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CINDERELLA'S METAMORPHOSES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF PERRAULT'S TALES

Abstract: This comparative analysis of two translations of Charles Perrault's "Cendrillon ou la petite pantoufle de verre" shows how the French *conte* was adapted for children in England at different moments and reflects different projects. Robert Samber's "Cinderilla: or, The Little Glass Slipper," published in *Histories, or Tales of Past Times. With Morals* (1729), is known as the first English translation of the tale. More recently, Angela Carter's retranslation "Cinderella: or, The Little Glass Slipper," published in *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* (1977), pays homage to Samber but also modernises the tale to carry a more emancipatory message. While Samber's translation reflects the working conditions of Grub Street writers and acculturation of Perrault's fairy tale in Protestant England, Carter gives it a feminist twist as she turns it into a "fable of the politics of experience." She would later rewrite it as "Ashputtle or The Mother's Ghost" (1987), this time using Manheim's English translation of the Grimms' "Aschenputtel" as a starting point.

Keywords: Charles Perrault, Cinderella, translation, Robert Samber, Angela Carter

Ainsi une traduction n'est-elle qu'un moment d'un texte en mouvement.

Elle est même l'image qu'il n'est jamais fini.

*Elle ne saurait l'immobiliser.*¹

(Meschonnic 1999: 342)

This comparative study of two translations of "Cendrillon ou La Petite Pantoufle de Verre," from Charles Perrault's famous collection, *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé* (1697), shows how the tale has been redirected

¹ "Thus, a translation is an instant of a text in movement, even an image that it is never over. It cannot be brought to a standstill." (my translation – C.M.L.).

towards a younger audience in England via two very different projects. “Cinderilla: or, The Little Glass Slipper,” published by Robert Samber in *Histories, or Tales of Past Times* in 1729, is usually seen as the first English translation of the tale. More recently, Angela Carter’s “Cinderella: or, The Little Glass Slipper” in *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* (1977) deliberately modernizes the text. The first translation bears witness to the material conditions and the cultural context of the Grub Street translators, while the second reflects the educational project and feminist sensibility of its author in the 20th century (Johnson 1828: 496–497).² Additionally, this translation is Carter’s first step towards a rewriting of the tale entitled “Ashputtle or The Mother’s Ghost” (Carter 1987a). This shows a continuity between Carter’s work as a translator and her creative literary work and even, as I argue in *Reading, Translating, Rewriting: Angela Carter’s Translational Poetics*, a dynamic interplay. My analysis will show how Carter’s (re)translation responds to both Perrault and Samber as it gives the Cinderella tale and its moral a new relevance and freshness.³

Charles Sorel highlighted the necessity of retranslation as early as the 17th century: “c’est le privilège de la traduction de pouvoir être réitérée dans tous les siècles, pour refaire les livres selon la mode qui court” (Sorel 1664).⁴ The expression *according to the fashion of the time* is particularly suited to Perrault’s tales, which have been translated and adapted over and over through the centuries.⁵ Furthermore, the tale illustrates this versatility through Cinderella’s character, whose identity, disguised under a derisive moniker, remains mysterious and elusive. It is the dress (and accessory to magic) that makes her either a princess or a servant, as suggested in the title of Perrault’s tale, “Cinderella; or, the little glass slipper.” To borrow Henri Meschonnic’s suggestive phrase, Cinderella becomes a figure of the text in motion, whose true nature (mobile, multiple and constantly reinvented) is

² “The name of a street in London much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *grubstreet*.” The edition of Samber’s translation used in this article is Barchilon and Pettit 1960.

³ This article corresponds with other articles on Angela Carter’s translations, specifically *Bluebeard* (2009), *Little Red Riding Hood* (2009), and *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* (2010). See: Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère 2013.

⁴ “It is the privilege of translation to be repeated every century in order to make books according to the fashion of the time.”

⁵ For an overview of Perrault’s tales in England cf. Verdier 1997:185–202; Malarte-Feldman 1999: 184–187; Lathey 2010. On the concept of “genericity,” Adam and Heidmann, 2009.

best revealed through translation or, more precisely, through retranslations. The tale is like its title character; subject to metamorphosis and constantly dressed anew.⁶ As such, the English translations of the tale that have proliferated since the 18th century represent a kaleidoscope of instants of a story open towards its own future.

Methodological Considerations

*Un texte ne saurait appartenir à aucun genre.
Tout texte participe d'un ou de plusieurs genres,
il n'y a pas de texte sans genre,
il y a toujours du genre et des genres
mais cette participation n'est jamais une appartenance.⁷*
(Derrida and Ronell 1980: 55–81)

Every text is inscribed within a complex system of genres that inevitably changes when the text is translated. In *The Law of Genre*, Jacques Derrida points out that each text participates in a genre, sometimes even several genres, without *belonging* to any one of them. Thus the *genericity* of a text, read as its dynamic inscription within a nexus of affiliated genres, is altered every time the text circulates. Gradually, the text is removed from its original circumstances of production and reception, the author's initial project, and the audience for whom it was initially intended. Obviously, these transformations are further enhanced or increased when a work is translated. As Lawrence Venuti has pointed out, translations are themselves linked to their own moment, context and audience (Venuti 2004: 25). Thus, when Perrault's tale was first translated into English in the early 18th century and retranslated much later by Angela Carter, it was adapted to new literary, cultural and commercial demands, while reflecting their respective authors' distinct aims and agendas. The source text and its subsequent translations should thus be considered unique productions inseparable from their own sociocultural and discursive context, and therefore creations in their own

⁶ In Perrault's tale, Cinderella's dress sparks admiration and immediately sets a trend among the ladies of the court.

⁷ "A text cannot belong to no genre, it cannot be without or less a genre. Every text participates in one or several genres, there is no genreless text; there is always a genre and genres, yet such participation never amounts to belonging."

right. This corresponds with the work of many contemporary translation theorists in the wake of the creative turn.

Once the translations have been briefly situated in context, a comparative analysis of the texts will show how both authors revisit Perrault's tale according to their own agenda. Carter's modern retranslation is coloured by Samber's classic translation; yet it also demarcates itself from it. The note that reads "newly translated by Angela Carter" on the cover of *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* indicates that the retranslation engages both with the source text and its famous predecessor. A comparison of the morals, in particular, sheds light on the translator's unique understanding of the tale, reworked for a specific purpose and audience.

This analysis also draws attention to significant editorial variations that reflect, but also partly modify, the image of Perrault as a children's author in the 20th century (Barchilon 1960). Thus, Carter's retranslation, first published in 1977 as *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault*, and again in 1982 as *Sleeping Beauty and Other Favourite Fairy Tales*, was reprinted in Penguin paperback in 2008 with two distinct covers, one aimed at children, the other at adults. This marks a new development in the modern reception of Perrault's tales in England, inflected by the success of Carter's fairy tale rewritings for adults in *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979). The phenomenon of retranslation thus captures the dynamic aspect of the translation history of Perrault's tales.

Robert Samber's Translation in Context

Histories, or Tales of Past Times. With Morals. By M. Perrault. Translated into English was published in London by J. Pote in 1729. According to Jacques Barchilon, the translation is based on a French edition of 1721 or a reprint published in Holland. Barchilon deems it "competent" (Barchilon, Pettit 1960: 47) as it follows the French text closely, but he faults it with being often "too literal" (Barchilon, Pettit 1960: 48). This almost word-for-word translation sets it apart from the method advocated by John Dryden at the time. Dryden was a proponent of relative freedom from the source text, which he called "Paraphrase, or Translation with Latitude"⁸ (Dryden

⁸ "The second Way is that of Paraphrase, or Translation with Latitude, where the Author is kept in View by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his Words are not so strictly followed as his Sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered."

1681). Alexander Pope, another famous translator, shared the same principle, explaining it in the preface of his retranslation of *The Iliad*, where he rejects “a servile, dull adherence to the letter”⁹ (Pope 1796: 48). Samber’s method, which resembles what Dryden calls “metaphrase,” may have been a conscious aesthetic choice, unless it simply resulted from the conditions under which Grub Street writers and translators had to operate. The system of patronage required them to write swiftly and with little time for revision or embellishment. Hack writers, as they were called, had to attract the attention of a patron that could finance the publication of a completed work, so the circumstances under which most translations were completed influenced the choice of texts as much as the way they were translated. What is more, unlike Dryden or Pope, they were neither famous (and, hence, entitled to a style of their own), nor even praised for their efforts, as Pope’s *Dunciad* (1728) makes clear, which satirizes the alleged “dullness” of Grub Street writers. Pope himself was one of the earliest poets to make a living solely by writing, and he derides hack writers authors like Samber who write for pay.

Little is known about the life and works of Robert Samber, only that he is the author of dozens of translations, sometimes difficult to distinguish from his own works.¹⁰ Samber did not become famous like Dryden, whose translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid* was a national event, and for which he received £1,400, or like Pope, whose translations of Homer (*Iliad* 1715–1720; *Odyssey* 1725–1726) made him a rich man.

In line with the literary production of “pens for hire,” Samber’s output includes religious and pastoral poetry, odes and elegies, as well as a few plays in the fashion of the time (Roman tragedies, imitations of Horace). If Samber did not go down in literary history as a writer, his work as a translator makes him a key figure, as a cultural mediator who contributed to the

⁹ “I know no liberties one ought not to take but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original, and supporting the poetical style of the translation: and I will venture to say, there have not been more men misled in former times by a servile and dull adherence to the letter, than have been deluded in ours by a chimerical and insolent hope of raising and improving their author.”

¹⁰ J.M. Blom gives some useful information about this relatively obscure, though influential, figure in European literary and cultural history. Samber explains his approach as a translator in his Preface to Castiglione’s *Courtier*, where he criticizes previous translations and presents his own as superior, because he translated directly from the Italian: “this version is from the Italian (for I would not translate from a translation), so I hope I have given it the sense of the author: if any one shall find fault with it, let him make a better, and I shall have the satisfaction, that I have incited an abler genius than my own, and the pleasure of setting, at least, one part of the machine of literature going.” Cf. Blom 1989: 518–519.

circulation of texts and ideas in the early 18th century, and their reception in England.¹¹ From Latin, Italian and French he translated several technical, medical and (pseudo-)scientific treatises (about eunuchs, obstetrics, and how to prolong life), as well as travel guides, pornographic literature and pious books, besides Perrault's tales. Here again, Samber's choices seem to have been dictated essentially by pragmatic considerations tied to the book market at that time.

Histories, or Tales of Past Times, with Morals (1729) is dedicated to the Countess of Granville and to her children ("the Infant Relatives of your Ladyship"), although "those of Maturity, will also find in them uncommon Pleasure and Delight" ("Dedication"). It is comprised of eight tales in prose complete with morals in verse, as in Perrault's 1697 edition, although the tales are in a different order. The book also originally contained a ninth tale (not reproduced in Barchilon's edition), entitled "The Discreet Princess, or the Adventures of Finetta" ("L'Adroite Princesse, ou les Aventures de Finette") authored by Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier de Villandon, though editorial history would maintain the confusion. L'Héritier's *conte de fées* was first published in her *Oeuvres Meslées* (1695), which comprises four tales contemporary to some of Perrault's own *contes*, and explores similar themes. "L'Adroite Princesse" already features alongside Perrault's tales in *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé*, published in Amsterdam by Jacques Desbordes in 1716.¹² Samber's translation is modelled on a French edition of 1721 (or a reprint of 1729, published in Holland), and reproduces its engravings. The real identity of the first translator of Perrault's tales is disputed. According to J. Saxon Childers, it was Guy Miège, a French tutor of Swiss origin, who might have completed this translation in order to make

¹¹ Blom remarks that Samber's literary production illustrates the way in which foreign publications have been incorporated into English culture. He points out that a thorough study of English translations in the early 18th century might even change our conception of the "Republic of Letters": "Much has been said about the frequent international contacts and exchanges of ideas between scholars and scientists during the period with which this article is concerned, and many generalizations have been made about the unprecedented opportunities for European readers to acquaint themselves with the results of scholarly and scientific investigations published abroad. In the case of Samber there are at least three instances of translations that presented themselves as native English products, so that the international dimensions were effectively obscured" (Blom 1989: 520).

¹² Barchilon and Pettit do not include L'Héritier's tale in *The Authentic Mother Goose Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhymes*. They replace it with nursery rhymes of the same time period, following the example of Francis Newbery, which contributed to the assimilation of Perrault's tales into children's literature in England. (cf. Verdier 1997: 194–195).

learning French easier for the children of the English bourgeoisie and aristocracy. This would explain the choice of a literal translation well suited to the didactic aim of the work. Today, the critical consensus is that Samber authored the 1729 translation and simply did not take credit for Miège's work. The translation would subsequently be reprinted as a French-English schoolbook.

If Samber indeed translated Perrault's tales into English, was he trying to reclaim popular stories (or "Fables" as he calls them in the "Dedication") and a self-proclaimed modern author in the famous Quarrel? Was he responding to the disdain Pope had recently displayed towards professional writers in his *Dunciad* by siding with Perrault against the classical authors admired by Pope and Dryden? The fact is that, in his dedication to the Countess of Granville, Samber aligns himself with the "divine Plato," deeming Aesop's fables superior to Homer's poetry as carriers of "Wisdom and Virtue": "The Divine PLATO had such a Value and Esteem for this kind of Writing, that he seems to have preferred it to Poetry itself: For though he banished HOMER his Commonwealth [sic], he assigned in it a very honorable Post for AESOP." This could be seen as a jibe against high culture, past and present. Or was Samber capitalizing on the success of Marie Catherine d'Aulnoy's fairy tales, or even of the tales from *The Arabian Nights*, which were circulating via chapbooks in England? Be that as it may, Samber introduced Perrault in England as a writer of popular stories for children that adults can also enjoy.

This first translation became the standard, and Andrew Lang's beloved *Blue Fairy Book* (1889) confirmed its reputation as a classic in English. In the short preface to the first volume of his famous collection, Lang mentions that "the tales of Perrault are printed from the old English version of the eighteenth century" (Lang 1965). Though he does not name their translator, Lang in fact reproduces touched up versions of the 1729 edition. Iona and Peter Opie's *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1974) would also reproduce Samber's translations, though here again without the morals (Opie 1974: 123–127).

Angela Carter's Translation in Context

When Angela Carter retranslated Perrault's tales in 1976 for Victor Gollancz, the feminist writer was aware of the controversy surrounding a genre accused of perpetrating patriarchal norms and values. "Cinderella" and

“Sleeping Beauty,” in particular, were accused of conveying the kind of stereotypes that hinder social progress as advocated by the women’s liberation movement (Haase 2004: 1–36). But when Carter rediscovered Perrault’s tales in French and in the scholarly editions of Andrew Lang and Jacques Barchilon, she became aware of the gap between perceptions of the tales and the complex nature of the original text, especially when replaced within its original context. What she found is very different from preconceived ideas of fairy tales and the soppy and conservative image tied to them. In an article entitled “The Better to Eat You With,” she recounts her experience:

The notion of the fairy-tale as a vehicle for moral instruction is not a fashionable one. I sweated out the heatwave browsing through Perrault’s *Contes du temps passé* on the pretext of improving my French. What an unexpected treat to find that in this great Ur-collection – whence sprang Sleeping Beauty, Puss in Boots, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Tom Thumb, all the heroes of pantomime – all these nursery tales are purposely dressed up as fables of the politics of experience. (...) Cut the crap about richly nurturing the imagination. This world is all that is to the point (Carter 1998: 452–453).

In keeping with their modern reception, Carter sees in Perrault’s faux-naïf *contes* nursery tales and “fables of the politics of experience” fit to teach children about the dangers of the world and how to thwart them. Wanting to put a modern spin on Perrault’s tales, Carter stayed close to her source text, but also subtly adapted the moral to her feminist agenda. Unlike most children’s editions to recent date, Carter included the morals, whose importance she underlined in the foreword. It is the moral tags “from which children can learn without half the pain that Cinderella or Red Riding Hood endured, the ways of the world and how to come to no harm in it” (Carter 1977: 17). In an attempt to point out the common sense she sees at work in the French writer’s work, Carter modernizes the tales and gives them new relevance. Indeed, as she points out herself, “each century tends to create or re-create fairy tales after its own taste.” (Carter 1977: 17).

In spite of her success as a writer, Carter’s activity as a translator has been neglected, although Jack Zipes points out in the recent paperback reprint of *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* (2008) that her translation of Perrault marked a turning point in her career (Zipes 2008: vii–xxvii). Furthermore, as I argue in *Reading, Translating, Rewriting*, translation was a creative laboratory for Carter, where she experimented with “putting new

wine in old bottles” (Carter 1998a: 37), to borrow her famous image in “Notes from the Front Line.” The translation and rewriting dynamic was to contribute to the renewal of the fairy tale genre in England in the second half of the 20th century. Moreover, Carter’s research on the fairy tale tradition led her to discover alternate versions of the classic stories, notably those collected by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, which would feed into her rewritings.

A Comparative Analysis of the Translations

“Translating is the most intimate act of reading.”
(Spivak 2004: 370)

The first edition of *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* (1977) begins with a preface that outlines Perrault’s life and work, as well as the alleged educational aim of his tales. The edition ends with a bibliography that comprises Andrew Lang’s scholarly edition of *Perrault’s Popular Tales* (1888), Jacques Barchilon’s edition of Perrault’s 1695 manuscript in *Perrault’s Tales of Mother Goose* (1956), Barchilon’s study of *Le Conte Merveilleux Français de 1690 à 1760* (1975), as well as Iona and Peter Opie’s richly illustrated *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1974). The Opies’ book reproduces the first English translation of Cinderella, presented as Samber’s without the morals. Note that Carter modelled her title on Samber’s, but restored the morals that the Opies had omitted.

Carter deliberately adapted the French text to her personal agenda for children. The stepmother’s daughters are turned into “children” (83) who “giggled” (94) in Carter’s version. Similarly, the translator does not hesitate to simplify the language and to modernise the cultural references by replacing the “cornettes à deux rangs” and “mouches de la bonne Faiseuse” (*Contes*, 172) with a more modern dolling up: “They sent for a good hairdresser to cut and curl their hair and they bought the best cosmetics” (86). But Carter aims to recreate the project of worldly instruction that she sees in Perrault’s tales for her young readers. She notices that tales like “Cinderella” deal with the education of girls, the institution of marriage, seduction and social success, and she perceives the hidden social critique that is so often lost in translations, which she seeks to reactivate in her own. If the audience of the tales has considerably evolved since Perrault (from

a witty salon game containing cleverly disguised political critique to fairy tales for children with a feminist edge or twist), Carter revives and updates their critique of the dominant ideology for her young audience. She sheds a more modern light on the discourse concerning girls' education that had been gradually erased in the process of reception, and even usurped by the conservative ideology, embodied by Walt Disney's *Cinderella* (1950). Surprisingly, the tale even lends itself quite well to the translator's feminist agenda.

In most modern editions for children, the full title of the tale is often reduced to the main character's name. Carter, however, chooses to keep the complete title of the tale, "Cinderella: or, The Little Glass Slipper."¹³ She even reproduces Samber's idiosyncratic punctuation, as if to distinguish the text of the tale from its cultural stereotype. The name "Cendrillon" is anglicised as "Cinderilla" in Samber's text and later stabilised as "Cinderella," which the modern translator adopts. The other nickname given to the main character in the French text is "Cucendron" (ash-bottom) (171). In Samber's translation, the "dishonest" quality of this nickname is lessened by the moniker "Cinderbreech" (75), adapted as "Cinderbitches" (84) by Carter. For the modern reader, "breech" or "bitches" designates masculine (or unisex) work attire, and is associated with the idiom "to wear the britches." Carter also changes Perrault's "habits" ("clothes" in Samber) into the heroine's "workaday overalls" (88). She raises the question of the construction of a female identity that toys with dress codes and recreates itself with the circumstances.

The incipit of the tale and its moral in verse are two instances where the story creates a very specific style, which both English translations re-interpret in their own ways. The set phrase "Il était une fois" ("Once upon a time") and the convention of the "Moralités" were specific traits of the *conte de fée*, a literary genre in the making at the end of 17th century. The French text (in Jean-Pierre Collinet's modern edition), Samber's English translation (in Jacques Barchilon and Henry Pettit's *The Authentic Mother Goose Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhymes*) and Carter's retranslation (in *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault*) are reproduced below:

Cendrillon ou la petite pantoufle de verre.

¹³ Carter's rewriting "Ashputtle or The Mother's Ghost" fuses elements from the French and German versions of the tale, as well as its translation by Ralph Manheim in *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old* (1977).

Conte

Il était une fois un Gentilhomme qui épousa en secondes noces une femme, la plus hautaine et la plus fière qu'on eût jamais vue. Elle avait deux filles de son humeur, et qui lui ressemblaient en toutes choses. Le Mari avait de son côté une jeune fille, mais d'une douceur et d'une bonté sans exemple ; elle tenait cela de sa Mère, qui était la meilleure personne du monde.

CINDERILLA: or, The Little Glass Slipper.

TALE VI.

THERE was once upon a time, a gentleman who married for his second wife the proudest and most haughty woman that ever was known. She had been a widow, and had by her former husband two daughters of her own humour, who were exactly like her in all things. He had also by a former wife a young daughter, but of an unparalleled goodness and sweetness of temper, which she took from her mother, who was the best creature in the world (73–74).

Cinderella: or, The Little Glass Slipper

There once lived a man who married twice, and his second wife was the haughtiest and most stuck-up woman in the world. She already had two daughters of her own and her children took after her in every way. Her new husband's first wife had given him a daughter of his own before she died, but she was a lovely and sweet-natured girl, very like her own natural mother, who had been a kind and gentle woman (83).

Perrault's tale begins with the stock phrase "Il était une fois un Gentilhomme..." (*Contes*, 171), conveyed in the 1729 translation as "There was once upon a time, a gentleman..." (*The Authentic Mother Goose*, 73). Carter prefers: "There *once* lived a man..." (*The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault*, 83). Admiring Perrault's conciseness and brevity, Carter plays with her readers' expectations with regard to genre, as she erases the generic marker reminiscent of Disney: the tale must serve to speak about life as we know it, not some wish-fulfilment fantasy. In order to mock the very real world of the Court (its social hierarchies, cruelties and vanities), Perrault had to resort to the marvellous. In turn, Carter uses the fairy tale to convey a useful message to children about how to beat the odds and be happy.

As part of his social critique, Perrault turned the characters into social types through superlatives: in the 1729 translation, the second wife is "the proudest and most haughty woman that ever was known;" conversely, the young woman is "of an unparalleled goodness and sweetness of temper," a trait inherited from her mother, who was "the best creature in the world." Carter in turn uses superlatives to describe the second wife

as “the haughtiest and most stuck-up woman” (note the use of the familiar term “stuck-up” to stigmatise pretension). However, unlike Perrault, the positive characters elude caricature: the daughter from the first marriage becomes “a lovely and sweet-natured girl” and her mother “a kind and gentle woman.” By deliberately omitting the adjective “unparalleled,” the modern heroine is no longer a paragon of virtue but a “lovely” child, like the “lovely ladies” she addresses in the morals. By refusing to glorify the beauty, gentleness and goodness of the female character, the translator chooses to focus on the lovable disposition and the natural gentleness of the child. Carter’s “Cinderella” thus reflects her effort to avoid female stereotypes exalting sweetness, meekness and passivity, which were targeted by feminists at the time.

The democratisation (and universalisation) of the tale is rendered possible by the suppression of Perrault’s subtle critique of the aristocracy. Cinderella’s father is a weak “Gentilhomme” who is entirely dominated by his new wife. Many a reader, starting with the narrator of “Ashputtle *or* The Mother’s Ghost,” has wondered about the father’s indifference towards his daughter’s denigration, exploitation and persecution. Carter translates “Gentilhomme” as “man” and at the end of the same paragraph refers to the first wife as a “gentle woman;” in so doing, she shifts the focus from a barely veiled critique of aristocrats’ behaviour towards their children to a more modern reflection on the characters’ moral qualities and the importance of mother-daughter relationships, probably under the influence of the Grimms’ “Aschenputtel,” where the girls’ mothers play a central role.

Carter’s focus on the female characters is reflected in the grammar of her prose: Perrault’s tale opens with the husband, defined by what he owns, namely a wife and a daughter from a first marriage (“Il était une fois un Gentilhomme;” “Le Mari avait de son côté”). In Carter’s translation, the husband promptly moves from subject (“a man”) to object (“his second wife”) to finally becoming the property both women are fighting over (“Her new husband’s first wife”). The conflict between the two women for “ownership” of a husband is replayed in the next generation. From the first sentence, the husband is replaced by the second wife, who becomes the subject of the second sentence (“She already had two daughters of her own”). She, in turn, is replaced by the first wife and the daughter who resembles her (“she was a lovely and sweet-natured girl, very like her own natural mother”). The tale begins with “a man,” but in Carter’s text, the first paragraph significantly ends with the word “woman.” The conflict that

opposes the two women and their daughters is underlined by symmetrical grammatical structures (“her own” vs. “his own”).¹⁴ Carter picks up on this in her rewrite, where the narrator observes:

Although the woman is defined by her relation to him (“a rich man’s wife”) the daughter is unambiguously hers, as if hers alone, and the entire drama concerns only women, takes place almost exclusively among women, is a fight between two groups of women – in the right-hand corner, Ashputtle and her mother; in the left-hand corner, the stepmother and her daughters (...)(Carter 1987a: 110).

However, it is in the morals that the translator expresses his or her interpretation of the significance of the tale most freely. In Perrault’s text, the first moral makes a case for the education of young women, a controversial subject at the time, as the guarantee for social success and a favourable union.

Moralité

La beauté pour le sexe est un rare trésor,
De l’admirer jamais on ne se lasse ;
Mais ce qu’on nomme bonne grâce
Est sans prix, et vaut mieux encor.

C’est ce qu’à Cendrillon fit avoir sa Marraine,
En la dressant, en l’instruisant,
Tant et si bien qu’elle en fit une Reine :
(Car ainsi sur ce Conte on va moralisant.)

Belles, ce don vaut mieux que d’être bien coiffées,
Pour engager un Cœur, pour en venir à bout,
La bonne grâce est le vrai don des Fées ;
Sans elle on ne peut rien, avec elle, on peut tout.

Autre Moralité

C’est sans doute un grand avantage,
D’avoir de l’esprit, du courage,
De la naissance, du bon sens,
Et d’autres semblables talents,
Qu’on reçoit du Ciel en partage ;

¹⁴ Another significant change concerns the first wife’s fate. In Perrault’s text, it is only said that the gentleman remarries. In Carter’s modern translation, under the influence of the Grimms’ *Märchen*, she is said to have died.

Mais vous aurez beau les avoir,
 Pour votre avancement ce seront choses vaines,
 Si vous n'avez, pour les faire valoir,
 Ou des parrains ou des marraines. (Perrault 1981:177-178)

The moral in verse is divided in two parts: the first one concerns “la bonne grâce,” described in Furetière’s dictionary as “affabilité, amabilité, gentillesse,” beyond beauty. It also gives the fairy godmother’s education and advice all the credit for the young woman’s social success. However, the ironic parenthetical aside in the second quatrain introduces doubt as to the veracity of this moral. The second moral contradicts the conventional praise of talents and cynically asserts that powerful connections are the only guarantee of success in life.

The early English translation adapts the tale to a different cultural context and poetic tradition:

The MORAL
 Beauty’s to the sex a treasure,
 We still admire it without measure,
 And never yet was any known
 By still admiring weary grown.
 But that thing, which we call good grace,
 Exceeds by far a handsome face;
 Its charms by far surpass’s the other,
 And this was what her good godmother
 Bestowed on CINDERILLA fair,
 Whom she instructed with such care,
 And gave her such a graceful mien,
 That she became thereby a Queen.
 For thus (may ever truth prevail)
 We draw our moral from this Tale.
 This quality, fair ladies, know
 Prevails much more, you’ll find it so,
 T’engage and captivate a heart,
 Than a fine head dress’d up with art;
 ‘Tis the true gift of heaven and fate,
 Without it none in any state
 Effectual any thing can do;
 But with it all things well and true.

ANOTHER

A great advantage 'tis, no doubt, to man,
 To have wit, courage, birth, good sense and brain,
 And other such like Qualities, which we
 Receiv'd from heaven's kind hand and destiny.
 But none of these rich graces from above,
 In our advancement in the world will prove
 Of any use, if Godsires make delay,
 Or Godmothers your merit to display. (Barchilon, Petit, 1960: 89-91)

By eliminating the ironic parentheses and reaffirming the truth of the first moral, this translation lessens the contradiction between the two morals of Perrault's tales. Furthermore, the *Fées* dispensers of the "bonne grâce" that insure social success are disposed of in favour of a Christianisation of the tale. This acculturation is typical of the reception of French tales in England, a puritanical culture that distrusted "pagan" tales of wonder and rejected all literature considered frivolous (Verdier 1997: 185–186). Whereas in Perrault's "la bonne grâce est le vrai don des Fées," in this version "good grace" takes on a more religious undertone, "grace" referring to divine favour that designates "in scriptural and theological language the free and unmerited favour of God (Providence, fortune, fate, destiny)" according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The renewed meaning given to the word "grace" is confirmed by it being "the true gift of heaven and fate," reinforced by "heaven's kind hand and destiny," and "rich graces from above" in the second moral. The English equivalent of "parrains" et "marraines," "Godsires" and "Godmothers," intensifies this shift towards divine grace and determination that replaces Perrault's wry comment on powerful courtiers. In Samber, the two morals are distinguished on the basis of gender - the discourse on beauty addressed a feminine audience, while the second is focused on masculine success ("man") and qualities ("wit, courage, birth, good sense and brain"); Perrault's text is more ambiguous. In turn, Carter retranslates the morals as follows:

Moral

Beauty is a fine thing in a woman; it will always be admired. But charm is beyond price and worth more, in the long run. When her godmother dressed Cinderella up and told her how to behave at the ball, she instructed her in charm. Lovely ladies, this gift is worth more than a fancy hairdo; to win a heart, to reach a happy ending, charm is the true gift of the fairies. Without it, one can achieve nothing; with it, everything.

Another moral

It is certainly a great advantage to be intelligent, brave, well-born, sensible and have other similar talents given only by heaven. But however great may be your god-given store, they will never help you to get on in the world unless you have either a godfather or a godmother to put them to work for you (Carter 2008: 95–96).

Unlike Samber, Carter opts for prose, a more direct and concise style suitable for the pragmatic (almost prosaic) message the translator is attempting to communicate to her young female readers. In doing so, Carter aligns herself with Perrault who, in his dedicatory epistle to “Mademoiselle,” claimed that his tales communicated a “Morale très sensée” (Perrault 1981: 127) (a very sensible moral), quite different from the moralising that would characterise their subsequent reception in England.¹⁵ As it happens, Perrault’s moral is particularly well suited for Carter’s feminist point of view, because it starts with an admission of the admiration generated by feminine beauty and then goes on to set itself apart from popular opinion. Perrault makes a point about education, talents and connections as instrumental to a royal wedding. A translation mistake notwithstanding (*dressant* mistranslated as *dressed*), Carter places “charm” above beauty, vanity and superficiality (“fancy hairdo”), and thereby reintroduces the magic associated with Cinderella and the *fairy tale* as well as the convention of the *happy ending*, which in this case points to conjugal bliss rather than social success. The insistence on charm serves to balance out the cult of beauty conveyed by Disneyfication of the tale in the 20th century.

Editorial Transformations

Every time a text is translated and republished in a new edition, its significance changes. Thus Perrault’s *contes du temps passé* are not identical to modern English *fairy tales*. *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* was originally published with illustrations by Martin Ware, whose black and white etchings are quite removed from traditional fairy tale iconography. In the wake of the success of *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979), a collection of short stories for adults inspired by fairy tales, a new edition

¹⁵ Just like the *conteuses* of Perrault’s time, Carter pictures herself as modern fairy who draws on her experience to advise and instruct the young women for whom she translates (cf. Hennard Dutheil 2013).

of Carter's translations for children, entitled *Sleeping Beauty and Other Favourite Fairy Tales* (1982), was published, this time in a larger format with colour illustrations by Michael Foreman (ed. and trans. by A. Carter). Whereas the 1977 edition was deliberately set against the commercial "Disneyfied" version of the tales, the second one is more conventional in its editorial choices. The title renders the tales more anonymous, for children wishing to read their "favourite fairy tales" (including two stories by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, translated as "Beauty and the Beast" and "Sweetheart"). The editorial strategies now aimed to establish the book's popularity by building on Carter's fame and Michael Foreman's reputation as an illustrator of children's books. The recent double reprint of *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* in paperback by Penguin, with an introduction by Jack Zipes, but without Martin Ware's illustrations, marks a new development in the reception of Perrault's tales in English. The first, *Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella and Other Classic Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* (Penguin Classics), replicates the traditional imagery of the fairy tale on the cover with a classic, tasteful illustration of *Little Red Riding Hood* among the poppies by John Hassal. The second borrows the title of the first edition, *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault*, and plays on a more risqué iconography consistent with Carter's sexually explicit and mannerist fairy tale rewritings in *The Bloody Chamber*. The photograph evokes an emancipated Cinderella, wearing strass-covered Dior slippers on a dirt or oil stained foot (Carter 2008). This work, entitled "Stepping Up" (2005), skilfully transposes the fairy tale into the present day while paying homage to the stories for adults that made Angela Carter famous. These simultaneous re-editions of Carter's translations of Perrault with two different covers and for two different target audiences enlighten us on the reception of Perrault's Cinderella as a children's story or, filtered through Carter's bold retellings, as a contemporary Cinderella rising to fame.

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