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Book Review: Deane-Cox, Sharon. 2016. *Retranslation: Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation* [2014]. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 210, \$35.96. ISBN: 9781474275477.

As may be inferred from the title, in this volume Sharon Deane-Cox analyzes the dynamics of retranslation, such as frequency of appearance, interrelation between versions, and the socio-cultural factors governing translation choices and marketing strategies. The aim of this study is to detect a linear trend toward improvement over time, as theorized by Antoine Berman in his Retranslation Hypothesis (henceforth RH), according to which retranslation derives from the need to at least reduce the failures of the original translation (Berman 1990: 5). To this end, Deane-Cox builds a corpus comprising all the (re)translations of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857) and Sand's *La Mare au Diable* (1846) published specifically for the British market. The choice is not accidental, but derives from the linguistic peculiarities of each novel, which are essential to unravel their main purpose and, consequently, are difficult – if not impossible – to translate properly.

In terms of structure, the book is divided into two parts: Part 1, comprising the Introduction and Chapters 1 to 3, provides a background of the analysis, explaining the mechanisms governing the field of (re)translation, from socio-cultural influences to the struggle between the economic and symbolic capital of a book; Part 2, comprising Chapters 4 to 6, is the core of the study, and lays the foundations for the comparative analysis of the two novels, proposing a fine-tuned methodology followed by the case studies on *Madame Bovary* and *La Mare au Diable*. To ensure a better understanding of the specific linguistic nuances analyzed, the reader

is also provided with back translations from the original French. Finally, the Conclusion summarizes the findings of the comparative study, in light of which a new approach to retranslation is put forth.

The Introduction starts from the premise that literary translation is an act of interpretation and, as such, implies a misreading of the source text (henceforth ST) determined by the values of the target culture. For this reason, the ST can always be subject to further interpretation, hence the need for retranslation. In this section, the author presents the aim of her study, which is to find out whether the phenomenon of retranslation follows the aforementioned RH by Berman. This hypothesis, in turn, echoes Goethe's (1992: 60-3) belief, according to which there are three epochs of (re)translation, where the third is the highest because, in such periods, the goal of the translation is to achieve perfect identity with the original, so that the one does not exist instead of the other, but in the other's place. However, Deane-Cox questions the concept of achieving perfection through reiteration over time, as it seems blind first to the existence of external influences beyond the text (ideology, economics, etc.), and second to the possibility of a step backward, contradicting the linear advancement theorized.

In Chapter 1, Deane-Cox discusses her analytical approach to investigating the socio-cultural factors influencing (re)translation, drawing on the work of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. More specifically, his concept of literary field, "a force-field acting on all those who enter it and acting in a differential manner according to the position they occupy there [...], a field of competitive struggles which tend to conserve or transform this force-field" (Bourdieu 1996: 232). The two principles at stake in this struggle are economic and symbolic capital, meaning the commercial success and the prestige of a (re)translation. To identify the agents determining the two types of capital, Deane-Cox resorts to the analysis of paratextual and extratextual material concerning her two case studies. The former is further divided into peritext, i.e. all the elements situated within the same volume (Genette 1997: 4), such as material format, book cover, dedication, prologue, postface, etc., and epitext, i.e. any paratextual elements not materially situated within the same book but circulating in a

limitless physical and social space (Ibid. 344), such as interviews with the author, writings by a third party and authorized by the author, etc. The latter, extratextual material, includes articles and reviews related to the translations, translators, publishers, and ST authors.

Using the aforementioned criteria, Chapter 2 explores the behaviour of the eight English (re)translations of *Madame Bovary*, from 1886 to 2011, to verify how socio-cultural conditions and mutual rivalry can influence not only linguistic but also marketing choices. What emerges from this analysis is that, when Flaubert published his novel, French translated literature held what Even-Zohar (1990, 48) defines a ‘peripheral position’ within the British literary polysystem, first because the educated elite could read French, so there was no actual need for translation, and second because the moral authorities of Britain distrusted French morality. This is the reason why the first English translation appeared almost thirty years after the publication of the ST. This chapter also shows how retranslation is linked to marketing, which exploits the (tendentious) idea that «new equals improved» (Deane-Cox 2016: 56) used by publishing companies as a strategy to make money.

Following the structure of the preceding analysis, Chapter 3 focuses on the seven English (re)translations, from 1847 to 2005, of the pastoral novel *La Mare au Diable*. The book is divided into 2 sections: the actual novel and the *Appendix*, an ethnographic study of the country wedding which concludes the first section. Unfortunately, the *Appendix* was ignored by translators until the fourth retranslation by Sedgwick (1895), despite its crucial role in unravelling the author’s aim, which is to facilitate cultural understanding between citizens and peasants. Once again, the study shows how socio-cultural vicissitudes in English society—Victorian morality, the rise of the cheap press, the economic downturn in the 1930s and the critical rehabilitation of Sand—influenced the retranslations of the novel.

Chapter 4 sets out the lines of inquiry which identify the characteristics of the two STs and, at a later stage, suggests concrete benchmarks to define how close the language of the original French works is to their English retranslations. To this end, Deane-Cox combines elements of narrative theory, such as ‘temporality’, ‘relationality’, ‘causal emplotment’, and

‘selective appropriation’, with concepts of narratology, such as ‘voice’ and ‘focalization’, and Halliday’s (2004) Systemic Functional Grammar. Narrative theory is employed to assess how the worlds described in the STs, with their memories, identities, and beliefs, have been reconstructed through translation. Narratology and Systemic Functional Grammar are applied specifically to analyze how (re)translators tackled Flaubert’s disorientating use of Free Indirect Speech, which is a peculiarity of his style. Indeed, as stated by Nida (1959: 19), translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, not only in terms of meaning but also in terms of style.

The methodological approach then gives way to the practical part of the study. Chapter 5 presents a detailed comparative analysis between the original *Madame Bovary* and the eight English (re)translations. This section aims at detecting a linear trend toward improvement in retranslation over time (RH), focusing especially on two elements: Flaubert’s critique of provincial life and the merging between the author himself and the main character, Emma, masterfully achieved in the ST through Free Indirect Speech. What emerges from the data is that no progressive trend can be identified. On the contrary, retranslation choices show peaks and troughs, disproving Berman’s hypothesis. The same applies to the *Appendix* of *La Mare au Diable*, whose only four English (re)translations have been analysed in Chapter 6 with respect to Sand’s purpose: the ethnographic study of Berrichon traditions and patois to facilitate cultural understanding. On the one hand, the appearance of the *Appendix* from the fourth retranslation onward supports the notion of retranslation as improvement, since the importance of this section has been finally acknowledged over time. On the other hand, the study of relationality, temporality, selective appropriation, and causal emplotment underlines unsystematic behavior in (re)translations, characterized, once again, by peaks and troughs. Furthermore, some translation choices have even proved to be in contrast with Sand’s idea of the author as cultural mediator, as they disrupt the relationship between the narrator and the reader, failing to convey the importance of cultural otherness.

The Conclusion restates the absence of linear progression in retranslation, disproving Berman's RH and the history-as-progress model since they are too rigid to explain the different patterns and choices each retranslation presents. At the same time, Deane-Cox proposes a new approach to retranslation: rather than examining it in terms of textual proximity to the ST, it would be better to consider each (re)translation as an individual world, with a different interpretation of the meaning, style, and structure of the original text. Consequently, they do not cooperate to restore the original ST, but they are independent entities resulting from social, cultural, and economic circumstances.

In general, this study is very engaging, especially for Translation Studies scholars, since it disproves a commonly held belief in the literary and translation field, the history-as-progress model of (re)translation, providing at the same time a new replicable methodology adaptable to further studies in retranslation. After all, when exploring this subject, it is essential to keep in mind that, as suggested by Hanne (2006: 210), translation has a partial and imperfect nature; consequently, no single translation is exhaustive or final. Deane-Cox provides ample explanation of the theories she draws on to support her analysis, which are systematically summarized in tables, thus ensuring quick access to the theoretical framework she discusses. That said, a good amount of prior knowledge is required to achieve a full understanding of the issue at hand. Therefore, this book is recommended for postgraduates, researchers, and scholars. Younger students interested in this topic may need to rely on further readings to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the theories debated here. As a final and minor note, a few inconsistencies in the bibliography and in-text citations could have been avoided.

## Bibliography

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**Angelica Petrucci** earned a Bachelor's degree in Linguistic Mediation and Intercultural Communication *summa cum laude* at SSML Gregorio VII of Rome in 2014. Her academic career concentrates on translation and interpreting to and from English, Spanish, French and Chinese. In 2018 she completed a Master's degree in Linguistics and Translation Studies at the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', focusing in particular on Audiovisual Translation. She currently works as a freelance translator.