain passive recipients of culture but to become its creative and conscious users. In his review, Gwidon Znajco (1996: 10) picked up on this interactive element, half-jokingly introducing the book's printed format as: '233 pages plus 7 blank ones on which everyone can get back at the Author.' This suggested as if the readers needed the blank pages for their individual responses to Barańczak's provocative ideas. Therefore, Barańczak not only suspended the universal validity of academic theory of genres by claiming his own artistic take in a very private fragment of reality. Through the gesture of codifying it, he also internalised it within the public space of readership and suggested his readers were also entitled to their own individual perspectives on literature.

Within this context, it is thus particularly telling that a significant fraction of Barańczak's playful genres crossed the boundaries of a unilingual literary world engaged with the poetics of translation. His translingual exercises, intensely drawing in a range of Western languages (principally English, German, Italian, French), could initially work as a

shock therapy to Polish poetry of the early 1990s after a few decades of the country being relatively isolated in political and cultural terms. Of course, this is not to say that what used to be antagonistically presented as 'Western' inspirations had not been fundamental to Polish culture already, as it indeed unchangeably has for many centuries anyway. Significantly, Tuwim's *Pegaz z dęba* was already a paragon of the cross-lingual reflection comparable to Barańczak's exercises, with all its delving into humorous peculiarities such as macaronic poetry, translational experiments, interlingual homonymies, and exotic rhyme equivalents (Mikrut 2009: 162, Wosnitzka 2015: 53-54). Still, Barańczak's instant injection of cross-lingual experimentation in 1995 was definitely a refreshing boost reopening Polish language up to different influences and reminding the readers about transnational common heritage. In other words, this unprecedented project, the 'private' theory of how to stretch the Polish language beyond the isolated unilingual comfort zone simultaneously intended to bring it closer to a broader European language community. And into all this came the figure of the translator who mediated across languages, but in doing so, he also went beyond a stereotypically ambassadorial role. Barańczak would understand his task in very active terms. Translating others served not only as the catalyst of integration, socialising the process of translation and familiarising the audience with translingual potential. On top of that, it could also, more subversively, question the existing hierarchies and preconceptions, let it be artistic, cultural, or political. This rebellious aspect of *Pegaz zdębiał* is not blatantly obvious at first glance, but already in 1996 Jan Gondowicz argued that Barańczak's playful book could not be treated as politically innocent. In his review with the telling title 'Pegaz wysuwa macki' [Pegasus reaches out its tentacles] (1996: 15), he signalled that when reading the volume: 'the guffaw […] efficiently overshadows the question of whether and to what extent literature is for fun.' Instead, supporting his claims with the examples of Russian futurism and nonsense poetry by Julian Tuwim, he called for discussion about how

experimentalism and linguistic games are never politically neutral, and so they inevitably 'reach out their tentacles' in certain directions.

Rather ironically, the volume was also published, read, and reviewed alongside the ongoing heated debate (1995-1996) over Barańczak's other playful book, collecting seemingly innocent parodies of Polish canonical poems, entitled *Bóg, Trąba i Ojczyzna. Słoń a Sprawa Polska oczami poetów od Reja do Rymkiewicza* [The God, The Trunk, and the Fatherland. The Elephant and the Polish Question in the Eyes of Poets from Rej to Rymkiewicz] (Barańczak 1995a). It was in that surprisingly controversial volume that Barańczak rewrote the highly acclaimed Polish masterpieces using the nonsensical leitmotif of the elephant. In doing so, he partly aimed to ridicule what is often proverbially called 'the elephant and the Polish question' which manifests itself in detecting Polish issues in every possible area, even in completely unrelated and least significant domains of life. Besides discrediting Polish self-centeredness, Barańczak nonsense verse could also attempt to tone down and debunk some nationalist myths and empty gestures, as the poet playfully rephrased the typical Polish military motto of 'God, Honour, Fatherland' in his book's title. As a consequence of these comical devices, the entire work was identified by some as anti-patriotic, disgraceful, and irreverent about the Polish cultural heritage (Morawiec 1995: 16, Romanowski 1995: 14); some of the pastiches were read in the political context of that time, for instance Barańczak's elephantoidal rewriting of Juliusz Słowacki's nineteenth-century verse anticipating the coming of a 'Slavic Pope' was seen as a scurrilous caricature of the figure of John Paul II (Morawiec 1995: 16; Piechowski 1995: 7; Zięba 1995: 11); whereas only a few critics defended Barańczak's absurd humour as a legitimately distorted mirror of the surrounding reality (Stala 1995: 12; Woźniakowski 1995: 14; Beylin 1996: 148-149). Regardless of the critics' accuracy in that particular case, Barańczak's artistic gestures and unconventional forms could still lend themselves to such subversive and defiant readings.

The ‘individual’ nonsense genres in *Pegaz zdębiał,* seen by the poet himself in terms of a counterpunch to the everyday reality, will be therefore analysed as a means of undermining prevalent norms, easy classifications, and fixed borders. In this respect, Barańczak’s cross-lingual exercises and experimental translations could comment on different domains of ‘everyday life’, such as geopolitical reality, national narratives, rhetorical discourses, but also the art of translation itself, as the poet would playfully destabilise the relationship of equivalence between different languages.

Partly for the latter reason, according to Luboń, *Pegaz zdębiał* needs to be treated as ‘a travesty caricaturing the translator’s duty of fidelity’ (Luboń 2013: 341), especially that Barańczak would intentionally ‘mistranslate’ the original meanings through the filter of experimental forms. Most specifically, Luboń referred this mechanism to the genre labelled by the poet as *idiomatoł* (‘idiomoron’), a name being a juxtaposition of the words *idiom* [idiom] and *matoł* [moron]. In one of the chapters, Barańczak prepared a whole list arranged alphabetically in ‘Kieszonkowy słowniczek frazeologiczny polsko-angielski’ [A pocket Polish-English phrase book] (Barańczak 1995c: 86-111), ostensibly presenting English equivalents for Polish ready-made phrases. However, Barańczak intentionally treated all of the idioms in a hyper-literal way, as if by looking for the equivalents of the separate constituents in a dictionary without checking the collocational context. The result of this extreme technique might be for example: ‘*Akt skruchy:* Picture of a naked woman crumbling,’ playing on the double meaning of the word *act* [act or (female) nude] and potential polysemy in the inflected form *skruchy* [contrition or something that crumbles], and turning the Christian ‘act of contrition’ into a crumbling female nude. From today’s perspective, the effects of similar witty experiments might resemble the inapt products of Google Translator, and it is indeed this type of mechanically literal and ‘moron’-like approach to the original senses that Barańczak particularly wanted to ridicule.

According to Luboń (2013: 341), the poet did so by strategically enacting the common mistake 'known to specialists in modern languages' of translating 'the polysemous word in the sense incongruous with a given context'. While probably thumbing his nose at literalist translators such as Grzegorz Musiał, Barańczak gave a reminder about the semantically relational nature of words. Irrespective of the language, their multiple meanings can enter different relationships and activate distinct connotations, and so the dictionary 'finger method' cannot be taken for granted as the last resort in literary translation. However, having the poet's translation manifesto at the back of one's mind, it might be nonetheless sensible to revise Luboń's statement about Barańczak mocking 'the translator's duty of fidelity', in general. Above all, in his 'idiomorons' as well as other literary genres in *Pegaz zdębiał* the poet endeavoured not so much to undermine the translator's efforts, but rather to dismantle the seemingly straightforward and uniform concept of fidelity and cross-cultural translatability. Thus, the translators can still construe their ethical 'duty' in terms of fidelity, though the 'fidelity' as such, being a very capacious and vague metaphor, can mean different things to all of them individually. For Barańczak, this idea will definitely stay aligned with his desire to let go of the literalist understanding of fidelity and raise the value of other poetic components amounting to particular semantic dominants. However, what I find most significant about Barańczak's agenda in his experimental and multiple translations of the early 1990s, is the way he often treated the act of abolishing some prevailing rules and norms of translation in categories of artistic liberation, democratisation, and pluralism of different, though equally important voices. This line of thinking manifests itself on a few levels. In his *Pegaz zdębiał*, Barańczak not only juggled reprints of his previous translations, exercised a range of techniques ostentatiously dissenting from a philological approach, and multiplied its fruits in creative chains. More importantly, Barańczak also fleshed out the liberating or democratising

element in this kind of practice. This aspect was particularly salient in the way he conceptualised the artistic construction and purport of his translation excesses, while simultaneously socialising the act of translation into the public zone of everyday reality.

One of *Pegaz*'s chapters, comprising the majority of limericks reprinted from *Fioletowa krowa*, was completed with new additions and presented under the label called *liberyki* ('libericks'). Establishing the relationship with the Latin word *libertas* [freedom], besides other alternative etymologies, was meant to highlight (Barańczak 1995c: 136): 'an extremely important feature of the limerick-liberick as a genre: the close coexistence between rigorous discipline and the principle of absolute *FREEDOM* within it.' Indeed, the starting point for his translations from authors such as Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll, and Ted Parker was the very form of limerick, combined with the total 'freedom of topics, problems, emotions and perspectives' (1995c: 137). For Barańczak, it was the rigorous form of libericks that rendered their semantic dominant, scaffolding that could freely channel independent creative imagination. For one thing, by deliberately departing from the letter of the original limericks and changing the literary worlds described in them, the poet again questioned the strategy of prioritising semantics over the aesthetic form. For another thing, he subtly suggested that dissenting from literalism in translation could have artistically liberating properties. In this way, the classification of different libericks within the volume aided Barańczak to enter what he apprehended as 'the land of poetical freedom' (Znajco, 1996: 10). By the same token, as libericks in Barańczak's translation were constructed to negotiate between a formal constraint and expressive liberty, they in a sense also echoed Barańczak's translation creed on a more conceptual level.

This sense of artistic liberation would be taken further in other experimental variations constituting part of his private theory. Barańczak discovered yet another vent for his creative expression in exploring the potential of what translation critics would probably

today call homophonic and 'homographonic' (Hawkey 2013: 7) translations. Coined after *gędźba poliglotycznego ględzenia* [the melody (archaic: *gędźba*) of a polyglot blather (*ględzenie*)], (Barańczak 1995c: 112), *poliględźba* intended to serve as the umbrella term for a genre oscillating between different languages. More broadly, Barańczak's humorous name referred to the works which visually or phonetically, by blurring the distinction between 'text and sound, the phonic, and the graphic' (Znajco, 1996: 10), destabilised fixed interlingual borders. One of the kind, labelled as *identograf* ('identograph'), aimed to show, in Barańczak's words, how two dishes cooked in separate pots from different languages could still turn out to be graphically identical (1995c: 113). For instance, the following literary text consisted only of Polish words and sentences, although Barańczak clearly made it look English in order to generate some senses translingually (1995c: 117-118):

> *Ten pies … I owe forty – a lot! Much to handle, buddy! Stale pies – but I brew stale ale, no? Stare, my windy fury, win one to ten, Sam! Stale pies… Wanna piece? A top-ten list, pal: go! I won!*
>
> [Polish: This dog… And those forts – and the flight! The trades of flies and Buddhas! Always a dog – always a shoe and an eyebrow, but eh? We old lifts and piles of wines, they are always the same dog… A bath, ovens? And the top: this letter, burn it! Away with it!]

By way of a side commentary to this piece, Barańczak named himself light-heartedly, though still provocatively, the 'radical English leveller from the lower orders, the subverter of traditional hierarchies' (1995c: 113). According to him, the gesture of equating these two graphically identical passages in a translingual reading could demonstrate that 'all languages are worth each other and none should put on airs' (113). Bringing Polish graphically closer to English, and in yet another example to German (115-116), two Western languages that to a greater extent had been politically separated from that part of Europe only six years earlier, can be read as an ironic integrational manifesto. According to the poet,

what at first glance looked like the Polish 'coarse cabbage dish' (188) could be in fact easily mistaken for a 'lyrical mini-rhapsody in German' (115) or 'a fragment of soliloquy from one of Tennessee Williams' or Arthur Miller's plays' (116). Invalidating the 'Western' stereotypes about Polish culture being inferior and less prestigious, Barańczak humorously attempted to elevate its status. As the Polish language could be technically equated to German or English, his experiment also served as a late reminder that Polish had always been part of and enriched 'the repository of the noblest tradition of European culture' (118). This levelling statement bears some significant implications for Poland's position in relation to 'the West' at the beginning of the 1990s. As it was later argued, similar types of experimental translations manage to 'subvert our sense of linguistic sovereignty' (Dembeck 2015: 108). As they unsettle the readers about fixed boundaries between languages, these binary oppositions become more fluid and arbitrary as they merge. Such a linguistic construct could be in this case easily taken as a springboard for a more political reflection on the Westward integration tendencies. The intense processes of dissolving the borders and approaching the other side of the Iron Curtain, which gradually took place in Poland of the early 1990s, equally deeply intersected the matter of language and culture. By bringing to the fore the unstable semantics of lexical forms which differ according to their linguistic context, Barańczak playfully demonstrated how the stipulated sequence of letters could easily transgress its native monoligualism. Dependent on the way it is interpreted and consequently pronounced within distinct language systems, the same word can be owned by different linguistic and cultural milieus. It can open up to other European languages; it can function translingually and transnationally.

A similar kind of literary 'polyglot blather' was also orchestrated through a streak of homophonic translations which Barańczak referred to as *fonety* ('phonets'). By focusing solely on the prosodic layer of original poems, Barańczak perhaps most fully illustrated his

postulations about the semantic dominant to the effect that music can also be 'the meaning'. Indeed, homophonic translations often aim to stress the fact that any literary work consists not only of its literal senses, but also prosody, oral performance, melody, and the effect that sound can have on experiencing it. It is due to similar properties that radically prosodic appropriations through homophonic translations can 'dismantle the concept of transparent literalism from within by taking the literal at its word' (Horáček 2014: 118). Thinking in line with similar ideas, Barańczak once again expressed this translation activity in liberating terms. As he argued, intentionally turning a blind eye to the text's literal message 'fortunately liberates us from the obligation of slavish fidelity towards the original and any senses unlawfully imposed by it' (Barańczak 1995c: 118). To this end, he brought into existence six longer pieces (120-135), following the technique of listening to the texts from various original languages (Italian, German, French, Japanese), and then reconstructing their prosody, stresses, and sound. When explaining the nature of this kind of 'phonet', Barańczak added a caveat to the effect that: 'written in the purest Polish, consistent and meaningful in its own way, it needs to *SOUND* exactly or almost the same as the original' (119). At the same time, however, in order to produce a literary work 'completely understandable to the Polish reader' (119), he quite often resorted to the technique of 'mishearing' and twisting original lyrics. As a consequence of these creative 'Chinese whispers', he rendered some bits in a merely rhythmical way and bent most of them to Polish syntax, inflection, and pronunciation rules against all odds.

Interestingly, this artistic practice was still received and further conceptualised as a type of an actual translation. In Jerzy Satanowski's theatre play *Mister Barańczak*, three homophonic prose texts labelled by Barańczak as 'pseudo-Italian, pseudo-Japanese, and pseudo-German novellas' (133) were performed in the style of consecutive conference interpreting. Embodying respective nationalities, three actresses read their literary works in

original languages leaving pauses for interpreters to follow up after each fragment, while three actors interpreted given parts homophonically into Polish, each keeping a completely straight face throughout the process. Apart from the audience's amusement, this part of the spectacle evoked an interesting impression: after a few sentences interpreted homophonically, the viewers could start guessing which Polish words would subsequently emerge from the following sounds of foreign languages (Italian, Japanese, and German). To put it differently, it took only a moment of these translation exercises before the Polish lanaguge could become audible through the original foreign text; the clear line between consecutive language pairs gradually dissolved as each two blended in sound.

A similar process of challenging linguistic and semiotic categorisations occurs in Barańczak's other 'phonets'. Besides the three translingual 'pseudo-novellas', Barańczak homophonically 'mistranslated' two Italian opera librettos and interwove two celebratory songs intro a satirical semi-operatic oratorio. Surely, it is not without reason that the musical provenance of some originals very much aided Barańczak's experiments residing somewhere in an intermedial and interlingual zone in-between. In fact, this way of exploring the potential of sound as an alternative means of translation and a pretext for conceptual criticism was not a precedent in Barańczak's *oeuvre* as of 1995. Only a year earlier he published the widely commented *Podróż zimowa* [Winter Journey] (1994), a collection of poems drawing on Franz Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise*, which was originally written to Wilhelm Müller Romantic lyrics. As Barańczak's poetic series did not really render the literal message of the German original, but focused on the musicality of Schubert's piece, it has been referred to as a 'virtual vocal text' (Hejmej 1999: 67), 'intersemiotic construct' (Hejmej 1999: 80), and more recently even 'an example of *poliględźba* […], or more specifically the genre of phonet' (Michniewicz 2010). Barańczak himself admitted (1994c/2006: 383) that his poems 'owe to Müller a number of […] phonetic inspirations'

but the final result was a work 'polemical to the German Romantic's poem.' Notwithstanding the common expectations, the poet decided not only to discard the original's verbal shape, but actually to display the somewhat opposing message to the German original and a 'dialectical' stance (Hejmej 1999: 80) towards its meanings. In other words, by prioritising the work's musical *alter ego* in his own rendering, Barańczak openly questioned the usual practice of referring translations primarily back to the semantics of their verbal prototypes, a gesture very much aligned with his 'phonets' from *Pegaz zdębiał*.

Still, even if ostensibly justifying Barańczak's choice of the unconventional sound technique, the musical component in all these original works was nonetheless taken to a radically new level. Just like the case of The Beatles' songs in *Fioletowa krowa*, these musical pieces were displaced of the source context, and then metamorphosed into new poems or longer para-literary works. In this sense, such 'phonets' also allowed Barańczak to let go of the original literal meanings and leave them behind in favour of new artistic qualities. Just like in many other instances of unconventional translation techniques throughout his two collections, he could again put at stake the basic principles taken for granted in the act of translation. Exactly for this reason, such a mechanism of blurring the borders between both linguistic and semiotic systems occupied an important space in his pursuit of artistic liberation through translation. As Magda Heydel (2015: 72) commented:

> Though treated as tomfoolery, this experiment turns into a serious question about the definition of translation. It makes us wonder whether we, by any chance, thoughtlessly agree to be locked up in the categories that have been established over our heads as we think about such a complicated creative process as translating.

As Barańczak unpacked these authoritative categories one by one and broke them into their component parts, he kept resorting to what he found as artistically liberating translation forms. As I will demonstrate in the following section, such emancipating

potential will perhaps most fully be unleashed in the poet's multiplied homophonic translations. In this sense, when reiterating different homophonic variants, the translator could combine the *pars pro toto* technique employed in *Fioletowa krowa* with his broader campaign waged against literalism in translation through experimental interlingual procedures. At the same time, in textually displaying his creative mishearings, Barańczak could still make sure to lead his readers by the hand and open up the text for alternative translation approaches just before their eyes.

2.4. Homophonic Multiples

In the commentary to his homophonic multiples, Barańczak again described this form of experimentation in terms of releasing translation from the bounds of literal meanings (Barańczak 1995c: 121-122): 'Phonet overshadows plain translation as […] diverse variants of text fragments and even new entire versions can be multiplied *ad infinitum*. Thanks to this the author's hands are not tied by a duty of fidelity towards the original elementary senses.' Expressive freedom that oozed through homophonic translations could therefore be intensified in the act of multiplying different variations written on the original musical theme. At the same time, articulating a foreign language's sounds in various imaginative ways while aiming to mould meaningful Polish variants inevitably involved some purposeful creative 'mishearings'. Barańczak's multiplied versions are uncannily wide-ranging in this regard as they managed to smuggle in various political topics and imagery. In his running commentary, the translator joked about Chinese language being very susceptible to this kind of semantic manipulation because of its tonal nature. As he claimed (Barańczak 1995c: 123): 'deviations from the proper model of intonating a word – nay, one vowel! – can change the sense of a pronounced sentence from an order in a restaurant to a

provocatively revolutionary and political exclamation.' This seemingly innocent mispronunciation, a shift of one sound, can bear the opposite fruit to the one intended, but irreversibly need to follow its performative power. Especially in his two examples of multiple 'phonets', the translator apparently played on this trick, tuning original lyrics into a pallet of nonsensical, but equally telling images. Whereas the first case could be seen as an artistic sample of Barańczak's multi-faceted experimentation, the other one really rounded off his polyphonic writing in translation.

As a textual base for his first multiplied 'phonet', Barańczak used the short Italian aria *Dalla sua pace* [On her peace (of mind)] from *Don Giovanni*. This piece is originally sung by Don Ottavio, a fiancé of the previously seduced Donna Anna, who swears to vindicate her honour, while expressing his love and dedication: 'On her peace mine also depends, what pleases her gives me life.' In the first of four columns, Barańczak placed the lyrics of the original Italian libretto, which he then homophonically transfigured into the following three poems that ran in parallel to each other. Nothing was left of the original *sua pace* [her peace], the heroine's peace of mind, as well as the Italian opera's subtle artistry, as the initial lines already anticipated the absurd, but also quite lowbrow and brutal proceedings in all three variants:

Dalla sua pace *la mia dipende* [On her peace of mind Mine depends]	*W Dallas siepacze* *chlali a bili w bęben* [Slaughterers in Dallas Were guzzling and thumping the belly]	*W Dallas łapacze* *lamy doili pędem* [Catchers in Dallas Were milking llamas in haste]	*W Dallas Apacze* *rabina bili prętem* [Apaches in Dallas Were hitting a rabbi with a bar]

The respective *siepacze* [slaughterers], *łapacze* [catchers] and *Apacze* [Apaches], whose names in Polish phonetically resembled the Italian pronunciation, would be responsible for a number of crimes and cruel undertakings in Dallas. Although all these three

nonsensical scenarios differed from each other almost entirely, there is only one crucial line that Barańczak decided to repeat without any alteration throughout the entire triptych: […] *w mordę mi da!* [(…) will smash my snout]. Regardless of the initial location, characters, and their subsequent deeds, the story always culminated in the same apocalyptic refrain, repeated thrice at the end of each section. Naturally, in order to maintain coherent narratives in the Polish versions Barańczak took the liberty of translating some parts strictly homophonically and others by focusing on either general prosody, rhythm, assonances, or other features. It is, therefore, through these departures from strictly homophonic form that creative mishearings could go beyond the merely absurd sequences of random words. As it is due to systemic differences between languages that homophonic translation can never totally reflect original sounds anyway, Barańczak still treated these phonetic loopholes as the outlet of artistic expression and smuggled in some telling themes and motifs. Rather curiously, in spite of setting the farcical action of all three variants allegedly in Dallas, he implicitly referred to the Polish local context when framing brutal scenes in some instances throughout his nonsensical scenarios. Characteristically, within the flood of absurd imagery and chaotic actions, the readers could still find some familiar holistic senses. All characters in separate variants would actually justify coercion, debauchery, and banditry, using different twisted, but suggestive arguments. The middle of three columns provided justification for mugging and drinking by referring to Polish historical roots:

S'ella sospira,	*Żelazną zbira*	[The thug's iron
Sospiro anch'io;	*dewizą: Chlaj piwo!*	principle: guzzle beer!
é mia quell'ira.	*Rzepicha z kielicha*	Rzepicha would also
quel piant' é moi.	*też chlała żywo!*	lively hit the bottle!]

In the bibulous bandits' words, the figure of Rzepicha, who allegedly lived in the ninth century married to Piast the Wheelwright, the semi-legendary founder of the first

ruling Polish dynasty of Piasts, could legitimise their misdemeanours. Despite using a rather remote approximation of the original's phonetics in lieu of a dozen closer options, Barańczak decided to bring forth *Rzepicha* as a symbol representing Polish national vices. Attributing some behaviours to this model, no matter how wicked and ill-behaved, might serve as a rhetorical argument excusing some crimes as long as they can be reflected in the national tradition. A slightly distinct viewpoint was represented in the third column, as Barańczak simulated the Communist newspeak fuelled by both physical and verbal aggression:

Dalla sua pace	*W Dallas Apacze*	[Apaches in Dallas
la mia dipende	*rabina bili prętem*	Were hitting a rabbi with a bar
quel ch'a lei piace,	*Kwęka i płacze?*	He is whining and weeping?
vita mi rende.	*Zwyczajny endek!*	A mere Endek!]

The anti-national character of this invective was somewhat paradoxical. The authorities of the Polish People's Republic would stigmatise their opponents with the label *endeks* [NDs], alluding to members of the ring-wing National Democratic party of inter-war Poland and treating them in effect as enemies of the state. At the same time, citizens of Jewish decent were also persecuted and infamously forced to emigrate as a consequence of the anti-Zionist and then anti-Jewish campaign of March 1968. The absurdity of calling a rabbi by this name lay in the fact that the National Democratic party in fact constituted an anti-Semitic and at times even fascist political group. In the form of nonsense verse, Barańczak could therefore reflect how it was simultaneously possible for Communists to attack Jews and *endeks* using mutually exclusive accusations. This ludicrous rationale was ostentatiously equated with all other facets of the absurd present in the parallel poems. In terms of corresponding lines, it also overlapped with the first rendering: a quite surreal, but phonically closest version, which probably served as the starting point for further creative reiterations. With images such as quieting the people by forcing them to eat healthily

(*Kwękania, płacze? Witamin w gębę!* [Whining, weeping? Let them eat vitamins!] for *quel ch'a lei piace, vita mi rende*) and refusing to pay the clergy (*Klesze klej w kieszeń? W mordę mi da!* [To glue the clergyman's pocket? He will smash my snout!] for *quel che le'increscе, morte mi dà!*), Barańczak has overall fanned out three nonsensical mechanisms of finding excuses to justify violence. What at first glance looked like frivolous variations on the theme of a musical piece were surprisingly suffused with the macabre and grotesque and brought out the Italian aria's originally darker shades.

As much as the very idea of releasing distinct scenarios born of the same lyrical text next to each other was in its essence rather humorous, Barańczak himself treated his multiple 'phonets' as fully-fledged literary works. In the commentary bridging his experimental *Dalla sua pace* with the following monumental work entitled 'Oratorium Moratorium' which was built on the same conceit, he spelled out his artistic attitude. In order to introduce his next homophonic piece in all its glory, he attempted to muddy the waters as to what is only humorous and quotidian as opposed to the literary and metaphysical. For instance, he humorously used capital letters when spelling the place of action: *Łazienka* [Bathroom], announcing his fellow poet as *mistrz Igraszki Słownej* [master of Verbal Plaything], and heralding his grand work's *Ważkie Przesłanie* [Weighty Message]. Blurring that convenient border, Barańczak also explicated (Barańczak 1995c: 124, emphasis mine): 'This phonet stems from (and sometimes how barren are the sands that make slender trunks of baobab masterpieces shoot up to the sky!) the *seemingly* nonsensical and silly game of inventing a phonetic calque for the first lines of *La Marseillaise*.' According to his claims, the poet tried his hand at inventing phonetic equivalents for the French verses during the 1990 visit of his colleague and translation critic, Edward Balcerzan. The game and playful rivalry between the two soon snowballed into a more serious contemplation and eventually Barańczak's own translation project (1995c: 125):

> [In my case,] the intellectual work on what might seem a purely abstract task promptly and quite naturally turned into a more general reflection on the nature of relations between Eastern Europe and Western World, which was at the same time situated against the background of particular contemporary events. Mind you it was year 1990 and the speed of the real socialist system falling in shambles in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc was received by Western Europe not so much with enthusiasm, but rather with great anxiety.

By way of immediate response to this political reality,[6] Barańczak arranged his intricate translation in the form of an oratorio (*oratorium*), a semi-operatic, though rarely staged, musical composition intertwining the voices of soloists, a mixed choir, and orchestra. The musical genre of oratorio, most prominent in the Baroque period, engaged with sacred themes and was used by both the Protestant and Catholic Church, with the latter allowing for its performance in Lent despite the otherwise abiding prohibition of spectacles. Half-jokingly alluding to this tradition, Barańczak also used his oratorio as an outlet for subversive artistic expression. In his elaborate 'phonet', as he called it, he employed multiple translations of the same two passages from *La Marseillaise*, the voice of the West, which were counterbalanced by different self-invented or altered fragments from a Socrealist song by Isaac Dunayevsky, redolent of the Eastern Bloc. In the final lines, as the stage directions have it, the musical crossover between these two versions is rounded off by the feebly amplified tune of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*, also known as the anthem of the European Union. The main title of the work 'Oratorium Moratorium' already hinted at Barańczak's viewpoint of what he saw as political stalling for time and temporary prohibition of activity on Western Europe's part in the initial years of the Soviet Union's collapse. Different opinions and assessments of the situation were interwoven in the orchestrated conversation of the voices featuring in the long, baroque subtitle; it introduced

[6] The piece appeared already in 1991 in the Polish émigré quarterly *Puls* published in London (Barańczak 1991b: 38-42).

those welcoming ‘New Europe’, but primarily ‘the balalaika-cantata band of the Western World *Harmonia Mundi* with soloists and a mixed choir expressing equally mixed feelings’ (129).

Again, Barańczak composed his oratorio from fragments translated homophonically (usually the few first lines of respective wholes), but then mostly from parts rendered just rhythmically and following the assonantal semblance. The key idea underpinning his oratorio lied in distributing various voices and political arguments among different renderings of the same original fragments. Besides criticising the political standstill, Barańczak’s polyphonic translation brought forward a mixture of various opinions representing: naïve optimism, apprehension, and even some aggression in enforcing liberal and federal ideas on the newly welcomed countries. What in fact sounded like a slightly makeshift debate resonated with the performance’s artificiality, especially its grotesque Italianate stage directions: *tutti frutti senza speranza* [all fruits without hope], *alla maniera un puoco imbecile* [in a bit idiotic manner], and *con sclerosa morosa* [with sluggish sclerosis], as well as jingles from *The Merry Widow*’s potpourri. Additionally, this bitter undertone was enhanced by the songs the translator chose for the piece’s textual base. Rather ironically, Barańczak juxtaposed the French revolution song and anthem to freedom with a Socrealist hypocritical eulogy that praised a collective fight allegedly for the same idea: *Wygramy walkę o trwały pokój, Wrogom wolności wzniesiona pięść!* [We will win the fight for permanent peace, the fist is raised against the enemies of freedom]. In his multiple versions of *La Marseillaise* and the Communist song, Barańczak toned down their zealous appeals for action and substituted the original great visions with a disillusioned discussion about recent events and concrete viewpoints. This multi-threaded conversation consequently spanned two different homophonic translations of the French anthem’s introduction (*Allons enfants de la Patrie…*), seven different versions of its refrain (*Aux armes, citoyens…*), and

two passages with altered lyrics of the Socrealist song. All of these fragments were intertwined in a gamut of multiple voices recurring in different order. For instance, two variants of *La Marseillaise*'s opening in Polish, which appeared twice: at the beginning of the 'phonet' (126-127) and towards its middle (129), expressed a sceptical stance in two distinct ways:

Allons enfants de la Patrie, *Le jour de gloire est arrivé!* *Contre nous de la tyrannie* *L'étendard sanglant est levé* *L'étendard sanglant est levé.*	*Tam ląd sam cham Arafat ryje* [**Pcha lont nam cham Arafat w ryje*] *Lecz Wschód i Wschód-to sprawy dwie.* *Tu co prawda też ciągłe chryje,* *Byle lud-krok w przód i się drze:* *Byle lud na wyprzódki się drze!*	*Załążek glątw ta klapa kryje,* *Gdzie żur z jagłami?–któż to wie?* *Lud jak wprzód tam ni tyra, ni je,* *Wolność ma, lecz znów czegoś chce:* *Ma jej w bród, ale znów czegoś chce!*
	[Arafat the coarse himself is drilling the land there, /*Arafat the coarse is pushing the fuse in our snouts; But the East and the East are two separate matters. It is true constant tiffs happen here too, The people has barely made a step forward and yells, The people is barely in the race and yells!]	[This flop is hiding a seed of hangovers Where is the sour rye soup with millet? Who knows? The people previously neither worked, nor ate, Now has freedom, but wants something more, Has freedom galore, but wants something more!]

In these passages, Barańczak creatively 'misheard' the original lyrics into two distinct renderings. At first, he produced two relatively accurate homophonic variations on the first three lines.[7] Then, he primarily followed the rhythmical pattern and assonants in rhymes, while introducing tiny sound shifts, and subsequently internal semantic alterations, within the last passage originally repeated without change as an encore. In the first 'phonet', Barańczak presented the political stance of those anxious about the similarities between the Middle East conflicts and the East European situation of that time. This passage, sung only by tenors from the choir, demonstrated how the complete chaos and some political claims in the post-Communist countries were received with surprise as too untimely and premature. In the other version, sceptical voices brought to the table potential consequences

[7] I am also including an alternative variant of the first homophonic opening suggested by Barańczak in his footnote (126).

('hangovers') of the abrupt political change and articulated some doubts about the lack of potential remedy (since the Polish sour rye soup with millet was a popular next-day dish, soothing the hangover). According to the other faction, the bass vocalists from the Western choir, East European claims transpired to be not even so much ill-timed, but actually rather unjustified. Full of unbridled ambitions, citizens of the post-Communist countries were already dissatisfied with the previous political situation and so after 1989, in the light of ascending freedom, should consequently approve of the ongoing transition. Rather ironically, Barańczak invented here an alternative homophonic translation for the French (*la*) *tyrannie* [(the) tyranny] to manifest the impact of what he saw as a misconception and understatement. Earlier on, the spoilt East European people only (*ni*) *tyra, ni je* [neither worked, nor ate (stylised)], which perhaps in the eyes of the West did not at all qualify as such a terrible condition. However, this phrase still homophonically echoed the more obvious phonetic equivalent in Polish hidden underneath: *tyranije* [tyrannies (with an archaic plural ending)]. Reading (or singing) this passage out loud could wittily activate its grimmer undertone and, by means of a double-edged message, question the Western dismissive point of view.

In both versions, Barańczak gave a foretaste of the polyphonic exercise which then different soloists and parts of the choir performed in seven variants of *La Marseillaise*'s refrain. Four of these renderings (127, 130-131) featured a similar thematic scope and composition as they mapped various East European countries, while demonstrating complete indifference about their fate. On the textual level, these passages in Polish became strongly aligned with the Socrealist song's two alternative refrains (128, 132) as Barańczak highlighted a clear continuity between the Soviet Union and the West's disrespect of the people from individual minor nations. The 'Western' four versions (performed by a soprano, entire choir, tenor, and again all singers) were therefore loosely interspersed and intertwined

with two surprisingly similar voices resonating on behalf of the Soviet agenda (whole choir, and choir reinforced by three soloists). Barańczak presented this symbolic affinity between the two agendas in a very pessimistic, but also melodramatic and exaggerated way. The last Socrealist refrain, descending into the pan-European *Ode to Joy*, was not only emphatically performed by the widest range of singers in a combined effort. As it actually crowned the entire musical procession, it accordingly culminated in a grand, grotesque finale with a standing ovation, applause by all vocalists and musicians on stage, and a loud exclamation carrying the last words: *świat tak czy owak toczy się w przód* [the world trundles forward anyway] (132).

Before that happened, the consecutive refrains revealed a somewhat hypocritical position of the West, dealing with East European affairs as long as they happened *przy zamkniętych drzwiach* [behind closed doors] (131). These passages quite explicitly commented on the proceedings of the 1989 revolutions as well as dynamic dissolving of the Soviet Union and its federation into independent states. On the whole, the unfolding refrains scanned through East European upheavals and turbulences, revealing some instructions and demands towards particular countries: *dość drak/ na placach Prag* [enough of rows on the squares of Pragues], *dość bitw/ na polach Litw* [enough of battles on the fields of Lithuanias] (127), *ścisz ryk/ ludności Ryg* [lower your scream, the people of Rigas] (131); they also openly dismissed the potential repercussions of that political situation, being rather flippant about events such as the early stage of the Croatian War of Independence in the wake of the Yugoslav Wars: *Niech Serb/ za herb/ ma młot i sierp: Chorwacie-chwacie cierp!* [let the Serb have the hammer and sickle as their crest; and let you suffer, the brave Croat] (127), and the Nagorno-Karabakh War with its ethnic conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis: *Niech krach/ i strach/ Żre Karabach/Lecz przy zamkniętych drzwiach* [Let the collapse/ and fear/ eat up Karabakh/ But behind closed doors] (131). In the last refrain of *La*

Marseillaise, just before it smoothly moved on to the Socrealist-based finale, the Western choir ultimately decided to turn a blind eye to what was happening in the former Eastern bloc. As the problems could be somehow magically solved on their own *zza zamkniętych drzwi* [from behind closed door], this voice tried to deceive themselves that *wnet harmonii i spokoju wrócą dni* [the days of harmony and peace will immediately return] (131).

The overarching theme for this sequence, a complete lack of compassion, equally spanned the two Socrealist parts, which: mapped through minor nationalities, Uzbeks, Tatars, Balts (128), Moldavians, Slovenians, Slovaks, Romanians (132); expressed disinterest in these peoples' fate: *spis krzywd Uzbeka/ nas nie urzeka* [The list of the Uzbeki's harms does not impress us], *Strata Tatara/ nie wzrusza nas* [Losing the Tatar does not touch us] (128); called this negligent attitude into question by again referring to specific conflicts: *Rozpałka gwałtów/ Los Bałkan, Bałtów?* [Ignition of violence, The fate of the Balkans, Balts?] (128); and gave a grim diagnosis, suggesting that the international solidarity and cooperation between countries ceased to exist: *Internacjonał skonał i zgasł* [International solidarity has agonised and waned] (128). Interestingly, as those French-inspired fragments mingled thematically with the Socrealist lyrics, they also simultaneously departed from the original French anthem with its conveyed idea of freedom. This happened both on the semantic and formal level: firstly, since Barańczak's rendering constituted a rather ironic commentary on Western elevated ideas from *La Marseillaise*, which transpired to apply only selectively to that part of the world; and secondly, as the initial idea of 'phonet' would be least strictly followed throughout these passages, hinging solely on the rhythmical semblance to the original.

On the contrary, the remaining three refrains of the French anthem (127, 129) starting with *Aux armes, citoyens…* altogether presented a different artistic quality:

Aux armes, citoyens, *Formez vos bataillons !* *Marchons !* *Marchons !* *Qu'un sang impur* *Abreuve nos sillons.*	*Choć zżarła schizma ją,* *Choć rwie debata ją,* *Euro–* *Pa Śro–* *Dkowa i Wscho–* *Dnia zgodnie przegna zło!* [Though eaten up by the schism, Though being torn by the debate, Euro- Pe, Cen- Tral and East- Ern, will together expel the evil]	*Ocalmy choć bon–ton!* *Choć żre debata ją,* *Euro–* *Pa Śro–* *Dkowa i Wscho–* *Dnia jednak wie gdzie dno!* [Let's at least save the good form! Though being eaten up by the debate, Euro- Pe, Cen- Tral and East- Ern, still knows where a rock bottom is]	*O, car! Mocarny pan!* *On nie dopuszczał zmian!* *Nagan–* *Nym stan–* *Dartem jest pan–* *Demonium: zły to plan!* [Oh, tsar! Mighty lord! He allowed for no changes! A reprehen- Sible stan- Dard is pan- Demonium: a bad plan!]

In each of them, the first few lines stayed quite closely with the original phonic and prosodic features. Then, the following ones principally conveyed the assonantal sequence and played on the rhyme pattern through a compromise between three Polish sounds: *-ą*, *-o*, and *-an*, for the French *-ons*/*-ens.* In introducing tonal and prosodic shifts throughout these three versions, Barańczak's intentional mishearings again broke into distinct semantic messages revealing *Harmonia Mundi*'s internal inconsistency. Respectively performed by, according to the stage directions, *tutti* [all], all basses from the choir, and, quite tellingly for the last passage's undertone, a ninety-four-year old bass soloist, these refrains not only reiterated different political stances, but also explicitly pointed to the 'imperative of many-sidedness' through translation variants. The first version (127) represented the most optimistic scenario, commenting favourably on Central and Eastern Europe's capacity to fight unitedly against 'the evil' and overcome the political schism. According to this voice, despite being torn by the debate (*choć żre debata ją*), this part of Europe could peacefully achieve the state of freedom without forming the original military 'battalions'. But since the original *bataillons* could still homophonically resonate through the Polish phrase, Barańczak implicitly signalled the tension between the French military means of striving for freedom ('batallions') and the Western understatement that encompassed the idea of confrontational, though pacifist 'debate' in Polish translation. In his diagnosis of this somewhat naive

optimism, he alluded to the assumption informed by the early experience of bloodless coups or nonviolent revolutions that took place from 1989 onwards among the Warsaw Pact countries. At the same time, however, events such as the violent unrest in Romania, brutal conflicts in the Balkan melting pot, and other occurrences from previously described refrains had to complicate this wishful thinking. Accordingly, the second translation variant of Barańczak's 'phonet' (129) was more doubtful, calling the Western countries to put on a brave face while Eastern Europe again reminded themselves about hitting rock bottom. Since this particular version of *La Marseillaise*'s refrain was already preceded by the Socrealist succession and the Western choir's hypocrisy had been revealed, the only possibility that remained for *Harmonia Mundi* at that point was at least to save the *bon ton*, the good manners, on the surface. In spite of distancing himself from any of these viewpoints, Barańczak simultaneously opened this translation forum for multiple dialectic readings of the French combative song.

What is in this case even more crucial, the translator also suggested that this polyphony could be endangered by suppressing any of these perspectives, even if they are perceived as uncomfortable or unpopular at a time. This manifested itself in the treatment of the last version sung by, as per stage direction, the elderly bass soloist, whose part resounded 'as a complete surprise and sudden reminiscence from childhood' (129). His criticism represented the opposing view voiced by the older generation and, openly disapproving of the post-1989 political mayhem, questioned the entire idea of a liberating revolution. Dwelling on the era before Poland regained its independence in 1918, the third variant drew an unsettling parallel: as long as the Russian tsar controlled the major part of partitioned Poland and, a few decades later, the Soviet Union continued to impose its hegemony on the country, there was neither structural chaos nor civil unrest to be seen. It is only the unrestricted processes unfolding afterwards that entailed the most lamentable

consequences for both time periods: i.e. the social nationalist and fascist movements leading to the Second World War, and respectively ethnic conflicts, cleansing, and internal wars in the post-1989 Eastern Europe and beyond. As the bass vocalist suggested that history could run its course and, therefore, the state of regained freedom might not be sustainable, his viewpoint clearly countered the democratic agenda and integrational tendencies of the early 90s.

In Barańczak's oratorio, however, democracy rather paradoxically transpired to contradict its own assumptions. Being most radically distinct in its political interpretation of the post-1989 reality from the previous versions, the third homophonic translation rendered an untimely and inconvenient opinion, which subsequently became an unwanted burden for the Western choir. Since the elderly singer vocalising this standpoint became a new *persona non grata*, he was, as the stage directions indicated, 'quieted by force and escorted arm in arm by security guards' (129). Given that his viewpoint did not fit in with the newly established ideological programme, it was forcefully pushed out of the political arena and underwent censorship in the same way as it would have done in the Communist period. From today's perspective, being aware of the post-1989 transformation failures and violent upheavals in some of the East European countries such as for example the Bosnian genocide of 1995, the readers could more easily evaluate Barańczak's ethical demand to appreciate all individual appeals and rights of veto. When the translator reprinted his work in 1995 in *Pegaz zdębiał*, he himself admitted that it was precisely due to those tragic events that his 'political satire' had perhaps lost part of its original comic quality (125). Still, in the entire absurd and grotesque atmosphere, the depiction of guards forcefully leading the singer off the stage signalled some affinity between the Soviet political means of coercion and post-Communist drive to impose Western 'democratic' agenda.

This parallel was drawn further as the choir, after a moment of confusion, continued to sing *La Marseillaise* in order to disguise that politically incorrect blunder. Quite tellingly, just after the glitch, another part of the oratorio did not proceed as planned and had to be interrupted because of the politically inappropriate message. The first two lines of the second Socrealist refrain accidentally performed by two women soloists: *Weź, ludu, dudy/ W miech tak jak wprzódy…!* [People, be humble to accept your defeat like you did previously] were also identified as ideologically unsuitable and consequently subdued: 'It turns out that this fragment was removed during the rehearsals as too didactic and one-sided' (130). In singing along and drowning out the communistically coloured passage, the Western choir unveiled their own strategy as a new kind of censorship: *...Bata errata/ Poprawi błąd?* [The lash's erratum will correct the error?] (131). In Barańczak's biting reckoning, this type of interventionist erasure struck the entire of idea of a multithreaded 'phonet'. As much as the intricately composed 'oratorio' was intended to serve as a forum for different arguments and critiques introduced through homophonic translations, this polyphony would be nipped in the bud with a heavy dose of irony.

For Barańczak, the artistic possibility of rendering the original in different ways would automatically assume that all of them should be freely voiced. At the same time, by taking part in a creative dialogue, these multiple 'phonets' would comment on the original notion of liberating revolution from different angles and engage with it in a dialectic way. Even though appearing as mutually exclusive and difficult to reconcile, these individual perspectives could still be negotiated through constructive polemics. Thus, the pluralism that Barańczak yearned for and projected through his homophonic multi-threaded oratorio would definitely differ from the externally imposed Westernised programme, in which the voices of protest were suppressed in the name of enforcing 'democracy'. At the same time, the act of dismantling the original's authoritative literalism would be a pretext for artistic liberation

and smuggling in subversive threads. In Barańczak's translation ethics, introducing different viewpoints would serve as a counterbalance to one totalising discourse and hinge on the project of acknowledging more than one line of thinking: let it be with reference to semantic dominants, translation variants, or even broader world views.

2.5. Mister B., But How to Live?

When in the 1990 interview 'Autonomia i oparcie' [Autonomy and Support] Barańczak was asked about his practice of publishing poetry translations in bilingual editions, he explained (1990a: 57) how he conceptualised translation in terms of compromising between autonomy and support:

> Each of us stretches between two extremities: foreignness and community, individuality and belonging; and this also seems to apply to translation of poetry. If it is good, it is an autonomous, self-sufficient poem in its own language that does not require any other back-up. But at the same time, if it is good, it also involves a form of creative dialogue with the original […]. What I find equally interesting in translation, just as in poetry, are apparently these situations when you discover that you cannot exist without the sense of your own autonomy and, simultaneously, you cannot exist without the support of others.

For Barańczak, various artistic practices, be it poetry or translation, are suspended between different modes of interpretation and informed by a creative dialogue with other texts. Already back in 1972, Barańczak gave a paper famously arguing that some translations can be approached as either 'self-sufficient' objects of interpretation or as texts somehow 'integrated with' and dependent on the original or its other existing translations. In this article, the poet encouraged the audience to a parallel or multilateral reading of a translation, its source text and other retranslations. According to Barańczak, since all these texts can be arranged in the form of a cross-fertilising conversation, translation is always entangled in the web of different relations of autonomy and support. Interestingly, already in that paper

Barańczak (1974: 54-55) distinguished the case of multiple translation variants as an editorial technique particularly prone to such intertextual dependences:

> There is another device, which plays a similar role and is used by editors of translations, namely: placing several renderings of an original text next to each other. […]. [It] happens that the juxtaposed translations complete and verify each other, which allows for reading them in abstraction from the original.

In Barańczak's categories, the technique of confronting different translation variants of the same original allow them to enter an uncanny interrelationship: once placed next to each other, these distinct versions illuminate one another, and in joining a differentiated conversation about the original, present a new multi-threaded artistic quality. Having both the sense of its own autonomy, as separate translation approaches to the original, but simultaneously being supported by the other variants, such metatranslations could indeed oscillate between individuality and belonging, between self-sufficiency and support. Taking Barańczak's reflections on multiple translations to a meta-textual level, a Polish literary critic, Ewa Kraskowska (1992: 129), started her article by extending the capacious metaphor of autonomous and dependent translations on broader discourses:

> This essay is not a 'self-sufficient' text since it has been created principally as a result of reading works by others. It attempts to put together some dispersed remarks by a few authors who express the same thought in different ways […]. Its aim is to unite them and compose them in such a way that they can illuminate, add to, and comment on each other.

In other words, Barańczak's notion of multiplied translations which can verify and comment on one another might serve more discursive categories. This idea has the potential of being interpreted not only in literary terms but also as a means of entering a dialogue with different speaking subjects and their distinct voices.

However, in the light of Barańczak's translation exercises, Kraskowska's statement begs another question, namely whether these different perspectives necessarily convey exactly the 'same thought' that different authors articulate using distinct forms of expression. It seems that Barańczak's practice of multiplied and experimental translations would rather suggest that a different scenario is also plausible. In some of the examples, such as translation multiples and homophonic metatranslations, what needed to be 'united' was rather the diversity of individual thoughts accompanying more than one form of expression. As much as the original text was the same, still the semantic dominants – namely different lines of thought about it and the ways of approaching it – had to 'illuminate, add to, and comment on each other'. When Barańczak promoted the *pars pro toto* ethical approach over the reverse, generalising one, he was also aware of the potential consequences: a demand to come to terms with the multitude of individual perspectives, to set the scene for a necessary debate, and somehow reconcile them in a dialectic conversation. This recognition, as Hanna Trubiecka (1991: 155) pointed out was also reflected in another ethical dimension of Barańczak's language critique:

> And so, we can point to one central stem from which the author of *Ethics and poetics* derives his multiplicity of critical voices; a core allowing for the 'language of difference, polysemy and concreteness' to be eased by some greater whole. I believe that this whole could be, perhaps banally, the idea of dialogue.

In the case of Barańczak's translation multiples, this call for a polyphonic dialogue was perhaps most explicitly fleshed out in his 'Oratorium Moratorium', which was intentionally composed as a musical forum for different voices. At the same time, however, his multiplied exercises clearly opposed the usual expectation of one-to-one translation equivalence and his distinct homophonic renderings questioned the norm of prioritising meanings over poetry's musicality. In other words, drawing the reader into this experimental

zone already allowed for an artistic protest against, in Heydel's words, 'being locked up in the categories established over our heads'. Although making such a confident step to enter this playground oscillated on the verge of nonsense humour, Barańczak's translation experiments still demonstrated some serious and metaphysical grandeur. As suggested before, Barańczak saw the very gesture of acknowledging different readings and creative translations of the exactly same text as an ethical task in itself.

Finally, he expressed this literary creed somewhat provocatively in the last chapter of *Pegaz zdębiał*, which could be read as a metaphorical epilogue to his seemingly innocent experimental genres. From the outset, Barańczak expected his audience's puzzlement or apathetic reaction to his nonsense genre and absurd translations. And so, he anticipated and in advance decided to answer 'a number of questions that spring to the lips of the Readers' (Barańczak 1995c: 194). Two of them demanded from Barańczak's 'private theory of genres' some practical implications for how to come to terms with the political reality of the early 1990s and called for the translator's active stance and ethical attitude: 'All good, but what does this have in common with the questions of Ideology and Politics that preoccupy us every day?', and *Panie B., ale JAK ŻYĆ?!, etc.* [Mister B., but HOW TO LIVE?!, etc.] (1995c: 194). In response to them, Barańczak offered his last playful genre, this time more closely engaging with literary criticism that illuminated the same literary text in different ways. Its name, *bezecenzja*, a juxtaposition of Polish *recenzja* [review] and *bezecny* [wicked], already hints at the pejorative and disapproving element in its interpretative approach to the reviewed book. Not exactly a precedent in Barańczak's essayist *oeuvre* at that point, this critical genre partly constituted a self-referential allusion to his renowned *Książki najgorsze* [The Worst Books] (1981), a collection of courageous reviews debunking valueless popular literature published in the official circulation for propaganda reasons. In the case of the Pegasus's *bezecenzja*, however, its stinging criticism of the original book

was, firstly, aimed to be taken with a pinch of salt, and secondly, had a double-edged blade that simultaneously cut both ways. Entitled 'Jak bliźniak z bliźniakiem: dwugłos braci Kłapczyńskich o twórczości Janusza Szpotańskiego' [Like a twin with his twin: The double voice of the Kłapczyński brothers on Janusz Szpotkański's output], Barańczak's literary conceit was built on a duophonic interpretation of the same poetic texts read in parallel, with two parts of the whole running next to each other, column to column.

According to Barańczak's tongue-in-cheek introduction, he himself was at first allegedly asked to review a book. Titled *Zebrane utwory poetyckie* [Collected poetic works] (1990), it featured anti-regime grotesque works by the Polish satirical poet Janusz Szpotański, who in the late 60s was arrested and sentenced to prison for his dissident literary activity. In his letter to the editor enclosed as a foreword to the doubled 'wicked review', Barańczak claimed that his own readings, informed by own experience, would be deprived of a metacritical distance: 'Isn't this affinity the lack of sufficient distance? Am I at all able to read Szpotański's poems afresh and judge them soberly?' (196). By way of solution, Barańczak decided to contact his former students, Karol and Butrym Kłapczyńskis, identical twins who always 'held exactly opposing opinions on every possible topic and in every single situation' (196). As Barańczak's twisted story had it, whereas Karol emigrated to the United States to become professor in Comparative Literature and one of the leading Marxists and feminists at Montana University; Butrym stayed in the country to become a conservative journalist acting on behalf of the non-existent *Chrześcijańska Asocjacja Narodowa* [Christian National Association].[8] Having both replied to Barańczak's request simultaneously, the imaginary twin brothers sent their reviews on the same day and so the

[8] The abbreviation alluded to the *ZChN*, i.e. *Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe* [Christian National Union], a Christian right-wing political party founded in 1989.

poet decided to publish them together as the 'critical literary double voice about Szpotański by these two such extremely bipolar personalities' (196-197).

Published on the left and right hand site of the page, and representing the respective wings of the political spectrum, the twin critical texts were entitled tellingly as: *Pod szpicrutą klasowej nienawiści* [Under the lash of class hatred] and *Na szachownicy narodowej zdrady* [On the chessboard of national treason]. The entire conceit of Barańczak's juxtaposition lay, however, in the way he constructed the unfavourable reviews as textually reflecting each other in a distorted mirror. As they in fact overlapped almost entirely in terms of composition, syntactical structures and analysed fragments, they radically diverged from each other only in the places where the critique of the same original poems was supported with ideological arguments. Depending on the 'wicked' review's variant, Szpotański's poetic texts were criticised for completely opposite reasons, starting already with the publication place, London (Barańczak 1995c: 198):

gdzieżby indziej, jak nie w tej
stolicy reakcyjnego konswer-
watyzmu, ukrywającego pod
nienagannie lśniącym meloni-
kiem imperialnych pozorów
pustkę i czczość kolonialis-
tycznej hipokryzji

[where else than in this capital of
reactionary conservatism, hiding
a void and emptiness of colonial
hypocrisy under the impeccably
shining bowler hat of imperial appearances]

gdzieżby indziej, jak nie w tej
stolicy lewackiego liberalizmu,
ukrywającego pod imponująco
wydętymi biustonoszami swo-
ich katedralnych kopuł uwiąd
i płaskość ateistycznej hipokryzji

[where else than in this capital of
leftist liberalism, hiding
an atrophy and flatness of atheist
hypocrisy under the impressively
bloated bras of its cathedral domes]

By the same token, the twins focused on the same fragments and images from Szpotański's poetry to argue for and prove their own divergent points. The satirist's depiction of the Tsarina simpering in front of a mirror served as evidence for either his 'male

chauvinism' and 'treating the woman as a sexual object' or 'Asian-Soviet taste' and 'masochist bewitchment by the power of that daughter of revolution' (204). Likewise, another fragment from Szpotański's ballad was diagnosed as either 'spreading the plague of blind consumerism' among the 'healthy social stratum, the working class' or 'breeding the germ of the Communist hydra in the nation's womb', that is among the 'healthy substance of the nation' (207). Finally, in yet another passage, the adventures of Comrade Szmaciak manifest the author's 'class discrimination' or 'anti-national prejudice' (201) identified respectively thanks to the poststructuralist philosophies, i.e. 'simplest deconstruction by means of Paul de Man's or at least Derrida's method' or the conservative methodology: 'simplest Christiano-national reading' (201-202).

Irrespective of their geographical separation, ideological discrepancies, and totalising perspectives serving the opposite sides of the barricades, the twin brothers were nonetheless rather bizarrely united in a polyphonic harmonious chord; it proceeded in an almost identical manner and ended with an exclamation of protest to the same end. However humorous, Barańczak's peculiar gesture of designing this last literary genre as a response to the audience's activist demands and questions was of no lesser ethical validity than any of his other works. In the new political reality, a dialogue of multiple radically divergent and equally one-sided world views, would be definitely a great challenge for the society, but also for literature as such. Although each Kłapczyński on his own might not realise his monophonic line of thinking and biased way of reading the same text, it is only through Barańczak's projected brotherly reunion that their voices could unmask each other's simplified and totalising visions of the world. This conceit revealing how two facets of the same text are each on their own prone to reduction, simplification, and bias is something that also fitted squarely with Barańczak's translation creed. In his epilogue, therefore, he responded to the readers' pressing questions by offering the 'banal' idea of a dialogue

between individual stand-alone perspectives. His translatorial twin-metaphor aimed to show how providing an opportunity for the two feuding brothers to meet and confront their approaches could make them see and rethink the limitations of their individual explanations. It is therefore only thanks to Barańczak launching both takes on Szpotański's text into an open forum that each of these separate 'translations' could illuminate and verify each other's assumptions, and collaboratively create a new dialectic quality.

This conceit, just like Barańczak's previous experimental and multiplied translations, required what the poet himself perceived as some sort of metacritical 'distance' to the literary text. In lifting himself above the original, the translator managed to recognise different readings following respective semantic dominants, put them in a creative conversation and let them illuminate one another before the reader's eyes. Of course, this project could be seen as immensely utopian, since the translators and readers have their own subjective preferences and tend to lean more towards one version or another. Still, by transgressing the usual editorial practice of pursuing only one official version and displaying a gamut of different possibilities, Barańczak attempted to open the original up for various readings and alternative renderings.

In this sense, the poet aimed to dismantle the notion of literalism and uniform idea of fidelity with an equal impetus to when he had spoken against the Communist spirit of generalisation and totalising language discourse. In the newly transformed Poland, however, this project would beg another question: how to come to terms with the multiplicity of these different perspectives and how to reconcile them in a constructive dialogue? Besides the postulate of a metacritical debate over different possibilities, Barańczak would also reinforce the idea of reciprocal acknowledgement and acceptance. The metaphor of twin mirror in a sense demonstrated that each of the individual approaches possessed some autonomy, but at the same time, could illuminate each other only thanks to the mutual support. Reflected in

his own artistic output through translation polemics both with others and with oneself, this polyphonic solution helped to understand and internalise the other's different perspective. In this spirit, in his 1994 musical translation of *Podróż zimowa*, Barańczak's ended one of his poems: *Więc to prawda, bracie w zwierciadlanym szkle?/ Mam jakiegoś ciebie, masz jakiegoś mnie?* [So it is true, brother in the mirror glass, That I have some you, and you have some me?] (1994c: 416).

3. Robert Stiller Overwinding the Clockwork Orange (1999)

3.1. Introduction

In the 1989 early-bird Polish review of Anthony Burgess' novel *A Clockwork Orange*, Andrzej Tuziak commented on the work's uncanny absence in Polish translation at that time: 'In our country, with two or three book circulations, nothing should surprise us, but this book has not appeared in any of them. It has never appeared for one reason: it cannot do so. Even if it were translated, it would not be the same novel anyway.' (Tuziak 1989: 10) Just on the eve of Poland's political transition, the reviewer perhaps could not know what history lay behind the book's Polish translation, and definitely would not be able to know how untypical and vibrant a life was still ahead of it. Despite all necessary updates and revisions to be made in Tuziak's statement, there is still one claim that may easily describe in a nutshell the novel's actual adventures in Polish: it could and, indeed, has never been 'the same novel'. As much as any novel in translation is never the same work anyway, Tuziak still, although unwittingly, managed to put himself in the shoes of the novel's future translator and foresaw a potential nuance to bringing this particular work to Polish readers.

Being a complex and not entirely straightforward task in itself, the Polish translation of *A Clockwork orange* with its Russianised futuristic language has nonetheless come to fruition. Still, no one could really predict the translator's decision to produce a doubled full-length translation of this prosaic text, let alone the chain of events that culminated in its publication. Introduced to the market in 1999 by *Etiuda* publishing house as book versions 'R' and 'A' ('R' for Russianised, 'A' for Anglicised), two renderings of *A Clockwork Orange* by Robert Stiller were presented in the form of a double-faceted, but internally

consistent take on the novel. As if being two sides of the same coin, the translation variants in respective publications corresponded to two distinct socio-political realities in Poland: the Communist era with Poland as a satellite country under Russian hegemony and the post-Communist US-inspired capitalist system under strong Anglo-American cultural influence. Besides two different, but compatible titles – *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* [A Mechanical Orange] and *Nakręcana pomarańcza* [A Wind-Up Orange] – the rendering's double format was stressed by a range of further tie-ins: the publisher's blurb, the cover's graphical layout, the translator's afterwords. The conceit of an original novel breaking into two – by no means the 'same' – novels read in parallel will therefore lie at the heart of this chapter's analysis. Although the first version of Stiller's translation was in fact created much earlier, I will treat the 1999 simultaneous release of two versions as an anchor for what Stiller then himself projected as 'a double pleasure' (Stiller: 1999c: 217) of reading and comparing these two renderings with each other. More specifically, I will attempt to address the issue of how such a metatranslation can serve as a simultaneous forum for political critique, and what the actual added value of bringing two different ideological readings together within translation would be in this particular case.[9]

Perhaps it is also not without reason that the idea of multiplying *Clockwork Oranges* in Polish and treating them as subversive textual commentaries came from no less a translator than Robert Stiller. A Polish polyglot of Jewish descent declaring the knowledge of a few dozen languages (including European languages, but also Malay, Chinese, Hebrew, Sanskrit) and having translated literary works from twenty-odd of them (Stiller 1991a: 1), Stiller became a very controversial figure in Polish cultural life. He will most probably go

[9] Being a well-known and controversial experiment, the case of multiple *Clockwork Oranges* in Polish has sparked much debate and has been analysed from different perspectives by a few scholars: Cezary Michoński (1992), Olga and Wojciech Kubińscy (2004), Anna Ginter (2006), Katarzyna Lukas (2008), and Bartłomiej Biegajło (2011). However, only Anna Cetera tentatively signalled a self-referential aspect of Stiller's experiment (2007: 96; 2009: 109) and this interpretative idea partly informs the extensive reading of two translations developed in this chapter.

down in history as a ‘difficult personality’ (Wróblewski 1989: 5), ‘confrontational’ man (Stiller 2014) and rather wayward *homo politicus* (Stiller 2014, Siedlecka 2009: 26). In the domain of translation, what earned him the title of *enfant terrible* was partly his sharp tongue and fervent tone in biting translation polemics: for instance, in the resounding cycle ‘Stół i nożyce’ [Table and Scissors] published over the 1970s in the *Literatura na świecie* magazine he co-shaped at that time (Adamczyk-Garbowska 2002: 192). But what also helped Stiller live up to the aforementioned reputation was definitely his swagger and ostentatiously erudite swing; it would often manifest itself in his almost proverbially drawn-out footnotes, featuring detailed philological reconstructions, meticulous historical references, but also some personal jibes. It is, therefore, unsurprising that Stiller’s translations of Vladimir Nabokov’s novels such as *Lolita* or *Pale fire* often exceeded the original length by a considerable proportion; as if the translator wanted to test in practice Nabokov’s famous appeal for ‘translations with copious footnotes, footnotes reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page so as to leave only the gleam of one textual line between commentary and eternity’ (Nabokov 1955: 512).

Staying with this idea with respect to Stiller’s translations of Burgess’ novel and taking into account his continuous knack for subversion, I will treat his *Clockwork Orange* duplication itself as an intricate network of such ample commentaries and footnotes. In taking the original text as a starting point for his intellectual and artistic resistance, Stiller consciously re-enacted the entire creative process and placed the very act of multiplying translations on a meta-discursive level. As it will be demonstrated, the novel with its original orange metaphor subsequently went well beyond its original locus, serving as a forum for critiquing different political agendas, social phenomena, and sources of moral decay. In this respect, Stiller’s orange on its own is by no means clockwork, mechanical, or wind-up: it becomes a very self-aware and self-reflexive process of negotiating between separate socio-

political realities. The doubled translation could therefore record Stiller's own scepticism and reluctance to accept, without any shadow of a doubt, either of the two systems just as they were or are. In the following chapter, I will read the Mechanical, Wind-up, and all other Oranges invented by Stiller as a creative ground for acknowledging and turning more readings of the original into a multi-faceted metatranslation and broader dialectical metaphor.

3.2. The '2 in 1' in the Making

The history of literary translation knows of translations of the same text published independently at a roughly same time by different translators and publishing houses. In the context of a decentralised system and free market publishing, it is technically possible to launch alternative translation variants into circulation almost simultaneously – a situation that would expectedly spark rivalry between them. However, when in 1999 the the same Polish publishing house, *Etiuda*, simultaneously released two book-length translation variants by the same translator, they were visually and textually introduced as tie-in books rather than as competitive products. Robert Stiller labelled them as two different versions of the original: *wersja R* [version R] and *wersja A* [version A], entitled respectively: *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* [A Mechanical Orange] and *Nakręcana pomarańcza* [A Wind-Up Orange]. Whereas the first variant inherited its title after the existing Polish translation of Stanley Kubrick's adaptation's title (Stiller 1991b: 142, 1999b: 204), the translator believed the other one would be in fact a more accurate term in Polish and kept both of them for better distinction between the two renderings (1999b: 204).

In order to highlight the kindship between two books more explicitly, their visual presentation was also intended to allude to and mirror each other. Both front covers featured

the same grey-shaded image, futuristic font, and graphical layout designed by Marek Piwko. The protagonist's head was set tight in the machine used for the novel's fictional psychiatric technique, with his eyes pried open, screaming mouth, and face contorting in pain and horror; with the only difference between the two covers being the background's colour, which was black for the 'R' and white for the 'A' version. On the back, the publisher's blurbs were phrased in almost the same way and overlapped in greater part, both suggesting that the novel's plot finds relevance in the reader's surrounding reality, either the past or the current one: 'We had the first-hand experience of this' (Burgess 1999a: back cover) for the 'Russianised' version; and: 'Sounds familiar. […] We are currently experiencing this first-hand' (Burgess 1999b: back cover) for the 'Anglicised' one. Besides the respective mentions of two different languages invented by Stiller to predict alternative developments of Polish, it is the version A's blurb that specifically pointed to the apparent continuity in relation to the previously created version 'R'. However, this unusual twin constellation and double-edged reading of the original novel was primarily endorsed by the translator himself.

Firstly, Stiller included three texts to this end, all of which explained the project's unique format and in a lot of detail presented the entire twisted story behind it: 'Burgess a sprawa polska' [Burgess and the Polish Question] and 'Kilka sprężyn z nakręcanej pomarańczy' [A Couple of Springs from the Wind-up Orange][10] in 'version R', and 'Kilka słów of tłumacza' [A Few Words from the Translator] in 'version A'. Secondly, in the latter afterword, he explicitly projected a double mode of reading onto two books and suggested that his unique experiment is governed by its own distinctive rules (Stiller 1999c: 217):

> I encourage the reader to stock up on both *Pomarańcze* [Oranges]*:* the *Mechaniczna* [Mechanical] as well as the *Nakręcana* [Wind-Up] one. One cannot replace the other

[10] These two texts were composed out of passages from Stiller's prototype afterword that was also titled *Kilka sprężyn z nakręcanej pomarańczy* and published alongside his 1991 rendering (Stiller 1991b). As the later afterwords also introduce threads absent from the first version of the translator's commentary, any discrepancies could inform the project's development.

> in anything but the plot. In all other respects a parallel reading and comparison of the two can become a double pleasure; and it is worth mentioning that there is neither similar case nor satisfaction comparable with that, nor such fun and joy, in the literature world-wide.

The source of comparative pleasure and starting point for Stiller's double translation and his intricate literary construction is, indeed, something else other than the novel's plot. What the translator brought to the fore in his reading of *A Clockwork Orange* is principally the interpretative potential of its peculiar language – a quality that got filtered through Stiller's own linguistic connotations and attitude to the original's socio-political implications, and then consequently reiterated in its Polish reincarnations as alternative running commentaries. In other words, even if referred to two potential historical visions, the reader of both translations is encouraged to think of both possible approaches on equal terms and try to put them into a broader perspective.

However, as it will be explained later in this chapter, Stiller's 'version R' had already existed years earlier in provisional distribution (Burgess 1989, Burgess 1990, Burgess 1991), well before 1999. In contrast, the 'A' variant came into being much later, partly capitalising on the wave of political transformation. Since this chronology is just set in stone and documented by Stiller is his translator's afterwords, this perhaps begs further questions: should the first translation be taken as the initially default one, which needed to be replaced by a more valid variant in the post-1989 world? Does the sequence of production necessarily determine the inevitable substitution of the two renderings? This assumption definitely does not explicate the last chapter in the life of 'version R': being put again into circulation in 1999, this time in a new double format with another accompanying version released simultaneously on the side. If only the contextual relevance of individual translation variants were here at stake, then why did Stiller not discard the outdated version, deeming it an antique that once served its purpose but no longer stayed abreast of recent developments?

Clearly, the double release of two *Clockwork Oranges* by the translator in 1999 challenges this intuition. Although acknowledging the successive process of coming into existence, the eventual synchronised publication of two translation variants manages to project a different mode of reading and takes the 'double pleasure' to a new artistic level. As the double format allows to look back at both of the variants from a certain point later in time, it facilitates a more distant and metacritical effort in reconstructing the two readings and relevant political systems in retrospect. By this means, the reader is somehow invited to comb through both texts and do comparative work on their own. All this to see how the two realities actually differ and to what extent they overlap with each other as the story is tellingly re-enacted over again.

Also, since the 1989 transition Stiller himself has done almost everything humanly possible to assert the rendering's double status. According to his claims, he had in fact intended to create his 'dualistic translation' (Stiller 1991b: 145) from the very beginning anyway (Stiller 1999a: 224-225), originally as a means of testing two linguistic hypotheses about the potential development of Polish. Regardless of whether this mastermind's plan actually reached back to such an early stage, the translator apparently clung to the idea during his negotiations with publishing houses throughout the 1990s. As he admitted later (1999a: 224), in 1994 he received an offer from *Gebether i Ska* press of either reissuing the 'R' version or publishing the 'A' for the first time. However, he rejected this mutually exclusive alternative in favour of the (eventually unfulfilled) opportunity to release both books in conjunction, provided by another press. Taking into account these and other means of shaping the novel's conjoined image in Polish, it is still the rendering's final textual shape set from 1999 onwards that will be analysed here as a fully-fledged double metatranslation popularised among the readership. After all, regardless of whether it was indicental or not, it is through this simultaneous book publication that the Polish rendering of *A Clockwork*

Orange became one of the most celebrated experiments in its own right; and it is in its 'dualistic' shape that the translation reverberated throughout the last two decades rewarding its publishers with seven reeditions for 'version R' and four reeditions for 'version A'. Thus, even when explaining the sequence and turn of events that led to the double format, I will treat them primarily as a useful insight into Stiller's creative process building up to the rendering's final textual shape.

As mentioned before, Stiller finds an artistic pretext for projecting this double pleasure in the construction of the original language with the strong interference of Russian, which itself has a long history. The novel is narrated in the first-person by the protagonist Alex, a teenager from somewhere in near-future England, who leads his gang on all-night orgies of random, as he calls it, 'ultra-violence'. Together with his companions, he uses a specific slang distorting regular English sentences with random Russian words, which are often twisted or adapted to English pronunciation, inflection or lexicology: for example, 'baboochka' (Russian: *бабушка*; grandmother), 'gulliver' (Russian: *голова*; head), 'horrorshow' (*хорошо*; well); 'rooker' (*рука*; hand), and 'chelloveck' (*человек*; man). Burgess named his linguistic invention 'Nadsat', which is a transliteration of the Russian suffix *-надцать* (teen), and depicted it as a part of youth subculture at the time in which the novel takes place. According to Blake Morrison (1973: xvi-vxii), Burgess preferred to use this artificial construction rather than base the protagonist's slang on any existing one, although in general he derived the idea from British youth groups of the 1960s, such as the Mods and the Rockers. However, worried by the danger that his idioms would have gone out of vogue already by the time the novel was published, Burgess wanted to avoid Alex's language seeming ephemeral and obsolete in the future. So, after having spent his holiday in Leningrad and seen some teenage gangs in the Soviet Union, he came up with the idea of adopting their language and combining it with English. Thanks to this device, the mixture

gained the added value of suggesting that hooliganism was not a local British problem but rather a more universal phenomenon in socio-geographical terms.

Also, the way Nadsat language was itself constructed further pointed to the problem of hegemony and violence. The protagonist's concept of 'ultra-violence' is arguably also applied to the language he uses and brutally distorts. The relentless aggression upon the language is metaphorically pursued by the expansion of barbarisms, the violence of one language upon another, which has 'a cruelty on its own' (Petix 1976: 43). Although Stiller's bold interpretation along this line, as it will be shown, was later pushed to the extreme in the Polish translation, the original readership might have been in fact also aware of this politically coloured linguistic allegory. For instance, in 1971, Robert O. Evans argued that Burgess' invention derived from the broader sociocultural presupposition: 'For the Anglo-American reader the Slavic words connote communist dictatorship, the society of *Darkness at Noon*, without moral value and without hope' (Evans 1971: 409). It is not entirely clear, and perhaps not really important, whether Stiller aimed to recreate an analogous sense of oppression, having got acquainted with similar readings in the original language. Irrespectively, he decided that transposing Burgess' invented idiom had a lot of potential in the Polish Communist context and, indeed, endeavoured to bring it to life in Polish translation before the 1989 translation.

According to Stiller's later accounts (1991b: 138; 1999a: 222), he prepared two chapters of his first version entitled *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* [A Mechanical Orange] for publication already in 1974. This short passage in Polish was meant to appear in *Literatura na świecie* along with the translator's pamphlet 'Horror-show, czyli bój się Pan jeża!' [Horror-show: Beware of the Porcupine!] (Stiller 1974: 186-201). In the latter text, which is the only one that was released back then, Stiller criticised a number of elements in Burgess' linguistic invention. These alleged flaws included: inconsistent construction of Nadsat,

plagiarising Joycean techniques (190), the inability to provide any futuristic hypothesis about potential language evolution, and the lack of the experiment's deeper social, political or moral meaning (200). Whether true or not, the pamphlet's accusations, later on revised and mollified by Stiller (1991b: 138), clearly aimed to set the stage for his own rendering. In contrast, his translation of the novel's excerpt was meant to offer a remedy against his objections: a relevant complex and profound commentary.

Unfortunately, we will never get access to Stiller's proto-Orange and the textual shape of these two chapters as his translation did not appear in print at that time. However, Stiller's narrative of the events explains why the scenario for the Polish *Clockwork Orange* took a completely different twist. Firstly, as he reports, his 'version R' was withdrawn from print in the nick of time (leaving the pamphlet on its own).[11] After that, the Communist censorship prevented him from publishing the translation with any state publishing house. Although Stiller received some distribution offers from the underground press, he preferred the official media because 'the case was too serious to undermine it in return for the limited and solely environmental impact of publication in the second circulation' (1991b: 159; 1999a: 223). Towards the end of and just after the fall of Communism, the situation changed and the 'R version' finally appeared in print in 1989, although only as a supplement to the science fiction magazine *Fantastyka* (Burgess 1989a). This booklet was also reprinted by an independent press called *Alternatywa* in the same year (Burgess 1989b) and then in 1990 by *ZRS* press, until Stiller could release a properly authorised version and the first draft of his introduction 'Kilka sprężyn z nakręcanej pomarańczy' in 1991 with *Wema* publishing house (Burgess 1991).

[11] However, there is no evidence of the censor's intervention in the pertinent documents stored in *Archiwum Akt Nowych* [The Central Archives of Modern Records] in Warsaw (case number: I.630.29.2016).

As if striking a disingenuous pose, Stiller expressed his surprise at the censorship's inference in spite of the novel's 'not containing (formally speaking) any message targeted against Poland and its political system in any historical period, socialism, Russia, nor the Soviet Union as well as none of their allies' (1991b: 159; 1999a: 222). However, assuming that the style in the first two chapters of Stiller's *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* was at least redolent of the one later employed in his full-length 'R' version, it is quite easy to guess why the censors could have not approved of this publication. Polish Alex narrated the story of his crimes using a language strongly tainted with Russian interpolations and more extensive stylisations. Taking into account the lexicon of neologisms, the original frequency and density (around 300 entries in the original novel's 'Glossary') was more than tripled by Stiller (cf. Stiller 1991b: 145; 1999a: 225) in order to enhance the sense of oppression and linguistic 'ultra-violence'. As Leszek Wysocki speculated later, the censors must have feared that 'the degenerates using Russian vocabulary could have brought forth an undesirable association for the Polish reader, threatening the prestige of the Soviet State' (Wysocki 2011: n.p.). In establishing such a parallel, the Russianised idiom could have probably resembled and compromised the 'newspeak' used by the Communist officials or Soviet infiltrators, becoming in a sense a harbinger of dissident novels published later in the 'second circulation'. For instance, in Tadeusz Konwicki's classic *Mała apokalipsa* (1979) (*A Minor Apocalypse*, trans. Richard Lourie, 1983), an analogously interfered language took on symbolic meaning and denoted betrayal and corruption in the society of the time. As the Polish and Russian words for 'Poland' got ironically intertwined in the famous formula shouted by the crowd: *Polska, Polsza, Polska, Polsza!*, they represented how the Communist apparatchiks blend in with the people's voice to smuggle in the idea of Poland as a part of the Soviet Union. Present already throughout the first two chapters of *Mechaniczna*

pomarańcza in the context of Alex's banditry, an equally telling linguistic construction could have alarmed the vigilance of censors.

Also, the novel's general anti-systemic undertone could provide a more holistic explanation for suppressing the author and withdrawing the novel's translation from print. In 1994, Zbigniew Batko (1994: 65) remarked that: 'aversion to Burgess was until recently explained on ideological grounds; and no surprise here, since the main target of his attacks were totalitarian systems.' Despite very few instances of Burgess' presence in Polish reception before the 1989 transition,[12] even in underground publishing, there was still a hazard of the author managing to live up to his reputation. In 1988, a 'second circulation' Polish magazine published a telling fragment of *1985* (1978), Anthony Burgess' tribute to and polemics with George Orwell's dystopian work, putting forward a critique of British society and expanding syndicalism. Regardless of the original context, in his translator's commentary reprinted from the Polish émigré literary and political magazine *Kultura*, Wojciech Skalmowski still proposed to juxtapose the 'chaos and tyranny' described in the passage with 'contemporary Russia and the reality it imposed on its neighbouring countries' (Broński/Skalmowski 1985: 130; 1988: 30). And so, even if not exactly representative of the first two chapters Stiller prepared for print, a similarly anti-regime potential in *A Clockwork Orange* could still inform the precautionary endeavours to sweep the novel under the rug back in the 1970s.

In fact, Stiller himself signalled a politically subversive reading towards the end of his 1974 pamphlet. As he summarised the plot, he also suggested that the novel's final dilemma could mean: 'the end of democracy and throwing ourselves in the pit of totalism'

[12] *Literatura na świecie* in 1978 published extracts from Burgess' tragicomedy *Napoleon Symphony* (*Symfonia napoleońska*, trans. Jarosław Anders). In 1986, the same magazine released Burgess' essay (trans. Elżbieta Pawełkiewicz) on George Orwell's *Nineteenth Eighty-Four* (alongside fragments from Orwell's minor works). According to Robert Looby (2015: 18), the latter concession was evident of the censorship's more liberal attitude in years 1986-87.

(Stiller 1974: 199). Perhaps for this reason the editor of *Literatura na świecie* needed to tack on his critical 'gloss' to Stiller's pamphlet, toning down its message, and light-heartedly reprimanding the translator for taking this cause too seriously and for losing his sense of proportion (Sadkowski 1974: 203-207). Despite Stiller's reading getting pigeonholed as far-fetched and paranoid, the novel's potential gravity and resonance was still tangible. In a readers' survey carried out just after the 1989 debut publication of 'version R' in the science-fiction magazine *Fantastyka,* some of the respondents picked up on the clear parallel with Poland's political oppression. One of them praised what he saw as the novel's 'realism' and placed it next to tabooed George Orwell, whose works were strictly banned from print for the lion's share of the Communist era (Rzeszutkowski 1990: 66): 'Try going out after 10pm to check. Good riddance! In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the hope lay in proles, in Burgess' world there is no hope.'

No matter if Stiller was truly unaware of the novel's possible impact or intentionally turned a blind eye it, it was still his own crusade for the novel's Polish publication that helped mythologise the Polish case of *A Clockwork Orange*. In fact, the translator quite consciously used and mediated in this process, shaping the rendering's image in terms of a forbidden fruit later on and claiming that 'legend still revolved around the book and its translation' (1991b: 159; 1999a: 223). The most suggestive record of this legend in the making involves Stiller's insinuations to the effect that the 1974 publication of his translation was withdrawn on Zenon Kliszko's recommendation. As he claimed, 'rumour had it' that Zenon Kliszko saw Stanley Kubrick's film at an exclusive screening sometime in the early 1970s, shrugged in disgust, and shouted: 'There will be no Clockwork Orange in Poland!' (Stiller 1991b: 159; 1999a: 222). Heard through the grapevine and thus completely unverifiable, Stiller's anecdote quite smartly identified not a random, but already stigmatised a serious Communist politician for the role of the evil bully. Infamously responsible for the party taking down

Kazimierz Dejmek's theatre production of Adam Mickiewicz's seminal Romantic play *Dziady* [Forefathers' Eve] at the Polish Theatre in Warsaw in 1968 (first staged in 1967), Zenon Kliszko based his unfavourable opinion of the performance mainly on the grounds of its Russophobic references. Becoming a great scandal, this event was followed by repercussions of significant grandeur: nation-wide student protests and the political crisis of March 1968, which later led to the expulsion of thousands of Jewish citizens. Thus, as soon as associated with the political persona of Kliszko, Stiller's word-of-mouth story strikes the right chord and fits squarely within a mythmaking narrative.

Probably for the same reason, this lore also became the novel's distinctive trait that went beyond the translator's paratexts. It got reiterated in the publisher's blurbs: 'someone shouted that there should be no Clockwork Orange in Poland! And the censorship was waging a war against it for 15 years' (Burgess 1999a: back cover); but it also unsettled and caused outrage among the novel's first readers participating in the *Fantastyka* survey, for instance: 'How can this novel be received? With pity and fury towards the bandits who once brutally robbed us of this and so many other works. Death to censorship!!!' (original punctuation; Pieniążek 1990: 66-67). All this culminated in granting the novel almost a cult status towards the end of Communism and from the beginning of the 1989 transition onwards. Perhaps, for this reason the first two book editions (Burgess 1989b, Burgess 1990) were then enlisted by the *Fundacja Centrum Dokumentacji Czynu Niepodległościowego* [Foundation of the Centre for Documenting Acts for Independence] as publications demonstrating how Poles fought for independence over centuries; although, rather ironically, these are the versions that Stiller identified as pirate copies, reprinted from his authorised supplement inside the *Fantastyka* magazine (Stiller 1991b: 160; 1999a: 224). Still, the novel's reputation and the account of its translation's adventures in Poland were definitely fuelled by Stiller's personal obsession with the fate of this publication. Having escalated into

a fierce campaign against censorship, publishers,[13] and the previous political system, it did not exactly come to an end with the 1989 transition. The later series of unsuccessful attempts to find a reliable publisher and then to release two translations of the novel simultaneously culminated into Stiller's tirade against the 'incompetence, thievery, and virulent destructive brainlessness' (1999a: 224) persisting in the post-Communist world. In theory, as Zbigniew Batko ironized about the Polish reception of Burgess in 1994, 'now that democracy, collective wisdom, and justice have triumphed, there should be no obstacles for his books to become available for every mother's son' (Batko, 1994: 65). Therefore, it is also the history of Stiller's disappointments on this front that got intertwined with his later broader critique of respective socio-political realities in his both *Clockwork Oranges.* And so, in this respect, the eventual publication of his double rendering, as well as his following translations of Burgess's novels with the same press: *Rozpustne nasienie* (2003; *The Wanting Seed*) and *Rok 1985* (2004, with Batko; *1985*), crowned years of his struggle. In a sense, it could be seen as a partially happy ending to the story since the newly encountered reality at least allowed the translator to put forward both his readings regardless of the object of criticism.

The actual timing for Stiller's development of the idea of creating two alternative translation variants gets lost in the shuffle. In 1999, Stiller stated: 'intended from the very beginning, the A version was created after many years' (Stiller 1999a: 224-225); an unverifiable claim about a preliminary intention that still leaves a lot of unknowns. For instance, it might be difficult to establish whether Stiller originally planned to produce both renderings already in the 1970s and formally put them in writing, or just hesitated between

[13] Stiller's conflicts with the aforementioned *Literatura na świecie* editor could have stoked up his resentment, and encouraged later efforts to publish the book's translation against all odds. In his written decision to quit the editorial board addressed to Sadkowski, Stiller made the following allusion: (Stiller 1980: 345) 'These phenomena, as well as others that I am going to hush up, blatantly clash with my viewpoints on the role of literary activity, especially in the domain of translation and promulgating foreign works.' Sadkowski himself has never confirmed Stiller's accusations of any textual interventions: neither in the sarcastic text 'Robert Stiller: Unus Defensor Veritatis' (Sadkowski 1987a: 384–7), nor in the article dealing with Anthony Burgess' political views (Sadkowski, 1995: 6).

two translation solutions and possible language combinations, which then found relevance and took the final shape on the wave of Poland's political transition. However, what can be said with a high degree of certainty is that the translator indeed cherished the thought of creating 'version A' still before the fall of Communism. The early 1989 publication of *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* in *Fantastyka* was already classified as 'version R' and, in a brief introduction attached to it, Stiller made a strong assertion about the upcoming alternative rendering (Stiller 1989: 2). As he then admitted in an interview, he was in the course of preparing the second variant two years later, in 1991 (Stiller 1991a: 1), which then culminated in its first publication alongside 'version R' only in 1999 (after a few unsuccessful attempts to publish both from around 1994 onwards).

Nonetheless, at the very beginning, his 'dualistic translation', as he would have it, was apparently meant to confront two possible directions in which the Polish language could have developed under the influence of either Russian or English. While the cultural impact of the first one was rather self-evident at that time, Stiller gave the following rationale for the latter years later (Stiller 1999a: 222): 'despite the political pressure, young people were anyway attracted to the English language and that second tendency in Polish was directed in the opposite way.' Whereas from today's perspective that linguistic trend, allegedly visible already by the 1970s, sounds more like *post-factum* wishful thinking, it was definitely at stake in Stiller's project towards the end of the Communist era. In the face of ongoing political development (still in 1989), he explicitly formulated a question as to which 'cultural dominance' would tip the balance in Poland: a political conundrum that justified his rendering's eventual bifurcating into two alternative scenarios announced already back then (Stiller 1989: 2). In 1991, Stiller was still trying to weigh the probability ratio of two equally realistic variants: 'if the Soviet cultural dominance persisted here' or 'quite the opposite situation' with Polish gradually getting transformed along the lines of English (Stiller 1991:

145). Even if slightly leaning towards the 'A version' at the 1999 market debut of the double publication, the translator still did not treat is as a foregone conclusion and considered both scenarios relevant: 'so, although the historical chances of 'version A' have significantly increased, the result of this game still remains undetermined' (1999a: 225). In turning Burgess' invented language into a linguistic touchstone that probed two plausible even if not actual language trends, Stiller shifted its role well beyond original fiction. It would be rather far-fetched to claim that Burgess also expected his Nadsat to become a common language of the future generation of English speakers. However, this aspect was not really the main concern for Stiller, who from the outset was not really fascinated with the original as such and, at least officially, claimed it being devoid of any truly profound quality. Although in the course of later 'consecutive readings and translation difficulties', he gradually attenuated and finally changed his judgment in favour of the novel (1991b: 138), he still treated it mostly as a springboard for his own artistic project. Initially piggybacking on its specific linguistic construction, Stiller's metatranslation not only raised the question of linguistic hegemony, but also, as he worked on his second version throughout the early 1990s, evolved into a broader critique of Poland's socio-political situation.

To facilitate the exegesis of his unique experiment and demonstrate that 'such a duality had a deeper validation' (1999a: 222), Stiller schooled his readers on the degrees of its understanding. To rephrase his stratification system: level absolute zero would be adequate for those who degraded Stiller's double rendering to the status of 'yet another of his, ha ha!, eccentric pranks' (1991: 145, 1999a: 225); and to those Stiller 'has nothing to say'. First level, amounting to the accomplishment of one of his artistic objectives, would require recognising in his 'dualistic translation' at least a 'sophisticated literary play and stylistic translation experiment'. Then, level two would entail reflection on the said alarming linguistic forecasts and general concern about how minor languages like Polish could in

future go extinct under the pressure of prevailing economic and cultural powers (1991: 145-146, 1999a: 226). Finally, the most advanced level which Stiller encouraged in his translator's afterwords was to 'reach deeper into the places where politics, sociology, ethics, and history are inseparable from language' (1991: 146; 1999a: 226).

This appeal invited a more complex treatment of linguistic constructions from *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* and *Nakręcana pomarańcza*, which Stiller used in 1999 to unmask socio-political phenomena in two different Polish realities. It is worth noting that from the outset he tried to look for the roots of Burgess' grim depiction in a mixture of broader cultural trends and those he mentioned in fact stemmed from both sides of the Iron Curtain. His list of possible contexts encompassed, for instance: the liberated lifestyle of American hippies and Beatniks, the crimes of the Charles Manson group, and the French civil unrest of 1968 – all filtered through the language of British tabloids such as *The Sun* and combined with the image of Bolshevism (1974: 192; 1991b: 139; 1999b: 199-200). Whereas the American and Western negative associations probably found their way to Stiller's pamphlet to tick off the usual ideological profile of publications in the official press, they still shed some light on the translator's line of thinking. As the original warped and idiosyncratic slang used by a group of criminals could bring to mind a plethora of cultural and social threads, the Polish translation of *A Clockwork Orange* should not be a mechanical code switching either. As Stiller would later argue, the experiment needed to go beyond 'an empty linguistic puzzle' (1999a: 221), and so he harshly criticised any other solutions he deemed thoughtless or too automatic.

The first proposition came from Anthony Burgess himself as Stiller corresponded with him long before the publication of his renderings. The translator discarded the author's suggestion to replace the original Russianised language with Anglicisms in Polish straightaway. In his explanation, Stiller blamed Burgess for being unaware of the Polish

language's specific history and the cultural implications of the country's geopolitical location, adding with a tad of satisfaction: 'He would never guess how serious this problem is and how unique in the global perspective' (Stiller 1991: 146; cf. Stiller 2005b: 9). Another misguided attempt, in Stiller's viewpoint, was an actual Polish translation of the novel's one chapter created by Cezary Michoński and published in the *Akcenty* quarterly (Burgess 1987). Stiller ferociously disapproved of what he saw as the young translator's 'pedantic futile jigsaw' and 'absurdly mechanical' technique of substituting the original Russianised neologisms with Anglicised ones exactly in the same places. According to him, the translator of *A Clockwork Orange* should rather find a literary idiom that can orchestrate the rendering into a total artistic ensemble.

As much as Stiller's double-edged invented languages in its own way meet this requirement, it goes without saying that this would have not been possible, had it not been for external factors and the later turn of events. In other words, Stiller's 'version A' would not be read in the same way: firstly, without the preceding 'version R' with all its baggage of experience and recounted misadventures; and secondly, without the 1989 transition that validated its political timbre in the relevant context. The idea of metatranslation's pairing has also affected the understanding of 'R version': being contrasted with its Anglo-American counterpart, its alternatively Communist undercurrent was additionally brought out. For instance, still in his 1991 introduction, Stiller maintained that his *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* had nothing to do with either Russia, the Soviet Union, or socialism in Poland (1991b: 159). In the 1999 corresponding passage, however, he slightly backpedalled on this statement and added the softening caveat: 'formally speaking' (1999a: 222). Also, in the final publication of 1999 Stiller smartly anointed one fragment as the interpretative key to the novel and that trajectory truly honed the message of his dialectic translation. Whereas Stiller's earlier

commentary of 1991 did not dwell on the term ‘subliminal penetration’, the 1999 translator’s afterword situated the notion really in the thick of the plot.

In particular, Stiler brought to the fore one of the scenes in the original, in which two doctors comment on Alex’s language by alluding to the most stereotypical connotations of that time (Burgess 1982: 91):

> ‘Quaint,’ said Dr. Brodsky, like smiling, ‘the dialect of the tribe. Do you know anything of its provenance, Branom?’
> ‘Odd bits of old rhyming slang,’ said Dr. Branom. ‘A bit of gipsy talk, too. But most of the roots are Slav. Propaganda. Subliminal penetration.’

In his afterword to the 1999 publication, Stiller stressed the importance of this passage to the way he oriented his reading of the novel and his subsequent translation strategy. Anchoring the original Nadsat at the intersection of subculture, linguistic violence, and ideological machinery was meant to make him delve deeper, as he would have it, into the domains of ‘politics, sociology, ethics, and history’. In his commentary, he argued (Stiller 1999a: 221):

> […] this ‘Russianness’ in Burgess’ novel was not accidental and is explicitly noted in the 6th chapter of Part Two as a result of ‘propaganda’ and ‘subliminal penetration’. It would be sheer stupidity to replace this shadow of destruction with an empty linguistic puzzle.

Taking this argument to a new level, Stiller’s reading of the passage instead rather precisely points the finger at the potential sources of moral decline symbolised by the language which Alex and his gang speak. When examining Alex just before the government-led Ludovico aversion therapy, Dr. Branom has a very explicit idea of the cultural and geopolitical affinities reflected in the criminal’s slang, which he reiterates in two different scenarios:

Version R (Burgess 1999a: 117):
Coś niecoś ze szwargotu przestępczego. Ale po większej części rdzenie lub zapożyczenia ***rosyjskie****. Propaganda. Infiltracja subliminalna*.
[A bit of criminal jabbering. But most of roots and borrowings are **Russian**. Propaganda. Subliminal penetration.]

Version A (Burgess 1999b: 117):
Coś niecoś rdzeni rosyjskich i szwargotu przestępczego. Ale po większej części ***amerykańskie****. Propaganda. Infiltracja subliminalna*.
[A bit of Russian roots and criminal jabbering. But most of them are **American**. Propaganda. Subliminal penetration.]

As it has been argued in the studies on Burgess' invented argot (Evans, 1971: 406; Adams 2011: 69), this original passage did not exactly illuminate the principle underpinning Burgess' invented language, especially with respect to the 'gypsy talk'. In contrast, however, Stiller's rendering of this scene in two different Polish variants lifts the veil on the translator's *modus operandi* and adds an accurate, informative gloss to his double reading embedded within the text. To sharpen the political contrast, the doctor exactly identifies the culprits behind Alex's corrupted language in his 'version A': it is precisely of American, rather than more generally English, provenance. Clearly contrasted with such a counterpart, the Russian propaganda and subliminal penetration from 'version R' again enters the Cold War-inspired fight for the soul of the Polish language. This time, however, its fate hangs in the balance between two socio-political realities, considered in the early 90s as two plausible, though equally disappointing, political projects. As much as the novel's plot stays unchanged in terms of the sequence of events, the translator fiddles with his Russianised and Americanised Nadsats to signal different factors and phenomena leading to them. Finally, as I will suggest towards the end of this chapter, the very repetition of the entire scenario and the gesture of re-enacting it through two consecutive eras give a deeper insight into Stiller's assessment of Poland's 1989 transition and two seemingly different political systems.

3.3. The Mechanical and the Wind-Up Languages

In respect to many aspects of his translation, Stiller did the readers a favour and on his own described the linguistic structure of two Polish Nadsats (Stiller 1999a: 233-235). Later confirmed in more meticulous studies, such as Anna Ginter's analysis of lexical and syntactical crossovers (Ginter 2006: 183-188), the translator's outline mapped out the main strategies of approaching these two completely different cases, both from a linguistic and historical perspective. Stiller was well aware of the affinity between Polish and Russian as Slavic languages as well as structural discrepancies between Polish and English, and so he adopted two distinct methods of introducing interlingual neologisms. In a nutshell, whereas the Polish-Russian combination brought out the potential of inter-Slavic word-formation, syntactic, and idiomatic calques, the 'Ponglish' slang was much more analytic: in terms of adopting non-inflective forms, infinitive, auxiliary and gerund constructions, definite articles, plural endings, and many others.

Notwithstanding these general principles announced by Stiller in his commentary and employed more or less coherently throughout the text, his treatment of Nadsat quite often went beyond Burgess' original coinages and insertions of Russian neologisms. This trend was not only reflected in the density of foreign interference in Stiller's renderings. Initially, as Stiller later argued, his 'version R' needed more Russification than the original as a result of the close linguistic affinity between Russian and Polish (Stiller 1999a: 221). Partly resulting from this assumption, the original number of 300 entries in the novel's 'Glossary' of neologisms (Hyman 1963: 185) attached at the end, swelled in Stiller's 'R' version to over 1000 instances (Burgess 1999a: 240-254; cf. Stiller 1991b: 145; 1999a: 225). However, since 'version A' later followed suit and in fact kept the number of Anglicised inventions roughly at the same count (Burgess 1999b: 201-216), Stiller put both of his

intensified Nadsats down to what he envisioned as a completely different 'scale of the linguistic experiment' (Stiller 1999a: 225). And it is also due to this experimental fervour and conceptual knack that his invented idioms partly absorbed other linguistic influences and unfolded somewhat differently in comparison with the original novel. Besides ubiquitous Russian-modelled neologisms, Burgess' Nadsat derived its playful vocabulary from teenage slangs, 'schoolboy transformations' (Hyman 1963: 185), 'infantilisms' (Petix 1976: 44), 'street talk of East London Cockneys' (Adams 2011: 69), and other forms of English patois.

To a certain extent, Stiller's invented languages built on a similar intra-lingual diversity, introducing lexical and semantic innovations patterned on 'local dialects and jargons' (Stiller 1991b: 151; Stiller 1999a: 229), for instance the Warsaw dialect or the Polish sociolect *grypsera*, used among recidivist prison inmates. Actually, Stiller revealed his Polish model for what he labelled as the novel's 'teenage and prison slang' (1999b: 210) in his renderings of the aforementioned self-referential scene with two doctors. In Polish, therefore, Dr. Branom does not speculate about Alex's argot as adapting some 'gypsy talk', but rather pigeonholes it specifically as *przestępcze szwargotanie* [criminal jabbering] (Burgess 1999a: 117; Burgess 1999b: 117). Interestingly, developed in the nineteenth-century Russian partition, Polish prison cant *grypsera* has traditionally had multilingual influences: Russian, Ukrainian, Yiddish, and German. And it is partly through this linguistic conduit that Stiller's Nadsats smuggled in borrowings from more languages. As the translator noticed during his work, this multilingual heritage lay dormant in Polish to be discovered through his experimental translation: time after time, it would transpire that 'some made up barbarisms already existed in regional jargons or sociolects' (1991b: 155; 1999a: 236). In addition to these quasi-foreign slang forms, Stiller beefed his artistic idioms up with newly coined borrowings from other languages. More specifically, he derived his

inventions from the ones with which Polish had the most palpable historical contact: English (for 'R' version), German, and 'Czech, Jewish, and Ukrainian here and there' (Stiller 1991b: 151; Stiller 1999a: 229).

Surprising as it may be, Stiller's strategy of a 'linguistic firework' (Lukas 2008: 95) has principally been seen either in terms of a merely subsidiary lexicon to choose from in emergency (e.g. Michoński 1994: 266; Ginter 2006: 184) or harshly criticised as 'making the idiolect inconsistent and depriving 'subliminal penetration' of a possible coherent agent' (Wierzbińska 2004: 20). However, it is rather unlikely that Stiller extended his Nadsat vocabulary to other languages unwittingly or needed to scrape the bottom of the barrel. As much as Stiller could have been inspired by the original Nadsat's broader sphere of sources in single instances such as German (Evans, 1971: 408; Adams, 2011: 69), French, Dutch, and Malay (Adams, 2011: 69), it looks that his own linguistic project reaches somewhat further. Firstly, as he explained, his technique of weaving German, Yiddish, and other loanwords into Nadsat equally pertains, '*mutatis mutandis*, to the "A" version' (Stiller 1991b: 151; Stiller 1999a: 229). Secondly, and in spite of some scholars' claims (e.g. Biegajło, 2011: 142), he did not mechanically replace respective loanwords between Russian to English with each other across his two versions. In fact, Stiller gives a hint at his rendering's true procedure again in the crucial fragment of the 'A' version. Whereas Dr. Branom in 'version R' classified Alex's language as 'A bit of criminal talk. But most of roots and borrowings are Russian' (Burgess 1999a: 177), his doppelganger in the version 'A' made a clear step further in relation to his predecessor: 'A bit of **Russian roots** and criminal talk. But most of them are **American**' (Burgess 1999b: 177). This accumulation of previous Russianisms inscribed in 'version A' bears traces in sentences such as, for example: *Ty* ***szczo*** [*что*; what] *dostał, brat*? (Burgess 1999a: 45) as opposed to the 'Americanised' *Ty*

szczo did get*, brat?* (Burgess 1999b: 46), which retains both quasi-barbarisms [original: 'Who you getten, bratty?' (Burgess 1982: 37)].

Stiller's decision to present his renderings as a partial continuation could be explained by his idea of projecting two hypothetical linguistic scenarios onto the format of metatranslation. Thus, his 'mechanical' and 'wind-up' oranges allowed him to capture two moments in the hyperbolised development of Polish: its linguistic surveillance to two great cultural powers, but still set against the background of other existing multilingual influences (such as German, Yiddish, Czech, etc.). By the same token, the translator's hypothesis oscillating between alternatives still needed to take into account *the status quo*: even if American dominance tips the balance in 'version A', it still cannot deny the previously prevalent Russian oppression throughout the Communist era, chronologically prior to it. Thus, keeping some of the formerly dominating Russian barbarisms would be as logical as smuggling in some of the Anglicisms into 'version R'; the latter following the allegedly strong inclination towards English among the Polish teenagers of that time. Either way, the key question here, according to the translator, is 'not which influence will eliminate the other; but whether the English language will have a considerable impact, with a lot smaller, but still visible part of Russian, or the other way round' (Stiller: 1991b).

In trying to picture languages in progress and encapsulate their socio-political implications, Stiller declared to have derived from the actual spoken and written language of Poles. According to his 1991 and 1999 afterwords, he conceived of his linguistic experimentation as a barometer of some already ongoing trends such as: Russian barbarisms and idiomatic calques present in the language of public media, cultural life, and literary translations from Russian (1991b: 153; 1999b: 231); the often ridiculed Anglicised language of Polish immigrants in the United States (Stiller, 1991b: 155; 1999b: 237), and of teenagers in bilingual schools in Poland (1999b: 237); as well as prison slang for the less common

usages of which Stiller diligently scoured relevant dictionaries (1999b: 236-237). Despite these tangible inspirations stemming from everyday linguistic reality, Stiller's literary attempt to reinvent Nadsat idioms in Polish still came to fruition alongside other prosaic texts and literary traditions towards the end of the twentieeth century, which in one way or another engaged with multilingualism. Although still in the 1990s, Stiller singled out only one forerunner of his linguistic amalgam, the satirical writer Stefan Wiechecki 'Wiech' renowned for his literary representations of the Warsaw dialect (1991b: 153; 1999b: 231), all other conventional models were somewhat in the air. For instance, Stiller definitely knew Maciej Słomczyński's celebrated 1973 translation of 'Anna Livia Plurabelle' from James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* and his inventive idiom that substantially stretched the unilingual borders of Polish by means of, among others, the English language (Joyce 1973: 242-67). Stiller's awareness of Słomczyński's creation is even more plausible as the rendering appeared in the *Literatura na świecie* monthly the year before Stiller's own unsuccessful 1974 publication; and it is also perhaps not without reason that Stiller explicitly compared Joyce's language with Nadsat in his pamphlet. Of course, this is not to say that Stiller appropriated any readymade models of similar linguistic mixtures in Polish literary texts. Nonetheless, setting his double Nadsat against the backdrop of other invented languages and conventional stylisations helps, firstly, to portray his metatranslation as an innovative project building on accessible artistic resources; secondly, to gain a more in-depth insight into his way of painting the literary landscape.

This possibility, however, concerns primarily the 'R' version rather than the 'A' one, and that is mostly for historical reasons. The 'Russianisms' of phrase in Polish has had a rather long lineage in Polish prose. One of the offshoots relates to literature revolving around the erstwhile constituent Eastern regions now called *Kresy* [Borderland] (e.g. Hadaczek 2011), whose artistic language often engaged with Ruthenian and 'Polish-Russian mixtures'

(Jarzębski 2002: 232). Since the Eastward shift of Polish borders after the Second World War, this region has been lost and has thus become mythologised, yielding numerous literary attempts to retrieve it through narration and language, for instance by Czesław Miłosz (*Dolina Issy*, 1955), Tadeusz Konwicki (*Kronika wypadków miłosnych,* 1974, *Bohiń*, 1987), Andrzej Stasiuk (*Opowiadania galicyjskie*, 1995, *Dukla*, 1997), to mention just a few. Naturally, Stiller's Russianised language of 'ultra-violence' absolutely excludes the possibility of any linguistic nostalgia, let alone specifically about the *Kresy* dialect. However, as if on the wave of other Borderland linguistic representations, his 'R' Nadsat still becomes a curious pretext for recalling Poland's irretrievably multilingual and multi-ethnic nature: as the translator enhances it with other Eastern Slavic languages (i.e. Ukrainian) and various regional forms, the traces of which, besides for instance Yiddish, may be still salvaged through some colloquial forms and oral practices.

More importantly, however, Stiller's idiolect from *Mechanicza pomarańcza* becomes a literary reminder of another strand of a very recognisable tradition: that of the 'Russified' Polish language (cf. Brzezina 2007: 39-72, 413-438). Depicted and stylised with the mediation of Russian or Russified characters in the nineteenth-century literature (most notably, Stefan Żeromski's *Syzyfowe prace*, 1897, but also novels by Eliza Orzeszkowa, Ignacy Kraszewski; cf. Brzezina 2007), it was so strongly resisted under the Russian partition as a symbol of political and cultural oppression of the Imperial conqueror. And in fact some expressions restored by Stiller for his 'R version' are redolent of that strand and transpire to be the actual relicts of the time. Though eventually sunk into oblivion as the political situation shifted, some of these obsolete words of Russian origin used to exist in Polish and can now be found in several elements of the past *coleur locale* recouped by the translator. For instance, Alex's favourite Korova Milkbar in the Russianised rendering is said not to be subordinate to any *ukaz* (Burgess 1999a: 7) that prohibits mixing alcohol into

their milk cocktails, which used to denote a decree or edict announced specifically by the Russian Tsar, as opposed to the standard Polish: *prawo* [law] in 'version A' (Burgess 1999b: 7) for the original 'law' (Burgess 1982: 5). Similarly, the protagonist is dragged by policemen to their *cyrkuł* (Burgess 1999a: 68), a police office existing precisely in Poland under the Russian partition. This is in comparison with the Polish *biuro* [office] in the Anglicised rendering (Burgess 1999b: 68) and in lieu of its original Nadsat equivalent: *cantora* (Russian: *контора*; Burgess 1982: 55). In revivifying such a linguistic landscape of institutional constraints by similar means, the translator establishes a metaphorical bridge overarching different periods of Russian hegemony in Poland. Although the main focus of his experimental Nadsat would be on the twentieeth-century political setting, it also partly attempts to dig into the linguistic texture of Polish and bring out other hotspots of the ultra-violent cruelty undertaken through and on language. As this process reached further back, it could equally concern cultural policies in Poland during the partition times: the imposed Russification of the Polish language, but also – with reference to German neologisms in Stiller's renderings – the analogous Germanising practices in the Prussian partition.

In the same vein, the Soviet Union's political and cultural influence would be viewed as a continuation of the once commenced project, as Stiller argued (1999a: 221): 'the Russification of the Polish language has already had a long history and even a few years ago it was still conducted in a premeditated, though tacit manner.' Following this understanding, although the novel does not refer 'formally speaking', as Stiller would have it, to the Soviet Union or Communism in Poland, its invented language in 'version R' still bears indelible marks of their influence and linguistic coercion. These historical stigmas emerge not only on the surface as the protagonist's narration often redefines and reimagines the surrounding reality of that time. For instance, in the Polish Russanised translation Alex sees a poster of a film produced not by 'Statefilm' (Burgess 1982: 18), but precisely by *Gosfilm* (Burgess

1999a: 23), taking its name from the USSR State Committee for Cinematography, Goskino (Gosfilm until 1963), as opposed to *Film Ojczysty* [Fatherland's Film] (Burgess 1999b: 23) in 'A' version. He finds his way not to a 'cottage' (19, 119), but to a *dacza* (24, 156), a summer house that was often state-owned and given to the party members; an existing Russian-modelled term contrasted with the phonetically Anglicised *kantry haus* [country house] (24, 156) in 'A' version. Also, the protagonist and his gang constantly confront *milicyjniaki* (151, 189) or *poli milicyjniaki* (45, 152, 190), coined after the Poland People Republic's military police *milicja,* reappearing in various places in the novel. These means of painting *Mechaniczna pomarańcza*'s literary vision resonate with Alex's language and filter his account of the events through a very specific frame of reference for the Polish reader.

Quite tellingly, in this version's prison scenes Alex also uses the name *zek* (Burgess 1999a: 85, 87, 88, etc.), pointedly for his fellow inmate whom he later beats to death (as opposed to the phonetically Anglicised *pryzner* [prisoner] in the relevant passages of *Nakręcana pomarańcza* and for the original Nadsat *plenny* [*пленный*; captive]). Denoting a prisoner of Soviet labour camps, this conventional term spread mostly through Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's accounts of Stalinist repression (English: *zek*; cf. Bellos 2011: 36). In Poland, even though Solzhenitsyn's writing was banned from print, the readings of Jerzy Pomianowski's Polish translation of his *Archipelago Gulag* describing the live of *zeki* in labour camps was still known to the Polish recipients – having been published in Paris in 1983 and transmitted by the Polish Radio Free Europe before its official release in 1988. Similarly, the Polish strand of Gulag literature came to the surface, most notably with testimonies such as: Gustaw Herling-Grudziński's account *Inny świat* (*A World Apart*, trans. Andrzej Ciołkosz, 1951), with its first Polish edition released in London in 1953 and becoming very much present in émigré circules and then in the Polish underground press in

1980; and Barbara Skarga's 1985 memoir *Po wyzwoleniu* [After Liberation]. As Małgorzata Czermińska (1997: 111) noticed, the first years of the post-Communist Polish prose (1989-1995) abounded with kindred late coming memoirs from prisons and labour camps in the USSR. In this context, Stiller's political label tagging the prison scenes could easily correspond to the ready-made literary representations of that time and spark negative sentiments about the figure of the perpetrator.

Though placed among other *zeks*, Alex is so much invested in the corrupted system he is part of and internalises that he manages to escape the consequence of killing his fellow camp prisoner. Whereas his Russianised narration points the finger at the symbolic culprit of similar crimes upon *zeks*, it could also bring to the fore other aspects of violence dormant in language. As Alex's brutality and vulgar language get intertwined with Russianisms, this rendering's *zek* passages become a reminder of the specific 'Gulag jargon' present in Polish Gulag prose (cf. Tichomirowa 2008: 97). In fact, this argot was often described as a combination of the so-called *poligramota* (political grammar) with the most atrocious vulgarities in Russian (Grudziński 1992: 16) or a multinational vehicular slang whose swear words were intuitive for Poles as they could easily find their equivalents in their own language (Skarga 1990: 203). Thus, the consequent Russian barbarisms used in Polish Gulag memoirs become yet another point of reference for the readers of Stiller's Russianised prison slang throughout the 1990s. As the usual prison *grypsera* is nourished by Russian swear words and language of aggression as well as happens to occur within the group of *zeks*, it adds another layer to the Polish Nadsat in 'version R'.

As a result of all these existing literary models, the Polish-Russian idiom in Stiller's rendering to all intents and purposes does not take the original argot at face value. It rather treats it as a starting point to pose a question about different possible recreations in the Polish context. In doing so, the translator actually multiplies and tests various types of Polish-

Russian mixtures throughout his translation playing on different grammars, traditions, and perceptions of Russianisms, and turning them into a literary seismograph of Russia's cultural influence in Poland. In this respect, it is perhaps less surprising that some further associations with other historic periods of Russian repression may be added to the explosive mix. For instance, Stiller's experimental language in *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* reminded one of the early reviewers, Władysław Zawistowski, of the Red Army travelling towards the West at the time of Polish-Soviet War of 1919-21 and then again during the Second World War (Zawistowski 1991: 7).

Nonetheless, regardless of similar historical perspectives, all of these interpretative threads lead to a more self-reflexive diagnosis about the cultural coercion and violence performed on the Polish language. This line of thinking partly accords with the aforementioned novel by Tadeusz Konwicki, *Mała apokalipsa* (1979), in which meaningful Russianisms (cf. Jarniewicz 2006: 179-188; Skibińska 2013: 129-157) were seen as a symbolic pronouncement of 'the linguistic decay' (Düring 2012: 417-418). In Stiller's rendering, however, the decomposition of language starts with the roots of the language itself. According to Barbara Skarga's *Po wyzwoleniu*, it was due to the shared etymologies between Polish and Russian swear words that she could discover her vulgar curses in Polish dangerously blending into the Gulag jargon. It seems that Stiller's 'version R' proposes a similar intuition and renews this aspect of the Russian language's presence within Polish. As Hanna Bałtyn remarked in her commentary to Stiller's 'version R', the comprehension of its language for the Polish audience is a daunting, though not impossible task, since 'Russian has for ages played the role of a *rugatielnyj jazyk*' (Bałtyn 1991: n.p.). This Russian expression for 'a vituperative, abusive language', which enters Bałtyn's original Polish statement, very accurately summarises the said state of affairs. As Stiller activates the offensive Nadsat in his *Mechaniczna pomarańcza*, it often turns out that this Russianised

language of ‘ultra-violence’ used by Alex and his aggressive gang finds correspondents in existing swear words in Polish. Stiller indulges in a wide range of abusive expressions, most often absent from the original, such as: adjectives deriving from *jebać* (Russian: *ебать*; fuck), *suka* (*сука*; bitch), *sukinsyn* (*сукин сын*; son of a bitch), *gnój* (*гной*; dirtbag), *chujnia* (*хуйня*; clusterfuck), as well as, for example, a palette of the derogatory *ryło* (Burgess 1999a: 21, 29, 20, 55, etc.) and *morda* (36, 168) (Russian: *рыло, морда*; snout), which would later on be juxtaposed with the simply phonetic *fejs* [face] in ‘version A’. In re-establishing this affinity of Russian vulgarism through his ‘R’ Nadsat, the translator also highlights the origins of the Polish abusive language: it is in the language of coercion *per se* where these two have found a point of contact and can now meet within Stiller’s brutalised amalgam. Its effect resonates even more as the novel’s characters often wear masks, and so their violent language metaphorically becomes a source of disguised and anonymous, but effective, aggression – in particular the one performed by the Communist political apparatus, but also through many other instances in Polish history.

And thus, what lies at the heart of the discrepancy between Burgess’ and Stiller’s Nadsats is how and to what end the two invented idiolects calibrate the effect of their linguistic exoticism. It goes without saying that the expectations about the source Russian-sounding vocabulary were definitely far less nuanced than the post-dependence sentiments of Stiller’s Polish audience. When it comes to Burgess’ original argot, in fact, some interpretations just treated its strangeness and remoteness in abstraction from the protagonist’s brutality. For instance, Esther Petix even construed the Russianised neologisms in terms of ‘the screen of another language’ that ‘softens the atrocities of the book’ and keeps ‘soothing and unnerving the reader’ (e.g. Petix 1976: 43). If this is truly the case, then in comparison to this understanding Stiller’s blatant pleasure in making his ‘R’ Nadat sound even more vulgar and barbaric reveals a far more dissociative stance towards the source of

linguistic distortion. As it has been noted, through its Russianised deformations, Stiller's derogative idiom also frequently slips into heavy irony (Michoński 1994: 265, Biegajło 2011: 140) or even demonstrates the translator's 'extremely sarcastic attitude towards Russian' (Biegajło 2011: 140). This way of downgrading Russian to the role of a barbaric and *rugatielnyj* language intruding on Polish culture can be also seen a strategy of distancing oneself from the former oppressor and coming to terms with one's post-dependency complex.

And such a literary revenge on the former hegemon would not be an isolated case in the panorama of Polish intellectual attitudes since the 1990s. As Maria Janion argued in her seminal paper 'Polska między Wschodem a Zachodem' (Janion 2003: 131-146) ('Poland Between the West and East', 2014: 13-33), the representations of Russia in several celebrated post-Communist literary works, such as Ryszard Kapuściński's *Imperium* (1993; trans. Klara Glowczewska, 1994) and Dorota Masłowska's *Wojna polsko-ruska pod flagą biało-czerwoną* (2002) (*Snow White and Russian Red*, trans. Benjamin Paloff, 2006), were often underpinned by a sense of moral and cultural superiority towards the former oppressor. Such an artistic stance could be naturally traced much earlier, for instance in the Gulag testimonies (cf. Zessin-Jurek 2015: 49) and the nineteenth-century literature under the Russian partition (cf. Maciejewski 1998: 192-193), recording the process of identifying oneself with 'Western' values as opposed to 'Eastern' barbarism. However, it is after the political transition and Eastern Europe being 'reclaimed' by the West that the opposition between Polish culture and the monolithic image of barbaric Russia is most strongly upheld.

Quite curiously, the flagship piece of this strand, namely Masłowska's *Wojna polsko-ruska* can actually be seen as a later Polish reincarnation of Stiller's 'version R'. Its aggressive protagonist *Silny* ('Nails'), a *blokers* (approximate to the English 'chav') who looks down on 'the Russkis' (pejorative of Russians) and uses an invented vulgar language:

distorted, full of colloquialisms, and representing various discourses of violence and post-dependent identities (cf. Barańska & Snochowska-Gonzales 2008: 129, Gosk 2014: 237). With such a striking parallel, it is quite surprising that very few reviewers picked up on this shared imagery between the two novels in Polish, with the only minor mentions including the resemblance of their constructed languages (Lengauer 2012) or the impact of the film adaptations (Baduła 2009). And whereas Masłowska was praised by critics for capturing the newly shaped mentality of the post-transition generation of Poles, it needs to be noted that Stiller's rendering in a sense heralded some of her intuitions. As Janion (2014: 32-33) argued, Masłowska's novel encapsulated the contradictions shaping Polish identity at that moment in time such as: anarchism versus capitalism, stinging irony towards the 'Russkis' countering the complex of Polish secondariness to the West: all of which permeated the protagonist's idiolect turning it into 'the narcotic trance talk composed of clusters of languages heard on television, in soap operas, Big Brother, school and office'. This double-faceted, and partly self-contradictory, aspect of the Polish post-Communist identity is even more closely aligned to Stiller's chronologically preceding project of double metatranslation. Just as Janion understood Polish post-Communist identity shaped through literature as something inherently torn between 'the West and the East', Stiller in his *Clockwork Oranges* critically tested the two concepts in practice. In doing so, he posed the question of whether any similar distinction actually offers anything new to the understanding of the post-1989 scenario; and what such 'Western' or 'Eastern' ideas would encompass specifically in the context of Polish post-dependency memory.

With an eye to this problem, Stiller's bifurcated novel in a sense represents two schizophrenic voices about such a 'self-contradictory' identity: as opposed to 'version R', his Americanised artistic idiom in *Nakręcana pomarańcza* illuminates the other side of the coin. In 1991, Stiller mentioned that his second reading could allow for ridiculing 'the

language of local teenagers snobbing it up in American style' (Stiller, 1991b: 155); and such cultural aspirations under the Anglo-American world's dominance were neck and neck with the broader pursuit of Western life style and drive for consumerism throughout the 1990s. At that time, these rapid socio-political changes were often reflected more generally in Polish prose: as Jerzy Jarzębski remarked, 'the invasion of predatory capitalism into Polish life with its pursuit of money, shady business dealings, exuberant eroticism, and criminality' made some well-known Polish authors 'flirt with a 'harlequin' or 'street' poetics of tabloid sensationalism' (Jarzębski, 2000: 347-348). All these burgeoning thematic and aesthetic characteristics in the post-Communist literary arena could easily serve as a backdrop for Stiller's idea of transposing Alex and his gang into the Americanised reality of his 'version A'. And it is also due to this cultural context that the protagonist and his friends in this reincarnation were consequently seen as children of American mass culture (cf. Kubińscy 2004: 73), whose worship of physical aggression could have been picked up through the pulp culture of lurid violence: popular films, literature, comic books, and video games.

In fact, Stiller's 'version A' fiddles with the protagonist's concept of 'ultra-violence' along those lines. While the Russianised version keeps the original prefix in its both translated variants, *ultra gwałt* and the more playful *ultra kuku* (Burgess 1999a: 118; 43, 179), the 'A' Nadsat changes them into: *super gwałt* and *super kuku* (Burgess 1999b: 118; 43, 179). The 'super-violence' embedded in this rendering's Americanised world sounds more like an ironic variation on the idea of super-powers taken from a superhero blockbuster. When Alex watches a series of brutal films as part of the Ludovico therapy, he realises his gang's undertakings extends the chain of violence performed at different moments of human history and displayed on screen before his eyes. In Burgess' original, he calls on doctor's assistants and requests to switch off 'all this dratsing [*∂pamъ*: tear] and ultra-violence' (Burgess 1982: 92), which in Stiller's Russianised version is rendered as *całe to zrażanie się*

[*сражение*: fight] *i ultra gwałt* (Burgess 1999a: 116). In *Nakręcana pomarańcza*, however, Polish Alex identifies the film as *cały ten* ***fajting*** [phonetic: fighting] *i* ***super gwałt*** [super-violence] (Burgess 1999b: 116). With all the Americanised tone to it, this image resonates with the depiction of brutality filtered through popular culture and mainstream cinema.

Also, as Alex and his gang from 'version A' often indulge in the said *fajting* or *big fajting* (49, 57, 116, 169), this activity becomes an Anglicised name for a constant element of their lifestyle, exactly like another invented neologism *grabing* (7, 13, 42, 54, etc.) [*grabować*: plunder] coined for their routine of robbing random victims. Although completely made up, Stiller's terms here use a ready pattern in Polish for English loanwords denoting repeated activities, lifestyles, and phenomena; the terms swiftly echo analogous borrowings with the *-ing* suffix that emerged in Polish in the 1990s (cf. Waszakowa 2009, Banderowicz 2007) such as, for example: *clubbing* (*klabing*), *zapping*, *lobbing*, *sponsoring*, to mention just a few. These language fashions, similar to the actually spreading usage of *super* (Waszakowa 2007: 90), found their way into Stiller's Americanised idiom as a means of mocking the teenage mimicry of the Westerners. According to the Polish critic Piotr Gruszczyński, 'Ponglish stuffed with distorted borrowings' from Stiller's *Nakręcana pomarańcza* was actually becoming 'more and more *kul* [cool]' and turned into the default speech of young people regardless of their educational background and actual knowledge of English (Gruszczyński 2005: 22). In the same vein, another reviewer argued that Stiller's hypothesis about the Polish language's development already had a foregone conclusion: since 'the everyday Polish growing out of tabloids and popular culture' got flooded with Anglicised jargon hybrids, these radically tipped the balance in favour of the Anglo-American cultural dominance (Kowalski 2006: XLIII). Irrespective of the actual snowballing trends, it is still crucial to see how Stiller unreels his 'A' Nadsat coinages and stylisations within the context of the novel's plot. In employing the English-modelled

prefixes or distinctive gerund forms for Alex's criminal activities, the translator suggests a rather ironic diagnosis about the teenage Americanised lifestyle: the reader needs to come to the conclusion that, however ubiquitous and in vogue, the superficial promotion of 'super-violence' with all its *fajting* and *grabing*, will not culminate in any better scenario than its Russianised counterpart.

The linguistic texture of 'A' Nadsat from Stiller's *Nakręcana pomarańcza* manages to capture yet another aspect of the Polish post-Communist reality. The 1989 political transition in Poland was followed by the so-called Balcerowicz plan, an economic 'shock therapy' fostering a rapid transition from the state-governed economy to the US-modelled free market economy or proto-capitalism. These socio-political shifts were also reflected in the formation of neologisms imported to Polish for newly arriving goods, technological devices, and other elements of the contemporary world. The linguist monitoring the post-1989 lexical changes, Teresa Smółkowa, commented on the contemporary Polish language in the following way: 'We have the biggest number of new nouns, because the world of things is nowadays prevalent. More and more new goods are being produced towards the end of the twentieeth century and this flood of things calls for new names' (Smółkowa 1995). As if going with this tide, Stiller's Americanised Nadsat recreates the literary world of things by multiplying borrowings and neologisms associated with modern reality, cars, shops, economic products. This particularly concerns the phonetic imitations of English words for standard names both in the original and 'version R', such as: *kastomer* [customer] (15, 30, 45, etc.), *szopy* [shops] (55, 113, etc.), *kar* [car] (23, 55, etc.), *brejksy* [breaks] (24, 29), *trafik* [traffic] (23), *hajwej* [highway] (42), and many others of the like. For instance, Stiller stuffs the description of one of the gang's many all-night orgies with modern-sounding newfangled Anglicisms, making the scene more scattered and dynamic, as if playing on the effect of adrenaline boost:

> Then we took the road west. There wasn't much traffic about, so I kept pushing the old **noga** [*нога*; leg] through the floorboards near […]. That was a real kick and good for **smecks** [*смех*: laughter] and lashings of the ultra-violent. We came at last to a sort of village, and just outside this village was a small sort of a cottage on its own with a bit of garden. […] I eased up and put the brake on, the other three giggling like **bezoomny** [*безумный*; insane], and we could **viddy** [*видеть*; see] the name on the gate of this cottage **veshch** [*вещь*; thing]. (Burgess 1982: 19)

> *A później szosą na* ***west****.* ***Trafik*** [traffic] *nie był duży, więc* ***aj did pusz*** [I did push] *girę normalnie w dechę prawie że na wylot […]. To jest dopiero* ***eksjating*** [exciting], *to jest coś! do śmiechu i do łomotu w* ***super gwałt*** [ultra-violence]. *Wreszcie dotarliśmy do takiego osiedla i* ***dżast after det*** [just after that] *był jakby taki mały osobny* ***kantry haus*** [country house] *z kawałkiem ogrodu […] [O]dpuściłem gaz i po* ***brejksach*** [breaks]*, a ci trzej chichrali się jak* ***med*** [mad]*, i widzieliśmy* ***inskrypszyn*** [inscription] *na* ***gejcie*** [gate]. (Burgess 1999b: 24)[14]

In his Americanised Nadsat, Stiller toys with the idea of Polish teenagers pretentiously imitating the *kul* language, but also hints at the broader social phenomena of the 1990s. His ironic take on what represents the Western values becomes a rather disillusioning response to the post-transition optimism and high expectations among the new generations of Poles. Firstly, Stiller mimics their shallow fascination with the stereotypical speed of life in the United States channeled through Hollywood action films, television series, and video games; but secondly, more widely, he pins down the West-patterned high life aspirations of the proto-capitalist Polish classes. His allusion to the newly disseminated models of lifestyle is additionally cemented by what he repeatedly translates as *haj feszn* (or: *top feszn*, following the actually booming usage of *top* in Polish; cf. Waszakowa 2009: 98) [phonetic: high/top fashion] throughout his rendering for the original expressions in standard English (Burgess, 1999b: 8, 14, 47, 48, 79, etc.) and instead of the Polish idiomatic *szczyt mody* from 'version R'. The Anglicised sarcastic coinage, as well as Stiller's other tongue-

[14] 'Version R': '*A później szosą na zachód. Nie było wielkiego ruchu, więc wciskałem* ***girę*** [colloquial: leg] *normalnie w dechę prawie że na wylot […]. To dopiero podnieca, to jest coś! do śmiechu i do łomotu w ultra gwałt. Wreszcie dotarli my do takiego osiedla i zaraz za nim była jakby mała osobna* ***dacza*** [*дáча*: summer house] *z kawałkiem ogrodu. […] [O]dpuściłem gaz i po hamulcach, a ci trzej chichrali się jak* ***z uma szedłszy*** [participle of: *сойти с ума*; go mad], *i widzieliśmy nazwę na furtce.*' (Burgess 1999a: 24)

in-cheek inventions, anticipated a further progress of these socio-cultural trends and found fertile ground in the later Polish reception.

The consumerist strand of Stiller's diagnosis was especially enforced through the renowned 2005 stage production of the novel's 'version A' that kept the Ponglish hybrid language and its respective title *Nakręcana pomarańcza*. Adapted by Jan Klata for *Wrocławski Teatr Współczesny* [The Contemporary Theatre in Wrocław], the play overturned the earlier less successful adaptation of 'version R' for *Teatr Stefana Jaracza* in Łódź [The Stefan Jaracz Theatre] entitled *Mechaniczna pomarańcza*, and in its brand new Americanised shape was reported to delight the translator (Stiller 2005a: 88; Stiller 2005b: 9). In his interpretation of Stiller's Nadsat, Klata followed his critique of the society's 'McDonaldization' and highlighted the 'wind-up' metaphor within this purview. For instance, in a self-referential scene key to the novel, Alex reads a fragment from the manuscript entitled *A Clockwork Orange*, written by F. Alexander, one of his victims, about imposing laws and conditions on 'a mechanical creation'. In the theatre production, as the passage unfolds, Alex's companion Georgie gobbles up a large, juicy chicken leg in the foreground: a rather telling synchronisation of two separate scenes from the novel which Klata decided to turn a direct commentary to each other. The titular 'wind-up orange' made in America would therefore be doomed to follow the rules of the newly established consumerist system and the following consumption craze. And this vision with its sense of the vapid *hej feszn* pursuit underpins Stiller's *Nakręcana pomarańcza* as the same story of Alex and his gang unreels leading to the equally lamentable consequences.

In its pessimistic prediction, the 'A' version of Stiller's rendering fits in with the intellectual current of unmasking the myth of a flawless capitalist democracy emerging already in the 1990s Polish prose and becomes one of the many literary expressions of such disillusionment. The post-1989 social and economic exclusion, the influx of foreign capital

and products, as well as the crisis of moral and aesthetical norms have arguably found their reflection in a wide range of contemporary novelistic representations by authors such as: Andrzej Stasiuk, Dorota Masłowska, Michał Witkowski, Stefan Chwin, Sylwia Chutnik, among others. In his *Polska do wymiany* [Poland for Exchange] (2009), Przemysław Czapliński argued that the repercussions of this condition inflicted the dissonance and disintegration of narratives about freedom, identity, and historical memory; while Jerzy Jarzębski suggested to look at the current Polish prose as symptomatic of the broader ideological mindset, dissatisfaction, and fear explaining the suspicion that the country has still been oppressed by foreign economic powers (2011: 11-14). In this sense, the political schizophrenia of Stiller's double rendering also becomes a record of deeper ruptures and snags in the coherent narrative after the fall of Communism in Poland. By placing the myth of capitalist democracy alongside the corrupted reality in the 'R' version, it attempts to debunk that myth revealing how the new utopian world turns into yet another dystopia. In doing so, it implies that these two systems of governance are just different manifestations of the same political servitude. Whereas the Russianised translation unmasks the previous apparatus of violent repressions and ideological constraints, the Americanised one points to a different type of conformism: taking for granted the imported lifestyle and replicating the ready-made models of thinking imposed by the powerful system of economic and cultural persuasion.

On a macro level, therefore, Stiller's 'version A' turns into an translatorial act of resistance against the soft power of more current global economy and 'multinational capitalism', a project lately postulated by Lawrence Venuti (2008a: 18-33). And so, it probably comes as no surprise that this type of anti-imperial and post-dependent discourse with an equal regard to both renderings emerged already in the moment Stiller announced his other upcoming translation at the beginning of the 1990s. For one of the early reviewers,

Anna Bojarska, the very fact that two hybrid languages considered by Stiller were fully understandable for Polish readers was a touchstone of Polish society's submissiveness and 'colonial' mentality (1992: 63): 'Well, Poles are the model proletariat', she insisted ferociously, 'The niggers of the world!'. Thus, the construction of the 'mechanical' and 'wind-up' idioms in Stiller's double rendering aims to expose these different forms of cultural vassalage on the example of Poland's political setting and Polish as a minor language. His experiment's duality can find a 'deeper validation', as Stiller wished, in the continuously subordinate fate of minor cultures and minor economies engulfed by more powerful forces in the globalised world. No matter if the eponymous orange is 'mechanical' as a product of the totalitarian system and straitjacket of censorship, or 'wind-up' due to economic incentives and commercially promoted lifestyles, it can never be left to its own devices and, just like the protagonist, always ends up being a cog in a larger wheel.

3.4. Metatranslation Going Round in Circles

In hinging the narrative construction on reiteration, Stiller's double metatranslation tweaks yet another mechanism propelling the original plot. It has been argued that Burgess' novel was in its own right structured around 'repetitive patterns' (Goh 2000: 263) such as recurring images, violent scenes, and narrative techniques. For instance, the same question opening each of the three parts highlights the text's operatic 'tripartite structure' (Ray 1986: 137). The author also spotlighted the importance of what he called the composition's 'arithmology' (Burgess 1986: vi) in his introduction to the American edition of the book, 'A Clockwork Orange Resucked', translated by Stiller and incorporated into his 'A' version as an interpretative backdrop ('Nakręcana pomarańcza na nowo wyssana'; Burgess 1999c: 195-199). Whereas the novel's reiterative structure is balanced out by the linear progression of

twenty-one chapters suggesting the protagonist's coming of age, the Polish double translation complicates this scenario by introducing an extra element of circularity. Although Alex tentatively converts towards the book's last chapter, which suggests a happy ending to the script, its Polish counterpart is not exactly finished at this point. Whether read chronologically according to the original sequence of being translated by Stiller or just in parallel, the two versions demonstrate some degree of continuity or a narrative compound as one rendering breaks straightway into the next one or concurs with the other scenario's culmination. This lets the story be told anew over and over again, as if the tape were rewound and replayed in two scenarios always leading to the same repercussions. But what is gained through a similar retelling and coiling the original plot into such a loop?

Just before what he promises to be his last act of ultra-violence, Alex claims that tomorrow is another day and counting from then onwards he will move on to leading a good life with 'all like sweet flowers' and 'all that cal [*кал*; crap]' (Burgess 1982: 148). The English reader is left on a cliff-hanger with these reassuring words, and can choose to take Alex's resocialisation for granted or distrust him. But will the Polish reader even consider believing the protagonist's promise if he needs to take the risk of being fooled twice: firstly, at the end of 'version R' and then again with 'version A' coming to a close, given that the history tends to repeat itself? Caught up in the cycle of recurring scenarios, the 'R' Alex and the 'A' Alex relive the same adventures in two realities that interlink two points of reference in Polish socio-political history. Playing both these film reels through Poland's successive moments in time puts serious doubts on Alex's declarations of future conversions in-between. Even the protagonist himself was well aware of the inescapable repetitive fate as he pondered over the possibility of having a son who might end up following his father's steps and making the same mistakes in his youth. And so, the Polish double rendering additionally reflects on the vicious circle of history: the generation of 'R' Alexs can usher in

the generation of the equally corrupt 'A' Alexs who have not learnt from the mistakes of their forefathers. The Polish rendering's duality played out in 1999 targets a blind spot right in the middle of this generation overlap. In the translator's own words (Stiller 1999a: 217), this makes his experiment amount to 'the unique case when the very same translator has […] translated the same novel twice but in a completely different way (for the older and the younger).' Even though 'the older and the younger' in the post-Communist Poland might identify their respective worlds in Stiller's translation combo, the very fact that they are governed by the same narrative spine still suggests considerable congruity between them.

This aspect interestingly corresponds to the strand of 'generational conflict' in post-1989 Polish prose taken up by a few literary scholars, most notably by Jerzy Jarzębski (Jarzębski 2013: 25-34), and more recently Svetlana Vassileva-Karag'ozova, who identified it as a variation on the classic genre of *Buildungsroman* or initiation novel (Vassileva-Karag'ozova 2015: 10). By the same token, however, Stiller's dual translation project turns the question of the actual 'conflict' upside down. Instead, it actually points to the excessive overlap at the intersection of these two horizons. Whereas Jarzębski in his studies of contemporary Polish literature insisted on the 'untranslability' of experiences between generations (Jarzębski 2013: 25-34), Stiller practically reversed the idea by projecting their perfect translatability: his two literary visions illuminate each other as slightly distorted twin realities that are governed by curiously similar principles.

The instances of this 'translatability' between generational experiences within Stiller's double metatranslation work analogously to the well-known thought experiment in Jorge Luis Borges' 'Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote' (1939, English: 1962). In his attempt to reach beyond the mere translation of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Pierre Menard, a twentieeth-century fictitious French writer, is said to end up recreating the original in the seventeenth-century Spanish text as it was, word by word, without formally changing

anything. Among many others, the translator's idea stemmed from the recognition grounded in American pragmatism that the same original words must have accumulated different meanings throughout the centuries; therefore, they also referred to non-identical phenomena when approached by different interpretative communities. Borges' meditation on history and semantic instabilities could be easily transposed onto Stiller's *Clockwork Oranges*: these two novels in Polish internally 'translate' each other within two different interpretative contexts, both for the younger and for the older. Each time Stiller matches up some mirroring threads in both of his translation versions, he implicitly assumes a range of similar mechanisms lying at the heart of the realities they correspond to. Even if eventually depicting non-identical social phenomena and their repercussions, the dual rendering still suggests some level of translability of experiences between the two overlapping generations. Through the mediation of the novel's overarching narrative, Stiller arguably manages to execute a double-edged critique of two different political projects while simultaneously putting a translation mirror between them and revealing how they lend themselves to unsettling comparisons.

This duality allows for an ongoing evaluation of the post-transition reality as the recurring story illuminates exactly the same genre scenes, escalating violence, and abuse of power, bringing equal disillusion with the new democratic government. Despite the alleged improvement of conditions in Poland, plenty of politically coloured elements such as, for instance, political slogans remain unchanged regardless of whether they appear in: *gazeta* (43, 100) [newspaper], *dziennik* (135) [daily], and *żurnał* [*журнал*; magazine] (100, 137) in the Russianised translation, or in the actually popular *njusy* (43, 100, 135, 137) [phonetic: news] (cf. Waszakowa 2007: 90) and *magazyn* (100) [magazine] in the Americanised one. For example, in one of the final chapters, Alex is forced to jump out of the window by the anti-government lobbyists who intend to use his case as a political tool. To this end, they

sneakily plant a *broszura* [brochure] in 'version R', and a *buklet* [phonetic: booklet] in 'version A', respectively, saying 'Death to the government', and enticing the protagonist to 'Open the window to fresh air, fresh ideas, a new way of living.' In a rather uncanny way, if read against two relevant backdrops in the Polish setting, these phrases would need to relate to two different governments and oppositionist movements, their destructive ideas, and newly promoted, pernicious ways of living. Irrespective of the timing and ideology, these slogans equally lead the 'mechanical creation' to follow blindly their premises and join the headlong rush of lemmings to self-destruction.

In the same vein, during a meaningful conversation with the protagonist, the writer F. Alexander rants over the approaching 'full apparatus of totalitarianism' (Burgess 1982: 125), calls Alex 'a victim of the modern age/world' (123, 126) and blames the people for selling their liberty to the Government in return for a quieter life (126). In Stiller's two versions, these passages, though rendered exactly in the same manner (Burgess 1999a: 161-165, Burgess 1999b: 161-165), resonate within different political contexts and relate to two distinguishable ideological trends. Their repetition can be read as a reflection on unchangeable and recurring history, especially that the writer immediately comments in both translations: *Nazwy stronnictw i partii są niczym* [Party and faction names are nothing] (Burgess 1999a: 165, Burgess 1999b: 165; 'party names mean nothing', Burgess 1982: 126). Claiming a dose of universalism, this reiterated statement suggests that the writer's dissident activity opposes any coercion and means of constraining one's individual freedom regardless of who the current government is. And so, when the Ludovico technique enforced by the ruling party is praised and marketed in *żurnał* and *newsy,* respectively, Stiller unsurprisingly makes the propaganda anticipating 'a nice crime-free era' (Burgess 1982: 104) bifurcate into two ironic promises: of a ***przewsochodna*** [*превосхóдная*: superb] *i wolna od zbrodni epoka* (Burgess 1999a: 137) and a *fajna git* ***gordżes*** [phonetic: gorgeous] *i wolna od zbrodni epoka*

(Burgess 1999b: 137). Whether the promised epoch is claimed to be superb or gorgeous using different barbarisms and referring to either the Soviet-led or the US-dominated world, it still points to equivalent forms of political manipulation and social deception. All similar points of contact and translatability between the two realities at play hinge on the assumption that there has always been some continuity between Poland's Communist and post-Communist order. And it is, paradoxically, thanks to this aspect of Stiller's negative project that the feuding generations can look beyond their conflict. In realising how artificially it is superimposed onto their post-transition reality, they can recognise exactly the same delusions they keep cherishing.

The translator's bold hypothesis about the continuously corrupt system maintained over Poland's political transition pervades his dualistic text on various levels. Besides the very fact of reiterating the novel's scenario through translation, Stiller built a more convoluted narrative around this circularity, putting a spotlight on the myth of the 'Solidarity' movement and the post-transition recovery. *Mechaniczna pomarańcza*'s back cover provokes the readers with a rhetorical question about the group of Alexs present in the 1999 Polish reality: 'How many others of such people in charge have kept their lash and dull knife until now?' (Burgess 1999a: back cover). The translator extended the answer to this question by pointing the finger at numerous culprits and different facets of the post-1989 political life. First of all, as he argued later (Stiller 2005a: 91–92):

> Even within the novel's timeline, the young reprobates metamorphose from bandits into policemen. Beforehand they would destroy the social order, and now they constitute and shape it. And when to look at all this from a more distant perspective: the same monstrous teenagers from 1962 are now, as of 2005, in their fifties and they govern, exercise power, and have their say in the matters of our country and society.

In fact, when in the book's Part 3, vulnerable Alex meets his previous companions now wearing police uniforms and coming to arrest him, they take advantage of their position and humiliate him by beating up his new defenceless alter ego. This succession is quite telling, particularly given that his fellow criminals once 'wanted to have things more democratic like' (Burgess 1982: 42). In 'version A', that early and seemingly liberating rebellion against Alex is additionally and ironically intertwined with the Anglicised argot as one of them called Pete insists: *A nie że ty* ***ołdy tajm*** [phonetic: all the time] *gadasz, co machnąć a czego nie.* ***Only*** *bez urazy* [And not that you are saying all the time what to twack and what not. Only no offence] (Burgess 1999b: 53), as if Stiller wanted to mock and reveal the source of pro-democratic intervention. Later on, however, the highest spoke in fortune's wheel turns lowest as one of Alex's comrades, Dim, a freshly recruited policeman, is the one who dictates the rules in the new order along with another thug, Billyboy. Though ostensibly dissenting from their past and assuring 'Not no more, droogie' (Burgess 1982: 117), Dim only turns out to fight fire with fire and escalate with more violence than previously. In the words: *Było i już nie jest, mój* ***drużku*** **[***друг*: friend] (Burgess 1999a: 154) in the 'R' version, and *Było i już nie jest, mój* ***budku*** [buddy] (1999b: 154) in the 'A' one, he claims that 'what happened in the past, stays in the past', although his language is still unmasked as equally tainted with Russianised and Americanised influences. And it is through similar subtle hints that a generational change within the group of shady characters, as Stiller pessimistically pointed out, could be transposed on the actual Polish society's progression. Whether within the novel's plot itself or through its reiteration over two translation versions, Stiller would thus attempt to undermine year 1989 as an overturning milestone and blur the blatantly Manichean distinction between the Communist and post-Communist era.

It is also perhaps to this end, that in the first introduction to his *Mechaniczna pomarańcza* published in 1991, Stiller also considered incorporating the entire thirty-two-

page brochure by Gershon Legman entitled *The Fake Revolt* (1967). As he argued (Stiller 1991b: 160): 'no one else has more precisely hit home with all the moral, social, and political aspects of the problem.' It is in this text that Legman famously decried the 'fake' countercultural and sexual revolutions of the 1960s in Western countries as opposed to the 'real' student revolts in Paris. The final point of his biting criticism led to a nearly apocalyptic vision (Legman 1967: 32): 'Freedom like that will blow us to hell very soon. […] Meanwhile until we're quite ready to go, the question is – politically, sexually and every other way – Freedom For *What*?' Through this discursive reference, Stiller laid the foundation for the key concept underpinning his recursive metatranslation: according to him, letting go of the past bondages in Poland was not a profound and total liberation as it resulted in slipping into a new purposeless state and yet another form of captivity. And so, when in the final paragraphs of the novel, Alex speculates about having 'to get started on, a new like chapter beginning' (Burgess 1982: 148), Stiller once again questions the possibility of his instant conversion and rapid maturation. The repetition of Alex's promise re-enacted in both versions (Burgess 1999a: 194, Burgess 1999b: 194) is again stigmatised with an extra Anglicism in *Nakręcana pomarańcza*: *Tak jakbym* ***startował*** [start] *nowy rozdział* [As if I started a new chapter]. In Stiller's double rendering, therefore, this magical formula captures the novel's plot in the loop: towards the final passages of the Russianised narrative, starting a new 'chapter' might mean rereading the same story from Chapter 1 of Alex's new life, but this time in its 'Americanised' reincarnation, and then over and over again in any other Oranges to arrive in future.

In addition to this circular mode, Stiller sets the story in motion within the Polish post-1989 context and, in doing so, he implicitly undermines the entire transformation miracle. The idea for this undertaking most probably stemmed from the translator's strong disbelief in the 'Solidarity' movement as an actual 'real' revolt in Polish history. Equating

Communist and post-Solidarity Poland in one of his interviews, Stiller vividly commented (Stiller 2014): 'And then, when that hutzpah with Wałęsa on display and its unfortunate repercussions came to being, these variants of Polish political life also started filling me with disgust over time;' and suggested there was no real escape from the 'destructive force of the local rulers and establishment'. Following Stiller's line of thinking, the 'fake revolt' of the 1989 transition could probably be extended to other related occurrences: it would need to discard the Round Table Talks as a political makeshift and criticise the superficial dealing with the past – in particular with reference to the so-called 'thick line policy'. This infamous term referred to the first post-Communist prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki's proposition to leave the past behind and divide it off from the ongoing transformation, a strategy that was often lambasted as turning a blind eye to the unpunished crimes of the Communist regime. Perhaps in this sense, as there has been no official condemnation or penalty inflicted on Alexs from 'version R', they could have easily transformed into or handed over the baton to the new host of Alexs from 'version A'. As the sins of 'the older' cohort are inherited by 'the younger' one, the ironic succession of generations spanning Stiller's two renderings reminds us of this indelible legacy. And so, in connecting the dots between the two respective realities against the Polish backdrop, the translator demonstrates that what goes around usually also comes around; the problems still undealt with must eventually turn the two political systems into equally compromised projects.

The translator's scepticism about the progress of transformation is fleshed out in yet another narrative aspect of his dual *Clockwork Oranges* that lends itself to a comparison with other prosaic texts of post-1989 Poland. In her review of Przemysław Czapliński's *Polska do wymiany* titled 'Inaczej czyli tak samo' [Differently, which is the same], Kinga Dunin distinguished two ways of understanding the recent novelistic expressions of disappointment with how Polish history repeated itself. As she admitted (Dunin 2009): 'I do not entirely

share the author's pessimism. Even if history reversed, it has come back at a higher level. Let's say we deal with a spiral here, like in Vico. So this is not a *backlash*, as Czapliński has it, but a *ricorso* – with a tendency to develop, change, and progress.' Whereas Dunin's interpretation comes to terms with the cyclical nature of history, Czapliński's proposition insists that going back to what used to be the starting point itself assumes some sort of regress. In some instances, Stiller's double rendering seems to share Czapliński's more pessimistic intuition of the backlash, which is signalled through some qualitative changes between 'version R' and 'version A'. In the dimension of language, the accumulation of negative interference is reflected through what Stiller called the *mutatis mutandis* technique of superimposing Americanised barbarisms onto some of the remnant Russianisms. However, besides this sense of progressive intrusiveness, the translator still subtly extended the scope of destructive phenomena over the two renderings. Depending on the version, he enlarged the group capable of speaking the corrupted language, which in the original consisted exclusively of degenerate teenagers, by adding to it some adult characters such as a chaplain in Alex's prison or elderly women at the bar. Having briefly mentioned this difference, Joanna Wierzbińska (2004: 19) called it 'another doubtful idea' of Stiller's, whereas Anna Ginter (2006: 188) decided to treat it as 'a translation error or oversight on the translator's part'. Otherwise, she argued, this would clash with the idea of unifying the group of teenage criminals and unjustifiably evoke the sense of complicity in crime through their distorted slang among the book's adult characters. However, it could equally be argued that this is precisely the reason why Stiller decided to extend the group of partners in crime: by tainting them with the compromised language, he pointed the finger at more figures equally responsible for the step backwards.[15]

[15] It seems unlikely that the translator overlooked a similar glitch in the light of two factors: firstly, the consequent distribution of Nadsat in relevant fragments, and secondly, the fact that Stiller has never corrected these 'errors' in all the following reeditions of two versions.

Rather tellingly, as his project developed into the double metatranslation, Stiller added to his 1999 afterword a passage absent from the relevant paragraph in the 1991 version (cf. Stiller 1991: 139) to the effect that more characters in the novel are equally vicious and therefore to blame for the society's decay. As he claimed (Stiller 1999b: 200):

> These nice elderly women, always ready for perjury for the benefit of criminals […]; these kind-hearted parents turning a blind eye to the generation flourishing without hindrance under their own roof; these vapid girlies and their vegetative grovelling in nothing more than their appetite; these decent people, completely blinded by crystallography, cats, or preaching. All this constitutes the *sine qua non* condition and, at the same time, the extrapolation of the atrocity concentrated in the persona of Alex and his mates.

In his translatorial accusation, however, Stiller is far more selective and narrows down the group of culprits to be tainted. As a consequence of this approach, the prison chaplain switches to Nadsat in both versions (with relatively more instances in the Americanised one), when trying to appeal to the prisoners and speaks their language as a kind of default vernacular in this criminal community (Burgess 1999a: 81-85; 1999b: 81-85). For instance, he condemns them for their urge 'to live easy' (Burgess 1982: 63) using the prison slang in 'version R' (*za frajer*; Burgess 1999a: 81) and a phonetic Anglicism (*za fri* [free]; Burgess 1999a: 81), but also curiously synchronises his language with Alex's phrases like in this example:

> Right, you lot. We'll end with Hymn Number 435 in the Prisoners' Hymnal. […] Of course I had the disc ready on the stereo. (64)
>
> Version R (81)
> - *To* ***recht, ferajna****! I na zakończenie odśpiewamy hymn 435 ze śpiewniczka.* […]
> - *Ja płytę, ma się rozumieć, już gotową miałem na stereo.*
>
> Version A (81)
> - ***Rajt*** [right] ***ferajna****! Więc na* ***end*** *zaśpiewamy hymn 435 ze śpiewniczka.* […]
> - *Ja płytę, ma się rozumieć, już* ***rajt end redy*** [ready] *miałem na stereo.*

Whereas in the 'R' version Stiller mostly keeps using the prison cant, in the 'A' translation Alex and the chaplain converge in their English barbarisms. In his 2005 theatre staging, Jan Klata also retained the chaplain's Americanised slang, stressing, according to Anna Burzynska (2005: 47), his more 'human' and fallible face since 'in addition to the inmates' old flaws, he endowed them with new ones by teaching them to squeal and toady.' Perhaps for this reason, the priest is also aware of and uses Alex's gang's idiosyncratic expression of approval, consequently translated by Stiller as *fajno fajn* [fine-fine] (for various standard or slang phrases in the original) through the novel. And it is probably not without reason that this curious utterance occurs at the moment when Alex conspires with him: by providing information about other prisoners, he actually helps the chaplain ingratiate himself with and get promoted by the Governor (Burgess 1999a/b: 85).

Further along these lines, the priest's surprising knowledge of the corrupted idiolect might be also nourished by the translator's own judgement of Polish clergy and the position of the Catholic Church in Poland. The prison chaplain, as depicted in the novel, is a careerist who gives the same automatised sermon to rounds of prisoners and uses Alex as an informant to climb up the institutional ladder. By stigmatising the priest with the demoralised idiolect, Stiller pointed the finger at the clergy for their participation in systemic hypocrisy and moral decline. Although the activity of the Catholic Church in Poland before 1989 was considerably constrained and mostly oppositionist in its attitude, history also remembers the cases of priests collaborating with Communist secret services and serving as whistle-blowers (e.g. Isakowicz-Zaleski 2007). Following the fall of Communism, the Church has significantly strengthened its position, both in legal (e.g. Daniel 1995) and political or even interventionist terms (e.g. Gowin, 1999: 52-87), having a huge impact on the democratic elections, governmental policies, and public life, all of which Stiller equally disapproved of

(Stiller 2014). On a few occasions, including a heated argument with a Polish Catholic priest in the press, Stiller quite openly expressed his negative attitude to the Catholic Church and Catholicism (e.g. Stiller, 1997a: 81; 1997b: 73; 1998b: 6; 2014). Throughout the 1990s, he also developed an interest in translating anti-Catholic or anti-clerical publications into Polish (e.g. by Eugen Drewermann, Karlheinz Deschner, Horst Herrmann). Probably partly for this reason, Stiller also depicted the chaplain and all he represented in a worse light by means of vulgar or pejorative augmentatives, and generally lower register, often absent from the original. This approach becomes manifest, for instance, in expressions such as: the invented *świętojebliwy* (based on *święty* [holy] and *jebać* [fuck], meaning 'holier-than-thou') in *grzdyl świętojebliwy* [sanctimonious squirt] (Burgess 1999a/b: 63) for 'holy veck' [holy man] (Burgess 1982: 50); *świętojebliwiec* (84) for 'holy chelloveck' [holy man] (65); *zafajdane muzyki świętojebliwe* [mucky sanctimonious music] (81) for 'solemn music' (62); *hymn świętojebliwy* [holier-than-thou hymn] (99) and *hymniszcze* [pejorative augmentative of 'hymn'] (81, 99) for the standard 'hymn' (62,77); *kaznodziejstwo i wzniosły bałach* [preaching and lofty rubbish] (83) for 'preachy gooveriting' [preachy talk] (64), and many others of the kind.

Whereas Stiller taints the prison chaplain with the demoralised language almost evenly with a slight quantitative bias towards the 'A' Nadsat, the old women at the bar acquire the slang exclusively in *Nakręcana pomarańcza*, an alternation later on adopted also by Jan Klata in his stage performance. In some recurring scenes early in the novel, the women make clumsy efforts to pick up the Americanised lingo. These attempts include the phonetic Ponglish imitations like: *God bles ju* [God bless you], *Tenk ju* [Thank you], etc. (Burgess 1999b: 14, 67), suggesting that the slang is all the rage and thus the older generation is also able to keep up with the trend. At the same time, however, the women articulate the foreign sounding words when speaking to Alex and his friends only once they have agreed

to cooperate with them. As the women were technically bribed by the gang's generous tips in order to later cover them in front of police, the Americanised language they use starts working as a sign of hypocritical collusion and a discreet agreement to abuse the system. Again, the women's demoralisation can thus be linked specifically to Stiller's critique of capitalism and money-driven immoral instincts conditioned by lucrative incentives. In this light, it seems that in the age of 'soft power' the political decay stems not so much from the oppressive force as from society as a whole for tacitly allowing and even encouraging its existence.

By and large, Stiller's subtle additions interwoven into the 1999 dual translation could be seen as a trace of his increasingly critical attitude to what he saw as the current state of affairs, and it is exactly this disapproving stance that found its way into his metatextual commentary. The growing spread of Nadsat among more people visible in the Americanised version makes his diagnosis even grimmer in comparison to the one from its Russianised predecessor, which in a sense confirms Czapliński's idea of the historical backlash. In his afterword and assessment of Poland's current situation, the translator implied such a pessimistic conclusion as follows (Stiller 1999b: 199):

> We had a first-hand experience [of that system of degeneration] over the long years of dismal practices in Communism, its jurisdiction, militia, social theory and their derivatives. This equally concerns the diseased system of lawlessness, hypocrisy and incompetence which has become prevalent after the collapse of Communism, yielding the same results, if not even much worse ones.

Therefore, it is by juxtaposing these two worlds in his metatranslation that Stiller allows for their mutual illumination, and makes the readers compare and decide which one has actually so far been the lesser of two evils. In addition to rewinding the same story and replaying it again in a new context, the translator downgrades the newly adopted system and voices his criticism through the Americanised Nadsat. While he undermines the myth of

transformation, he also playfully complicates the common binary and Manichean opposition between the two periods of Polish history suggesting the later one has taken a turn for the worse. And finally, Stiller's subversive act of blurring the politically imposed 'thick' line points to some historical continuity and the cyclical nature of social mechanisms propelling his two *Clockwork Oranges*. In his recurring story, the eventual society's demoralisation keeps taking place regardless of the time, political system, and currently ruling government, as long as there is a group of ordinary citizens thoughtlessly permitting the *status quo*.

3.5. 'Turning and Turning and Turning' the Orange

Taking on the form of a discursive post scriptum, Stiller's idea of metatranslation going round in circles has controversially made more rotations than probably expected. Years before Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, which Stiller described as Poland's 'entering the political orbit of the unified Germany', he speculated about creating a German 'N' version [N – for Polish *niemiecki*] – first half-jokingly (Stiller 1991b: 151), and then more seriously (Stiller 1999a: 229). The third rendering was meant to appear under the title: *Sprężynowa pomarańcza* [Spring-assisted Orange], and to round off the project by letting the translator 'make his own *Love for Three Oranges* come true' (Stiller 1999c: 219). In 2004, after Poland's actual EU accession, Olga and Wojciech Kubińscy enlisted the trends and events of that time which could accord with Stiller's undertaking and cause the Polish audience's mixed reaction. Examples included, among others: 'the alliance between France and Germany, more aware of their new power,' 'Germany's harsh criticism of Poland's supporting the American intervention in Iraq,' 'arguments over the European Constitution and Treaty of Nice,' and 'the debate about establishing the Centre Against Expulsions in Germany' (Kubińscy 2004: 74). Although still in 2005, Stiller kept asserting that his Spring-

assisted Orange was about to be published (2005a: 88, Stiller 2005b: 9), it has never appeared in print.

As of 2016, Stiller has prepared the first chapter of his 'version N' and, partly thanks to the unexpected revival of interest in his potentially triple metatranslation, he returned to the idea of releasing it as a full book once finished (Stiller 2016). Judging from the first passages, this version promises to be an equally versatile experiment. At first glance, it often assimilates the hybrid Germanised language via Yiddish and its specific sound shift, for example: *Danke szejn* [thank you], *wichtyk* [important], and *fertyk* [ready] (Burgess 2016: n.p.), as if the translator endeavoured to retrieve the pre-War multi-ethnic imprint on the Polish language. More curiously, however, this rendering has the potential of renewing the post-dependency discourse with Stiller's typical bravura: as it reaches back to the nineteenth-century Germanising practices in the Prussian partition, rubs the unhealed wounds of Second World War aggression, and aims against the more recent Germany-centred economic structures. By testing this controversial ground and dealing with the experience of occupation through writing, Stiller's third rendering will hopefully also be able to articulate and tame Poland's deeper traumas that still lurk not so deep under the surface. Even in 2015, when the Polish government did not accept the European Union's compulsory quota of Syrian refugees, Stefan Chwin diagnosed that the main driving force for Poland's political suspicion and anti-German scepticism stems from exactly the same mechanism. As he argued in his article for *Die Welt* (Chwin 2015), it is the nation's historical fear of ceasing to exist, which in the last centuries of the country's history was either a very tangible threat or an actual reality, that made Polish society act in spite of the European Union's will during the refugee crisis and scent a political ambush set up by Germany. Polish fear of being no more, according to the writer, takes its toll on the current public debate in the aftermath of the recent chain of events such as: European Union's inertia with regard to the Ukrainian

case and some agreements on the Nord Stream behind Poland's back. As this overwhelming sense of deceit on German's part dictates the government's successful efforts to capitalise on the society's traumas, perhaps Stiller's translation experiment has a perfect chance to become a well-timed literary pronunciation of this condition – in all its complexity, but also brilliant sense of humour.

Nonetheless, irrespective of whether Stiller's 'version N' finally comes to light in its entirety, it is quite symptomatic that it has still been treated by various critics as an inherent element in his experiment on the conceptual level (e.g. Cetera 2009: 109; Kubińscy, 2004: 74). Furthermore, its very existence makes the Polish clockwork orange spin further – at least by one turn. In the novel's final passages, Alex rightly predicts that its mechanism will go on 'to like the end of the world, round and round and round' as if someone 'like old Bog [God] Himself (by courtesy of Korova Milk Bar)' kept 'turning and turning and turning a vonny grazhny [smelly dirty] orange in his gigantic rookers [hands].' And so in Stiller's triple metatranslation, this movement goes forward thanks to the creator of firstly *mołocznia Krowa Bar* (Burgess 1999a: 193), and secondly *mleczarnia Cow Bar* (Burgess 1999b: 193), as signalled at the end in respective translation variants, and then will perhaps be kept in motion by courtesy of *mlekodajnia Kuh Bar* (Burgess 2016: n.p.) in the upcoming 'N' version. In this manner, the politically vicious circle will keep going 'round and round and round', as long as there will be more interpretative attempts and subversive critiques to come, be it through translation or in any other form.

In fact, because of Stiller's provocative announcements at the time of his doubled publication, the translator had to respond to some 'jokers asking if he was going to create a Chinese version' (Stiller 2005b: 9). Although back then Stiller disowned this idea for a lack of historical relevance (2005b: 9), perhaps from today's perspective, rather ironically, he would need to revise his opinion in the light of China gradually becoming a global player

and economic, military, and political power. Regardless of the accuracy of similar predictions, it becomes apparent how Stiller's critical take on the original notion gets rechannelled through translation to reprehend a wider range of social phenomena. Rather sarcastically, he announced the fourth and last upcoming version: *Upierdliwa pomarańcza* [Pesky Orange], which was supposed to be the most grotesque as it would be written in pure, impeccable Polish (2005a: 88). This gesture, according to Stiller, could save the language from its gradual decay caused by 'barbarians' such as Polish journalists, TV presenters, and academics. Having expressed his discontent with what he saw as the debasement of the Polish language earlier in his collection of essays *Pokaż język* [Show your language/tongue] (2001), Stiller already gave a foretaste of the potentially combative twist in his unrealised Pesky Orange. Although once again on a purely speculative level, Stiller very consciously used the instance of translation to manifest his protest against another potential group of influence. This time anchored in Polish society itself, the internal enemy was represented by the media and voices of authority shaping the language of public debate as well as forming public opinion. And so, becoming a capacious category in itself, the Polish 'clockwork orange' has subsequently been turned into a narrative framework explicating socio-political phenomena from different angles. After Jan Klata's 2005 stage adaptation revolving around the dilemma of having 'the power of choice' versus being 'a little machine capable only of good' and 'committed to socially acceptable acts' (Burgess 1982: 122), the reviewers immediately found corresponding problems in their surrounding reality. According to Jacek Cieślak (2005: 15), Polish Alex of that time was dropped into 'the country in which the Pope's death interrupts the usual hell only for a while and where justice and moral norms tend to be treated instrumentally and always against somebody.' Another critic (Pawłowski 2005: 19) further pointed to the society's 'allowance for lies and manipulation in public life' against the background of the ongoing electoral campaigns. The protagonist being forced to

do good against his will particularly brought to his mind the postulate of the 'moral renewal' widely discussed by right-wing campaigning politicians, later stepping in for the previously dominant social democratic party. Nonetheless, in all these instances, the category of an automatized lifestyle, morality, and system of norms imposed on the individual by a wider group of decision-makers constitutes a creative matrix sparking different artistic responses, whether through translation, the medium of theatre, or discursively established parallels.

In the previous chapter, Barańczak's multiple translations and philosophy of artistic liberation openly celebrated the co-existence of more than one reading and poetic voice in a very affirmative way. In contrast, the metatranslation of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* may appear as a more critical rather than constructive or inclusive project. However, the translator's idea to use translation in the form of a multi-edged subversive critique could still be construed in pluralist terms: as a leeway for commenting on different and, perhaps only seemingly, mutually exclusive political systems. Revealing these different readings and viewpoints becomes both the translator's and the reader's playground for testing various literary languages and their socio-cultural connotations, which in effect leads to a constructive revision of identity issues. So if there is any positive adage to Stiller's deeply poignant metatranslation, it would be exactly this gesture of presenting all these multiple facets on equal terms against any constraining publishing norms and conventional or political expectations. After all, coming to terms with the criticism of different agendas, including the current one, must assume opening a forum for more than one possible literary reading, more than one translation solution, and more than one political viewpoint. And this perhaps could be the one step forward that Stiller did not recognise – or objected to – in relation to the past, which would underpin his multi-threaded rendering. If his diagnosis of a historical backlash and moral regress can be in any way counterbalanced, then it is perhaps through this metacritical possibility of distancing oneself and re-evaluating various available

paradigms that are at hand. Thanks to this opportunity, a cog can for once step out of the larger wheel and observe it spinning over and over again from a sufficiently safe distance.

4. The ‘LnŚ’ Translators Doing Brecht in Different Voices (2012)

4.1. Introduction

After almost a quarter century of silence since his last Polish translation of 1988, Bertolt Brecht the poet reappeared in the Polish literary scene rather unexpectedly. Being in fact the first collection of his poetry since the milestone of 1989, the volume titled *Ten cały Brecht* [All That Brecht], which was published in 2012 could finally put a symbolic end to the German poet’s long rocky road in Polish Communist reception. Indeed, Brecht’s life especially in Polish translation at that time was definitely not the easiest. Manipulated in publication, censored, and tailored for different audiences, presented as either anti-regime or pro-Communist works depending on the context, serving the purposes of either the state propaganda or the New Wave artists, dissident intellectuals, and the ‘Solidarity’ activists, his poetry became a peculiar fighting arena for opposing interest groups and their ideological viewpoints. And this ambivalent and constantly biased image of the poet in his Polish reincarnations seemed to have left no room for revision and renewal. Having been torn between these extremes: the black and white, the ‘us’ and ‘them’, and placed with or against a certain side and ideological option, Brecht’s lyrical works then had to face an uncertain future ahead in his post-Communist afterlife. With the fall of Communism and the termination of his somewhat unwillingly embraced political mission, the new reality begged further questions about his possible niche in Polish literature: how to read his poetry anew, what language to use when translating it, and how to let go of the past conflict of agendas that could be subsequently opened to more readings and viewpoints.

A response to some of these pressing challenges after over two decades finally came from the four Polish translators affiliated with the aforementioned *Literatura na świecie* (*LnŚ*) literary magazine: Jacek Buras, Jakub Ekier, Andrzej Kopacki, and Piotr Sommer, who each presented their own selection and variations of Bertolt Brecht's poetry within the 2012 volume *Ten cały Brecht.* They explicitly highlighted their subjective and multiple approach to Brecht's poetry in the book in many ways. Its title, *Ten cały Brecht*, which literally means 'this whole Brecht', sounds rather ironic in light of the very limited selection represented by eighty-one translated poems out of over two thousand existing ones. But since the phrase could also read as 'typical Brecht' or the offhand 'all that Brecht' (analogically with English *all that jazz*), it simultaneously poses the question of whether the constructed image of the poet and his reception might be from today's perspective unambiguously classified. In his review, Paweł Masłowski (2012) noted that 'the title refers to the problems which all that Brecht causes for contemporary interpreters and scholars,' who are torn between his poetry's unquestionable aesthetic quality, on one hand, and the politically encumbered message underpinning lyrics from certain periods of his artistic activity, on the other. With their new renderings, the translators of *Ten cały Brecht* took a stance towards this status quo, setting out to complicate the fixed image of the author. In the attempt to set themselves against the backdrop of the Communist legacy, they appear to subvert some of the erstwhile rules governing the circulation of Brecht's poetry in Poland. As Buras, Ekier, Kopacki, and Sommer project a quadruple reading of his works (with some repeated poems appearing in different textual shapes in Polish translation), their metatranslation invites a more distant and metacritical approach to the slightly problematic poetic *oeuvre*. By testing the intersection between the ideological and the aesthetic component in the Polish Brecht, their translation project addresses the issue of whether nowadays 'we want the Brecht he

was or the Brecht we want', as Leszek Szaruga put it in his review of the book (Szaruga 2012: 32).

While describing the metacritical strategies of the *Literatura na świecie* translators in *Ten cały Brecht*, it will also be indispensable to mention the fundamental role of the magazine itself as a platform for promoting literary translation and exchanging views on different approaches to the art. With its first volume published in May 1971, the monthly journal facilitated the circulation of world literature in Poland well before the fall of Communism and constituted the most influential forum for high quality polemics over parallel existing literary translations of foreign works. Perhaps it is also no coincidence that the Brechtian multiple project came to fruition first in the circle of *LnŚ*. In fact, already six years earlier in 2006, a few poems from *Ten cały Brecht* were initially published in the magazine in the form of a modest selection by four translators accompanied by essays on Brecht by, amongst others, Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt. And since the format of this publication very much accorded with the magazine's long-standing tradition of presenting more than one translation variant of a given work and the practice of illuminating original authors from multiple angles, it could also lay the foundations for what later developed into 'all that Brecht'. In the following discussion of the 2012 metatranslation, I will map out the *LnŚ* magazine's contribution to Poland's translation culture. In particular, I will trace back to these of the early-bird editorial strategies and inspirations of its creators that in a sense heralded the ideas present in the Brecht volume. This may also justify and put into perspective the feature that clearly distinguishes the instance of Brecht read in multiple ways from Barańczak's and Stiller's translation multiples: namely, the collective nature of the *LnŚ* project as opposed to individual metatranslatory experiments described in the two previous chapters. Still, as Andrzej Kopacki explains in the introduction to the collection, all the translators in the quartet shared the same idea: that is, 'thinking of translation as literary

genre, its idiomatic nature, rules, borders' (Kopacki, 2012: 7). And so, just like in the previous cases, the intended quadruple reading hinges on the same self-conscious principle: by deliberately juxtaposing their renderings next to each other, the *LnŚ* team of translators alert the readers to the very medium of literary translation.

Through their collaborative metacriticism, Buras, Ekier, Kopacki, and Sommer also evidently undermine the institutional binary opposition between creative writing and translation, the author and the translator, as well as the original and its copy. Rather tellingly, the creators of this particular Brecht, who is seen here as a mosaic built from multiple perspectives, are the ones named on the front cover as the authors of the book, rather than the poet himself. What sheds some light on this gesture is probably the statement of Jerzy Jarniewicz, another translator from the *LnŚ* circle and co-editor of the magazine. In essays collected in his book *Gościnność słowa* [The Word's Hospitality] of 2012, he argued that the increasingly common practice of exposing the translator's name, which he calls 'the translator's coming-out', can be a sign of the changing perceptions of what translation is and how it functions in literary culture (Jarniewicz 2011: 120-125; 2012: 7-22). As the front cover is usually reserved for the author, i.e. the 'original' creator of the text, shifting his name – or even only his surname, which functions here like a brand or some general image labelling what his poetry stands for – into the title (*Ten cały Brecht*) becomes a significant gesture in the light of the whole artistic premise: the book is about the quartet of translators writing their own Brecht. In his introduction, Kopacki describes the publication form as follows (2012: 6):

> This shape accounts for a characteristic, although also very banal, transition in understanding what a book of translations is: the image of the poet emerges from the crossroads of four readings, interpretative and creative perspectives; and this, more conspicuously than usual, alters or at least revises the author's status.

In presenting their subjective approaches, which are bound to show the author from different angles, the translators turn the volume into a literary story about reading Brecht told through a series of personal accounts of their own artistic experiences with his output. Since a microphone for voicing these equally legitimate narratives is shared and passed on among more translators, the Brechtian rendering to a certain extent elaborates the previously multiplied projects of individual translators, Stanisław Barańczak and Robert Stiller. As more translators have their say and their variants are treated on a par with others within one publication, Brecht's poetry becomes re-enacted in a fourfold way at the same time. In its simultaneity and polyphony, this metatranslation can become a pluralist and inclusive theatre stage, allowing for more actors to enter the literary scene and recognising more than one scenario of the performance.

4.2. Between Literature in the World and the Polish Brecht

Before that could happen, the Brechtian quadruple metatranslation had to build on a range of literary occurrences throughout the Communist era and beyond. As signalled before, two major tendencies particularly nourished the project in its current shape and could eventually culminate in the 2012 book edition. The first one, which is the self-aware attitude of the four Polish translators to their project, capitalised on the literary and intellectual heritage of the *Literatura na świecie* magazine. The other one involved the ambivalent image of Bertolt Brecht in the Polish literary context which the translators inevitably needed to take into account and subsequently attempted to dismantle. Before converging and meeting at one point in *Ten cały Brecht*, these two strands of factors have developed over time and spanned a few decades back; I will briefly outline the most essential phenomena, debates, and inspirations building up to the collaborative and multiple reading of Brecht's poetry.

First of all, the unquestionable role of *Literatura na świecie* in shaping Polish translation criticism, publishing practices, and the art of literary translation at large definitely deserves more discussion here. Aimed at introducing foreign literary trends and authors in translation, this relatively liberal literary monthly operated in the official state circulation and after its foundation in 1971 cherished a high level of popularity with the print run reaching as many as 30-35,000 copies for most of the 1970-80s. After two editors-in-chief, including aforementioned Wacław Sadkowski, its editorial supervision was in 1994 handed over to Piotr Sommer, who also happens to be one of the *Ten cały Brecht* translators. It was also thanks to this rather infrequent rotation in the editorial board that the conceptual shape of the magazine has remained consistent for the last half-a-century, only slightly shifting its focus from heterogenic selections of dispersed works from around the world to what Czapliński called 'ingenious monographic issues on great writers (e.g. Proust), thinkers (Paul de Man, Lacan), the literature of city-regions (Quebec), and the literatures of individual countries' (Czapliński 2007: 41).

But nonetheless, despite these transitions in its scope, what has never truly changed throughout these years was the particular attention paid to the quality and interpretative perspective of literary translations, the intense exploration of their limitations and possibilities as well as meticulously argued translation commentaries and polemics published alongside translated works. Referring especially to these in-depth analyses of individual translations featured in each *LnŚ* issue, Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska once wittingly reminisced (2007: 172): 'If anyone were unsure whether you could become Sherlock Holmes by choosing the career (or fate) of a translator,' then these texts 'that read like sensation novels' would completely resolve any doubts. Besides Robert Stiller's polemical cycle 'Stół i nożyce' mentioned at the beginning of the previous chapter, the literary magazine often published equally vehement debates and snappy retorts written by

critics, translators, academics, regular readers, and even politicians. For instance, in 1980 the currently controversial conservative party leader Janusz Korwin-Mikke and Robert Stiller famously waged disputes over Stiller's and Maciej Słomczyński's Polish translations of 'Jabberwocky' from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, with Korwin-Mikke even presenting his own poetic version of the work as a support for his arguments (cf. Korwin-Mikke 1980: 347-353). Although not entirely representative of the magazine's conventionally featured authors, this sort of discussion still points to two key aspects of the monthly's activity: firstly, how open it was to various critical voices and alternative translation attempts or debuts; and secondly, how diverse an audience it managed to attract while discussing the arcana of literary translation. Similarly, the fact that the *LnŚ* translations equally sparked interest among translators and readers from outside the profession also manifests itself in frequently published letters to the editors commenting on the individual renderings and their authors' arguments.

On the occasion of the 500th release of the *LnŚ* issue in 2013, Krzysztof Hoffman wrote a telegraphic summary of the magazine's cultural activity in his article under the telling title: '500 literatur, 500 światów' [500 Literatures, 500 Worlds]. As he recalled there (Hoffman 2013: 152-153), from the moment of its birth, the monthly strongly opposed the monolithic monolingualism and the idea of 'universal literature' that is easily transferrable across countries and transparently translatable into major languages, particularly into the globally dominant English language. Instead, as he noted (2013: 153), the concept incarnated in the very title *Literatura na świecie*, i.e. 'literature in the world' rather than 'world literature', would be the leading principle of the magazine's existence; and so 'what becomes key to its agenda is breaking up the façade of monolith and the dispersion of viewpoints.' Apart from doing so by means of introducing different literary traditions, this postulate has been accomplished in the *LnŚ* on many other fronts, and perhaps most spectacularly in the

matter of literary translation. The awareness of different viewpoints and readings has been reflected not only through debates between conflicted sides over their distinct translation strategies. It also manifested itself in recognising different possible renderings of the same work and publishing those various voices on a par with each other in the magazine. The most palpable form of acknowledgment of such an interpretative diversity arguably consisted in simultaneous editorial juxtapositions of distinct approaches presented to the readers in parallel within one issue. This thought provoking device was treated as a ground for comparison between different translation variants and the translators' respective readings of the original. As such, it would mainly appear in a few recurring forms and contexts.

The first recognisable publishing practice of the kind usually featured two renderings of a prosaic text running alongside each other in order to be read in parallel and instantly compared. This included for instance: a fragment of James Joyce's *Ulysses* by Maciej Słomczyński and Józef Czechowicz published in 1973 on even and uneven pages respectively (Joyce 1973: 242-267); an excerpt from Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* by Magdalena Tulli and Ryszard Engelking placed next to each other in the same convention in 2003 (Flaubert 2003: 97-143) with an added introductory remark: *razy dwa* [times two] (2003: 97); as well as Claude Simon's *Leçon de choses* [Lesson in Things] by Zofia Chądzyńska and Beata Geppert presented as two alternatives running in half-page columns on the same page (Simon 1986: 132-136), introduced with the editor's explication (132):

> Below we publish two translations that only in a tiny part overlap with each other […]. We do this on purpose. Both translation versions, the one by Ms Zofia Chądzyńska as well as the one by Ms Beata Geppert, seem interesting to us. Moreover, their juxtaposition will let many of our readers better understand the translator's work and the type of solutions between which they need to choose.

As it later turned out, the latter instance in particular came as surprise to the magazine's disturbed readers and the editor-in-chief wrote an explanatory note in response

to their letters (Sadkowski 1987b: 351-353). In it, he quoted one of their opinions as an example of the wider reaction of 'objection and distress'. The letter accused the magazine of an alleged attempt to take advantage of the editorial strategy in order to show the younger translator in a bad light next to a more experienced colleague, despite the equally high quality of both renderings (1987b: 351). Treating this voice of criticism as a starting point, Sadkowski took this opportunity to flesh out the magazine's ethical agenda: as he had it, a simultaneous publication of this kind was not aimed at any 'competition' or 'imposed rivalry' between translations, with one being necessarily better than the other (as suggested by the reader), but instead it served as an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge both of them as 'perfect, fully mature and consequent' readings and to prove 'how creative the translator's work is' (352). And finally, by way of example and as an ultimate proof, he asked the readers to compare a fragment of Claude Simone's introduction in those two translations and find out themselves how their respective choices influenced the entire narration and consequent reading of this passage. Thanks to this case study, Sadkowski aptly turned Simon's 'lesson in things' into his own lesson in multiple translation and the ethical implications of acknowledging more than one way of understanding the original.

In the same vein, the *LnŚ* magazine engaged with multiple translations of poetry, both by presenting single poems in different Polish variants placed next to each other as well as publishing wider selections of poetry by more than one translator with a few poems repeated in different textual shapes within one issue. The first strand featured examples such as: Heinrich Heine's 'Lorelei' in Robert Stiller's and Leopold Lewin's versions (Heine 1981: 356-357) placed in 1981 in parallel 'so that the readers can themselves draw conclusions' (Lewin 1981: 354) about their distinct approaches; Arthur Rimbaud's 'Bateau ivre' [Drunken Boat] in three renderings by Zenon 'Miriam' Przesmycki, Adam Ważyk, and Józef Waczków printed in 1982 one after another (Rimbaud 1982: 290-300), demonstrating how

each involves ‘a certain hierarchy’ of choices that amounts to a ‘new reading of the original text, a new interpretation, and commentary’ (Olędzka-Frybesowa 1982: 302); Alexander Pushin’s ‘Prorok’ [Prophet] in four renderings by Józef Łobodowski, Julian Tuwim, twice by Witold Chwalewik (in versions of 1950 and 1968) (Puszkin 1987: 373-375) grouped together in 1987 to see the ‘exciting level of difficulty’ in trying to approach diverse ‘shades abundant in the text’ (1987: 373); and Dante’s ‘Canto II’ (*Inferno*) juxtaposed in 1995 in seven variants: first by Stanisław Barańczak and Tomasz Łubieński (Alighieri 1995: 46-61), who articulated their rationales in the opening editorial, and then by Julian Korsak, Antoni Stanisławski, J.M. Michał Kowalski, Alina Świderska, and Edward Porębowicz (Alighieri 1995: 96-133), to address the question of ‘how to translate Dante nowadays’ (Surma 1995: 135). In all these metacritical ‘case studies’, the focus of multiplied presentations clearly went beyond the translation’s task to introduce the original authors. Instead, it set the stage for a reflection on distinct creative takes and discrepancies between the translators’ individual visions.

In the context of the 2012 Brechtian literary metatranslations, the example of numerous Polish Dantes with its opening discussion (Barańczak, Sommer et al., 1995: 2-44) may shed more light on the magazine’s instructive and inspirational role in shaping the cultural awareness of literary translation. While mapping and evaluating the existing Polish renderings of *The Divine Comedy*, one of the *Ten cały Brecht*’s translators, Piotr Sommer – then already in his capacity as *LnŚ* editor-in-chief – and Stanisław Barańczak exchanged their views on creative variations on canonical poets:

> PS: […] I recently saw the anthology of texts *After Ovid. New Metamorphoses* […] – published by the Fabers in London – in which various translators and parodists divided bits of Ovid among themselves.
>
> SB: In the USA, they have just recently released an edition of *Inferno*, in which around thirty contemporary poets publish their own translations, each of them doing one or a few.

> PS: …exactly, these editorial and translation ideas are for them quite frequent, whereas such a tradition of translating 'after' an original practically does not exist in Poland.

Interestingly, both of the books described by the translators resembled and in a sense anticipated *Ten cały Brecht* on the conceptual level as they, too, invited a multiple poetic viewing of the original authors. The first one, *After Ovid: New Metamorphoses* (1994), used this idea for variations on Ovid's themes (artistic translations, responses, travesties) by 42 different poets. The editors explained that the project underwent some structural 'metamorphoses' as the initiators 'came to see reduplication as a positive virtue' (Hofmann, Lasdun: 1994: xii). With its multiplicity of reading perspectives and poetic voices, the book also showed the story through the prism of its own linguistic 'metamorphosis'. The other book, *Dante's Inferno: Translation by Twenty Contemporary Poets* (1993), was a collection of Cantos translated by various poets who presented their consecutive parts in diverse lyrical dictions, one after another. It retold the story of Dante's travels by inviting the poets each to arrive at their own solutions and find 'their own Virgil for the work at hand – whether via *terza rima*, some echo of that prosodic sound, a modified rhyme scheme, blank verse, or free verse' (Halpern, 1993: vii). And so, while developing their own editorial tradition, the *LnŚ* translators still carefully followed similar polyphonic translation projects in the American publishing context. To a certain extent, their *Ten cały Brecht* in a book format could eventually be constructed around a similar premise two decades later.

At the same time, yet another strand of multiple poetic translations included within single issues of the magazine could set the stage for the book's pilot version in 2006. When bringing together selections of translated poetry by more than one translator in their publishing convention, the *LnŚ* also made concessions for the scenario of poems getting reiterated in different textual shapes once part of the individual translator's literary worlds and creative imaginations. The instances of translated works repeated within thematic

sections devoted to single authors spanned cases such as: T.S. Eliot's doubled 'Animula' in the 1980 selection of Krzysztof Karasek and Krzysztof Boczkowski (Eliot 1980: 243, 247), with Karasek arguing that translation is 'an essay' in which a translator at their own peril expresses a subjective attitude to the translated poem and provides motivation for it (Karasek 1980: 245); the 1991 presentation of Ezra Pound's poetry with 'Canto I' bifurcating into Andrzej Sosnowski's and Leszek Engelking's readings (Pound 1991: 46-51); the 2009 sample of C.K. Williams' lyrical output with the poem 'A Negro Woman' in Krystyna Dąbrowska's and Andrzej Szuba's separate interpretations (Williams 2009: 88-89; 128); and finally variations on three German authors by the translators later participating in *Ten cały Brecht*: Jakub Ekier and Andrzej Kopacki's 1998 selection from Durs Grünbein with 'Schädelbasislektion' [Skull Base Lesson] in their distinct renderings (Grünbein 1998: 5-9); the 2006 double take on Gottfried Benn's 'Einsamer nie' [Never Lonelier] by Jacek Buras and Andrzej Kopacki (Benn 2006: 9-10, 59); and, last but not least, a teaser of the 2012 project with four selections of Bertolt Brecht's lyrical works by Jacek Buras, Jakub Ekier, Andrzej Kopacki, and Piotr Sommer. All these editorial doublings and preliminary steps in translation metacriticism were eventually rounded off by the unique and unprecedented 2012 quadruple publication *Ten cały Brecht*. In its fully-fledged composition of metatranslation, it could subsequently embody the idea of juxtaposing different versions as belonging to individual translation visions within one poetic book.

Still staying with the lineage of *Literatura na świecie*, it is worth mentioning that the project's purview gained yet another layer owing to what Jerzy Jarniewicz labelled 'the translator's coming-out'. In his 2011 article titled *Niech nas zobaczą* [Let them see us], which would later become the introduction to his book bringing together essays published mostly in the *LnŚ* magazine, he diagnosed an arguable cultural change in the recent Anglo-Saxon publishing practices and the way they revise the author-translator status. As he

observed, American collections of poetry in translation usually feature the translators' names on the front cover, 'whereas in Poland such a practice depends on caprice' (Jarniewicz 2011: 121). Then, quoting Jo Shapcott's *Tender Taxes* (2006) and Don Paterson's *Orpheus* (2007) as examples to follow, he called for such further 'coming-outs' of translators as primary authors of their creative renderings of poetry also in the Polish literary scene (2011: 124-125). However, as history of translation has it and demonstrates time and again, it is not really a forgone conclusion that the creative and subjective component in literary translation automatically entails the translator's explicit right to their own individual voice and translated literary world in a given language. The audience's expectations and prevailing rules of literary production make it clear that the translator having their say is still something to fight for. And indeed, the validity of this biting influential reckoning holds even for *Ten cały Brecht*, a poetic metatranslation that clearly subverts the usual publishing norms by naming the four translators as the book's actual authors on the cover and first pages. Still, needless to say that this level of self-awareness has not been recognised by any major library catalogue in Poland. All of them unanimously claim 'Bertolt Brecht' to be the author of the book, and then enlist four translators in brackets, in some cases additionally emphasising Andrzej Kopacki as the initiator of the project.

Regardless of the experiment's preliminary impact, the question of the translator's subversive coming-out also reaches back to the earlier feuds over who is anointed as the translation's 'author apparent' and to whom literary translation belongs. Still before the era of translation copyrights and its regulation in Poland in 1994, this ethical issue of translation activity also gave some food for thought for *LnŚ* critics and translators. On a few occasions, they pondered over problems that correspond to the literary agenda of *Ten cały Brecht*: namely, the ethical implications of highlighting or singling out one's individual artistic take while at the same time fighting under the author's flag. For instance, what also could have

eventually nourished the final metacritical and subjective approach of Brecht's Polish translators were vehement discussions around, and unfavourable criticisms of, the proposal of 'merged' translations. Having come to light before 1989, the idea encouraged cherry-picking of the best fragments from different existing translations of the same canonical original and blending them into one amalgam without separating distinct voices. It probably comes as no surprise that, when put on the table in *Literatura na świecie*, such 'merged' translations stirred up some controversy and drew very mixed reactions. First, in his 1977 article 'Przekład jako własność niczyja' [Translation as No One's Property], Robert Stiller tentatively considered composing new translations by 'annexing' (Stiller 1977: 333) most appealing fragments from available Polish versions of Heine's poems and other classics on the premise that these renderings serve as a 'communal property' anyway (335). Employing such suggestive imagery, that argument then proceeded as follows: on the one hand, if someone is able to document skills that are comparable to the other appropriated translators of Heine, she or he admittedly 'has the moral right to use everything I have done as if it belonged to no one'. On the other hand, however, this person still ought to signal this textual 'commonness' and shared voice somehow (e.g. in footnotes) in order to distinguish different authors of original translations (1977: 334).

Stiller's ambiguous proposition was then taken up by Maria Leśniewska who in 1985 carried out a similar translation experiment in practice: she blended different existing translations of Charles Baudelaire into what she called 'a montage' (Leśniewska 1985: 351), but named only herself as the translator to see if the text would read well without any hints and come across as sufficiently homogenous (352). In arguing 'it is not the translator's name that is the most important in this whole enterprise, but the poet's name' (1985: 352), Leśniewska brought forward the almost Machiavellian 'means to an end' solution: as long as the translation product is good, the method is irrelevant, even if it involves 'conscious

plagiarism' and 'stolen verses' from other translators' readings. In their responses to Leśniewska's montage, *LnŚ* reviewers picked the idea of such merged translation voices to pieces. Firstly, Zbigniew Bieńkowski (1985: 357) pointed out that each of the appropriated Polish renderings of Baudelaire had a different genealogy and reflected a different personality. And so, since all of them originally stemmed from distinct individual ways of experiencing the original, these perspectives must 'for ethical and aesthetical reasons' not be melted into one combination of shining fragments. To the same end, Józef Waczków ridiculed the proposition by slipping into telling politicised metaphors (1985: 361): 'And it turns out that it is not the translator that speaks to us but a one-man institution (established by who? pursuant to what top-down decrees?).' In bringing to the fore the totalising aspect of similar ideas, Waczków argued that 'this mishmash […] is the last instance of the adaptation completely stripped of an individual style;' and then he twice appealed to the readers and translators: 'do take risks, search for individual styles, do not drown in the regular greyness' (359, 364). It therefore appears that melting all individual readings into an averaged translation pulp is something that the *LnŚ* circle clearly opposed both on the artistic as well as ethical level. Instead, not only multiplying interpretative voices, but also claiming a right to each of them separately lay at the heart of the magazine's debates and critiques, multiplied viewings of the original, and finally the resulting *Ten cały Brecht* project.

With an eye to all these discussions and editorial solutions abundant in *Literatura na świecie*, it seems legitimate to place the 2012 Brechtian volume at the intersection of two closely intertwined influences. For one thing, the idea of 'doing Brecht in different voices' could partly have been fuelled by the Anglo-Saxon publishing trends which the *LnŚ* translators attentively followed and rechannelled through their own publications. Besides the translator-on-cover principle, this strand also included the previously described collective publications, turning subjective and iridescent ways of rendering the original into a story

about the creative potential of literary translation. For another thing, the Brechtian book appeared on the wave of the magazine's own long-standing tradition of translation experiments and publishing multiplications that opposed the default one-to-one presentation of works from other languages in Polish translation. Even though not necessarily completely local and isolated incidents, the *LnŚ* practices were often born of the reflections on translation ethics spelled out by the editors and translators from this particular milieu. To a certain extent, their recurring strategies of multiplying different viewpoints and readings of the same original could also have followed a broader agenda of individualism in translation and become a symbolic protest against the averaged 'regular greyness'.

Alongside these cultural trends present within the *Literatura na świecie* environment, the other major concurrent line of development provides a less favourable backdrop to the story of the 2012 Polish metatranslation. Whereas *Ten cały Brecht* very self-consciously continues numerous threads from the *LnŚ* tradition, the volume clearly positions itself against the other legacy: the ideologically driven reception of Brecht in Communist Poland with all its nuances and peculiarities. What the multiple reading of Brecht's poetry especially aims to reevaluate critically from today's perspective is his work's particular susceptibility to political manipulation and its resulting ambiguous role in the literary scene of the time.

The first steps of Brecht into the Polish post-War landscape left no room for doubt. Poland in its early Communist period, before Stalin's death, and the Poznań anti-regime protests of 1956 brought forth an ideologically one-dimensional Brecht who was praised, for instance, for putting Socialist Realism into theatrical practice (Wirth, 1955: 65). Critics of his plays were accused of being 'enemies of the revolution' (Wirth, 1956: 84) who intended to solidify 'the order based on exploitation' (85). The only collection of Brecht's translated poetry from that time, *Wiersze wybrane* [Selected Poems] edited by Lech Pijanowski and published in 1954 by PIW State Publishing Institute, was supposed to show Brecht as a

eulogist of ‘the new, developing, just world, whose symbol is the Soviet Union’ (Pijanowski 1954: 5). In the article with the telling title ‘Brecht po polsku, czyli cwaniactwo i tchórzostwo’ [Brecht in Polish: Craftiness and Cowardice], Robert Stiller (1998a: 7) called the book ‘one of the greatest disgraces of PIW, not only due to the quality of the translations and editing, but also because this tendentious selection seemed an attempt at turning the great and fearless poet into a toady and scribbler.’ In addition, Brecht’s visit to Poland in 1952 was seen as relevant only for political reasons, as Jan Kott remarked (Koenig, Kott et al., 1998: 110), since ‘the attitude towards Brecht seemed to become then a litmus test’, an ideological diagnosis of the whole society.

This politically coloured strand was taken up by two different groups in the following years in Communist Poland: Brecht was simultaneously seen as a communist and, by anti-regime intellectuals, as an antidote for Communism. For example, in the official introduction to his plays, published in 1976 and mapping his previous reception in Poland, Konrad Gajek argued that Brecht as ‘one of the greatest hopes of the left-wing literary movement’ (1976: 73) could have a positive impact on the ideological and artistic aspect of Polish theatre (88). On the other hand, Brecht became the main hero for New Wave intellectuals. Although Polish dissident poets from the 1968 formation would theoretically oppose Brecht’s political viewpoint, they quite often either translated his works or positioned their own literary output to his writing by rechanneling his attacks on the previous system of oppression to their own object of resistance and intellectual protest. The key New Wave poet and translator who helped introduce Brecht’s poetry through the underground press, Ryszard Krynicki, was also a biting critic rather than favourable reader. As Krynicki admitted in his 1981 interview, he did not understand how ‘Brecht could start serving the doctrine and dogma’, that is ‘the deceitful utopia, in the name of which crimes were committed and nations resettled’ (Krynicki 2015: 10). And thus, he confessed: ‘I initially translated him a bit too much in my

own way' (Krynicki 2015: 10). These first translation attempts in Krynicki's 'own way' were available already in 1974 thanks to *Galeria O.N.*, a niche and independent graphical gallery run by artists. After a long struggle to publish the 'unpublishable' in the official zone, additionally fuelled by the 1976-1980 official ban on publishing Krynicki's authored works, he finally managed to introduce Brecht's poetry to a broader audience through the 'second circulation'. The collection of translated poems titled *Elegie bukowskie i inne wiersze* [The Buckow Elegies and Other Poems] appeared first in 1979, and then again in 1980, making quite a splash in the dissident circles, mainly owing to the person of the translator, his selection of the poems, as well as the textual shape of his Polish renderings. The impact of these underground publications was summarised by the Polish critic Tadeusz Nyczek as follows (Koenig, Kott et al., 1998: 111): 'When Krynicki was translating Brecht's poems in the 70s it was one of the most anti-communist books, impossible to get published in any official publishing house. And those poems were then circulated as political *bibuła* [prohibited materials released by the Polish underground press – K.S.].' Considering this statement, it is perhaps easier to judge the grandeur of Krynicki's gesture of smuggling twelve translated poems into the officially released collection of poetry *Organizm zbiorowy* [The Collective Organism] in 1975. In this sense, the translation of Brecht's poetry in Poland also served as camouflage for forbidden subjects and anti-regime sentiment, becoming what was often identified with reference to the Soviet Union's history of literary translation as 'a safe art' (Etkind 1978: 146), 'haven' (Leighton 1991: 38), and a textual 'screen' (Loseff 1984: 77; Baer 2010: 155). In hiding behind Brecht's disguise, the translator could take advantage of such Aesopian language by making it play polyphonically with the censors' vigilance.

And this phenomenon ushered in even more politically engaged forms of resistance with Brecht's mediation. Krynicki was also the first one to translate into Polish Brecht's 'Die

Lösung' [The Solution], a poem that within the Eastern Bloc 'before 1989 was printed in the official circulation arguably only in Poland, which became a little sensation in those circumstances' (Szaruga 2012: 31). This iconic lyrical manifesto, poignantly critical of the East German government's violent actions in suppressing the workers' uprising of 1953, ended with a perverted suggestion it would be easier if *die Regierung löste das Volk auf und wählte ein anderes* [the government dissolved the people and elected another] (Brecht 1967: 1010).[16] In a telling gesture, it was Krynicki's Polish translation 'Rozwiązanie' [The Solution] that helped the 'Solidarity' opposition man the barricades. For instance, the lyric's rendering was placed on the front page of the 'Solidarity' trade union bulletin for the central and eastern region around Lublin in 1981 (Brecht 1981a: 1) alongside an article reminding the people about the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Poznań 1956 protests of Polish workers, which were violently suppressed and afterwards hushed by the government of the People's Republic of Poland. Such a framing of the Polish version not only established a parallel between the original German demonstrations described by Brecht and the Polish uprising three years later. It also gave a new lease of life to the common cause of dissidence following more recent protests and demonstrations of that time, especially the series of strikes in July 1980 in Lublin, which then culminated in the events of August 1980 in Gdańsk with Lech Wałęsa taking the lead. By refreshing these memories with the help of Brecht's words, the paper's editors implied that the Polish scenario for 'the solution' could pan out differently: namely, that it could come true under the auspices of yet another group of newly 'chosen' people, which was the then-current opposition and the 'Solidarity' movement actually serving its nation.

[16] All works in German will be quoted from Bertolt Brecht's *Gesammelte Werke* (1967). Unless otherwise indicated, English versions in square brackets are provided in my (interlineal) translation.

Moreover, Ryszard Krynicki himself also recalled how some of the poet's works in his translations were printed on the 'Solidarity' movement leaflets, with occasional fragments edited or altered for propaganda reasons (2000: 142). For instance, the title of another of Brecht's poems translated by Krynicki, 'Worauf wartet ihr?' [What are you waiting for?], was changed in print to 'Na co czekamy…' [What are we waiting for…] and graphically placed in the middle of a photo of oppositionists. As a result of this visual positioning, the poet's engagement in the cause was additionally intensified and his role shifted from an independent commentator into an insider and zealous ally of the 'Solidarity' movement (Luboń 2013: 213-15).

The more Brecht's literary persona becomes a battlefield for clashing factions, the more the context in which his translations appear becomes a sensitive issue. According to another Polish poet of the New Wave, Julian Kornhauser, towards the end of the 1970s, Brecht's translated works were placed in anthologies among authors both of West Germany and East Germany, as well as published in the official and underground presses, at the same time serving on the opposite sides of the barricades and representing two political agendas which could technically abrogate each other. As a consequence, the strategies of reception and readers' interpretation were doomed to become heavily political too (2002: 243): 'depending on the publication place, the way of distributing books or leaflets, the person of translator, the relevant elucidation of the author's output, the reader could sometimes interpret Brecht as a regime poet, and at other times as an independent, rebellious artist.' This anti-systemic aspect was also recognised by the authorities who, as Robert Stiller reported (1998a: 7), would suppress and ban official performances featuring Brecht's cantos, songs, and poems. This was the case, for instance, with an evening of poetry titled *Niebo zawiedzionych* [Heaven of the Disillusioned] in Teatr Ateneum Warsaw (1982); first selected works were heavily censored and then in the end the performance itself was prohibited.

When the same performance was planned to be staged in Stettin, it was cancelled immediately on hearing that the sold tickets were accompanied by leaflets advertising a local meeting of the 'Solidarity' members. Interestingly, four years after this incident, Robert Stiller, who was the translator of the aforementioned works, managed to publish the most controversial poems from the performance, such as 'Rezolucja komunardów' ('Resolution der Kommunarden' [Resolution of the Communards]), only by smuggling them into a children's book called *Rekin zęby ma na wierzchu* [The Shark Has its Teeth Outside] (*Und der Haifisch, der hat Zähne*) (1986). In the introduction written in a kind of Aesopian language, the translator explained the interpretative context for two subversive poems by providing his young readers with a childlike definition of irony: 'you need to understand something in reverse to what the author has said' (Stiller 1986b: 7). Brecht's role as a touchstone of the Polish political situation also showed through Stiller's two other collections of his poetry in translation, both of which were released by the official state publishing house. It becomes apparent that the 1980 collection (*Poezje wybrane* [Selected Poetry]), which was then enlarged into the book of 1988 (*Postylla domowa i inne wiersze* [Devotions for the Home and other poems]), was prepared for different expectations and attitudes to its successor. The change in the thematic scope of the two coincided with the transition from the period following Martial Law of 1981 to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. As a consequence, the ideologically monotonous image of Brecht the poet was complicated by his less ideologically charged facets closer to the end of the Communist era.

This modest step towards a different role for Brecht in the Polish literary arena, however, did not really change the broader view of his reception over the decades. The attempt of various critics to evaluate this reception on the 100th anniversary of Brecht's birthday in 1998 left no doubt as to the actual purpose of his specific presence in the Polish

literary scene. For instance, Krzysztof Wolicki argued (Koenig, Kott et al. 1998: 121) that despite Brecht's previous frequent and resonant appearance, he:

> is completely unknown as a writer. And so is his poetry, although he was one of the two greatest German poets of the twentieeth century. His plays in the existing translations are absolutely unsuitable for the stage. After all, they were most often directed by people whose main concern was whether Brecht is a party or non-party writer, whether he is an orthodox party-writer or a revisionist one. And all that is totally irrelevant to the actual Brechtian themes.

Due to these pragmatic readings of Brecht's literary *oeuvre*, the transition of 1989 left his works apparently devoid of their force since there seemed to be no political or ethical mission to be completed anymore. Jan Kott in his commentary on Brecht's reception observed that 'nowadays all these issues no longer raise any emotions' (Koenig, Kott et al. 1998: 110). Stiller summarised the lack of interest in Brecht's works after the fall of Communism, remarking that Brecht is only 'relevant when one is fighting with a totalitarian regime' (Stiller, 1998: 7). According to yet another critic, because of this historical luggage and Brecht's role as a 'travel comrade' (71) throughout the Communist adventure, he cannot now be 'taken seriously' by a Polish audience (Krzemiński 1998: 70). And so it seemed that there was no adequate language or form in which Brecht could speak to contemporary Polish readers.

All this provides the backdrop to *Ten cały Brecht*. Brecht's bipolar and politically charged image was definitely an important influence on the strategy of the translators, who attempted to revise the poet's position in the Polish literary arena. By openly explaining their translation choices and editorial solutions, they tried to oppose the previously ideologically driven manipulations of his texts. Finding a potential remedy in the familiar form of multiplied viewing from *Literatura na świecie*, they brought together different subjectively selected versions of his poetry, whilst also explicitly revealing their rationale for doing so.

In the act of presenting these diverse variants of the original, the *LnŚ* translators thus signalled that many various Brechts can exist simultaneously within one polyphonic book; and, at the same time, so many other viewpoints and readings of his poetry can be acknowledged in this public literary forum.

4.3. The Brecht Quartet

From the very beginning, the four *LnŚ* translators explain the rules of their collaborative artistic revision of the poet's image in a couple of ways. Leading the readers through the volume step by step, as if coming up with a makeshift user's manual to their newly born Polish Brecht, they first explicate in the words of the editor, Andrzej Kopacki (2012: 5-6): '*This* Brecht (who, by the way, also liked to multiply versions of his own poems) can be read as one multi-threaded poetic score for four voices and eight hands.' In its multiplied and polyphonic form, therefore, *this* particular Brecht actively aims to oppose and complicate the image of the titular 'all that Brecht' whose echoes still haunt the Polish literary scene. In order to complete such a revisionist task, the volume's successive translators join in with their orchestrated poetic performances; and in doing so, each of them individually reveals how his own quarter of the book has been composed and gives directions for reading his own personal Brecht. To this end, all the selections are preceded by excerpts from one of the translated poems, which in each case function like a title for the section, a motto, or an umbrella phrase anticipating its content. These excerpts and the choices of literary works they represent strictly correspond to the explanatory essays which are to be found after each set of renderings. In these essays, the translators justify their strategies and specific takes on Brecht, and reveal the particular ways of reading his poetry they have endeavoured to oppose. In the realm of their individual translation worlds, a few repeated

poems appear in distinct interpretations and textual shapes, most blatantly stressing the uniqueness and subjectivity of each of the four Brecht's readings. Furthermore, the essays are always placed after the translations, as though they were not intended to direct the interpretative perspective from the beginning, but rather retrospectively illuminate the experience of each single Brechtian face.

What are the different images that emerge from these consecutive artistic presentations? The first of them, by Jacek St. Buras, is closely intertwined with his previous experience of translating Brecht's early plays: mostly *Baal* (written 1918, staged 1923) and *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1928), which were staged in his version in 1996 (*Teatr Polski we Wrocławiu* [Polish Theatre in Wrocław]) and 2008 (*Teatr Współczesny we Wrocławiu* [Contemporary Theatre in Wrocław]) respectively, but also *Happy End* (1929), fragments of which were incorporated into the famous 1982 theatrical production *Mahagonny* (*Teatr Współczesny w Warszawie* [Contemporary Theatre in Warsaw]). In particular the reception of *Mahagonny*, written and performed in Communist Poland, proves crucial in light of Buras's artistic enterprise and becomes a starting point for his selection of Brechtian early songs. In his essay 'Pod urokiem buntownika' [Under the Rebel's Spell], he recollects how he treated that particular performance of his translation of Brecht as an opportunity to give vent to his own response to the socio-political situation of the time, and to manifest it in his own words on stage. He was consequently rather perplexed to find that in the eyes of some Communist reviewers, the production stayed in accordance with the current critique of the bourgeois world, capitalist system, and exploitation of labour (Buras 2012: 47). In the face of this unexpected twist, the translator admits that Brecht has always inspired him for exactly the opposite reason: it was the rebellious inclinations of Brecht's early literary *oeuvre*, and especially its more apolitical dimension, i.e. its recalcitrant and terse attempts of demystifying the rules of interpersonal relations, that attracted Buras.

This determines the title of Buras' selection, 'O kruchości stosunków międzyludzkich' (original: *Über die Unsicherheit menschlicher Verhältnisse* [On the uncertainty of human relationships]), which comes from the First Finale of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, the source of most of the lyrical songs within this part of the volume. This individualist and subversive dimension is additionally enhanced by Buras in his translation of the song's refrain: *Die Welt ist arm, der Mensch ist schlecht* [The world is poor, man is bad] as *Świat biedny jest, a ludzie źli* [The world is poor, and men are bad]. It places the lyrical 'I' from the song against many others, who form a defined group of evil people, and revises the more universal statement that everyone is bad. In doing so, Buras reveals a glimmer of hope that, if need be, there will always be some rebellious individual who will confront the corrupt majority. And so perhaps, from today's perspective, the Brechtian lesson in protest against injustice and compassion for the disadvantaged is not necessarily repeated to no avail. As Buras in a sense constitutes a common denominator of the past and the present Brecht, he does not completely negate the poet's Communist baggage, but rather redefines the validity of his critique of social relations into contemporary society. Being thematically less revisionist in his selection, he still quite uniquely reinstates the melic element of Brecht's poem-songs. In making the melodic Brecht resonate with his figure of 'lyrical rebel, born do-gooder', he stresses his early spontaneity rather than later didacticism (Buras 2012: 50).

The next voice, following that of Buras, belongs to Jakub Ekier, who sets out to challenge the fixed, positivist way of reading Brecht's poems in the context of his biography and political views. The translator expresses his objection to treating the symbolical signature *Ja, Bertolt Brecht* [I, Bertolt Brecht] (from Brecht's poem titled *Of Poor B.B.*) only in terms of the author's literary effort to document his own identity (79) and critiques the frequent practice of extending that hermeneutic approach onto his whole literary output.

Instead, in his essay ‘Ani czyjś, ani swój, ani jeden’ [Neither someone’s, nor oneself’s, nor one only], he proposes looking at Brecht as a poet who switches tone of voice and takes on a different ‘I’ (76), writes in all three generic persons (first-, second-, and third-person) (81), and plays with diverse languages and styles (85), which allows him to escape simplistic distinctions. Referring to the Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden, Ekier instead pursues a more phenomenological way of reading literature. By pointing to Ingarden’s concept of ‘spots of indeterminacy’, i.e. components of a text which allow for an individual reading, he explains how to come to terms with the paradox that, ‘this character, non-identical with the author, carries his signature: I, Bertolt Brecht’ (89). The translator instead offers a more complicated and diverse image of the poet in translations spanning the whole period of the poet’s literary activity.

The motto for the selection, ‘Kiepski czas na poezję’ (‘Schlechte Zeit für Lyrik’ [Bad Time for Poetry]), refers to the poem under the same title, from Brecht’s *Svendborger Gedichte*, which was written in exile. The emphasis put on this particular phrase and the whole work itself ironically comments on the reductionist approach to analysing Brecht’s poetry. On the one hand, Ekier admits that ‘Brecht does quite a lot so that his poems delude the reader with their documentary façade’ (79), which is partly justified by a difficult period in which writing poetry must be doomed to be read as engaged journalism. On the other hand, however, the lyrical ‘I’ still ‘tells the story for the sake of telling it’ (83) and equally deeply experiences different aesthetic, moral, and existential dimensions (85). This is also why ‘Kiepski czas na poezję’ becomes the flagship text of this selection: it is in this poem that the speaker admits that (2012: 63):

We mnie walczą	[Inside me contend
Zachwyt nad rozkwitłą jabłonią	Delight at the blossoming apple tree
I zgroza po przemowach malarzyka.	And horror at the house-painter’s speeches]

On the one hand, the 'horror at the house-painter's speeches', the historically situated propaganda of the unfulfilled student of Fine Arts, Adolf Hitler, disparagingly belittled as *malarzyk* [derogatory for: 'painter'; German: *Anstreicher*], is admittedly what drives the poet to the writing table. But on the other hand, both of the divergent spheres of artistic interest are still equally confronted within the poem in order to enhance the tension between the values they represent. It is thus the outcome of such a clash: the conflicted and diverse Brecht is a self-constructed literary persona who is not easy to pin down and will become the main hero of Ekier's translations.

The subsequent part by Andrzej Kopacki, professor of German literature and the initiator of this whole artistic enterprise, might appear as more idiosyncratic when compared to the previous two. Contrary to Ekier's spread-out and wide-ranging framework, Kopacki's renderings focus on a very narrow and consistent selection from only two poetic books: *Hauspostille* (1927) and *Svendborger Gedichte* (1939). This choice is associated with the translator's decision to present the intensely lyrical Brecht, who, next to Gottfried Benn, truly deserves his title of the founding father of modern German poetry (Kopacki 2012: 127). Unlike the unfavoured literary critics who try to read into it 'the rhetoric of memory', 'counter-culture tendencies', 'failed panegyrics', or 'encoded criticism of Stalinism' (127-128), Kopacki wishes to move on from the undeniable fact of propagandist works existing in Brecht's literary *oeuvre* and instead concentrate on what he sees as Brechtian lyricism at its best. Both Kopacki's renderings and his writing introduce the leitmotif of 'the plum tree' that comes from two poems: 'Wspomnienie Marii A.' ('Erinnerung an die Marie A.' [Remembering Marie A.]) and 'Śliwa' ('Der Pflaumenbaum' [The Plum Tree]). These works symbolise not only the translator's precise close-up of the poetic texture and the matter of artistic language, but also his general fascination with metatextuality that underlies his

design of the whole book. Kopacki establishes a conceptual relationship between his selection of translations, titled after a fragment from the first poem, *Pod drzewem młodą śliwą* (*Unter einem jungen Pflaumenbaum* [Beneath a plum tree]), and his essay's title, *Śliwa pod okiem*, which plays on the Polish homonym *śliwa* ('big plum/plum tree' but also 'black eye'). He starts his essay with the explanatory sentence: 'Brecht came under my eye in the deep 70s – and it immediately started hurting' (127), referring to the poet's politically tainted writing, which he saw as completely devoid of any lyricism. Kopacki's Polish versions of Brecht, therefore, do recognise two facets of the symbolic *śliwa*, but are born out of the desire to explore only the more poetical one. In his translations, plums and plum trees are part of a sensuous imagery as well as a symbol of fertility, which was also reflected in Brecht's liking for the colour purple and erotic cues in his earlier works, such as *Baal*. In addition, this fruitfulness is also interpreted on a self-referential level with regard to the author himself being prolific and producing abundant works.

For this reason, Kopacki reads the ending of 'Wspomnienie o Marii A.' metatextually: the 'wind' which takes the cloud out of his sight [*schwand sie schon im Wind* (232)] is understood as a Romanticist representation of spiritual illumination and artistic inspiration. In this context, he treats the original love scene under the plum tree as a 'poetological' (Kopacki, 2012: 134) exercise: no matter how lively and sensual this depiction is, it is still part of a writing convention. He signals such a reading in his translation of the opening line: *An jenem Tag im blauen Monat September* (232), which in the original refers to a day in the 'blue' month September, probably because of the colour of the clear sky above the plum tree. Whereas for instance Robert Stiller (1988: 146) translates this colour simply as *niebieski* [(light) blue], Kopacki chooses a more atypical adjective, *modry* [deep/cornflower blue], which seems archaic linguistically from today's perspective but appeared in romanticist and later symbolist descriptions of instances such as: blue eyes (e.g.

modre oczy [deep blue eyes] in Adam Mickiewicz's Romantic epic *Pan Tadeusz* [Master Thaddeus], 1834), and deep water (e.g. *na modrym oceanie* [on the deep blue ocean] in Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer's 'Narodziny Afrodyty' [The Birth of Aphrodite], 1894). Moreover, remaining with the first stanza of 'Śliwa', Kopacki uses two other expressions from a similar register: *miła* [archaic: beloved] for *Liebe*, where both Lec and Stiller simply use *miłość* [love]; and *nadobny* [archaic: fair, lovely] for the equally dated *hold*, which Lec renders as *uroczy* [charming] and Stiller as *piękny* [beautiful]. All this stylistic patina and poeticised language in Kopacki's translation reveals a playfulness with the clichés of Romantic love and the conventional language of its depiction. By ironically choosing the most hackneyed diction, Kopacki refuses to take the actual theme of the poem at its face value.

The translator adopts the same self-referential manner to interpret the other poem, 'Śliwa' ('Der Pflaumenbaum'), which describes a plum tree no longer capable of bearing fruit. Despite the tree's miserable state, the last two lines are optimistic (647):

Doch er ist ein Pflaumenbaum	[But it is still a plum tree
Man kennt es an dem Blatt.	One can tell by the leaf]

Previous translators have rendered the last line in a completely straightforward way – for instance, Pijanowski (1954: 41) gives *Spójrz liście prawdziwe* and Stiller (1988: 299) *To po jej liściach znać*. Kopacki again points to a potential double meaning in this passage. As he notices (2012: 137-38), the German word *Blatt* may refer not only to the plum tree's leaf, but also to a page or a sheet of paper. The knowledge about the tree reaches the reader thanks to the page on which the poem is written: they only need to trust the author and the literary world described by him. The metatextual act of reflecting upon the *Blatt*, the sheet of paper that represents the material medium and textual fabric of the poem, becomes even

more meaningful for Kopacki's understanding. According to him, 'through the power of language and not the raucous propaganda, the poem teaches us about what we easily lose from our sight or stay bashfully silent about' (137). He attributes this quality specifically to the word *Blatt*, which also appears in the phrase *kein Blatt vor den Mund nehmen*, meaning 'to speak openly', as if without covering one's mouth with a leaf or a sheet of paper. The Polish language has two separate words for these two semantically non-identical *Blätter*; Kopacki therefore decides to apply another subtle and almost unnoticeable solution (108):

Jednak należy do śliw	[But it belongs to plum trees
Poznać to po listkach.	One can tell by the little leaves]

The diminutive form of *liście* [leaves], i.e. *listki*, remotely echoes the word *list(y)* [letter(s)] but also refers to the Polish phraseological collocation *listek figowy* [fig leaf], a cover which can only keep something secret and invisible to the eye. In this sense, the poem can speak about the plum tree only with a *Blatt vor dem Mund* as it is doomed to constantly cover the depicted object with language, to hide it behind the 'fig leaves'. The only thing that the reader can tell for sure is that it belongs to the whole category of 'plum trees', as the plural form in the Polish translation indicates. This semantic recognition can happen by taking a look at the 'fig leaf' itself, and by investigating the poetological texture of which the symbolic tree is made.

On the one hand, this metatextual perspective reveals much about Kopacki's treatment of Brecht's lyricism as well as about his fascination with the phenomenon of the materialism of poetic language *per se*. Regardless of how recognisable or not this pun is, it is worth noting that Kopacki tries to examine each and every word to see what Brecht's poetry is made of. Similarly, in his translations of Rilke's *Die Flamingos* accompanied by the essay '"Flamingi" Rilkego jako tekst poetologiczny' [Rilke's 'Flamingos' as a

Poetological Text], he explains how the final line describing the birds as they *schreiten einzeln ins Imaginäre* may refer not only to their own descent into dreams but also to their getting into the poet's imagination (2009: 69-79). While Barbara Surowska, for example, translates the same phrase as *marzenia* [dreams] (2009: 177), Kopacki insists on his metatextual interpretation in his choice of *przestrzeń wyobraźni* [space of imagination], shifting the connotations more towards artistic creativity.

On the other hand, the translator's inclinations towards self-referential readings are also manifested on a broader level. The focus on the surface of the *Blatt* or 'fig leaves' can explain his artistic idea of constructing the whole collection in a self-reflective and metacritical way. By pointing to the subjective modality of translation, Kopacki shows how the target language can cover the original, just as poetic language conceals the described object. Brecht can only be appreciated in Polish through the fig leaves of a different language, but if one is able to understand its texture and the artistic rules of translation itself, they may aid the recognition of different interpretative categories and ways of approaching Brecht's poetry. Coincidentally, Robert Stiller used the same metaphor of the fig leaf when discussing Brecht's reception and new translations in Poland. According to him (Stiller 1986a: 8), each translation 'helps the readers discover him anew, discover him speaking most sincerely, in his own voice, without standing on ceremony, and without any fig leaves.' Whereas Stiller believed that each consecutive translation could make Brecht's authenticity come to the surface, however, Kopacki's metacritical project would rather assume the impossibility of this task. Instead, it focuses on revealing the 'fig leaves' of poetic language that cover the depicted plum tree and of the translation which similarly conceals the original text.

Finally, the last part of the book is by Piotr Sommer, a poet and translator of modern Anglophone poetry (e.g. Seamus Heaney, Charles Reznikoff, Frank O'Hara). As he

intentionally and openly chose English as the language of indirect mediation for his rendering, this apporach might seem quite radical and controversial and so might need more extensive discussion. Its textual base was John Willet and Ralph Manheim's edition (Brecht 1976); however, as Sommer has admitted, the final version also confronts German originals and was lightly edited by Kopacki afterwards (Sommer 2015). This strategy is particularly meaningful in the context of Sommer's discussion on 'literature being translation' with Czesław Miłosz and Ryszard Krynicki, in which he commented on indirect translation (1993: 14): 'something like this can be committed only by exception, a bit like a sin which is difficult to resist.' In the case of this unique project of metatranslating Brecht, it was Kopacki who convinced him to prepare his own readings of the author despite Sommer's linguistic inclinations towards English rather than German. Although the translator knew Brecht's poetry from both Polish and English translations, he still preferred to use the latter as the point of reference, which he subsequently justified as follows (2012: 165):

> I guess that English was devoid of connotations which some Polish translations entailed. When reading Brecht in English, I was not tempted to 'correct' translations, and I could read them from a less biased perspective. Moreover, I did not associate the English Brecht with his narrowly political image: as the co-founder of a sort of New Wave language, so dashingly domesticated in Polish poetry by [Julian] Kornhauser, […] [Ewa] Lipska and the entire post-linguistic *oeuvre* of [Ryszard] Krynicki.

For Sommer, English meant an escape from the fixed language in which the Polish Brecht spoke from underground publishing houses, and the anti-communist works of the New Wave poets who employed his poetic diction in order to express their own resistance to the system. That particular Brecht, who successfully completed his mission a long time ago, had since demanded a refreshed interpretation, which, according to Sommer, the English mediation helpfully provided. He sees further added value in translating through the

contemporary *lingua franca* in the possibility of situating Brecht in an inter-lingual and inter-literary network, alongside the poets he has read in English, whether in translation or the original, in order to put him in dialogue with them. Sommer establishes a conceptual and linguistic relationship between Brecht and authors such as C.P. Cavafy, Miroslav Holub, Aleksander Wat, and Charles Reznikoff, whose poetic language also plays on syntactic structures and objectivist narratives. According to the translator, Brecht is principally 'the poet of sentence' (166) and this places his aesthetic programme alongside Cavafy's elaborateness and 'intonation soaked with irony' (170) or Reznikoff's practice of 'building the poem on the syntactic and intonational possibilities, finding a potential in narration, specifically defamiliarised documentarity [or] some particular rhetorical devices' (172). These features play a key role in Sommer's understanding of Brecht's poetic language and, as a consequence, also influence his translation approach to syntax as a quality generating additional meanings. In his essay on translating the miniatures by Charles Reznikoff, he explained (2005: 233) that 'the translatability of syntax' hinges on a more profound condition: access to 'the deep structure of the poem which consists not only of strictly phraseological and syntactical relations, but also something like the rhythm of observation, of speaking, of thinking.' Therefore, the inter-lingual and linguistically oriented context in which Sommer chooses to explore Brecht's idiosyncratic diction is a perfect setting in which he can test the 'grammar' of his poetry by trying to infiltrate its conceptual structure.

For this very reason, the translator chose to title his selection 'I tak budowałem zdania' after the line *Und ich stellte die Sätze so* [And so I arranged/built the sentences] from 'Über das Sprechen der Sätze' [On Speaking the Sentences], and then made his closing essay the continuation of Brecht's line by calling it 'Tak, czyli jak?' [So, that is how?]. This juxtaposition suggests some interesting reading in the context of Sommer's 'syntactical approach', as well as his translation method of filtering Brecht's works through the inter-

lingual poetic space of English. By using the fragment on building sentences with reference to his translation strategy, Sommer comments on his own *modus operandi* with the help of Brecht's poem. What is more, he treats it as a point of reference for the way he himself 'arranged the sentences' in the translation (144).

I tak budowałem zdania, aby widoczne były *Ich rezultaty, to znaczy w taki sposób, ażeby* *Samo ich mówienie mogło* *Mówiącego ucieszyć albo zasmucić. A my pozostali też* *Moglibyśmy się z ich powodu smucić albo cieszyć, słysząc jak mówi.* *(To utrudniało oglądanie sztuk teatralnych: często* *Zaczynały działać dopiero wtedy, gdy oglądało się je drugi raz.)*	*Und ich stellte die Sätze so, dass ihre Folgen* *Sichtbar wurden, so also, dass* *Sie gesprochen zu haben den Sprecher* *Froh machen konnte oder auch unfroh, und auch uns andere* *Konnte es unfroh machen oder auch froh, dass der Sprecher so sprach.* *(Dies erschwerte das Sehen der Stücke: die erste* *Wirkung trat oft erst beim zweiten Sehen ein.)* (787)
[And so I built the sentences, so that visible are Their effects, which means in such a way that The very speaking of them could make the speaker happy or sad. And we others, too could because of them get happy or sad, hearing how he speaks. (That made watching theatre plays more difficult: often they worked only when one saw them for the second time)]	And so I arranged the sentences that their effects Became visible, I mean in such a way that The fact of speaking them could Make the speaker happy, or unhappy, and we others too Could be made unhappy, or happy, by hearing him speak thus. (Hence the plays became harder to see: the first Impression often sank in only when they were seen the second time.) (Brecht, 1976: 342)

This self-referential poem describing the performative function of language is very much in accordance with Sommer's own hermeneutical experience of interpreting Brecht. The lyrical observation about the text 'working' only after the second viewing is similarly reflected in the translator's comments on the retarded process of discovering what this poetry communicates and how 'repeated reading' of Brecht's poems can 'gradually reveal on what a sentence plays' (167-168). Interestingly, this rendering and Sommer's particular choices in 'building the sentences' bring about tangible interpretative effects as well as traces of the translation process itself. For instance, the method of indirect transfer left a textual imprint on one of the lines in the Polish version. While in the German original, the others could be made happy or unhappy, *daß der Sprecher so sprach* (787) [that the speaker speaks in this

way], Sommer makes the account more precise and shifts it to the auditory level: ***słysząc*** *jak mówi* [**hearing** how he speaks]. This image has been adopted from Edith Anderson's translation from Willett and Manheim's English edition, in which she also explicitly describes the act of '**hearing** him speak thus' (342) as the actual, palpable outcome of someone's producing sounds. This tangibility or 'audibility' of effects is developed further in Sommer's translation choices, although with less influence from the English variants.

In his essay, the translator gives a hint about yet another interpretative context for his translation. Revolving around a quotation from Alexander Wat, a Polish poet of the early and mid-twentieeth century, in his analysis of self-selected Brecht's poems, and referring to *coś, do czego można powracać* [something to which one can return] (168), he signals a 'Watian' reading context. The fragment comes from Wat's 'Jeśli słowo "istnieje"' [If the Word 'Exists'] and begins with the lines which, in Czesław Miłosz's translation, read as follows: 'If the word "exists" is to have any meaning/ it should refer to something to which we can return' (Wat, 1965: 23). In this poem, Wat carries out a semantic analysis of the predicate, most probably influenced by Tadeusz Kotarbiński, a Polish philosopher known for his 'reism' doctrine acknowledging the ontological and semantic value of 'things' (*res*) that really exist, i.e. the 'visible effects' in Brechtian terms (*widoczne rezultaty*; Brecht 2012: 144). In this translation, Sommer also stresses such tangible effects of speech reflected in grammar, the most noticeable example of which is the German construction *dass sie gesprochen zu haben* rendered as the substantival gerund form *samo ich mówienie* [the very speaking of them], which then results in further actions. Within the limited verbal space of the poem, the way in which Sommer stresses the performative act of poetry and arranges sentences also leads to the concrete textual shape of the literary work and the subsequent interpretative paths of its readers. Therefore, 'I tak budowałem zdania', distinguished by the translator out of all other renderings through the motto for his own section, could be treated

as the narration of his reading of Brecht's words, which in a sense also produces a tangible outcome in the form of his translation solution. Insofar as Brecht was preoccupied with the actual 'effects' and driving force of his poetry, Sommer tries to dismantle the poet's syntax and rhetoric leading to the performative power of translation.

At the same time, the Watian metaphor of 'something to which one can return' opens up yet another context for Sommer's commentary on his linguistic strategy. His focus on the real meanings and 'things' preserved within the inter-lingual zone can also express his yearning for universal anchors and aesthetic qualities in Brecht's poetry. The concept of 'returns' as presented in Wat's poem was taken up by Sommer in an interview (Sommer, 2002: 16), in which he referred to the final metaphor of Odysseus returning to Penelope:

Jak dobrze powracać do dawnych wzgardzonych pojęć! *(Nb. Potoczny jest sens tego „wróćmy".* *Tak na przykład wrócił* *Odys do Penelopy, do niej która zna sekret:* *że trzeba tkać i prać. I znowu tkać i prać.*	How good it is to return to old rejected concepts! (N.B. The meaning of that 'let us return' is common. So, for example, Odysseus returned to Penelope, to her who knew the secret: that one must weave and unweave. And again weave and unweave. Trans. Czesław Miłosz (Wat, 1965: 23)

Commenting on the 'weave and unweave' procedure in relation to the current condition of poetry, Sommer suggested that: 'Maybe this is exactly the nature of the beginnings and continuations, and the well-known historic and literary processes' (2002: 12). In this sense, there are always returns to 'old rejected concepts' as well as to old rejected poets, who get woven and unwoven into historical and literary processes, only to be woven again. Sommer himself anticipated his later return to Brecht's poetry in 1986, in his poetry collection *Czynnik liryczny* [Lyrical Factor] (Sommer: 1986/88: 1):

Według Brechta

Przypuszczam, że niektórzy poeci
przestali ostatnio rozsyłać swoje wiersze
do gazet
Myślą sobie pewnie: poczekamy
aż się to wszystko uspokoi
i minie im (gazetom
i innym poetom) ta dziecięca choroba
obywatelstwa,
czy jak to tam nazwać.

Bo minie.
Czytelnicy będą mieli tego dosyć,
redaktorom też się znudzi i w końcu
zwrócą się do nas.
A my otworzymy szuflady
i wyjmiemy z nich nasze
Wartości Ponadczasowe
które, właśnie dlatego że są
ponadczasowe,
mogą sobie teraz
spokojnie poczekać.
[After Brecht

I suppose that some poets
recently stopped sending their poems out to newspapers
They are perhaps thinking: we'll wait
until this all calms down
and they (newspapers
and other poets) get over this childhood illness
of citizenship
or whatever you call it
Because they will.
The readers will have enough of it
The editors will get tired of it too and finally
they will come to us.
And we will open the drawers
and take out of them our
Timeless Values
which are timeless exactly because
they can now
calmly wait]

After a period waiting for the 'childhood illness of citizenship' to pass, Sommer could finally return to Brecht by translating him, taking out of his poetry those timeless values which have been quietly waiting until now. In this sense, the translator weaves Brecht into the Polish literary scene again after a quarter century of a gradual unweaving of his ambivalently biased image out of it. Thus, by referring to Wat's poem in his essay on his translation strategy, Sommer reveals *Ten cały Brecht*'s role in the literary process of reading Brecht in Poland as well as explaining the rationale for his individual, intimate act of 'arranging sentences'. In his personal experience with Brecht's sentences, he delved into them to find some timeless qualities, 'visible effects', lyrical anchors, and meanings that really exist – even if previously manipulated or falsified.

Presented through four different interpretative lenses and followed by explanatory essays illuminating the poet in such a colourful translation prism, all those creative and revisionist takes serve as internally consistent images of the Polish Bertolt Brecht. The titular 'all that Brecht' arrives at the crossroads of four Brechts: Buras' demystifier of the rules of interpersonal relations; Ekier's diverse and self-constructing artist; Kopacki's 'poetological' and self-referential lyricist playing with literary conventions, and Sommer's poet of sentence with its performative force. Admittedly, several from their poems had been translated some

time before the publication of this book – including Stanisław Buras's songs for stage performances and a few versions by each in the *LnŚ* monographic issue (Brecht 2006b: 167-175, 219-243, 285-303, 325-332). Still, the very idea of placing these distinct voices next to each other and presenting their multiplicity and diversity deliberately within one volume transposes them onto a more self-aware metacritical project.

In revealing its own rules and the mechanisms of interlingual and interliterary transfer, this literary metatranslation of Brecht definitely contributes to what Kopacki (2012: 6) called a 'transition in understanding what a book of translations is'. And what is even more telling in this particular case, the translators' perspectives and aesthetic preferences do not really overlap, and while their common goal is to present their versions against the general background of Brecht's reception, their propositions confront each other's readings and viewpoints too. For instance, Ekier's essay on the one hand provides argumentation in support of Kopacki's ironic interpretation of 'Erinnerung an die Marie A.' with a reminder of its initial title: 'Sentimental Song no. 1004', which is supposed to symbolise one more than the number of women seduced in Spain by Mozart's Don Giovanni. On the other hand, he implicitly opposes Stanisław Buras's reading by questioning the category of *kruchość stosunków ludzkich* [the fragility/uncertainty of human relationships], which comes from the title chosen for his selection of translations, and its relevance to interpreting some of Brecht's poems (2012: 83): 'And if Brecht really, more or less, presented the lyrical I as the example of 'the fragility of human relationships' or even dehumanisation in them, then the thought that 'the poet' does not remember Marie A. would seem even more naïve.' Likewise, Buras admits that he has never been fascinated by Brecht's later literary output (50), presented by both Ekier and Kopacki, whereas Kopacki himself starts his essay by criticising the tiring and monotonous tone of the politically engaged Brecht (in his plays, too). This dialectic aspect was also stressed by Paweł Mościcki, who in his review of the book remarked (2012):

> The translators enter into a dialogue or even polemics with each other in their commentaries, expressing for example different opinions on one of the most famous of Brecht's poems, 'An die Nachgeborenen'. Thanks to this we see not only how poetry can be translated, but also how it is intertwined with the act of reading, the way of approaching the poem and the author's literary output.

It is crucial that, despite their different, and sometimes even mutually exclusive, readings, all the translators still agree on the parallel publication of their voices and accept the multiplicity of variants and potential interpretations. Ekier states in his essay that he did not intend to get into a polemic with previous translations as such, even that he did not look at them (88), but naturally he is still aware of the parallel versions within the volume: not only did he see some of them in *Literatura na świecie* six years earlier, but he also quotes them and directly refers to them in footnotes. And even when assessing Buras' categories as inapplicable in his personal opinion, Ekier still admits that 'all these divergent readings […] sound probable' (Ekier 2012: 83). But more importantly, such a practice of cross-referencing takes place in all the translators' essays as they redirect the readers to each other's versions of the same translated poem. Acknowledging parallel translations and putting them into an intertextual network is also a way of coming to terms with the fact that there can be different approaches to the same original text. It seems that *Ten cały Brecht* points to exactly the same solution: translations within the volume can achieve a meaningful dialogue and this poetic symbiosis of different voices and viewpoints gains a completely new pluralist quality. This rediscovery of Brecht is therefore no longer about revealing only one side of his poetry and making it fit for a one-sided purpose. Instead of arguing solely either pro or con, this project opens up literary translation to more than one possible way of reading Brecht's poetry, tailoring it, and arguing about it. In doing so, it also permits the reader to decide for themselves which interpretation out of the ones at hand they find most convincing.

4.4. The Girl Twice Drowned and Other Doubles

Having entered such a dialectic forum of translation worlds, the translators' specific ideas and individual perspectives on the original are most compellingly manifested in the poems appearing in different versions throughout the book. The overlapping pieces are 'Vom ertrunkenen Mädchen' [On the Drowned Girl] rendered by Jacek Buras and Andrzej Kopacki, 'Ausschliesslich wegen der zunehmenden Unordnung' [Solely Because of the Increasing Disorder] and 'Als ich in weissem Krankenzimmer der Charité' [When in my White Room at the Charité] – both translated by Jakub Ekier and Piotr Sommer. These duplications coexist within the volume and also tellingly intersect, showing how diverse interpretations and solutions can be negotiable once they belong to one's artistic realm. In his review, Paweł Mościcki, too, finds such doublings crucial for making the readers aware of the translators' rationale and their alternative approaches (2012): 'Some works appear in two different versions, which gives this selection an additional dimension and makes it a sort of a practical guide to the translator's craft.' At the same time, allowing for different textual shapes of the same original to meet within one book lies at the heart of the Brechtian metatranslation, as it alerts the readers to the act of translation itself but also exposes the rules of the translators' pluralist dialogue. Their deliberate confrontations in the doubled poems thus shed light on how one original text can bifurcate in separate directions when approached from different standpoints. In the following passage, I will analyse three pairs of such translation 'slams' and demonstrate how individual poems fit into the four respective translation realms.

The first poem, 'Vom ertrunkenen Mädchen', initially appeared in 1919/20 in *Baal* and was then republished by Brecht in multiple versions and placed in different contexts: for example, as a stand-alone poem in the *Hauspostille*, and incorporated into *Das Berliner*

Requiem (1928) under the title 'Die Ballade vom ertrunkenen Mädchen'. As the latter version was placed alongside works such as 'Grabschrift' and 'Red Rosa', its heroine was often equated with Rosa Luxemburg, the Jewish Communist of Polish origin who in 1919 was knocked down with a rifle butt and shot in the head; her body was thrown into Berlin's Landwehrkanal (Schebera 1995: 131). In *Baal*, however, the song about the drowned girl is written into the play's composition and comments on the story of one of the characters: an innocent virgin, Johanna, who, having been seduced by the protagonist and afterwards rejected, drowns herself in the river (cf. Brown 2002: 84). Although both this song and the poem placed in the *Hauspostille* provoke comparison with Shakespeare's suicidal heroine from *Hamlet*, Ophelia, it is the different literary variations of the story that became the real point of reference for the recycled theme. According to some critics, Brecht's poem fits in with the long-running 'German tradition of representing Ophelia' (Owen 2007: 781) or the genre of so-called *Wasserleichenpoesie* [water corpse poetry] (Brown 2002: 78). Similarly, Rainer Nägele (2002) demonstrated how 'Vom ertrunkenen Mädchen' derived from French poetry and its decadent imagery, especially Arthur Rimbaud's 'Ophélie', and how the last line explicitly refers to Charles Baudelaire's 'Une charogne'.

As such, the poem describes 'the last journey' (*letzte Fahrt*) of the drowned girl's body, which swam downstream into the great rivers:

Vom ertrunkenen Mädchen
Bertolt Brecht (Brecht 1967: 252)

Als sie ertrunken war und hinunter schwamm
Von den Bächen in die größeren Flüsse
Schien der Opal des Himmels sehr wundersam
Als ob er die Leiche begütigen müsse.

Tang und Algen hielten sich an ihr ein
So dass sie langsam viel schwerer ward.
Kühl die Fische schwammen an ihrem Bein
Pflanzen und Tiere beschwerten noch ihre letzte Fahrt.

Und der Himmel ward abends dunkel wie Rauch
Und hielt nachts mit den Sternen das Licht in Schwebe.
Aber früh ward er hell, dass es auch
Noch für sie Morgen und Abend gebe.

Als ihr bleicher Leib im Wasser verfaulet war
Geschah es (sehr langsam), dass Gott sie allmählich vergaß.
Erst ihr Gesicht, dann die Hände und ganz zuletzt erst ihr Haar.
Dann ward sie Aas in Flüssen mit vielem Aas.

The Drowned Girl
Trans. Richard Moore (Brecht 1991: 9)

When she was drowned and swam down
through the streams into the great rivers,
the opalescence of Heaven was just wonderful,
as though it had to soothe and appease the corpse.

Seaweed and algae touched and clung on her,
so that she slowly became much heavier.

Fish swam, cool, along her leg.
Plants, animals impeded still her last journey.

In the evenings Heaven grew dark, like smoke,
and at night, with stars, held light in suspense.
But it was soon bright, so that also for her,
there would be morning and evening.

As her pale flesh rotted in the water,
it happened (in stages) that God gradually forgot her?
first her face, then her hands, and only at the very last, her hair.
Then she was rubbish in the rivers with much rubbish.

O utopionej dziewczynie
Trans. Jacek Buras (Brecht 2012: 17)

Gdy utonęła już i spływała w dół
Strumieniami do rzek szerokich
Opal nieba był tak dziwny, jakby czuł
Że musi jakoś udobruchać te zwłoki.

Wodorosty czepiały się jej nóg
Tak że powoli coraz cięższa była.
Chłodne ryby podpływały do jej stóp
Wstrzymywały ją jeszcze, gdy tak odchodziła.

Niebo zaś wieczorem ciemniało jak dym
I nocą na wodzy gwiazd trzymało światło.
Ale wcześnie się rozjaśniało, by
Ranków i wieczorów jeszcze jej nie brakło.

Kiedy zgniło w wodzie jej blade ciało
Bóg stopniowo (bardzo wolno) zapomniał o niej, wpierw
Jej twarzy, potem rąk, na koniec włosów, aż się stała
Ścierwem w rzece pośród wielu innych ścierw.

O topielicy
Trans. Andrzej Kopacki (Brecht 2012: 99)

Utonęła, a potem prądy wód
Poniosły ją w stronę rzek szerokich
Niebo było jak opal, istny cud
Jakby musiało udobruchać zwłoki

Z wolna się stała od alg i traw cięższa
Chłodne ryby pląsały u jej nóg
Roślin i zwierząt masa coraz większa
Kładła się brzemieniem na ostatniej z dróg

A nieboskłon wieczorem jak dymu cień
A nocą światłem z gwiazd huśtawki mżył
Lecz rano jaśniał, by i dla niej dzień
A po dniu wieczór jeszcze był.

Kiedy już zgniły w wodzie blade zwłoki
Stało się (bardzo wolno) tak, że Bóg stopniowo zapominał o niej
Najpierw jej twarz, potem dłonie, a na koniec loki.
I stała się ścierwem w pełnej ścierwa toni.

In his rendering, Jacek Buras almost exactly follows the accentual and syllabic pattern of the original, an effect of the translation's theatrical function: the text is most probably intended to be sung on stage. As such, this rendering uses more open vowels, and is much more dynamic and philologically transparent. For instance, Buras uses more verbs than Kopacki: *spływała* [she was swimming down] for *hinunterschwamm*; *odchodziła* [she was leaving] for *ihre letzte Fahrt* [her last journey]; *[opal] jakby czuł, że* [as if the opal felt that…] for *als ob [der Opal]…* [as if the Opal...]. Contrary to Buras's dynamic version, in which *wodorosty czepiały się* [the seeweed was clinging], *ryby podpływały* [the fish were swimming up] and *wstrzymywały ją jeszcze, gdy tak odchodziła* [they were suspending her, as she was leaving], Kopacki condenses his description lyrically and prosodically. He also stresses the girl's bodily passivity by depriving her of any action in active grammatical forms; for instance, in his version (2012: 99) she did not herself 'swim' as it was the water

that carried her away. Kopacki also chooses words that lean towards substantival constructions gives the description some additional literal 'weight'. For instance, he brings forward the idiom *kłaść się brzemieniem*, whose current figurative meaning indicates that the *masa* [mass] of plants and animals made the girl's last journey difficult; however, the more archaic and literal reading could refer back to the etymological roots of *brzemię*, meaning a burden or something heavy to carry.

At the same time, Kopacki's particular care for the lyricism of this work is also reflected on a more thematic level. It does not involve, unlike in Buras's case, poetic representations of nature's anxiety, concern, and empathy for the girl, which is typical of Brecht's engaged and compassionate accounts of the poor and exploited. For example, the 'sky opal' (*Opal des Himmels*) in Buras's translation *był tak dziwny, jakby czuł* [was so strange as if it felt], while Kopacki instead stresses the 'wondrous' (*wundersam*) aspect of the scene with the ironically conventional exclamation: *istny cud* [a true miracle]. Likewise, the whole third stanza in Buras's version evokes the feeling of sympathy as nature is unsettled and willing to help and calm the drowned girl on her way. As Buras renders *halten in Schwebe* in the Polish expression *trzymać na wodzy* [literally: to hold the reins; figuratively: to control], he suggests that the sky is trying to keep the light in balance. Kopacki, however, emphasises the more capricious and unsteady aspect of the original metaphor *in Schwebe*, i.e. to be undecided or up in the air. His translation of the line *A nocą światłem z gwiazd huśtawki mżył* [And at night it drizzled with light from the swing of stars] implies the more frivolous attitude of nature described in his scene. In Kopacki's rendering none of these weather phenomena are solely trying to comfort her (*by i dla niej* [so that also for her]) whereas Buras presents the sky's effort as targeted only at the girl, guaranteeing that there would still be more time for her and that she 'doesn't lack' the morning and evenings: *by/ Ranków i wieczorów jeszcze jej nie brakło*.

Towards the end, Kopacki's reading evades the peaceful symbiosis of the girl with an empathetic nature just before she merges into the river of carrion. Instead, he decorates the final scene with intensely poetic descriptions. For instance, although the German original uses the neutral noun 'Haar' [hair], Kopacki specifically presents the drowned girl with beautiful locks (Buras: *włosy* [hair]), which is even more strongly contrasted with the heroine's final fate, immersed in water full of carrion. The dissonance escalates further owing to an almost oxymoronic juxtaposition: *w pełnej ścierwa* ***toni*** [in the depth full of carrion] (Buras: *w rzece* [in the river], German: *in Flüssen* [in rivers]), since the poetic word *toń* is reserved for deep clear water and conventionally took on symbolic meaning in some Romantic literature. In one of the oriental *Sonety krymskie* (*Crimea Sonnets*) by the Polish Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz, titled 'Ajudah' ('On Juda's Cliff', trans. E.W. Underwood), the poet confessed while looking out from the cliff at the waters of the Black Sea that his lute would 'immerse itself in the depth of oblivion' [*w zapomnienia pogrążyć się toni*]. In exactly the same way the drowned, anonymous girl is submerged in the depths of oblivion, disappearing in the river that resembles Lethe, the Greek mythological river of forgetfulness, while *Gott sie allmählich vergaß* [God gradually forgot her]. However, as Martin and Erika Swales noticed (2000: 388): 'God forgets, then; but the poem does not. Indeed, it finds a strange immortality in the girl's decomposing (and recomposing) bodiliness.' It is not without reason that this process of decomposition happens in a depth full of a very particular *ścierwo* [carrion]: the literary carcass of Baudelaire's 'Une Charogne'. The nameless heroine from Brecht's poem takes her place next to all the artistically transfigured Ophelias in the long tradition of representing drowned women.

Kopacki in his translation additionally stresses this metatextual dimension and what Rainer Nägele called (2002: 1073) 'a purely literary circulation' by using a very conventional poetic register. From the very beginning, he anticipates this reading with his

translation choices: unlike Buras, Kopacki does not translate the original *Bäche* [streams] literally as *strumienie*; instead he speaks of *prądy* [currents] of waters. Significantly, like in English, the Polish word *prąd* [current] can also mean a literary or philosophical tendency, which in this context figuratively carries the girl right to the lyrical 'depth' of carrion. And indeed, in his metatextual reading, Kopacki activates the Polish continuation of Ophelia representations and bridges the traditional figure with a more domestic theme. By featuring a Polish Romantic heroine, cleverly camouflaged in the title, from the very beginning Kopacki suggests a self-reflexive interpretation of the poem. The heroine is a *topielica*, an archaic Polish word for a drowned girl, but, most importantly, it also refers to the ghost of a drowned woman in Slavic mythology, fairy tales, and folklore. This leitmotif was particularly popular in Polish Romanticism: it appears, for example, in Adam Mickiewicz's ballads 'Świtezianka' and 'Świteź',[17] as well as in Władysław Syrokomla's version of Geothe's 'Johanna Sebus', titled 'Zuzanna Topielica'. By naming his poem 'O topielicy' and establishing this intertextual relationship, Kopacki calls up the spirit of the Polish drowned girl as a literary motif and inevitably stresses the more auto-thematic dimension of Brecht's poem. As he embeds the lyrical language of his translation in the conventional discourse of Polish Romantic poets, he also challenges the boundary between authenticity and the self-created artistic pose. In contrast, Buras's song is more linguistically transparent and regular, but it simultaneously emphasises the compassion and empathy in Brecht's poetry – the values which often led the author to oppose the unfair system in favour of the poor and defenceless, and which Buras found so appealing when translating Brecht's poetry on his own terms. Both these readings are in accordance with the translators' declared understandings, and interestingly fork into two separate ways of reading and enacting the German lyric in Polish.

[17] Nb. the alternative title, 'Die Ballade vom ertrunken Mädchen', also places the poem in this literary genre.

The next poem duplicated in translation within the volume is ‘Ausschließlich wegen der zunehmenden Unordnung’ [Solely Because of the Increasing Disorder], a piece from *Svenborger Gedichte* (1939) written by Brecht during his exile years. It is perhaps no coincidence that this work made its way into the selections of the other pair of translators: Jakub Ekier and Piotr Sommer. The poem has been often compared to the piece whose flagship title became the motto for Ekier’s translated part: ‘Schlechte Zeit für Lyrik’ [Bad Time for Poetry] (Kopf: 1996: 87; Ockenden 2002: 183-184; Thomson 2006: 234; Parker 2014: 387), or even treated as its ‘forerunner’ (Thomson 1989: 103). As both these works share the theme of art being torn between conflicted purposes in a time of disruption, they were squared with Ekier’s reflections on Brecht’s poetry as compacted in his translation quarter. Then, since Brecht found it impossible to write in traditional form during his exile years (cf. Knopf 1998: 86; Parker 2014: 387), his unrhymed poem propels its narrative by completely different means. In Peter Thomson’s words (1989: 103), this verse ‘is a small masterpiece of construction, its phrasing, line arrangement, and syntax cleverly managed to produce a single, virtually unpunctuated sentence that hustles the reader breathlessly through it.’ As the poem unfolds over one intricately arranged sentence, its uncanny syntactic relations are something that the other translator, Piotr Sommer, most thoroughly sets out to examine in his rendering.

In both of these cases, the interpreters play out the conflict differently between Brecht’s postulate of creating *einseitig* [one-sided] poetry in inauspicious political circumstances and the actual fulfilment of his intentionally dubious statement. Here, Brecht ostensibly rejects any multifariousness and complexity in the world in favour of the *trocken* [dry] and *dürr* [reduced] poetic categories which are meant to be adequate during the titular ‘disorder’ – be it the fascist prelude to war, or what Thomson assumes to be ‘Brecht’s peculiarly intellectual word for capitalism run amok’ (1989: 102). At the same time, of course, the poem ‘is itself

able to avoid one-sidedness' (Whitaker, 1985: 98) owing to its ironic wit, rhetorical construction, and lyrical understatement. And so, Ekier and Sommer dismantle this apparent self-contradiction accordingly in their own ways, bringing out different shades in the tension between the divergent roles of poetry during 'the increasing disorder'.

Ausschließlich wegen der zunehmenden Unordnung
Bertolt Brecht (Brecht 1967: 519)

Ausschließlich wegen der zunehmenden Unordnung
In unseren Städten des Klassenkampfs
Haben etliche von uns in diesen Jahren beschlossen
Nicht mehr zu reden von Hafenstädten, Schnee auf den Dächern, Frauen
Geruch reifer Apfel im Keller, Empfindungen des Fleisches
All dem, was den Menschen rund macht und menschlich
Sondern zu reden nur mehr von der Unordnung
Also einseitig zu werden, dürr, verstrickt in die Geschäfte
Der Politik und das trockene »unwürdige« Vokabular
Der dialektischen Ökonomie
Damit nicht dieses furchtbare gedrängte Zusammensein
Von Schneefällen (sie sind nicht nur kalt, wir wissen's)
Ausbeutung, verlocktem Fleisch und Klassenjustiz eine Billigung
So vielseitiger Welt in uns erzeuge, Lust an
Den Widersprüchen solch blutigen Lebens
Ihr versteht.

Solely because of the increasing disorder
Trans. Frank Jellinek (Brecht 1976: 225)

Solely because of the increasing disorder
In our cities of class struggle
Some of us have now decided
To speak no more of cities by the sea, snow on roofs, women
The smell of ripe apples in cellars, the senses of the flesh, all
That makes a man round and human
But to speak in future only about the disorder
And so become one-sided, reduced, enmeshed in the business
Of politics and the dry, indecorous vocabulary
Of dialectical economics
So that this awful cramped coexistence
Of snowfalls (they're not merely cold, we know)
Exploitation, the lured flesh, class justice, should not engender
Approval of a world so many-sided; delight in
The contradictions of so bloodstained a life
You understand.

Wyłącznie przez ten zamęt
Trans. Jakub Ekier (Brecht 2012: 57)

Wyłącznie przez ten zamęt
Rosnący w naszych miastach objętych walką klasową
Niektórzy z nas ostatnimi laty postanowili
Mówić już nie, że miasto portowe, że śnieg na dachu, kobieta
Zapach dojrzałych jabłek w piwnicy ani że ciało coś czuje
Mówić nie o tym, co człowieka dopełnia i uczłowiecza
Ale jedynie o tamtym zamęcie
Czyli wybrali jednostronność, suchość, i uwikłanie
W polityczne zajęcia i w jałowe „niegodne" słownictwo
Ekonomii dialektycznej
Po to, by owo straszne stłoczenie
Śnieżnych odpadów (my wiemy, nie tylko ziębiących), wyzysku
I ciał wiedzionych pokusą, i klasowego prawa nie zrodziło
Zgody w nas na tak wielostronny świat, radości
Z tego co sprzeczne w równie krwawym życiu –
Rozumiecie.

Wyłącznie z powodu narastającego nieporządku
Trans. Piotr Sommer (Brecht 2012: 150)

Wyłącznie z powodu narastającego nieporządku
W naszych miastach owładniętych walką klasową
Niektórzy z nas postanowili nie mówić więcej
O portach, o śniegu leżącym na dachu, o kobietach
Zapachu dojrzałych jabłek w piwnicy, o tym co czuje ciało
O wszystkim, dzięki czemu człowiek jest taki krągły i ludzki
A mówić już tylko o nieporządku
A więc stać się kimś jednostronnym i jałowym, uwikłanym
W sprawy polityki i w suchy „niegodny" język
Ekonomii dialektycznej
Ażeby to koszmarne ciasne współistnienie
Padającego śniegu (jest nie tylko zimny, wiemy o tym)
Wyzysku, skuszonego ciała, sprawiedliwości klasowej, nie wytworzyło w nas
Aprobaty dla świata o tylu twarzach, apetytu
Na sprzeczności tego krwawego życia
Sami rozumiecie.

First of all, the flow of Ekier's variant in terms of language and style has a completely different dynamic to the one of Sommer. At the beginning Ekier, tellingly changes the construction introducing the ideas and images which 'some of us' have decided to revolve around into the more colloquial and not entirely grammatically correct: *mówić już nie, że miasto portowe, że śnieg na dachu, kobieta…* [speak no longer that port cities, that snow on the roof, a woman]. As opposed to the original *reden von* [speak of/about], this list gives a sense of unfinished clauses, of snapshots from life, or fragments taken out of conversations.

It is also redolent of an iconic verse by Julian Tuwim, in which the Polish-Jewish poet imitated the informal talk of 'Straszni mieszczanie' [Horrible Burghers]: *I znowu mówią, że Ford… że kino… / Że Bóg… że Rosja… radio, sport, wojna* [And again they say that Ford… that cinema… that God… that Russia… radio, sport, war]. In Ekier's rendering of Brecht's poem, however, such rattle talk is only seemingly mocked and condemned in favour the new uniform type of 'vocabulary'. According to Ekier's afterword, the translator was in fact fascinated by and aimed to delve into 'Brecht's spontaneity in mixing styles; as if someone was thinking out loud and making up following lines on the spot' (Ekier 2012: 80). Unfortunately, this initially lively talk that stands for the multi-faceted world with its dispersed voices needs to be compacted into fixed formulas that can urgently respond to current disturbances. As the poem unfolds, the style metamorphoses. Ekier additionally turns original adjectives or participles (*einseitig*, *dürr*, *verstrickt*) into homogenised pigeonholes and heavy categories*: jednostronność* [one-sidedness], *suchość* [dryness], and *uwikłanie* [entanglement]. He stresses here the quality of phrase that he later summarised with reference to these particular lines as 'nominal, dense, and difficult to embrace' (85), even more explicitly differentiating it from the previous register.

This is also how the political one-sidedness and imposed uniformity diverts people and poets from 'what completes and humanises a man' (*co człowieka dopełnia i uczłowiecza* for *was den Menschen rund macht und menschlich* [what makes a man round and human]), from all the different stories that constitute each of them and make them full as individual beings. The constant practice of speaking about the actual disruption, which recurs in their utterances (*ten zamęt – o tamtym zamęcie*; this disruption – about that disruption), monopolises the discourse and entraps everyone in the 'futile "unworthy" vocabulary' (*jałowe „niegodne" słownictwo*). The tension in Ekier's rendering thus hinges on the question of the artist's place somewhere between easy binary oppositions: one-sided,

homogenous collectivism versus diversified individualism. In this poem, Brecht does not exactly take on a singular lyrical 'I', becoming rather a part of 'some of us'. But nonetheless, he still seems to belong to a sovereign voice whose self-denial is perhaps slightly ironic or coquettish: after all, as highlighted in Ekier's interpretation, the poem itself can successfully overcome any entanglement in a fixed monotonous idiom, documentary uniformity, and tentativeness of his reflection. With its varied tone, tribute to different voices 'speaking that', and dialectic interpretative line, this translation is clear evidence that the poet also escapes easy classifications, being 'neither someone's, nor oneself's, nor one only', as Ekier had it.

In Ekier's reading of the poem, the translator to a great extent puts the blame for this conflict on external factors. For one thing, what he has in mind here is a specific type of social 'disorder' taking place in the cities; in order to signal this situatedness, he reverses the word order and links two first lines into: *przez ten zamęt rosnący w naszych miastach* [due to this confusion/disruption increasing in our cities], a specific occurrence taking place right there. For another thing, he introduces the phrase with the Polish preposition *przez* [literally: due to, implying negative effects], suggesting the disruption's fault as it creates such circumstances for the poets so they are now forced to respond to them artistically. In the other translation, however, Piotr Sommer seems to stray from this line of interpretation. Not only does he insist on keeping the 'titular euphemism' (Sommer 2012: 174) *nieporządek* [disorder, disarrangement], but he also skips the demonstrative pronoun, suggesting it is a more general 'increasing disorder' whose consequence he will examine. It also probably comes as no surprise that Sommer's version religiously follows Brecht's syntactic structures – modelled after both the original and its closely related English translation – giving a sense of precision and meticulous concentration on the sequence of sentences.

As fleshed out in Sommer's afterword, this particular attention given to Brecht's narrative arrangement stems from the translator's belief that: 'syntax undercuts a

considerable part of his communicated message and the poem does not in fact say what it declares' (Sommer 2012: 166). In his own translated sequence, Sommer plays on this quality by delimiting the verses and leaving phrases cut in very ambiguous points by what he later called 'calculated retardations' (167). For instance, he rearranges the verse format to break the third crucial line at *Niektórzy z nas postanowili nie mówić więcej* [Some of us decided to speak no more], and leaves this statement as a temporary cliff-hanger. Only in the follow-up passage does it become clear that this phrase is just a part of the longer train of thought, while there is something *about* which these 'we' decided to not speak. To put it more precisely, whereas for Ekier the choice between *mówić już nie że… ale mówić o tamtym zamęcie* [speak not that… but speak about that disruption] was still a choice between two different forms of speaking (better or worse ones), Sommer suggests a more radical stand. According to his version, *mówić już tylko o nieporządku* [speaking only about disorder] in fact equates to not speaking at all, 'speaking no more' (*nie mówić więcej*), as – referring back to his Watian ideas and speech performativity – it produces no visible effects, no tangible results.

Two later cliff-hangers come to the rescue and lift the veil on where this *de facto* muteness of the poetry occupied solely with disorder originates. Firstly, Sommer implies a close causality between two actions: to speak about disorder and 'so become somebody one-sided, futile, and entangled […] in dry "unworthy" language' (*więc stać się kimś jednostronnym i jałowym, uwikłanym* […] *w suchy „niegodny" język*). Of course, only in the following line the reader learns that 'language' turns out to refer specifically to the language of 'dialectic economics'. As Sommer transforms the original *Vokabular* [vocabulary] into the general realm of 'language' and tellingly leaves it just before the line break, he also suggests that speaking exclusively about disorder entails a form of entrapment in language as such. In his interpretation, one-sidedness of expression constitutes, indeed, a

sort of speech disorder, a disarrangement playing havoc with the usual evocative resources. It manifests itself in their reduced performativity: homogenous and biased language is too futile or barren (*jałowy*) to produce concrete effects.

And how, according to Sommer, could this tendency be counterbalanced and the right 'order' restored? The translator gives a new lease of life to Brecht's seemingly 'dry' poetic language by prompting more pictorial and bodily images. One of the last delimitated cliff-hangers, the 'appetite' (*apetyt*) for contradictions rather than Ekier's 'joy' (*radość*) or the original 'delight' (*Lust*) in them is preceded by a chain of similar visual and concrete metaphors. The multi-sided world (*vielseitige Welt)* becomes a 'world with so many faces' (*świat o tylu twarzach*); it encompasses the appetite, 'lured flesh' (*skuszone ciało*), and 'what the body feels' (*co czuje ciało*); it allows for speaking about 'all thanks to which a man is so rotund and human' (*wszystko, dzięki czemu człowiek jest taki krągły i ludzki*), stressing their corporal fullness (*krągły*) rather than just being of 'round' shape (*okrągły;* German: *rund*), let alone the process of 'completing or fulfilling' (*dopełniać*) their humanity, as Ekier wanted. Sommer enhances vivid concrete imagery to express a contrast between the futile poetic language and the one bearing palpable realisations and actually moving the person on the receiving end. His rendering thus puts forward a different paradox than Ekier conveyed: this time, the seemingly 'dry' language of poetry still produces some effects, sensations, or feelings; and it is both types of idioms (the totalising abstract language and the concrete intimate one) coexisting within it that evoke the appetite for contradiction. In this respect, it is therefore the 'cramped coexistence', the tension between the homogenised expression entrapped in its own linguistic means and the sense of palpable roundness, human face, bodily imagery that, according to Sommer, can bear visible consequences for the readers.

As a result of these different emphases and viewpoints, both translators approach the poem alongside distinct, but internally consistent lines of reading. Whereas Ekier

distinguishes between different expressive voices and Brecht's personas, Sommer dismantles the syntactical arrangement of his performative rhetoric. While Ekier articulates the conflict between collectivism and individualism as possible artistic reactions to political disruptions, Sommer suggests that this conflict has already been there; it always lies dormant in the language of poetry itself, coming to light as the abstract and the concrete meet halfway and are confronted with each other.

Finally, Brecht's late miniature, 'Als ich in weissem Krankenzimmer der Charité', written in the Berlin hospital in May 1955 just a few months before his death, culminates his presence in Ekier and Sommer's translation realms. As Peter Whitaker pointed out (1985: 219), this work 'summarizes one of the central arguments of Lucretian (Epicurean) materialism in support of its thesis that death should be envisaged with equanimity, as part of a continuous process':

Als ich in weißem Krankenzimmer der Charité
Bertolt Brecht (1967: 1031)

Als ich in weißem Krankenzimmer der Charité
Aufwachte gegen Morgen zu
Und eine Amsel hörte, wusste ich
Es ist besser. Schon seit geraumer Zeit
Hatte ich keine Todesfurcht mehr, da ja nichts
Mir fehlen kann, vorausgesetzt
Ich selber fehle. Jetzt gelang es mir, mich zu freuen
Alles Amselgesanges nach mir auch.

Kiedy ja, pacjent w białym pokoju
Trans. Jakub Ekier (Brecht 2012: 75)

Kiedy ja, pacjent w białym pokoju
Obudziłem się w Charité nad ranem
I usłyszałem kosa, lepiej to
Pojąłem. Już od dawna
Nie bałem się śmierci, bo przecież
Nic mi nie będzie, o ile
Nie będzie mnie. A przez tę chwilę
Odkryłem radość dla siebie
W całym śpiewie kosów, po mnie tak samo.

When in my white room at the Charité
Trans. John Willet & Ralph Mannheim
(Brecht 1976: 451-152)

When in my white room at the Charité
I woke towards morning
And heard the blackbird, I understood
Better. Already for some time
I had lost all fear of death. For nothing
Can be wrong with me if I myself
Am nothing. Now
I managed to enjoy
The song of every blackbird after me too.

Kiedy w białej sali Charité
Trans. Piotr Sommer (Brecht 2012: 163)

Kiedy w białej sali Charité
Zbudziłem się nad ranem
I usłyszałem kosa, wiedziałem
Lepiej. Już od dłuższego czasu
Nie bałem się śmierci: niby co
Ma mi być, jeśli nie będzie
Mnie? Od tej chwili
Potrafiłem się cieszyć
Każdą piosenką kosa, również tą po mnie.

Even within this limited lyrical space it is possible to spot a few traces of Ekier's and Sommer's interpretative habits. In the title and opening verse, Ekier insists on the personal pronoun 'I', although it is not used in Polish unless as an element of the opposition (*ja, nie ty*; I, not you) or when emphasising the subject of an activity. Here, it seems that the translator points out Brecht's literary agency under the disguise of yet another role. Although the author was actually hospitalised in Berlin and wrote this work at his deathbed, his poetic testimony still should not be treated only autobiographically. This time, the ostentatious 'I' form refers to one of many narrative categories available in Brecht's output: the persona of *ja, pacjent w białym pokoju* [I-the patient in a white room] comes after the one of *mnie, dramatopisarza* [me, the writer of plays] from his poem 'Die Freunde' [The Friends]) rendered by Ekier only a few pages earlier (Brecht 2012: 69), and becomes the final snapshot in Ekier's album of the poet's diverse faces. However, when the poem's speaker comes to terms with his death and the lack of suffering afterwards, he experiences an epiphany in that very moment: *Przez tę chwilę odkryłem radość dla siebie/ w całym śpiewie kosów* [For this moment I discovered joy for myself/ In all singing of blackbirds]. The phrase 'for myself' curiously tacked on here by Ekier begs a further question: is it possible that Brecht-the actual person could find some joy finally for *himself* in that last smattering of art (the absolute 'all singing') performed to him by blackbirds, just like he previously brought joy to his readers by taking on different poetic roles? The perverted consolation at the end thus comes with the sudden realisation that the art of 'all singing', i.e. poetry, will manage to outlive Brecht and persist in separation from his autobiographical person – just as Ekier wished to read it.

Sommer's version, on the other hand, again plays on the delimitation and bears traces of the German and English syntactic structures. For instance, unlike Ekier in his variant, Sommer duly mirrored the instant cause-effect relationship of (*als ich*) *die Amsel hörte, wußte ich* [(When I) heard the blackbird, I understood] in his Polish verse: (*kiedy) usłyszałem*

kosa, wiedziałem] – to complete it only in the next line by 'better' (*lepiej*). And why is this strict causality between two actions within one verse so important to understand Brecht's train of thought here? The possible answer lies in the arrangement of the following question: *niby co/ Ma mi być, jeśli nie będzie/ Mnie?* [like, what/ is supposed to happen to me, if there will be no/ Me?]. Sommer exposes the other pronoun 'Me', making this sentence read along the following lines: what action can be performed on its object ('Me') when the object itself is removed from this passive relation of agency? The poem's speaker came to 'know' that regularity exactly as the result of 'hearing' the blackbird; it was the instance of a blackbird producing sounds that had a performative effect on him. Having realised this interdependency, 'from then on' (*od tej chwili*) he managed to enjoy each recurring 'song' by the blackbird (*każda piosenka kosa*; English: 'the song of every blackbird'), including the ones to come after him. According to this understanding, it does not matter what happens to the object of action. Even if there is no passive 'me' to whom the death has occurred, there will be still another speaking subject whose continuous 'songs' will persist and keep influencing the listener. In other words, the Charité's patient in Sommer's rendering takes solace in the conclusion that whoever actively produces sounds will in a sense be able to overcome death, having previously yielded some tangible results and affected others. This sort of consolation may be equally appeasing as the one from Ekier's version; both translators, however, reach the poem's culminating point by following distinct creative paths and sentence arrangements. As they put emphasis on different aspects in their doubling, the poem either hints at an anti-positivist reading within Ekier's translation realm, or reminds the reader about the continuity of lyrical performative force when approached by Piotr Sommer.

By and large, the above quadruple translation combination allows for the individual poems to reveal multiple shades once at the intersection of individual translation realms. In

the Buras-Kopacki confrontation, the eponymous girl becomes ‘twice drowned’ to two different ends: she either swims down the river to arouse compassion or joins the literary current of other drowned heroines to bring forth the conventional nature of poetic language. Then, in Ekier and Sommer’s translation worlds, Brecht appears as either: a diverse and unclassifiable poet trying to escape his biographical pigeonholes and reconcile the collective and individual mission of poetry; or an orator using syntactical arrangement to awaken the performative power of words. Still, all these voices telling their own stories about Brecht are acknowledged on the pluralist forum of the volume that guarantees no imposed monopoly on one single ‘right’ interpretation of his poetry. And in this sense, paraphrasing Ekier’s motto, although Brecht in the 2012 metatranslation does not necessarily remain ‘oneself’s’ as is always to some degree ‘someone’s’ (Buras’, Ekier’s, Kopacki’s or Sommer’s), he still successfully ceases to function as the ‘one only’.

4.5. V-Effekt and Ethics of Metatranslation

As opposed to the one-sided representations of Brecht before 1989, *Ten cały Brecht* makes a Polish audience sensitive to the multiple and subjective nature of reading his poetry in translation. Depending on the translator’s perspective, Brecht’s works can become part of completely different, but internally consistent representations, and this smorgasbord of possibilities is visually spread out in their full diversity. The gesture of turning the book into a literary metatranslation and making it a story of reading and translating Brecht can be interpreted against various backgrounds. As already discussed, it can be linked to the ethical project of discarding Brecht’s ambiguous status as a poet and dissenting from the Communist era tradition of manipulating his texts through editorial and translation practices. By confronting different understandings and literary impressions, the quartet of translators

aims at opening Brecht's poetry in translation up to the polyphonic and democratic dialogue of equally legitimate interpretative voices. At the same time, the conceptual sources for this gesture are likely to shed more light on the ethics of metatranslation: in abolishing the illusion of translation equivalence, the act of confronting multiple variants teaches us an important lesson about the notion of originality and metacritical distance to any performed work, a didactic task in which Brecht's own ethical stance also played first fiddle.

First of all, all the *LnŚ* translators at various points indicate the interplay between Brecht's intellectual legacy and the way they themselves approached and rendered his texts. For instance, in the previously quoted introductory fragment Kopacki (2012: 5-6) added *en passant*, in parentheses: '*This* Brecht **(who, by the way, also liked to multiply versions of his own poems)** can be read as one multi-threaded poetic score for four voices and eight hands.' The translators thus draw a parallel between their own translation strategy and Brecht's modernist practices of reshuffling and multiplying his texts, whose interpretations could vary according to the place of their publication and literary context. It was also this specific trait of Brecht's poetic activity that once made Eric Bentley (2002: 49) point out: 'One has always to ask of a Brecht translation what German text it is based on since Brecht himself was forever changing what he wrote.' As it may be difficult to determine the textual base for the poet's original work, his fashion of juggling and metamorphosing his texts keeps reminding us of their constantly progressive and infinite nature. Likewise, in getting this notion transposed onto multiple Polish renderings, the *LnŚ* translators capitalise on a similar reckoning and openly admit how tentative and subjective their selections and translation attempts are.

The analogy with Brecht's own poetics seems justified for yet another reason: the alleged 'originals' in fact often derived from second-hand materials and functioned as artistic palimpsests overwritten on borrowed themes. While Brecht challenged the notion of

originality and unmediated artistic creation, the Polish *LnŚ* translators make use of Brecht's literary procedures to question the one-to-one, allegedly equivalent relationship between a translation and the original. In the 2012 project, Brecht's poetry functions as a point of departure for the translators' own narrations, which they willingly confront with the other individual perspectives challenging and bringing added value to them. As this musical score after Brecht can be performed in different voices and by 'eight hands', it also partly reflects the fact that, as Feliks Przybylak remarked (1998: 6), 'for Brecht nearly every text would become merely the material for further processing, a peculiar sheet music.' In this respect, the intellectual and artistic patron of the 2012 metatranslation is Brecht in his capacity as juggler of ready motifs on which he brilliantly builds a completely new aesthetic quality. The Polish translators' objective in *Ten cały Brecht* was to find a kindred value in literary translations: although they are born of the originals, they, too, live their own lives in every single act of interpretation.

In the same vein, the book's metacritical construction with its more distanced perspective on Brecht may reach back to the author's strategies of approaching a performed text. This strand recurred in Polish criticism after 1989 with reference to his trailblazing theatrical practices: 'It can be argued that thanks to Brecht the era in which the original dramatic text was faithfully reenacted is over now. What has come instead is the de-sacralisation of the canon and the époque of philosophising over the text' (Przybylak, 1998: 6). More specifically, stronger credentials for such a transition can be found in the notion of Brechtian 'epic' or 'non-Aristotelian' theatre, which favours an explicative and discursive insight into dramatic action. By excluding empathy (Brecht, 1964: 91) with any characters or events, this kind of performance was supposed to prevent the viewer from taking what would happen on stage for granted, instead welcoming a more distanced approach to it. This aesthetic process could be achieved with the help of what Brecht called the

Verfremdungseffekt (*V-effekt*, translated usually as 'alienation', 'distancing effect', etc.; cf. Silberman, Giles et al. 2015: 5). Having loosely drawn upon Victor Shklovsky's term *ostranenie* [defamiliarisation], Brecht used his artistic technique of introducing strangeness in order to 'renew our powers of cognition' (Silberman, Giles et al. 2015: 5), to push the viewer out of their comfort zone and make them reflect on the very act of re-enactment. As Frederic Jameson argued in his book's chapter 'Pedagogy as Autoreferentiality' (1998: 89-99), the method of estrangement with all its self-reflexive implications was not so much a philosophical concept as a didactic technique of helping the audience 'think'. Similarly, in the case of *Ten cały Brecht*, the defamiliarising effect of bringing together different variants of Brecht's poetry helps the readers revise the categories that they previously took for granted. It complicates: firstly, the usual practice of reading translations as one-to-one representations of the original; and secondly, thinking specifically of a Polish Brecht only in ideological terms of either/or. By alienating the Polish audience from any passive acceptance of Brecht's one fixed image, the book invites a more critical viewing of various ideas about his poetry and reveals the rules of this dialectic game to its readers.

To this end, as the translators explicate how (Kopacki, 2012: 5) 'texts and sketches are arranged in such a way that they facilitate recognising the distinctness [of motives, circumstances, selections, viewpoints and means of action], and this book certainly reveals it.' In taking on different forms one after another in consecutive renderings, Brecht's image is shredded into a diverse mosaic, alienating the reader from any monochrome picture. In the essay 'Theatre for Pleasure or Theatre for Instruction' in which Brecht defined epic theatre, he referred to Alfred Döblin's observation: 'with an epic work, as opposed to a dramatic, one can as it were take a pair of scissors and cut it into individual pieces, which remain fully capable of life' (Brecht, 1964: 70). When confronted with a fragmented drama, the audience cannot completely immerse themselves in the narrative and they consequently

gain a metacritical distance from it. As John Willet claimed (1959: 172): 'Brecht treats the 'epic methods' of the 1920s as something more than the new narrative aids; they become means of breaking the magic spell, of jerking the spectator out of his torpor and making him use his critical sense.' Following the same rationale, *Ten cały Brecht* as a literary metatranslation also falls under the category of 'translation for instruction' as it manages to dispel the illusion of reading translations as perfect, equivalent representations of the source text that ostensibly provide direct access to its senses. At the same time, the 2012 project demystifies the pre-1989 manipulative practices which claimed to show the only 'true' Brecht while inevitably enforcing their 'own' Brecht. As this totalising mechanism squeezed Brecht's multi-faceted activity into easy formulas, it dangerously imposed the *totum pro parte* optic onto his readers. According to the *LnŚ* translators, in the post-1989 Polish literary scene, only multiplying and confronting all the 'individual pieces' with each other may eventually let a more complex panorama emerge from this monochromatic image.

In other words, the question of what language is likely to break a Brechtian curse in the Polish literary context could be addressed on the poet's own terms. Just like Brecht's 'stage began to tell a story' (1964: 71), *Ten cały Brecht* creators tested the literary ground of translation through their metacritical narration in order to recapitulate the past and tell their own story of reading Brecht anew. This fourfold curious account demonstrates how Brecht's image is each time transformed depending on the interpretative lens, cultural baggage, and world view of the individual translators. In exposing their creative process, the *LnŚ* translators subverted one more norm: the standard practice of making the readers feel they are invisible observers of translation performed before their eyes. In 1936, Brecht argued that a typically European stage illusion is the so-called 'fourth wall', hinging on the audience's 'illusion of being the unseen spectator at an event which is really taking place' (Brecht, 1964: 92). By showing the backstage of the performance and four alternative

scenarios of the translation play, Buras, Ekier, Kopacki, and Sommer knock the readers out of their passive mode of internalising the text just as rendered and delivered to them. Instead, they suggest that the translator's part in the performance is also to activate the readers' 'cognitive powers' and teach them how to differentiate between distinct takes on the original. Thanks to such a metacritical exercise, they could no longer be kept in the dark as passive recipients of the single 'true' perspectives offered in a given publication or political context. Instead, they can remove their blinkers and act as conscious users of translation culture. In this sense, the idiom of literary metatranslation stretches out a polyphonic and pluralist forum for different ideas, choices, and opinions, which the readers only need to learn how to assess and choose from. At the same time, it puts many other significant issues on the table, revising Brecht's image against the Communist legacy, opening it up for alternative viewpoints, and testing the author's distancing methods as a refreshing formula in translation ethics. And so, it is now left to the readers to decide whether they wish to join this diverse table, sit patiently through all interpretative propositions at stake, and have their say in the discussion.

Conclusion

As demonstrated throughout this thesis, the central problem of literary metatranslations boils down to the conflict between two schizophrenic identities of translation. On the one hand, the act of translation is always potentially multiple, repeated, and infinitely wide-ranging. On the other hand, this spectrum of possibilities at some point needs to be confronted with the often dissatisfying, but in most cases inevitable, norm of compacting it into a one-to-one substitute and making it enact the original. But if we agree that there is no right and single interpretation of one text, then why should we assume that there exists the one only, authentic, and truly equivalent version of the original? With regard to the first part of this question, the lesson in putting the author and their authorial intention extracted from the text to the Barthesian 'death' was admittedly taken a while ago. And so, if coming to terms with equally legitimate perspectives and readings of texts is the order of the day, then multiplying different translation variants without any of them claiming to reach the equivalence should naturally follow suit. Nonetheless, the process of desacralising the original and knocking it off its pedestal seems still under way as there always comes something that resists, restrains, and subdues it. As long as the Septuagint-like mechanisms keep sanctioning the fixed one-to-one equivalences, the circulation of alterative metonymic rewritings is doomed to encounter a range of political, editorial, financial, and legal obstacles that manifest themselves even at seemingly innocent and inconspicuous levels.

After all, even the cases discussed in the last three chapters implicitly point to limitations of the kind: why could Barańczak's creative reeditions of his translated poetry volumes with alternative variants not just be published alongside their other versions, as postulated by Monika Kaczorowska? Why did it take so long for Stiller to find a publishing

house that would release his two alternative translations simultaneously as a double set of novels? Why did Polish library catalogues classify Bertolt Brecht as the only true author of *Ten cały Brecht* instead of the volume's four actual authors: Buras reading Brecht, Ekier reading Brecht, Kopacki reading Brecht, and Sommer reading Brecht? Similar norms and expectations of what translations do and what they should look like keep influencing their creators and publishers; as a result of such micro- and macro-pressures, they themselves decide to pack any diverging alternatives and unruly irregularities into the finite and convenient substitutes of original works. As all those various established orders keep interfering in the mainstream translation production, the genre of translation multiples and other renderings that do not square fixed definitions strenuously elbow their way through the literary scene. And in fact, the Polish projects also managed to come to fruition owing to a host of very favourable circumstances. These factors in particular included the translators' well-established status, their determination, their successful cooperation with independent publishing houses, and capitalising on editorial traditions developed from other forms of circulation such as literary magazines. Without such specially prepared ground and opportunities that paved the way for less standard forms, the Polish instances of literary metatranslations might have not come to light so easily.

However, what remains most symptomatic in the discussed Polish projects is definitely their historical entanglement. All of them were born of the political transition between two worlds of artistic expression: the one constrained by the totalising censorship and the other ushering in a fledgling democracy with free publishing and freedom of speech. Whereas the first one coalesced bipolar tensions between the official circulation with its monopoly for truth and the strong opposition from the underground press; the other newly restored system, despite its own flaws and limitations, could at least resolve the cultural hierarchy and authoritative voice into a number of different propositions. On the wave of

these changes, all the Polish translators conceptualised their multiplied renderings as ethically engaged forms responding to that reality; their ideas ranged from the pursuit of artistic liberation against the notion of literalism, to critical re-evaluation of the past and the present, to opening the text up for multiple points of view and equal voices in discussion. In Stanisław Barańczak's understanding, when part of well-conceived aesthetic projects, translation multiples could address the readers' questions of 'how to live' by compromising vague and totalising ideas, and instead pursuing the ethics of the concrete, the individual, and the *pars pro toto*. These single propositions and different variants needed to support each other artistically and dialectically; the reason being that, as the poet-translator would suggest, such compound constellations and confrontations allowed the individual ideas to illuminate and verify each other. And so, only together could they truly abolish the reign of authoritative literalism in translation, and subsequently recognise their own temporary totalities and any other limiting monopolies.

A comparable self-critical dimension also permeated Robert Stiller's elaborate project as he endeavoured to assess, distance himself, and overcome the fate of post-dependency engrained in Poland's political history. In approaching the same novel over and over again, he referred each of his versions to different interpretations of historical facts and linguistic landscapes. Releasing these alternative and almost contradictory hypotheses simultaneously challenged the major ideas behind historical motivations for retranslating. When in her article, Elizabeth Lowe asked 'Why Re-translate?' (Lowe 2014: 415), she asserted that retranslation in the 'world of ideas and political movements' would typically involve 'a re-visioning of society based on certain historical and political conditions' (2014: 417). But then, in taking a step further, Stiller also demonstrated why it made sense to retranslate the same novel almost simultaneously one after another, even though in allegedly the same historical and political conditions, and in relation to the very same society. His

multiple vision of the same socio-political world from divergent ideological angles shifted the emphasis on the translator's active role in filtering and responding differently to these conditions from a critical distance. In his own equation of the political scenarios, Stiller additionally disclosed the vicious circle of history as the novel's originally corrupted society kept getting roped into a self-reproducing clockwork mechanism. But it is still mainly thanks to the act of bringing together the competing interpretations of the same state of affairs that his metatranslation could reveal this repetitive political pattern and diagnose the post-Communist Polish society as torn between divergent identities and influences.

As such multiple facets and scenarios appeared on a par with each other, they also subsequently became part of a broader agenda of Polish translation multiples. Likewise, an analogous aspect made it possible for the quartet of the *Literatura na świecie* translators to revise and reconstruct Brecht's image along more polyphonic and dialectical lines. To a greater extent, it was the long-standing tradition of acknowledging multiple readings and unique translation approaches within the literary magazine that provided a platform for such metacritical discussion. But above all, the Brecht translators took their project to a new level by deliberately collaborating with each other and sharing the translation stage among a wider and more inclusive mix of voices. In this way, the new generation of interpreters could revisit and reclaim the author who had previously been taken back from them in the thick of the pre-1989 manipulations and feuds over the political edge of his poetry. As this gesture opened up the floor for alternative ideas and readings of Brecht, it also turned the multi-threaded idiom of metatranslation into a dialectic and anti-illusionist Brechtian lesson for the readers.

With regard to all those issues and other interdependencies, the three Polish examples discussed in this thesis considerably stretched the epistemological potential of translation multiples. Besides suggesting that different possible interpretations of a text

could reveal the lack of one true equivalence, they additionally rephrased the problem into more ethical and humanist categories. The follow-up question for the Polish metatranslations therefore reads to this effect: if there is no proper reading of, and opinion about, the same original and subsequently no fixed equivalence in translation, then why should there be a monopoly for one point of view, for one interpretation of historical, social, and political facts, and for one public discourse? It is certainly not without reason that the post-Communist projects could take a stance towards this idea by advocating a more open forum for diverse voices. At the same time, by dismantling a range of totalising discourses and biased images through translation multiples, they could also symbolically espouse a more democratic agenda in their works.

And therefore, even if literary metatranslations in general could be seen as a belated echo of postmodern literary practices, a continuation of poststructural thought or reinforcements recruited for Perloff's rear-guard movement, their Polish counterparts additionally highlighted a more socially engaged element to them. With regard to this specific role, the post-Communist examples are definitely not isolated cases on the wide spectrum of translation practices; especially that the marriage of translation and different ideas about activism, ethics, and resistance has been gradually changing its image of a passive and neutral medium of communicating original senses. In recent years, many scholars working across Translation Studies have highlighted the power of literary translation to question the established orders, hierarchies, and inequalities, be it with respect to gender (e.g. Lori Chamberlain, 1988), sexual orientation (e.g. William J. Spurlin, 2014), the post-colonial perspective on the Other (e.g. Gayatri Spivak, 1998), and global economic powers influencing the circulation of ideas between major and minor cultures (e.g. Maria Tymoczko, 1999; Tymoczko with Edwin Gentzler, 2002; Mona Baker, 2006; Lawrence Venuti, 2008a; and many others). The emancipating and defiant aspect of translation has

equally pertained to its more experimental strand. For instance, a number of critics suggested (Keenaghan 1998, Katz 2004, Horáček 2014, Dembeck 2015) that some artistic pseudo-translations and homophonic translations aimed to smuggle in obscenity and homoeroticism under the pretext of taking on a different literary persona (e.g. Spicer's *After Lorca*) or homophonically mishearing the original (e.g. Zukofskys' *Catullus* and Kelly/Schuldt's 'Am Quell der Donau', 1998). Thanks to these translation strategies, the voice of the supressed could be heard through an imagined original or in the course of creative mishearings, eventually leading to homosexuality being translated into visibility. Similarly, other American translators such as Christian Hawkey in *Ventrakl* and David Cameron in *Flowers of Bad* engaged with the original authors enforcing violence and deformation on their texts. By piercing them, tearing them, splitting in halves and dismantling some fragments, they sought to voice their protest against US technologically-driven warfare, capitalist exploitation, and aggressive politics.

It seems that the similarly subversive potential of experimental translation has also been tentatively recognised in the Polish context, including a few recent projects. For instance, in their 2001 volume, Jerzy Jarniewicz and Wojciech Engelking back-translated the pseudo-translation of Christopher Reid's *Katerina Brac* (1985), speaking with the voice of an invented East European woman poet. This creative translation with no original aimed to revise the stereotype of East European verse and let go of the burden of politically tainted clichés (cf. Szymanska 2017). More recently, a mechanically-aided deformation of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu le Roi ou le Polonaise* [Ubu the King or the Poles] (1896) was published by three acknowledged translators: Aleksadra Małecka, Piotr Marecki, and Google Translator (2015) with the established avant-garde press *Ha!art*. In their 'manifesto and premeditated heresy' of placing 'a Duchamp's fountain in the Polish market of books' (Marecki & Małecka 2015), the creators turned the original absurdist satire on Ubu's tyranny in Poland

into, as they postulated, ‘a subversive commentary’ on the pathologies of the free market’s cultural production with its lukewarm quality and slapdash pace (Marecki & Małecka 2015). Similar experiments and purposeful translation acts that keep challenging the boundary between translation and creative writing have also been followed by more general critical thought. Most notably, a number of women translators and poets engaging with the creative poetics of rewriting made the aforementioned Polish critic and translator Jerzy Jarniewicz explicitly argue in his essay entitled ‘Antygony wracają’ [Antygonies Return] (2016) that ‘the process of women’s emancipation develops in parallel to the emancipation of translation.’ As he postulated, the reflection on the changing idea of women’s social roles could also inform how translation is positioned in culture. Since, in a way, both of them need to revise the stereotype of submissiveness and secondary nature, they might benefit from marching arm in arm towards the same goal.

With an eye to similar developments, the Polish post-1989 metatranslations and any other upcoming artistic works of the same ilk could perhaps resonate and be read alongside a wider strand of contemporary projects revealing the liberating, emancipatory, and resistant potential of literary translation. Since the three major cases discussed in this thesis often attempted to critique and take a stand towards geopolitical and social issues such as Western reactions to the collapse of Communism and fate of East European countries, Poland’s post-dependency discourse, and ideologically-driven manipulation of literature, they also combined an unconventional or experimental form with their artistic pursuit of, and sceptical commentary on, the liberation of Polish society. As the Polish creators conceptualised their creative rule breaking and protest against easy interlingual matchings of meanings in ethical or political terms, many formally subversive elements of their Polish translation multiples found their relevant reflections in more general themes conveyed with their mediation. And thus, alongside their artistic resistance to issues such as literalism in translation, mechanical

reconstruction of the original plot, and instrumentalist usage of literature, the Polish translators consequently spotted and stigmatised what they diagnosed as concurring socio-political circumstances. In their understanding, these corresponding phenomena encompassed, for instance, the fallacies and dangers of totalitarian rhetoric, indelible marks of cultural and political hegemony, narrow interpretations limited by ideological blinkers, and many others of the kind.

All these subversive and critical aspects of metatranslations notwithstanding, the actual starting point for the Polish projects was still, with no exception, the multiplicity of different versions and possibilities. Even though opposing the previous totalising discourse with their full force, the liberating undertone of such experiments in the wake of the 1989 political transition still hinged on the affirmative gesture of providing leeway for more than one reading perspective or point of view. In this manner, as different variants and translating selves ceased to act only on their own account, the authors of Polish translation multiples could move on to put a number of such diverging opinions in a creative dialogue with each other. The act of acknowledging more than one reading and translation, including any potential or actual perspectives of other interpreters, therefore remains the core idea underpinning literary metatranslations in this socio-cultural context.

Arguably, this might be also the main conclusion that has the potential of resonating in other domains of contemporary translation activity in Poland. For one thing, as Anna Cetera noticed with regard to the intensely retranslated classics such as Shakespeare's plays, despite apparent translation polemics over different approaches, their crowded 'co-existence in time resembles, in a good sense of this image, arranging a hall of mirrors rather than storming the pedestal, of which one translators knock another one' (Cetera 2015). So it is partly on the wave of the rapidly changing publishing context that translators have gradually become aware of each other and previous renderings, started recognising their parallel lives,

and even consciously played with them by placing their own versions in a complex intertextual web. Perhaps the most compelling example worth exploring further in this respect would be Adam Pomorski's controversial retranslations of the literary texts that are canonical and foundational for Polish culture. In his modern takes on Goethe's *Faust* (1999), R.M. Rilke's poetry (2006), and T.S. Eliot's 'The Wasteland' (2007), he meta-discursively placed his often radical interpretations in relation to other existing versions and translator figures. For instance, in the sixth existing Polish rendering of 'The Wasteland' from his pen, which made the poem read as an artefact of popular culture, he alluded to Czesław Miłosz's earlier version by correcting its translation glitches through his own intertextual references to the Nobel laureate's own poetry. In constructing a meta-textual bridge between his and the earlier most recognisable variant, Pomorski thus made another translation present in his own reading and in a sense inscribed the co-existence of these two into the text.

Then, for another thing, thinking about metatranslations in polyphonic and dialectic terms might also open the way for more collaborative projects in the spirit of *Ten cały Brecht* volume. Although based on a slightly different concept, the recent 2014 Polish rendering of Matthew Kneale's *English Passengers* (2000), titled *Anglicy na pokładzie* [The Englishmen on Board] and co-edited by Krzysztof Filip Rudolf and Michał Alenowicz, celebrated such a multiplicity of translation voices in its own way. By dividing the novel among twenty-one different translators, the editors made the original twenty-one narrators each speak with a unique language, personality, and translatorial voice. This 'one step further in the direction pointed by the author', as the editors had it, allowed the translators to achieve a 'completely natural diversity of style' (Rudolf & Alenowicz 2014: 11). At the same time, however, as the original conflicts, cultural differences, and postcolonial resentments were rooted in language and the characters' linguistic limitations in perceiving the surrounding world, the translators transposed all of them onto the realm of Polish translation. Besides giving the

impression of linguistic diversity, their narratively dispersed version had the added value of signalling the analogue divisions and conflicting ideas by means of multiple Polish idioms, differently interpreting minds, and blatantly singled out translation selves. And therefore, even though not explicitly undermining the one-to-one relationship between the source and target text, the polyphonic case of twenty-one translators as well as Pomorski's meta-textual and interlinked renderings still continue to challenge and enrich the usual modes of reading and thinking about translation as finite and representational products. Perhaps these and other related projects along the lines of literary metatranslations and collections of multiplied renderings in the contemporary Polish literary scene will keep nourishing the discussion about the translation's social relevance. By further testing and stretching its creative capacity, they might also inspire other translators to search for alternative means of expression.

Finally, as the Polish instances of literary metatranslations discussed in this thesis have indicated, their ethical relevance does not necessarily manifest itself in postcolonial, gender, and economic inequalities occuring between the original and its recreation in a different culture. In fact, any tension and polemic could equally come to the surface without positioning oneself in relation to the other; they may easily erupt within the culture itself as different readings and opinions confront each other and scrap through local canons and established orders. In the same vein, even if still aesthetically favouring some variants over others, literary metatranslations have the potential of giving vent to many more translation voices than usual. By providing a pluralist forum for the multiples to appear simultaneously next to each other, they in a sense uphold what Jacques Rancière once called the 'equality of conditions' after de Tocqueville's ideas with specific reference to the politics of literature (Rancière 2004: 14). According to Rancière, through its dismissal of hierarchies between the novel's characters, styles, and subject matters, literature since the nineteenth century has

become more egalitarian and shared the artistic space among more visions of society without prioritising any single one of them. Perhaps in this sense, literary metatranslations can also at least symbolically grant such 'equal conditions' to the otherwise unrecognised translation variants fighting for their place in the established order of print. This does not automatically need to assume that any standards of literary translation and what individual translators each understand as fidelity should be abolished in favour of the principle that 'anything goes'. What literary metatranslations would rather propose in this respect is the textual space for acknowledging more than one true understanding of fidelity that largely prevails in the cultural discourse. By textually displaying the multiplicity of possible approaches to the original, similar artistic works thus keep pushing the envelope of translation circulation and hijack more space for other readings and variants to emerge. Even if the figure who has brought these translation multiples together, selected, and framed them does not act in an entirely neutral way, the mere symbolic gesture of extending the textual sphere of an artistic work for more than one possiblity already shifts the accents. As similar precedents open up both the original text and its respective translated afterlife for various readings, they also embrace the wider aim of an ethically engaged project. By socialising and internalising the practice of translating and approaching the original in different ways into the public sphere, translation multiples can challenge the Communist literary order that favoured canonisation, authors deemed classical, and authoritative translations. At the same time, however, the creators of literary metatranslations can also symbolically oppose broader totalising ideas. In adopting their translatorial agenda of the multiple, they can simultaneously pursue different standings and worldviews, and treat them as equally legitimate propositions in a democratic gesture.

By accepting the parallel existence of such translation multiples, their Polish creators in fact let their artistic intuitions square with a recent critical discussion in the Polish milieu

of literary translators and critics. Initiated by Magda Heydel in her review of Edward Balcerzan's book *Tłumaczenie jako wojna światów* [Translation as a War of the Worlds] (Balcerzan, 2009), this heated debate reverberated with what could have interesting implications for multiple translations. After an exchange of opinions with Balcerzan and criticising his book's titular metaphor of a battle between rival translations as enemies (Heydel, 2011: 334), Heydel postulated a completely different interpretation of the relations between them. In the article she tellingly titled 'Dialog światów' [A Dialogue of the Worlds] (2013), she firmly stressed the following: 'Translation – and the retranslation – is created not in order to compete, but to give a possibility of coexisting.' This adage, as formulated by Heydel, happens to encapsulate the most essential transition in thinking about the ethics of translation with reference to the literary metatranslations discussed in this thesis. In its revealed multiplicity, translation is no longer only about reaching out to the translated other, a constructed and exoticised identity that arrives from a different language and culture, and building a bridge between them in relation to oneself. Instead, it also calls for accepting any other person from the very same culture by coming to terms with their completely different opinion about, and reading of, the same original 'text' – regardless of whether it pertains to a literary work, a historical event, a political statement, or anything else subject to individual interpretation.

In the wake of the 1989 political transformation, the Polish literary metatranslations have thus introduced a few crucial propositions to this end: a symbolic textual platform for presenting and balancing those distinct perspectives; a confrontation of unique stories behind each of them explaining their entanglements in a range of individual decisions, backgrounds, and tendencies; and a metacritical tool allowing for different interpretations and viewpoints to observe, complete, and verify each other. In this sense, as the Polish translators formulated their projects alongside their own specific ethics of the multiple, they

also managed to extend their relevance to the crossroads of language and man's co-existence in society. According to their understanding, a remedy for political tensions at the turn of 1989 in Poland would entail stepping out of any of the totalising frameworks, distancing oneself from them, and comparing their individual interpretative assumptions and limitations. In the course of recurring ideological fights in the politically polarised arena of contemporary Poland, casting translation in this metacritical role might be of greater significance than ever – especially when the rhetoric of different conflicted factions belittles or suppresses the opposite side without fairly presenting and respecting its rationale. And so, in the face of these and many other clashes of totalities to come, the artistic project of understanding and acknowledging the multiple still has a long arduous road ahead.

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