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In recent years the hermeneutical approach to translation has received an increased amount of scholarly attention (see, e.g., Cercel 2009; Stolze 2011; Cercel 2013; Robinson 2013; Stanley et al. 2018), although it must be clearly stated that, formally speaking, research within this field, despite being deeply rooted in philosophical tradition, is still in its infancy. The discussion of the significance and role of the field called translational hermeneutics within translation studies is becoming increasingly methodologically oriented, with the major concerns of the most recent publications within this field including: 1) establishing certain criteria and categories which could serve as methodological departure points in analyzing not only translation products, but also the translator's behaviour during the translation process, and 2) delimiting both boundaries and common points between translational hermeneutics *per se* and other translational research trends, and between translational hermeneutics and different domains, for example cognitive science (see, e.g., Piecychna 2019, forthcoming). Such aims were also outlined in the reviewed monograph entitled *Translational Hermeneutics: The First Symposium*, edited by Radegundis Stolze, John Stanley and Larisa Cercel (2015).

The volume contains a collection of seventeen articles discussing a multitude of aspects concerning the use of the hermeneutic legacy within the field of broadly understood translation. All the papers published in the volume are an outcome of presentations delivered during the first symposium on Hermeneutics and Translation Studies, organized on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2011 at the University

of Applied Sciences in Cologne<sup>1</sup>. As the editors of the volume write about the articles: “They represent the diversity of the papers delivered, not a school of thought. There was no effort made to homogenize terminology or content. To the contrary, this collection has more the character of a portfolio which should confront the reader with the diverse perspectives drawn by the promise of fusing hermeneutics with translation. Hopefully, in the years to come the continued efforts to develop a field that we are now tentatively calling »Translational Hermeneutics« will yield some level of consensus on both fundamental precepts as well as unresolved, controversial questions” (p. 7). And indeed, it could be stated without too gross a generalization that despite the earlier publications pertaining to the hermeneutical approach to translation, it is the reviewed monograph which reflects the editors’ conscious and deliberate attempts to both renew and enliven an interest in the relationship between hermeneutics and translation, and establish translational hermeneutics as a fully-fledged research branch within translation studies by bringing new ideas that seem to stand in stark contrast to the established and widely accepted objectivist paradigm in science. It is worth accentuating that contributors of the volume originate not only from different countries, but also from different continents. As the editors claim: “The fact that we had speakers come not only from Europe, the United States and Canada, but also from Egypt, Iran, Hong Kong and China suggested that the interest in linking hermeneutics with translation studies is one spanning many cultures” (ibid.). Although Germany has long been considered the centre and place of origin of hermeneutics, it seems plausible to claim that translational hermeneutics has already gone beyond this area and has become a truly global and interdisciplinary enterprise. Thematically, the papers could be divided into the following areas: the main assumptions of translational hermeneutics as a potential research paradigm within translation studies, the status of hermeneutics in the field of translation studies, the legacy of philosophical hermeneutics and phenomenology in translational hermeneutics, translational hermeneutics and praxis, and hermeneutic interpretations of literary translations and cultural artifacts, or, more broadly, culture.

The first thematic area includes two articles: one written by the editors of the volume and the other by Douglas Robinson. The paper entitled *Hermeneutics as a Research Paradigm* by Larisa Cercel, Radegundis Stolze and John Stanley provides a solid background for understanding the very essence and origins of

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1| The editors of the volume had planned to organize this event as early as 2009 (2015: 7), and thus this year might be regarded as the beginning of the renewal of interest in fusing hermeneutics and translation. Although the relationship between hermeneutics and translation *per se* as delineated by translation theoreticians is by no means new, as it dates back at least to the 1970s, deliberate attempts to establish translational hermeneutics as a separate methodological branch of translation studies have been made only within the last few years.

translational hermeneutics. The authors discuss not only “central theoretical issues that characterize the hermeneutical approach” (p. 18), but also “a description of translational hermeneutics based more on post-Husserlian hermeneutics (Heidegger and Gadamer)”, as well as “some examples of the direction that hermeneutically inspired research might take” (ibid.). The most valuable part of this article seems to be the last section, in which Stanley suggests in what way it would be possible for translation scholars oriented hermeneutically to deploy Husserlian phenomenology within the research into translation and other communicative, intercultural situations. By considering the phenomenological method “one important historical foundation of translational hermeneutics” (p. 37), the author rightly draws attention to the fact that the same method might be successfully applied in cognitive research. The other notion that the author underlines is the Gadamerian concept of a game, an ontological foundation which could serve as a starting point in analyzing and interpreting the so-called “lived world” and its relation with “human molding perception of this lived world” (p. 31). And while these sections are very promising in terms of the development of translational hermeneutics and its potential application as a separate research strand, what might be striking is the fact that in this paper translational hermeneutics is often referred to as a “discipline” (see, e.g., p. 85). To my mind, this is not correct because (1) translational hermeneutics is still in its infancy and does not have a solid methodological background to rest upon, and (2) treating translational hermeneutics as a discipline stands in stark contrast to what its proponents claim about the potential use of the hermeneutical approach to translation within Translation Studies. After all, after having read the volume, it is apparent that propagators of this “movement” do not want to establish a separate discipline dealing with translation, but they are rather interested in finding means to incorporate translational hermeneutics into the already established academic discipline of translation studies.

Douglas Robinson, in his paper entitled *Fourteen Principles of Translational Hermeneutics*, makes an attempt to provide a collection of propositions that could overall serve as the theoretical and methodological foundation for the new translational “enterprise”. Apart from very obvious principles suggested in the previous paper by Stolze, standing at the core of translational hermeneutics (that is, subjectivity, historicity, phenomenology, the process character of the act of translation, holism, reflection), Robinson adds eight more: social constructivism, iterability, multiple subjectivities, dialogism, the double-bind, performativity, rhetoric, and somaticity. And while all these terms sound very promising in light of the now developing paradigm of translational hermeneutics, the author, unfortunately, has not elaborated on them, providing very scant and far too general explanations of all the concepts except one, namely somaticity. This last notion, encompassing “somatic markers”, “somatic mimeses” and “somatic ecologies”

(p. 49), has been described in detail, presumably on purpose, as according to Robinson “[a] hermeneutics of translation needs a somatic of translation” (ibid.). The author is quite right in saying that our human experiences are “marked somatically in connection with the recurrence of events that are similar enough to the ones that occasioned the marking to make the felt reminders useful guides to decision-making” (p. 49; quotation partly modified). The greatest potential of the notion of somaticity lies in its resemblance to the now very popular paradigm of embodied simulation, which has not been much explored within translation studies and which could provide a solid methodological framework in connection with hermeneutical and phenomenological assumptions as delineated by Husserl, Heidegger or Gadamer.

The next thematic area, namely the status of translational hermeneutics within translation studies, has been touched upon by Lothar Černý in his paper entitled *Hidden Hermeneutics: The Beginnings of Translation Studies in Germany after World War II*. The author discusses the most prominent figures “in the emerging field of Translation Studies in East and West Germany after World War II” (p. 55), focusing specifically on the legacy of Otto Kade, Wolfram Wills, Werner Koller, Hans J. Vermeer, Katharina Reiss, Christiane Nord, Radegundis Stolze, Fritz Paepcke, Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast and Klaus Mudersbach. The greatest strength of the paper lies in the author’s attempt to 1) disclose the “hidden hermeneutics”, or hermeneutics *implicite*, in the *oeuvre* of the above mentioned translation scholars, as well as to 2) explain why the hermeneutical approach to translation has so often seemed to remain in the background of the more popular and sterile debate over the notion of equivalence and strict linguistic rules governing the translation process. Černý also provides quite accurate comments on the very essence of theoretical approaches to translation as delineated by Paepcke and his student Stolze. It is hard not to agree with the author of the paper that 1) “Paepcke’s hermeneutical programme seems to capitulate in the face of the complexity of the translator’s task” (p. 72), and that 2) “[w]hether Stolze’s approach is a breakthrough for hermeneutic translation theory remains to be seen” (p. 74). Černý is absolutely right when he underlines the flaws of Paepcke’s and Stolze’s endeavours because they 1) lack both theoretical and methodological precision as regards the very nature of the act of translation as seen from a hermeneutical perspective, and 2) as for now they could not be properly and clearly deployed in the form of concrete programmes in analyzing either translation products or the translator’s behaviour and his/her motivations.

While Černý fails to specify the way in which the paradigm of translational hermeneutics could be successfully incorporated into translation studies methodology, John Stanley, in his paper titled *Translational Hermeneutics and Inverted Worlds: Some Reflections on Paradigms*, makes a determined attempt to point out not only the advantages of the paradigm of translational hermeneutics over the

so-called Kadean perspective and ensuing strictly linguistic and pragmatic approaches to studying translation, but also concrete categories and methods, or “essential cornerstones” (p. 85), which could be applied in order to bring some new ideas to the field of translation studies. These “essential cornerstones” include: the Husserlian phenomenological method, namely the *epoché*, the Heideggerian “Dasein” – the Hermeneutical “Seeing-as”, and the Gadamerian concept of language games and “text”. The methodological categories have been contrasted markedly with the severely criticised Kadean position which exerted a huge impact on “the early predominance of the equivalence debate” (p. 110). Because Stanley convincingly suggests which notions within phenomenological and hermeneutical philosophy could be incorporated into translational hermeneutics (not necessarily limited to the three mentioned above), this article should be considered the most valuable in the whole volume because the paper elaborates new and original directions within translation studies by means of, and through, the hermeneutical approach to translation. The article is also thought-provoking in terms of other controversial issues, of which the most important seems to be the conundrum of the notion of subjectivity in research into translation. As Stanley convincingly puts it, there is a place for objectivity within the paradigm of translational hermeneutics as well: “»Objectivity« in the Kadean sense is a mirage that results from postulating ideal conditions; »objectivity« in the hermeneutical sense is tantamount to a consensual agreement reached by a scientific community working in their messy, conceptually circular lived worlds” (p. 139). What ensues from such a perspective is the widespread acceptance that the paradigm of translational hermeneutics is guided both theoretically and methodologically by the consensus that it is not possible for translators and translation scholars alike to break the hermeneutical circle within which they are equally embedded, a statement that shall offer a new critical approach to the study of translation. Perhaps one of the solutions to this problem could be an attempt to incorporate the Gadamerian concept of *Bildung* into the hermeneutical model of translation competence.

The third paper, which indirectly deals with the potential application of hermeneutical tenets within the field of translation, is titled *Der Beitrag der hermeneutischen Dolmetschforschung zur Begründung einer Translationshermeneutik*. Miriam Paola Leibbrand attempts to demonstrate in what way one can possibly use the so-called “Hermeneutical Research into Interpreting” (p. 205) within the field of translational hermeneutics. This area, namely interpreting studies in the light of hermeneutics, has not been thoroughly explored as yet, which might be a bit surprising given the fact that even Friedrich Schleiermacher, after all regarded as the father of contemporary hermeneutics and translational hermeneutics, reflected upon the differentiation between translation in the written and in the oral forms. It is true that the philosopher considered interpreting a secondary

and rather mechanical type of translation; however, taking into account that that hermeneutics offers interesting insights into the nature of speech (*Rede*), communication and language, it is beyond doubt that a hermeneutic approach to interpreting might turn out to be very fruitful on many levels. What could be regarded as the most valuable part of this article is first and foremost the author's deliberate attempt to try to deploy the notion of understanding not only as an indispensable component of every translation process, but also as a research method and "the foundation for an epistemological attitude" (p. 205). By the method, Leibbrand understands the reflective strategies undertaken by the interpreter during the interpreting process. This qualitative approach to Interpreting Studies has been interestingly labelled by the author *Verstehende Forschung*. Due to the fact that Leibbrand has successfully tried to reconcile hermeneutics with cognitive science in her approach, she has also indirectly contributed to solving the old dilemma underlying "the LAP-versus-ESP-controversy in Translation Studies" (p. 206), which makes the paper very promising for further development within the field of Interpreting Studies.

Within the third thematic area of the reviewed volume one may find an article entitled *Prologue to a Hermeneutic Approach to Translation* by Brian O'Keeffe. The author aspires to analyze the status of translation *per se* in Gadamerian philosophical hermeneutics. The main aim of the paper, however, is to focus exclusively on the beginning stage of the translation process when the translator "enters the hermeneutic circle" (p. 145). O'Keeffe is thus particularly interested in "what takes place at the outset of translation, what gets the translator underway" (p. 159). While the author states that one of his interests is to elaborate in the article the main difficulties that the translator encounters while beginning the act of translation, the reading of the paper demonstrates that a substantial part of the text pertains to one main difficulty, namely the prejudice of completeness and the controversial temporal issues connected with the category of a translatorial understanding resulting from it. O'Keeffe rightly underlines the conundrum of the status of this initial prejudice that guides all the other "sub-prejudices" as they emerge in the interpretive process; however, as the author admits, his approach could be regarded as "an over-complicated way of saying that there must be a prior apprehension by a translator that he or she is about to undertake a translation" (pp. 160–1), which seems to be an obvious, unquestionable fact. The main difficulty as connected with the prejudice of completeness lies, according to O'Keeffe, in "the nature of an understanding that is in anticipation of itself" (*ibid.*). The author, fully aware of this problem, finds a tentative, and quite interesting, solution to it by associating the prejudice of completeness with the translator's fore-knowledge, influenced to a large extent by the host culture and with the translator placing great value in the act of translation itself, which bears a close resemblance to Steiner's reflections on the hermeneutic movement.



Summing up, the paper offers a plethora of stimulating and thought-provoking questions regarding the nature of the beginning of translation and the specificity of entering the hermeneutic circle of the translator. Above all, however, it reflects the widely known, and yet quite hard to understand, fact that “the translator’s beginning position on the foreign text is both fully comprehending, but still faces an un-comprehended text” (167). Be that as it may, translation explored from such a perspective should then be regarded as the act of understanding, entailing the translator’s fore-knowledge of the permanent lack of this understanding, or of only the temporal existence of such understanding.

The next thematic area explored in the volume relates to translation and praxis as grasped from a hermeneutical perspective. More specifically, praxis should here be understood as a twofold concept encompassing 1) certain forms of practice, or actions, undertaken by translators in their translatorial endeavours, and 2) certain aspects allowing the concretization of the act of translation, e.g. the translator’s competence. One of the papers tackling this issue is a paper titled *Faktoren einer hermeneutischen Übersetzungskompetenz* by Radegundis Stolze. What might raise a doubt at the very beginning of the paper is the statement expressed by the author that so-called “hermeneutic translation” is always guided by the translator’s understanding of the text, a condition *sine qua non* without which no translation is possible. The question is, however, whether the preceding of translation in the form of understanding does not accompany all acts of translation, not only those labelled as “hermeneutical”, let alone controversy over the very essence of so-called “hermeneutical translation”. The second objection originates from the very general hermeneutical premise itself, namely that understanding is not a stable, fixed fact but rather an ongoing process which is subject to constant actualizations both at an individual and a collective level. Stolze is surely right in claiming that the act of translation is marked by dynamism (after all, it encompasses the use of various strategies and different forms of knowledge), but still the reflections, it seems, lack precise references to the specificity of this dynamism as juxtaposed against the hermeneutical approach to translation. The most valuable section in this article is a set of premises, or orientations, on which the translator might focus in order to translate in a competent way. The tables (p. 187, 192) presented by the author of the article pertain to not only understanding the source text, but also formulating the target message, which clearly demonstrates the holistic nature of the translation process in its constant unbreakable circularity, a feature which in itself might be regarded as the characteristic of the hermeneutical approach to translation. The systemic model of translation depicted by Stolze (p. 201), reflecting the dynamic character of the concept of translation competence, might serve as a collection of various aspects (emotional, material, cognitive and intellectual) from which specific components of the translator’s competent behaviour could be extracted. The author,

unfortunately, does not reflect upon the hermeneutical specificity of this model of translation and of translation competence, which makes it difficult for the reader to differentiate this particular attempt from other models of translation competence described in the literature.

The translator's tasks and the specificity of the act of translation are also tackled by Vera Elisabeth Gerling in an article titled *Übersetzung und modern Hermeneutik bei Valery Larbaud*. The author of the paper analyses *Sous L'invocation de Saint Jerome* by Valery Larbaud, a French writer, poet and translator. Valery Larbaud was a polyglot, and therefore his interest in translation *per se* should be of no surprise to anyone. In *Sous L'invocation de Saint Jerome*, comprising a collection of short essays, he reflects upon not only St. Jerome's life and the thinker's translational legacy, but also multifarious aspects of translation, perceived here as a work of art, and its reception in a given literary polysystem. The book itself has not been explored by translation scholars until now; therefore, Gerling's attempt should be considered innovative and fruitful for the development of translational hermeneutics. The author of the paper rightly underlines the hermeneutical underpinnings of Larbaud's thoughts on translation and understanding (after all, the French writer accentuated the individuality of every act of rendering embedded in cultural and historical contexts). One should also generally agree with Gerling's suggestion that Larbaud's work be translated into German.

In an article entitled *Die Stimme im Text als tertium comparationis beim Literaturübersetzen* Rainer Kohlmayer underlines the significance of rhetoric for translation studies, in particular for literary translation. The issue of reading aloud in the context of rendering literary texts has too long been neglected in the literature, and with this paper the author brings this important topic to life. As Kohlmayer rightly suggests, the tradition of making the text be heard, allowing it to speak through the interpreter, was ignored and then forgotten in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which was directly connected with the common practice of reading for ourselves at that time. The two types of reading, however, are not the same and exert a totally different effect on the reader. Why is it so important for the translator to read out the text they attempt to render, according to Kohlmayer? The first thing is that rhetorics is inseparably and deeply connected with hermeneutics, as has already been depicted by, *inter alia*, Gadamer (1999). After all, as Gadamer has always claimed, all arguments formulated in accordance with the rhetorical tradition must also be read, understood and interpreted (*ibid.*). What is more, all great pieces of literature have been created within the rhetorical tradition of writing, and thus they contain so-called acoustic potential, which could only be successfully extracted from the text by turning to pronunciation and, indirectly, to performance. In such a perspective, literary translation might indeed be regarded as art in itself, where the translator becomes a creator who exerts an impact on the audience's experience, including the sensorimotor reactions, with the text. One



of the greatest values of the text, however, lies in the underlined significance of the rhetorical tradition of writing for translation didactics. In this respect translational hermeneutics might also find its way into the paradigm of translation teaching within translation studies.

The last thematic area relates to the use of a hermeneutical approach to translation within the field of interpreting concrete literary or cultural works. Adriana Șerban, in an article titled *Writing, Directing and Translating Poetic Films*, offers a hermeneutical perspective from which one can analyze and interpret audiovisual material. The author focuses on so-called poetic films, namely those “that give undisputed priority to non-verbal expression through images and music” (p. 262). The main interest in this paper, however, lies in the translator’s “mediating voice” (p. *ibid.*), or the translator’s presence, as exposed in subtitles of DVD versions of films translated into English and French: *The Duellists* from 1977, directed by Ridley Scott; *Nostalgia* from 1983, directed by Andrei Tarkovsky; and *The Horseman on the Roof* from 1995, directed by Jean-Paul Rappeneau. While the author presents many interesting and thought-provoking views on the multidimensionality of voices in the process of filmmaking, the role of the translator in rendering poetic films with predominating silence (“the echo of the word finally spoken is a wondrous combination of fragility and weight”, p. 270), the inexpressible, the status of silence in interpretation carried out by the implied spectator and ensuing vision of the cinema, and the differences between the specificity of silence “as artistic choice and means of expression” (p. 266) as depicted in films and other cultural artifacts, the analysis of selected translated examples, whose aim is to seek “traces of the translator’s presence in the dialogues in the form of choices that have been made” (p. 271), is too superficial and mostly speculative. Also, the analysis itself is neither hermeneutical nor holistic as the author, it seems, does not consider the whole situational and historical context in which both the production of a given film as well as its subtitled translation have been embedded.

Marianne Lederer, in a paper titled *Modern Hermeneutics: a New Approach to the Translation of Culture*, sets out three main aims: 1) to demonstrate that the view held by translational hermeneutists that language and culture are “inseparable” (p. 290) could not be less from true; 2) to tackle the issue of the relationship between comprehension and culture; 3) to answer the question of whether translators can transfer “a source culture as a whole” (*ibid.*) and how it is possible for them to make readers of a translation understand the target text. It seems, however, that the aims set out in this way have certain flaws, and therefore cannot be fulfilled. First of all, the author does not specify what she understands by the labels “language” and “culture”. Without proper specification one cannot say anything valid about the bond, or its lack for that matter, between the two notions. Second, the paper lacks concrete definitions of other significant concepts used by Lederer, e.g. subjectivity, understanding, or cultural translation. While the author

is surely right when she claims that “[a] distinction should be made between, on the one hand, the translation of language-bound cultural items, which are of a lexical order and, on the other hand, cultural beliefs, customs, and values which are not necessarily bound to the source language” (p. 298), here again one can spot the unresolved question of what exactly the two notions, namely language and culture, encapsulate. Also, the explicitness versus implicitness of culture as depicted by language is yet another issue which should first be thoroughly explored by the author of the paper. By analyzing fragments of a short story entitled *Widows* by Hwang Sun-Won, Lederer attempts to demonstrate the difficulties that arise in the translation process when the translator is faced with both explicit and implicit traces of a foreign culture, and more lexical-oriented cultural elements. However, what stands out here, it seems, is a very unclear differentiation between different manifestations of culture, as if the concept itself did emerge each time on two different levels: linguistic and non-linguistic. From the article, it transpires that culture is explicit when concrete linguistic items are used, and remains implicit when it pertains to judgments, customs, beliefs, etc., which is not entirely true as cultural beliefs could also be vividly and markedly expressed via linguistic means themselves. The more appropriate view of culture, especially in the light of translational hermeneutics, should be that the cultural item is always and simultaneously composed of a twofold face: explicit and implicit, where both the explicitness and implicitness depend on the reader’s experience and prior knowledge, as well as on his/her interpretive capabilities. Finally, Lederer is not right when she claims that hermeneutists place a greater emphasis on language than other translation scholars. What should rather be underlined in the first place is that language, according to hermeneutists, is by no means a linguistic tool (see, e.g., Gadamer 1960, the 3<sup>rd</sup> part) but rather a non-independent, holistic entity which cannot exist without the world, whose part is also culture itself. The article, then, has less to do with hermeneutics as it might initially seem. Such a view of hermeneutics as presented in the paper might, perhaps, also explain the reason for the widespread non-understanding of what translational hermeneutics really encompasses and what its roots are.

In an article titled *Quran Translation: A Hermeneutical Case Study*, Seyed Mohammad Alavi analyzes four different exegeses and translations of the Quranic verse 4:34, which relates to “women’s rights and obligations” (p. 309). The author tries to underline “the hermeneutic processes involved in the act of translation” (p. 310), in particular “the hermeneutic processes that take place in the minds of the translators, how the premises of translators shed more light on the actual translation products, and what socio-political implications these renderings might have” (p. 311). The rich-in-details analysis has been interestingly placed against the background of “Iran’s political system, a modern theocracy since the Islamic Revolution of 1979” (p. 311), a methodological approach whose nature can be

regarded as hermeneutical in itself. The article can also be considered a perfect example of the application of the Gadamerian concept of effective history, the notion of the fusion of horizons within translation studies, and the act of understanding as a dialectic of questions and answers. The paper also illustrates effectively the hermeneutical processes inherent in the act of understanding a source text, where particular lexical items, e.g. *al-rijālu*, might trigger different culture- and history-based interpretations relating to the status of men and women, which, in turn, could exert an influence on the final translation product and its understanding by the receiving audience. In addition, the author of the article aptly demonstrates that the translator's decision, especially in regard to the controversial issue of gender, does not arise in a vacuum, but grows out of the broad political, educational and historical system within which they work and live, and their own understanding of the world which surrounds them: "(...) translators take concrete interpretive arguments and reflect this in their translations" (p. 327). As the author rightly underlines, "[t]o judge whether a translation is false or not is not possible unless it becomes clear which premises and assumptions are at work" (p. 330). One could also add that such evaluation is impossible because of power over humans incessantly exercised by history. The paper illustrates starkly the status of the translated text as seen from a hermeneutical perspective, that is, the message constituting "the translators' construction of what the text says to them" (p. 335), as well as the role of the translator, whose task lies not only in *reproducing* the source message, but also in *producing* a new textual entity.

Likewise, George Heffernan, in a paper entitled *Translating Augustine and Interpreting the Academicians: An Application of Übersetzungshermeneutik to the Questionable Relation between an Inaccurate Translation and an Inadequate Interpretation*, presents an idea of how one should see the methodological dimension of translational hermeneutics. The author asks two main questions in his paper: 1) "How should one characterize the relation between Augustinian epistemology and Academic skepticism", and 2) "How is one's interpretation of the relation between Augustine and the Academicians determined by one's translation of *Contra Academicos* and vice versa?" (p. 364). The first question, as Heffernan posits, lies within the scope of philosophy, while the second pertains to translational hermeneutics. According to such differentiation, translational hermeneutics could be understood as a research strand within translation studies, offering, *inter alia*, ways of explaining the role of the translator dealing with philosophical texts, as well as the shape and status of the paratext in translating and editing philosophical works. The author of the paper bases his reflections on the standard English translation of *Contra Academicos* (*Against the Academicians*) produced by Peter King. In this very detailed and intriguing translational analysis, Heffernan attempts to measure the accuracy of the translator's strategies, decisions and comments in the form of footnotes with regard to the question of whether Augustine

was once a real Academic sceptic or not. Contrary to King's views on that matter, Heffernan claims the opposite, saying that *Contra Academicos* does not contain any proof that Augustine was an Academic sceptic at the time of the work. The author of the paper, presenting the reader with convincing linguistic evidence which depicts the impact of the translator's understanding of a given philosophical problem on the shape of the translation product, is right when he claims that "King's interpretation (...) must be reexamined" (p. 379). In general, the paper is a model analysis of "a hermeneutical case study of the questionable relation between an inaccurate translation and an inadequate interpretation" (p. 386), and it also shows the interpretive potential of translations of philosophical works, full of different types of paratexts, in explaining implicit discrepancies between what the original says and what the translator thinks about a given philosophical problem depicted in the source text.

Applied hermeneutics is also the subject of William D. Melaney's text on *Shelley, Hermeneutics and Poetics: Metaphor as Translation*. The author tackles Shelley's theory of the great poem and his view on language by implicitly comparing the capabilities of the human mind to the hermeneutical concept of the historical consciousness, where the human understanding both shapes the future worldview and "continually readjusts" (p. 396) all the past interpretive endeavours, and where "a revolt against authority" (p. 397) can launch a new circle of interpreting tradition, with the metaphor offering an authentic insight. One can ask how the subject of the paper in question relates to translational hermeneutics because the issue is not obvious at first glance. It turns out that Melaney, offering a unique interpretation of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, treats here both the poet and the reader as translators, who, by rendering certain "opaque and limited" (p. 402) experiences into the capabilities of the human mind, "turn the poem into a source of insight that we need to distinguish from a hypothetical original that descended from a literary archeology" (ibid.). What is of greatest value in this paper is an implicit view of translation which, by traversing Melaney's words, can be characterized as having "a dual nature" (p. 403) and expressing "a movement back and forth between an origin that announces its ends and an end that never escapes its origin" (ibid.). In this way the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious, the past and the present, reason and intuition, find their way into the translational experience of every reader who always interprets a literary work by connecting the linguistic layering with historical and experiential being in the current manifestation of the world and by resorting to imagination, which seems to be continually placed between "the sensibility and the intellect" (p. 406). Above all, however, the article in question offers a unique interpretation of the transformational mission of poetry, whose nature itself is hermeneutical and translational at once: to disclose the unseen and unsaid, and to situate the unseen and unsaid within the context available to the reader at any given time.

Frank Garrett, in a paper entitled *Negative Hermeneutics and Translation: The Unworkable Poetry of Wisława Szymborska*, analyzes two poems written by the Polish Nobel laureate (*Brueghel's Two Monkeys* and *Still*), published in 1957 in the volume *Calling Out to Yeti*, with the aim of making clear what he understands by so-called negative hermeneutics as based on Maurice Blanchot's philosophical views. More specifically, the author focuses on the following three "aspects of Szymborska's poetry" (p. 412): "the framing and distantiation the poet utilizes as a means of saying what cannot be said, the grammatology of the texts in their »original« language, and the various conflicts inherent in the text's interpretations and previous translations" (ibid.). The analysis is very interesting in that it opposes the more traditional, hermeneutical literary interpretations which, according to the author, "fail in unlocking and revealing the text's material conditions, the textual aspect that, for Blanchot, allocates a space where literature becomes possible" (412). While Garrett is right that "*over-contextualising*" (p. 427) in Szymborska's poetry might sometimes reduce the "brilliance and insight" (ibid.) of her works, one cannot, however, agree with the author as regards his comments on the meaning of the noun *wołanie* (calling) in the Polish language. The suffix *nie* as a component of this abstract noun should not be confused with the particle *nie*, which in the Polish language is used for negations. The author, it seems, deliberately confuses the two meanings in an attempt to confirm his interpretive assumptions, to support his reading of the poem *Still*. Although Garrett indeed focuses on the materialistic side of language in his approach to interpreting literary works, it is, to my mind, a classic example of overinterpretation, even if, or even more so when, approached from the perspective of negative hermeneutics. This example can also be considered a warning against the approach, where a too literal "translation" of linguistic means in search of the ideal "emptiness" of the text obfuscates the reading and makes it stand in stark contrast to morphological rules governing the composition of single words. One should also draw attention to the fact that the author of the paper, in defence of his own approach, labelled as negative hermeneutics, seems to treat so-called positive hermeneutics as a futile attempt to "fully grasp" (p. 429) the text. Such an opinion must obviously raise certain doubts as hermeneutists also claim that it is not possible for the reader to "fully" comprehend the text which exists only insofar as it gives rise to individual, highly subjective readings.

The last two articles of the volume tackle the issue of translation from a metaphorical perspective, as a socio-cultural problem. The translation of the so-called lived world into the textual layer is an interest of Mao Chen, who in an article titled *Hermeneutics and Life Writing: Ha Jin as a "Migrant" Translator* attempts to demonstrate how the author, here understood as a mediator, "renders" his personal life experiences into a complete literary work while trying to keep subjectivity at bay. More specifically, as Chen claims, the objective of the article is to illustrate "the relevance of a hermeneutical analysis of Ha Jin's work: It shows how

Ha Jin employs literary form to shape personal experience in ways that give the concept of »life writing« a coherent meaning” (p. 432). The paper, unfortunately, leaves the reader unsatisfied as the author does not present how the coherent meaning has been achieved by Ha Jin. The unsatisfactory effect might, probably, also arise from the fact that the paper does not contain any definition of the term *coherence* as used in the text. The conclusions reached by Chen are rather obvious, or even banal, as the author claims what raises no doubts: the writer “translates” what they have experienced throughout their lives into fictional worlds, which are by no means “copies of the outside world” (p. 442) but “fictional equivalents” (ibid.) necessarily modified and reshaped by the creator’s embedment in the social, historical, cultural and political contexts.

A similar theme, namely the translation of the writer’s experience with the exile, has also been tackled by Marcel Inhoff in a paper titled *The Hermeneutics of Culture in D. Walcott’s “The Prodigal”*. The main objective of the article is to analyze the identity crisis that Caribbean writers encountered while contacting other cultures, *inter alia* the European world. Such experiences, which obviously boil down to translating impressions and perceptions as caught especially during travels or when meeting people speaking foreign languages, are called by Inhoff a “structured hermeneutics of culture(s)” (p. 445), which, using the author’s words, could be defined as “an attempt to read the other culture through examining similarities with one’s own” (p. 450). The author of the paper is particularly interested in the divide between the language Walcott writes in (an impeccable, educated, literary sociolect of English) and the Creole-based language of the people about whom he writes, e.g. in his poem *The Prodigal*. The poem has been chosen for analytical purposes because, as Inhoff writes, “[h]ere, Walcott is clearly changing his tropes and focus, exchanging his well-honed and poetry of flux for a new poetry of place” (p. 448). The analysis has been interestingly juxtaposed against James Clifford’s theory of “travelling cultures”, as delineated in his essay published under the same title. The massive change in Walcott’s poetry could be referred to as a very specific type of cultural translation, despite the fact that the author of the paper tries to refrain from naming it in this way. It is worth remembering that the poet was raised and educated in English but this language was not “his own”, so to say, because the culture from which he originated was not English. One can say, then, that Walcott was in a constant flux of movement and translation between what seemed to be foreign and what seemed to be known. In other words, two cultures have been translated and reshaped here: English and Caribbean, with neither of them being the dominant one. What remains of greatest value in this paper, though, is the way M. Inhoff demonstrates how poetry, and writing in general, can become a mediating, hermeneutical process of a translational nature, a process during which one can at least come close to the understanding of what has as yet sneaked out of being understood.



The reviewed publication, well informed by research in the field of philosophical hermeneutics, phenomenology, semiotics, and cultural and literary studies, offers an invitation to evaluate and reconsider the significance of hermeneutics for translation studies, both theoretically and methodologically. With complex issues pertaining to the use of the legacy of philosophical hermeneutics within modern translation theory, this thought-provoking and stimulating book also sheds light on the role that philosophy in general might play within the field of translation *per se*. Rich in its research topics which directly relate to both the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of translational hermeneutics as a separate subdiscipline in its own right, the publication also provides an important step towards delineating possible ways of explaining and interpreting intertwining relations between translation, understanding, interpretation, history, culture, subjectivity and objectivity in all their facets and dimensions. Furthermore, the volume makes a deliberate attempt to identify the boundaries between translational hermeneutics and other research trends within translatology which in recent years have gained in significance. Besides, the publication provides a solid groundwork for further research into translational hermeneutics, and amply demonstrates that the criticism so often levelled at proponents of this “movement” perpetuates unhelpful stereotypes concerning its main tenets. The reviewed volume will be of great interest to a broad spectrum of scholars, not only those dealing with interlingual translation, but also philosophers, semioticians and historians, that is, researchers who view translation more broadly. It is also worth underlining that the majority of the articles in the volume are in English (with only four in German, contrary to common practice in the case of publications pertaining to the hermeneutic approach to translation), which might accurately reflect the fact that representatives of translational hermeneutics have already become fully aware of the necessity of presenting their research in the language which makes it possible for a wide range of scholars to become acquainted with the latest studies conducted within the field of hermeneutics and translation.

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