

**Di Sabato, B.; Perri A., (a cura di) (2014).
I confini della traduzione.
Padova: Libreria Universitaria.it Edizioni**

Patrizia Vigliotti

(Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa Napoli, Italia)

The 13 contributions presented in this reader were adapted from lecturers held at the University Suor Orsola Benincasa Naples, Italy, as part of a translation course for students at the master's degree level.

This collection of essay works reflects «the diversity of the tracks and treks» (Way et al. 2013, p. 4)¹ that translation studies have taken in recent years. It is a fact that the discipline is developing into a multifaceted domain of research, bringing together scholars from different fields and professionals, academic and non-academic experts. The contributors to this volume belong to a range of disciplines; many of them are professional translators from different languages into Italian and bring with them the invaluable experience gained in their practice.

One of the most relevant aspects of the book is perhaps the way major trends in Translation Studies interweave with insights into the academic research tradition in Italy. One distinguishing trait in this tradition is found in the editors' purpose, which is primarily 'practical and didactic'. It is our aim to draw an outline of the essays and highlight their main themes. Following Holmes' seminal map,² the majority of the essays broadly falls into a product-oriented and process-oriented descriptive translation studies category. A group of essays on audio-visual translation and sign language interpreting as well as training and teaching methodology represents the 'applied' branch in Holmes' map. The 'cultural turn' and intersemiotic translation are also addressed in several articles and from different viewpoints.

The volume opens with Pergola's guidelines of contemporary theories on translation, among which emphasis is given to the impact that other disciplines have had on the field: special attention goes to the communica-

1 Way, C. et al. (eds.) 2013. *Tracks and Treks in Translation Studies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

2 Holmes, J.S. (2004). «The Name and Nature of Translation Studies». In: Venuti, L. (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

tive and functional approaches and the polysystemic approach and to the illustration of the ensuing shift from source-oriented to target oriented approaches. Eco's conceptual understanding of translation - a continuous process of negotiation in the attempt to 'say almost the same thing' as the source-text - is discussed here as well as in other essays in this collection.

Di Sabato's research focuses on the 'failed' impact that the soaring demand for translations has had on the type of texts analysed in translation studies. The author observes that whereas the great majority of translated texts is 'non-literary', the research field related to this type of texts has been left unexplored. The essay provides evidence for the assumption that 'formal' richness is not the exclusive feature of literary texts.

Two essays in the collection explicitly draw on semiotics and on Jakobson's concept of intersemiotic translation. Perri's article looks at intersemiotic translation as an 'umbrella' term that brings together a broad typology of texts. The idea that any process of translation is, in a way, an intersemiotic one and that the nature of the medium involved makes the process more evident is supported by examples based on some French literary works and on Munch's 'transmutation' of written notes into the celebrated painting *The Scream*.

Patierno's article tackles intersemiotic translation from the point of view of filmic transposition of literary works, drawing on Pierce's and Barthes' image-text theory. A historical recollection on the relationship between literature and cinema since the 1920s further supports the thesis that filmmakers exercise greater freedom when adapting the source text to the filmic version.

New trends in translation studies have flourished over the years: one of them is the training of new translators. Mazzotta leads us back to the 'applied' branch in Holmes' taxonomy and to the more pragmatic aim announced in the *Introduzione*, suggesting that task-based approaches may enhance professional translation skills. The reference discipline in this context is foreign language teaching and learning. The article closes with the presentation of two, student-centred activities that might integrate the syllabus of a translation course.

One of the most fruitful trends in the Italian research field is, perhaps quite obviously, the translation of literary works. Three of the authors approach this field from a number of perspectives. This group of essays also links with the common feature of the interest in cultural aspects and the impact of the contexts in which they originate (Bassnett 2014).³

In Ottaiano's words: «Retranslations are the way a literary text is passed on to a specific time in history, to its generation, and the language it speaks, and to the editorial market that exists at that particular time».

3 Bassnett, S. (2014). *Translation studies*. New York: Routledge.

Reflecting on his own translations of Spanish masterpieces, Ottaiano describes retranslated works as complex processes of re-negotiation that reflect crucial intellectual, linguistic, literary and social changes in the target culture. The focus inevitably shifts to the «decision-making and working practices involved in the translation process» (Pym 1998, p. 13),⁴ and the impact of the translator's responsibility towards the earlier acknowledged versions of literary works.

Similar reflection on the challenges facing professional translators appears in De Marco's contribution. The subject matter is the translation of 'icon' novels, exemplified by *Jornada de Africa* by Portuguese writer Manuel Alegre. The difficulty of rendering the wealth of extra-textual references related to national culture, to history but also to world literature, inspires the author to foresee a possible solution in the creation of internet-like hypertexts, sort of texts 'parallel' to the translation in which such references could be preserved.

The loss of cultural density is also approached in a study by Di Martino. The author's research focuses on the transformations that immigration flows cause on the language. The author illustrates some salient characteristics of Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and its Italian translation. The essay closes with the author's assumption that the impoverished, flattened Italian version might be the result of the publisher's deliberate, although ethically debatable choice to produce a plain, 'reader-friendly' text.

In Podeur's essay, the translations into several languages of *120, rue de la Gare* by Mallet are analysed on the basis of Berman's 'deforming tendencies' (1995). By way of comparison of the French original and the Italian, English and Spanish translations, this rigorous methodology contributes to shedding light on the translator's strategies. The main interest for students lies in the extensive examples of excerpts from the original as well as the translated texts that support the author's assumptions.

De Meo's essay looks, among other things, at the interaction between translation and technological innovation. It addresses the advantages and limitations of dubbing and subtitling in particular, and the choices made by different countries in this respect. Remarkably, the author posits possible future practical application of audio-visual translation studies in the field of foreign language acquisition, integration and literacy, as well as in fostering multilingualism and multiculturalism, providing practitioners with «insights that may also be of use to researchers in other fields» (Bassnett 2014, p. 12).

The contribution by Fontana best illustrates how the 'boundaries' of translation are expanding to new fields of investigation. Sign languages

4 Pym, A. (1998). «Method in Translation History». In: Munday, J., *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Applications*. New York: Routledge.

should be recognized as independent semiotic and linguistic systems since they are 'proper' interlinguistic and intermodal forms of translations, the author argues. This type of translation is a privileged perspective from which new social meanings can be analysed and comprehensively understood.

In the essays by Paumgardhen and Ruggiero, discourse revolves around the history of two countries, Germany and Italy, whose cultural identity and languages have been profoundly influenced by translation works. Paumgardhen acknowledges that the 'disaster of Babel' proved to be a blessing for the German culture whose literary canon is, in fact, made of translators and translated writers.

Similarly, Ruggiero traces the history of translations in Italy from ancient Rome to the twentieth century. Cultural identity in ancient Rome was the result of the imitation and the re-creation of the Greek model. The Italian translation models in the late nineteenth century were strongly indebted to the German culture. The German influence might explain the continuous shifting between source-oriented and text-oriented approaches within the discourse on Translation Studies in Italy nowadays.

The material provided in this volume illustrates the wealth of ideas and new perspectives that characterise Translation Studies at the international level and the type of reflection they enhance in the academic research field in Italy. Although intended primarily for university students, this reader may produce abundant interaction and discussion among researchers, practitioners and translation teachers.