

Honest impostures and the translation of lyrical poetry

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Introduction

According to J.-J. Lecercle (1999) and his ALTER model of interpretation, making sense of discourse necessarily implies the construal of a mental representation of the speaking subject. Texts are equipped with so called 'images' (Lecercle, 69) which properly interpreted by the readers/listeners, will guide them in the construal process. The resulting representation is necessarily a hypothesis: a theory of the writer's/ speaker's motives, attitudes, personality, emotional states, etc. But however speculative, it is a central part of the process of interpretation.

Therefore, it is the reader who ultimately *puts* the writer *in* the text, and in this sense, reading implies a necessary imposture. The subjective and hypothetical nature of a reader's perception of the speaker-behind-the-text, accounts for the nuance of supplanting implied by the term *imposture*. In construing the speaking voice, a reader can never be completely sure whether the subject he' construes would coincide with the one construed by other readers, or with the one intended by the author. But making sense of a text requires that we assume the risk: we must impose a subject.

Reading, writing and translating involve this kind of imposture. It is my goal in the present paper to investigate the nature of this creative aspect of interpretation in relation to lyrical poetry, as it shapes reading, translation and the reading of translations. I hope that close attention to the phenomenon itself will help translators increase their sensitivity and understanding of authorial presence, which might in return be reflected on translating practice.

1 In this paper, I will use the pronouns she/her to refer to writers and translators; readers will be treated as he/him.

Part I: The lyrical subject...

1. A DEFINITION OF LYRICAL SUBJECT

Let us begin by defining the notion of lyrical subject, as I understand it, and logically derived from Lecerle's theory of interpretation. A lyrical subject is a virtual anthropomorphic presence, that the reader of a lyrical poem conforms in his mind, triggered and controlled by the text, and drawing from his own psychological life, as part of the process of interpretation. This presence is perceived/construed as *if* it had an extra-textual and pre-textual existence, and as *if* it was endowed with an autonomous emotional and intellectual idiosyncrasy which is expressed in the lyrical text. The lyrical poem derives its coherence from that of the lyrical subject, although the lyrical subject is in itself an open and inexhaustible entity, as is the meaning of the text, which is bound to vary from reader to reader, and even from reading to reading.

Responding to the rules of the game implicit in reading poetry, the reader *forgets* that the lyrical presence has been created by himself; as I have pointed out, this presence is felt as if it actually was the very origin of the text. An illusion is created according to which, a lyrical presence is talking to the reader through the poem². This situation actually allows the reader to enter into a (virtual) interpersonal relationship, which opens up the path to processes of emotional identification, empathy, sympathy and the like, which are essential to the literary experience.

The psychological depth of the lyrical presence has actually been generated in and from the psychological depth of the reader. The reader finds in his own inner life the raw materials out of which the lyrical presence is conformed as a thinking and feeling entity, and this has a number of non-trivial implications: the emotional range of a lyrical presence may never go beyond the emotional range of the reader that represents it in his mind. Even when lyrical subjects seem to have exceptionally rich emotional lives, the fact is that they are as just as rich as we can make them, and never richer. In a way, they are just as rich as each one of us –as readers– is.

2 Although the idea of forgetting might seem a bit too sophisticated and far-fetched, the notion is clearly related to the Aristotelian conception of art as imitation; and in the domain of human psychology, this kind of forgetfulness is associated to the process of subjective projection.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL PROJECTION AND POETIC COMMUNICATION

The process through which a reader construes a lyrical presence is quite akin to other psychological processes such as psychological projection and empathy. Both of them imply a certain imposture. In projection, I ascribe “unwittingly [my] beliefs, values or other subjective processes to others” (Reber, 604). In empathy, I tend to assume that others are feeling what I would feel in their situation. In both cases I *put* something mine *in* the place of the other.

Imposture –as projection, as empathy, or as any other related process– seems to be a necessary step in making sense of verbal messages, literary and non-literary. A theory of the speaker’s intentions, feelings, habits, etc. is part of the cognitive context within which we make sense of an utterance.

In its more extreme version, interpretation as imposture would enclose us within radical solipsism, which would render actual communication –as contact and exchange between interlocutors– impossible. Being the reader the one who creates the speaking subject, poetic communication would be a process by which the reader communicates with himself. This is partly the case, and our readings, as well as our translations, will definitely unveil much of ourselves. But there is also room for communication in the traditional sense. Communication between two interlocutors necessarily rests on the fact that the number of things that they share is larger than the number of things in which they differ. What guarantees communication also guarantees the effectiveness of translation, such is Eugene Nida’s argument (2).

Although the psychological materiality of the lyrical presence –emotions, attitudes, values, etc.– is derived from the reader’s own psychological life, we must not forget that it has also been elicited by a number of textual elements. Therefore, if someone changed the textual elements in certain ways, the same reader would probably generate a different presence, even when drawing from the same subjective source –his own subjective life. The reader’s creativity in generating lyrical presences is somewhat guided and, therefore, limited by textual elements.

Now, the poet is usually the first reader of her work and, therefore, the first one who generates a lyrical presence from the text. Unlike the reader, the poet may introduce changes in the text if she does not like the kind of lyrical presence that the draft elicits in her. The translator has exactly the same prerogative. To the extent that poets, translators and readers share a number

of typically human experiences –pain, frustration, love, desire, deception, etc.–, poets and translators may be fully justified in expecting their readers to construe a mental representation of a lyrical subject which is similar enough to the one they derive themselves.

3. RESURRECTING A POINT OF ORIGIN

Since we are dealing with a presence behind the text which is perceived as being the origin of the text itself, it is a matter of academic necessity to offer a way of safely crossing the abyss detected by Barthes' proclamation of the death of the author: "writing –Barthes states– is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin." Shortly before expressing such categorical statement, the French scholar wonders –concerning a fragment from Balzac's *Sarrasine*– "Who is speaking thus?" And his answer: "we shall never know" (3).

The fact that 'we shall never know', does not prevent us from speculating about it, and it does not exclude the possibility that such speculation plays an essential role in the process of interpretation. Admittedly, readers will never be able to reach the real self of the writer, the one and only point of origin –having been metaphorically *destroyed* in the writer's attempt to express it through language. But if writing implies destroying a point of origin, in the view of authors like J.-J. Lecercle (1999), J. Hillis Miller (1977), A. Nehamas (2002) or J. J. E. Gracia (2002), reading necessarily implies construing one; that such construing is merely a *recovering* of the first point of origin is merely an illusion, but one which also plays its role, allowing for the activation of processes of empathy and sympathy which are central to the lyrical experience.

4. THE ANALYSIS OF LYRICAL SUBJECTS

The experience of a lyrical presence is a rather automatic effect which can be very easily exemplified. A very brief passage, such as the opening stanza of Leonard Cohen's "The Famous Blue Raincoat" would perfectly do:

It's four in the morning, the end of December
I'm writing you now just to see if you're better
New York is cold, but I like where I'm living
There's music on Clinton Street all through the evening.

My experience of this lyrical subject could be roughly verbalized in commonsensical terms: I am faced with a male presence –it is a *man* singing–

who is still awake at four in the morning. It would not be too out the way assuming that a certain emotional instability is keeping him awake; he is probably a man with a rich emotional life. He is also concerned about a friend, and worried about him, which points to a capacity of caring for others, a tendency to establish harmonic affective links with people. The fact that music is stronger than cold in conforming his preferential world is also an interesting clue. A nice man, intensely alive, full of feelings, and musical sensitivity. This is a lyrical presence, which I construe behind the text, prompted by the text, but making choices which actually reveal my own subjective and psychological complexion.

Here is one of the reasons why this kind of approaches is utterly embarrassing and harshly despised by the formalist tradition still alive in our intellectual milieu: in my attempt to describe the lyrical subject, I am disclosing and *imposing* my private inner world³. Still, although this is impossible to prove, I claim that the game of reading lyrical poetry requires what the father of the humanizing approach to Shakespearean characters – professor A.C. Bradley – referred to as “reading force” (184). If we are to enjoy lyrical discourse, we must put in it as much of ourselves as we possibly can.

The question now arises, concerning lyrical subjects, of whether they constitute analyzable entities; and if they do, how we are to analyze them. Lyrical subjects are not the only anthropomorphic entities to be found in the literary worlds. According to Rimmon-Kennan, Booth’s implied author is another such entity (86) (Booth 67). The most obvious case of literary anthropomorphic entities are, of course, fictional characters in drama and narrative. The distance between a lyrical subject and a fictional character is not that long if one considers Pagnini’s notion that “the lyrical genre [...] could derive from the single-actor theatre” (4)⁴. This view is conspicuously close to that of the New Critics; Wimsatt did not hesitate to postulate the presence of a “dramatic speaker” endowed with thoughts and attitudes between the reader

3 After all, perhaps this man is up at four in the morning because he goes to work early; he might be writing an e-mail to a friend who has the flu; perhaps his taste for music is so superficial that the habitual drone of Christmas carols on the street is enough to keep him satisfied, etc. However, paraphrasing Bradley: ‘If we feel these objections, do we feel them when we are reading [the poem] with all our force, or only when we are reading it in a half-hearted manner?’ (184)

4 Pagnini derives this notion from the anthropologist Oskar Eberle, for whom the essence of theatre consists in a “an individual who represents another I, who puts on a mask, and acts with voice and gestures according to the characteristic mode of a being different from himself”. (Pagnini, 4)

and the poet (5). Brooks and Warren defined the lyrical poem as a ‘little drama’; the poem –they write– “is an utterance. There is someone who utters. There is a provocation to utterance. There is an audience.” (112).

Implicit in this kind of reasoning one can easily find the typically formalist claim of separating the lyrical subject from the empirical subject, and deny any value to the biographic approach in criticism and explication. But in so doing, they present the lyrical subject as a fictional character, and consequently, I assume, it must necessarily be analyzable by using the same techniques used in drama and narrative by authors such as M. Pfister, S. Chatman or, more recently, J. Culpeper, among others.

Käthe Hamburger, in *Die Logik der Dichtung* considers that the lyrical subject is perceived by readers not as a fictional entity but rather as real subject, talking to us readers, and responding subjectively to a real world which is also ours. This view also reinforces our notion that readers construe the lyrical subject as an anthropomorphic entity. As R.D. Sell points out, “to say that a “real” author and a “real” reader *truly* are more real than implied ones will never quite do” (160); the presence that I construe behind the poem is as real –actually as hypothetical and operative– as the one I construe from the words and actions of the poet if I ever have the chance to meet her. Besides, even if we treat lyrical subjects as fictional characters, we will find that many of the authors who write extensively on characterization, like those mentioned in the previous paragraph, belong to the humanizing school, which has it that readers make sense of fictional characters by resorting to the same kind of processes they use in making sense of real people⁵.

5. ‘SUBJECTLESS’ POETRY AND THE LYRICAL FUNCTION

It is necessary to consider the possibility of a poetry devoid of lyrical presence, or actually, the possibility of a text devoid of presence. One would immediately think of such texts as traffic signs, official warnings like ‘do not walk on the grass’, or even the scientific prose of a handbook of, say, mathematics. The fact that traffic signs and official warnings are not efficient if handmade by conscientious citizens points to the necessary presence of a subject minimally

5 At the de-humanizing end of the spectrum, characters are vaguely defined as “patterns of recurrence” (Weinsheimer, 195), functions or actants. This view precludes the possibility of considering empathy and sympathy towards characters as a necessary part of the literary experience. Such perspective encapsulates literary experience within the ivory tower of aestheticism.

characterized as endowed with authority and credibility. In the case of scientific prose, the extremely low profile of evaluative and connotative language conveys an effect of invisibility. However, a minimum characterization in terms of authority and credibility is also necessary here. Compare the following texts:

- A. Lacto-densímetro de Quevenne.**— Es un areómetro que puesto á flotar en la leche indica su densidad. Está graduado especialmente para la leche de vacas; pero modificando los datos refiriéndolos á la densidad media de las otras leches, se podrán utilizar para éstas sus indicaciones. (Dorronsoro 1905)
- B. Estoy 100% seguro de que el lactio-densímetro de Queviene, o Queveni, no lo sé, sirve para medir la densidad de la leche. Y se mete en la leche, o se deja flotando, creo, e indica la densidad, y eso.**

Both texts convey, roughly, the same basic proposition. But it is obviously the expressions of certainty and uncertainty in the case of B, among other subtler details, what reveals a richer presence in B than in A. In comparing both texts one would say that A has no authorial presence, but this transparency actually conveys an effect of authority and credibility, and these are aspects that can only be attributed to an anthropomorphic entity.

There is a certain kind of poetry which shares such features with scientific prose. Let me provide a brief example:

**Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.**
(T.S. Eliot)

The immediate conclusion we can draw from all this is that all texts have at least a minimum presence which accounts for basic aspects such as relevance, authority and credibility. On the other hand, there are texts which direct the reader's attention towards a more developed presence, and promote the construing of fuller entities. It is possible to view this within the frame of discourse strategies, or even language functions.

There is a referential function, and a referential strategy which consists in directing the reader's attention towards the outer world of (referred) things. There is, of course, a poetic function –famously described by Jakobson– and, why not, a poetic strategy that leads the reader's attention towards language itself. But there are texts which also have what I would call a lyrical function and strategy, which directs the reader's attention towards the speaking subject's states and personality traits. This is actually what characterization researchers call self-characterization. Let me exemplify with two poetic texts, the first one being an example of poetry where the referential and the poetic predominate, and the second, a case where the lyrical predominates.

**A. La semilla contiene todo el aire;
el grano es sólo un pájaro enterrado;
la nube y la raíz sueñan lo mismo;
la savia abre la palma de la espiga
donde el sol y la lluvia se recrean
y amasan con su amor el pan caliente [...]**
(Valente)

**B. Son las diez de la mañana.
He desayunado con jugo de naranja,
me he vestido de blanco
y me he ido a pasear y a no hacer nada,
hablando por hablar,
pensando sin pensar, feliz, salvado.**
(Celaya)

Text A resembles scientific prose. It has the effect of directing the reader's attention to the sensual richness, textures, colors, etc. of the natural world referred to. There is also, in text A, a syllabic rhythmic pattern, where each line is a sense-group, accommodated in the space of eleven syllables each, and where syntactic structures tend to be repeated; that is, there is a poetic strategy which leads the reader's attention towards language itself. And, there are also, in text A, a number of aspects which point in the direction of the lyrical subject: a lyrical function and strategy. Apart from the notions of relevance, authority and credibility –the zero point of self-characterization–, we are faced with a subject who thinks that the seed is a buried bird; a speaker who conceives of clouds and roots as beings endowed with the capacity to dream; who views sun and rain as entities that can and do love. These are the kind of anomalies that lead our attention towards the lyrical subject. And so, poem A is lyric to a certain degree.

But in text B, the presence of the lyrical subject is not as subtle as in text A. Here the speaker is textually represented as the first person of most verbal forms; the subject and his morning activities are actually the main theme; we are invited, in every single line, to picture him, his clothes, his feelings and thoughts. There is, certainly, a referential and a poetic function at work in poem B, but one of the most important differences between poems A and B is the predominance of the lyrical function in the second and its near absence in the first.

Now, I will not say that the translation of the first is either easier or more difficult than the translation of the second. Actually, the translation of any poetry is always a risky and complex business. What I do claim, without hesitation, is that the translation of predominantly lyrical poetry has a number of specificities which are derivable from the presence and role of the lyrical subject. We could bump here into a very particular kind of traductological situation: one where the referential world is recovered, a poetic strategy implemented, and where the lyrical presence has been sacrificed or altered in different degrees.

I do not think this situation is necessarily problematic in the sense that a translation will be wrong if it does not allow for the construal of a lyrical subject identical or equivalent to the one we would construe from the original. According to the theory I have presented, any translator may only be able to project, both in the reading of the original and in the reading of her translation, a subject derived from her own private psychology. And no matter how she does it, each reader will construe the lyrical presence according to his. However, the kind of awareness to presence that I try to promote with the present paper, might be a useful tool in the hands of any vocational translator of lyrical poetry, who might now consider the possibility of selecting between a choice of translating options by bringing into play criteria based not only on the referential and poetic strategies, but also on the lyrical strategies available.

Part II: ... and its translation

1. TRANSLATING AND TRANSFORMING A LYRICAL SUBJECT: AN EXAMPLE

Let us consider now a particular case of translation of a lyrical poem. I have chosen the first stanza of Tony Harrison's long poem v. in Jesús López Pacheco's version (1996).

**Next millennium you'll have to search quite hard
to find my slab behind the family dead,
butcher, publican, baker, now me, bard
adding poetry to their beef, bear and bread.**
(Harrison)

**El próximo milenio os costará encontrar,
entre las de mis muertos, mi tumba de juglar:
uno vendía carne; cerveza, el tabernero,
y, aunque yo vendo versos, vendió pan el tercero.**
(López Pacheco)

Perhaps López Pacheco's most remarkable achievement in the translation of v. is the implementation of a poetic strategy, while retaining the referential strategy. The translator proposes a stanza of four lines, rhymed AABB, with a length of 13/14 syllables per line. If the original poet's conception of poetry is to be taken into account by the poet-translator, then any translation of Harrison's verse must try to afford what Lopez Pacheco aims at. Harrison himself has often alluded to the need for poetry to be rhymed and subjected to rhythm, rather than let it flow as fashionable 20th century chopped-up prose. This would be enough of a criterion for bringing the poetic function to the forefront in the translation. However, in giving priority to the poetic function, the lyrical function may be easily left unattended.

López Pacheco makes a number of decisions which affect our perception of the lyrical subject behind his stanza. For example, he opts to address a second person plural –“os costará encontrar”. There is no way to know whether Harrison's lyrical subject is addressing a singular or a plural *you*. But if we construe it as addressing a singular *you* which talks to a personal *me*, then as a reader I will feel personally interpellated, and I will construe the subject as ready to establish an intimate and personal relationship with me. Such lyrical subject would stand on my very same level, not as a public speaker in front of a audience, but rather as a close friend, sharing confidences with me.

This personal and intimate interaction, which qualifies our perception of the lyrical subject, cannot be present in López Pacheco's version. His lyrical subject speaks, so to say, from the podium –“os costará” rather than ‘te costará’. Therefore, we may construe him as a social mediator, fully aware of his role, a socially committed and responsible poet, if you want, speaking to the people, designing a public speech, rather than as a close friend effortlessly talking to me, carefree and spontaneous⁶.

6 Coincidentally, López Pacheco himself was a social poet and political activist.

Harrison's expression "the family dead" presents also colloquial features which point to a close relation with the reader. This lyrical subject perceives and presents himself as the member of a family, and therefore as a gregarious kind of person. This gregarious quality is not maintained in López Pacheco's version, where the lyrical subject uses the possessive –"mis muertos"– and includes no reference to his family. López Pacheco's expression rather points to an existentially felt individualism and raises a subtle social barrier between the subject and the reader, which is significantly absent in the expression "the family dead". By the use of the definite article, Harrison presents both the family and the dead as if they were already known to the interlocutor. In this way, Harrison's lyrical subject may be construed both as an extraverted and agreeable speaker, and such traits are not as prominent, in my opinion, in López Pacheco's version. The lyrical subject in the Spanish version is felt as someone more formal and distant.

Another of López Pacheco's moves causes the introduction of the notion "to sell", which is absent from the original. Harrison's subject seems rather focused on the materiality of handcrafted foodstuffs. His concern seems to be with taste and nutrition, and there is no mention of the transactional dimension. The point behind all this is the description of the poet as craftsman, and of poetry not so much as something sellable, but as something tasty, nutritious and necessary. On the other hand, López Pacheco's subject thematizes the act of selling with up to three forms of the verb 'vender'. All this, again, qualifies our perception of the lyrical subject. The image of a working-class poet who proudly writes for the working-class, attending their primary needs with tasty working-class poetry, reinforced in Harrison's stanza by the very poetic strategy –especially through enumeration and alliteration–, is not so readily retrievable from the Spanish version.

Actually, López Pacheco's text offers the possibility of construing the subject rather as man fully aware of his individuality and his distance from the working class –which is something we often find in Harrison's poetry. Notice how in the last line of the stanza, the Spanish version includes an adversative structure –"aunque yo vendo versos"– which is not present in the original. My guess is that López Pacheco has introduced this element in an attempt to comply with the poetic function; and in this sense it is successful, since it gives his line the right length and allows for a natural rhyme. The referential function is not very much altered, but introducing this adversative structure has serious consequences in relation with the lyrical strategy. Where

Harrison's subject seeks a leveling of professions and products, López Pacheco's emphasizes the difference between selling verses and selling bread: the phrase "aunque yo vendo versos" emphasizes the exceptionality of his profession rather than the notion of continuity. And this cancels the most characteristic feature of Harrison's lyrical subject –his gregarious nature– and points again towards individualism.

2. ON THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF INVISIBILITY

As far as I know, the notion of translating a text as to retain presence has not been directly addressed in any theory of translation. Venuti (1995) certainly speaks of authorial presence as something of a tyrannous entity before which, the translator has often tried to become invisible. In the light of the theory presented above, I could make a few comments concerning Venuti's arguments.

First of all, the so called authorial presence is a virtual construction elaborated by the reader/translator and construed from the reader's/translator's psychological life. Truly enough, when reading certain texts we will all agree that 'there is an authorial presence', but such presence is personally construed by each reader, and rather than the alien force that Venuti envisages⁷, it is the result of psychological projection triggered by textual elements. Therefore, the authorial presence which Venuti considers opposed to the translator's presence is actually a projection of the translator's self.

Surrendering to the authorial presence is not becoming humbly or masochistically invisible, but actually proposing one's personal vision of the authorial presence. The conflict between authorial and translator presences is an illusion. My guess is that if two different translators of the same text attempt to recover in their respective translation an exact equivalent the authorial presence they perceive –therefore surrendering to it completely–, I, as a reader of both translations will probably build different authorial presences from each of them –unless, of course, they come up with identical translations.

According to Venuti, translators tend to resort to the style of scientific prose to become invisible (5). Certainly, a minimization of the lyrical function/

7 In Venuti's own words "Translation is required to efface its second order status with transparent discourse, producing the illusion of authorial presence whereby the translated text can be taken as the original. However much the individualistic conception of authorship devalues translation, it is so pervasive that it shape translator's self-presentations, as a process of identification with the author." (7)

strategy and a maximization of the referential function/strategy will make readers construe a minimally characterized subject –viewed in terms of relevance, authority and credibility. Such kind of translations cannot result from a desire to preserve authorial presence, but rather from a desire not to do so. Invisibility in this sense does not mean that the translator’s voice dissolves before authorial presence, but rather, that authorial presence has been substituted by a minimally self-characterized subject. In other words, the translator has preferred to give us a minimally characterized presence, rather than assuming the risks of giving us her personal understanding of the authorial presence.

A translator who tries to translate so as to recover authorial presence in its absolute fullness is unwittingly leaving his or her own footprint already. A translator who attempts to leave his or her own personal footprint in the translated version is doing so wittingly. But in fact, none of the two are invisible translators.

3. CONSIDERING THE RANK OF STRATEGIES

According to N. Hofmann (quoted in Gutt 15): “the highest obligation of the translator is to develop a scheme for ranking those elements that contribute to the aesthetic effect perceived.” According to the theory here presented, in translating poetry it would be essential to determine the balance established in the original between the three functions/strategies. If after our personal consideration of this aspect of discourse, we decide that the lyrical strategy clearly predominates over the poetic and the referential, then we could legitimately sacrifice any of the secondary aspects in favor of the first. Poetry where the main effect is understood as a special kind of interaction with a particular anthropomorphic subject should be translated in a way that at least such interactive experience may be derived from the translated text. In my opinion, in the example analyzed above, López Pacheco understood that the poetic and referential functions were much more important than the lyrical function itself, and his translation consequently offers an interpersonal experience which differs qualitatively from that of the original. My point is not so much criticizing the work of fellow translators like López Pacheco, but rather opening up the path for a consideration of the lyrical strategy as a valid criterion to guide the translation of certain texts.

4. STYLE AND THE LYRICAL STRATEGY

What I have referred to as lyrical strategy or self-characterization strategy is clearly connected to what the theorists of translation call style. The following is a classical definition by classical translation scholar:

Style is the essential characteristic of every piece of writing, the outcome of the writer's personality and his emotions at the moment, and no single paragraph can be put together without revealing in some degree the nature of its author. (Savory 54)

I think we can safely assume that those textual elements associated with style, and indirectly linked to the writer's personality and states are precisely the textual elements which trigger a reader's construal of the lyrical subject. This connection between text and author has been theorized by many other scholars, but even when nobody questions this vectorial aspect of style, that is, its pointing towards authorial presence, the traditional analysis of style develops the direction towards meaning. This is what happens in Gutt's understanding of the role of style:

one might well argue that the point of preserving stylistic properties lies not in their intrinsic value, but rather in the fact that they provide clues that guide the audience to the interpretation intended by the communicator. We shall refer to such clues as communicative clues (Gutt 134).

So, the stylistic vectors which were supposed to lead to the authorial presence, are now referred to as communicative clues, which lead to meaning. And this is still consistent with our theory of reading. Actually, one construes the speaking subject as the anthropomorphic originator of the message, and then one construes meaning as *her* meaning. But in Gutt's approach the process has been short-circuited, and as a result, the act of reading is viewed only as an act of retrieving sense, and not, also, as an interpersonal experience.

Style is bidirectional. It points to the speaking subject, and then it points to meaning *Das* coming from the subject. The two aspects are interrelated, but it is both possible and frequent to describe style in only one of its vectorial properties. We will see this more clearly with an example. Let us consider again Harrison's opening stanza of *v*.

The traditional analysis of style would focus on aspects such as the enumeration present in the last two lines, reinforced as it is by alliteration. In following the direction of meaning, we would say that the rhetorical figures

mentioned point to a semantic leveling of *butcher = publican = baker = bard*, and *poetry = beef = beer = bread*. The elements are re-categorized in a way that the profession of the poet and his produce are made equal to the other professions and produce; and this sends off the message that, for this lyrical subject the profession of the poet is as essential, as tough, as working-class, as the other three; and poetry as a product is also as essential, as physical, as working-class as the other three. Having said this, the role of stylistic features have been explained, but only in one direction.

In order to develop the other direction one would have to consider the following questions: Which kind of poet would equate his profession to that of the butcher, the publican and the baker? Which kind of poet would strive for his poetry to be as essential as food? Which kind of poet would feel proud of belonging to the working class? In providing an answer to these question I will conform in my mind the image of man endowed with humbleness, social commitment, an altruist desire to be helpful, a gregarious instinct and sense of loyalty, etc. I can establish a personal relation with such individual, I can admire his perspective, I can value his personal stance, etc. And of course, as a translator, I can try to make sure that such a man be construed from my translation of this stanza.

The second part of the analysis, again, betrays the personality of the reader. It might be claimed to be unscientifically subjective; but I very much doubt that without subjectivity, and without this kind of subjective projections, we would be able to enjoy any literary product. The formalist approach, in its *scientificity*, has insistently tried to reduce poetry to meaning. This has caused a lamentable dissociation between reading poetry and analyzing poetry. I think this situation has not had a serious influence neither in the personal enjoyment of poetry nor in its successful translation. But it has caused a parallel dissociation between the act of translating lyrical poetry and the theory of translation. I just hope that the perspectives presented in the present paper might help to bridge the gap between theory and private intuitions.

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