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**JOLANTA WAWRZYCKA, ERIKA MIHÁLYCSA (EDS.),  
“RETRANSLATING JOYCE FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY”,  
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James Joyce, and in particular his masterpiece *Ulysses* occupies a unique position in the history of European literary modernism. In her famous theory of the literary world, Pascale Casanova (2004) places it/him at the Greenwich meridian, the measure against which smaller literary cultures can judge their progress towards modernism. Because of its central position within the literary field, and its simultaneously translation-defying and translation-inviting playful approach to language and languages, *Ulysses* is a rich source of inspiration on the possibilities and challenges of translation. The new volume edited by Jolanta Wawrzycka and Erika Mihálycsa is a delightful proof of the transcreative power that is released in moving across languages. With its 17 chapters, preceded by an excellent introduction by the editors, the collection on retranslating Joyce functions like a kaleidoscope of translational interpretations and linguistic affordances in many languages and cultures.

In spite of its title that suggests a wider perspective to Joyce, the volume mainly focuses on translations of *Ulysses* – and mainly in European languages – while other works by Joyce are discussed only briefly. It has been authored by devoted Joyceans, that is, Joyce translators and/or Joyce scholars, and the combination of erudition and hands-on experience in the chapters is very appealing. Many chapters are sneak previews to on-going retranslation

processes or translators' or editors' reflections on their own completed work, offering the reader possibilities for looking over the translator's shoulder and joining in the complexities of translational decision-making.

While the blurb text places the volume at the intersection of three disciplines – Joyce studies, translation studies, and translation theory – my impulse is to place the volume first and foremost within comparative literature, and to see translation studies (or theory, if you like) as a field where supportive viewpoints have been borrowed. The volume also offers something in return. In current translation studies, new directions are actively being sought and new forms of activity are being examined. One newcomer to limelight is transcreation, a new way of labelling and perceiving extremely creative translatorial practices. Creativity is very much at the heart of this volume, and the authors offer a wide array of neologisms to explain and name the particular creativities. Dislocation, re-linguaging, transsemantification, transplaining, re-foreignisation, fictionalisation and many other creative terms offer many new windows into what happens in creative translation and retranslation.

In this review, I will not follow the standard model of describing each of the chapters plus the introduction with a couple of sentences. Instead, I will focus on some central themes that reflect the nature of this particular volume and cut across different chapters. In doing this, I will shamelessly follow eclectically my own preferences. I therefore need to remind you that this review is written from a perspective of a translation studies scholar interested in retranslation first and Joyce only secondarily, and Joyce scholars will likely make other choices in their reviews. I do realise that this approach will not do full justice to the richness of nuance in the volume, but I hope it will provide appetizers that will encourage readers to get their hands on the entire publication.

To begin with, the focus of the collective volume, **re-translating Joyce**, is worth pausing over. Indeed, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe, Joyce has been translated already. In most if not all European languages one or more translations of his major work has been published, and so 21<sup>st</sup> century Joyce translation is by definition retranslation. It is also not a minor point that Joyce's works are out of copyright since 2012, and the proliferation effect of this legal and financial factor is evident across the chapters if one follows the publication dates of most of the most recent retranslations. We can also expect new retranslations and revisions to emerge, reinforcing the image of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the age of retranslating in the Joycean world.

The editors provide an informative introduction to what kind of a creature retranslation is, debunking easy shorthands such as the "retranslation hypothesis", and reflecting on its convoluted history (pp. 2–6). The idea behind the hypothesis – that first translations tend to be assimilative and target-oriented, and that only retranslation can get closer to the original – has taken much space in retranslation theory and empirical case studies, although the limits of its explanatory power have been well known for some two decades already. Although most chapters are designed around comparisons between old and new translations, the volume avoids the trap of simplified patterns of thought on assimilation versus foreignisation.

A particularly fresh take on the retranslation hypothesis is the one by Kris Peeters and Guillermo Sanz Gallego (Ch. 11) who put forward a Bakhtinian revised version of retranslation hypothesis, suggesting that rather than more "faithful" or source-oriented, retranslations might tend to be more *dialogical* and engage in a both/and (rather than either/or) approach to translation solutions. Whether or not this hypothesis will prove to stand the empirical tests remains to be seen, but it definitely has the power to move discussions away from the closer-further measurements implied in the original hypothesis that echo a longstanding Schleiermacherian dualism in our thinking of what translations can be like. In the case of an extremely heteroglossic and dialogical author such as Joyce, it certainly seems only logical to aim to measure how dialogical the translations are, whether or not they follow a particular temporal sequence.

What needs to be understood is that any comparison between first and subsequent translations is not a comparison of two creatures that are alike: a first translation is part of the context of the new translation, and cannot but somehow influence the process. The complexities of this influence are demonstrated in many chapters, for example by the translator Jolanta Wawrzycka's account of her ongoing translation work (Ch. 6). She explains how she works through and with the first translator, both gaining confidence from similarities and creating her own voice through their differences.

Another apparently simple but on a closer look complex division is retranslation versus revision. In many translation projects these two processes blend to one another in ways that defy easy classifications (see Paloposki, Koskinen 2010). While retranslating literature has received a significant amount of theoretical attention, the less glamorous and shady practice of revising or re-editing of classics has remained a much more hidden activity. The challenges of revising are amply demonstrated in several chapters (2, 3,

4, 5, 7 and 17), perhaps most forcefully by Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes (Ch. 14) whose adventures in the labyrinth of translation policy and politics lead them to summarise the experience as follows: “never agree to revise an existing translation” (p. 271).

As Rosa Maria Bollettieri Bosinelli and Ira Torresi (Ch. 13) compellingly argue, in translation it may be necessary to resort to micro-domestication on local level to achieve foreignisation on a macro level. This question of the interplay between global and local translation strategies is a major issue for case study-oriented retranslation research. Case studies tend to be analyzed section by section and reported by select examples. Also in this volume, stylistic decisions are often analyzed through a comparison of translation solutions of a few sentences at most. These ample examples, often comparative over more than one language, show the authors’ attention to detail and analytic skill, but as the examples accumulate over chapters, one begins to wonder whether other, more holistic analytic tools might also be needed to do full justice to translators’ *translation projects* (Berman 1995). Indeed, in retranslation research, Antoine Berman has become famous for the aforementioned retranslation hypothesis that was not really his own making and that does not do much to our understanding of what retranslation is or does. His posthumously published monograph on critiquing retranslation offers a much more nuanced framework for appreciating first and subsequent translators’ overall aims and horizons. This contribution is not among the references in the volume, but it might prove useful for taking the research of? Joyce translations and retranslations further (see Niskanen 2021).

Also, none of the chapters employs computer-assisted text analysis tools.

Might this be another new development for the 21<sup>st</sup> century Joyce studies that would shed new light on Joycean retranslations? And if so, what kinds of multilingual corpora might be developed and what kinds of new questions that could escape the first-subsequent/ flawed-improved categorizations to which any retranslation research design can easily fall pray? Case studies such as the ones compiled in this volume on Joyce have been the “default” design in retranslation research, but to gain new insights it is also necessary to compile data from other perspectives. In Chapter 17, Sam Slote discusses Derrida’s quantifying analysis of the “phantom yeses” that are multiplied in the French translation of *Ulysses*. His detailed description of the fading and emerging of these yeses in the different editions of both the original and its translations indicate that a corpus approach would necessarily need to accommodate a complex network of texts but that it might

also reveal fascinating patterns and undulations across versions that may be hard to grasp by a close reading approach.

One interesting corpus might well be compiled of the various commentaries provided by Joyce translators over time. The chapters in this volume are also a treasure trove for anyone interested in the discourses used by retranslators. It is fully understandable that a retranslator would find it necessary to explain their choices by contrasting these with a previous, less successful translation, but it is also a known fact that retranslation as a phenomenon tends to portray a path of consistent improvement that is as much a pattern of discourse that we are culturally primed to repeat as an empirical fact based on hard evidence. A tendency towards presentism is ingrained in the human mind. Many of the translator-authors in this volume are well aware of this tension, and reflect on it in their contributions, some even contemplate whether they should be even writing because of it. Yes. Yes! The volume is a testimony to and celebration of the productive and supplementary, multiplying force of translation.

## References

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