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# *Affect in Literary Translations: What is at Stake for the Author and the Translator*

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**Abstract.** This article explores the relationships between authors, translators, and readers within the context of literature and translation. Emphasising the reciprocal influence between texts, it delves into the desire of writers to control the interpretation of their works during translation. The examination extends to the hierarchy within literature and translation, questioning whether a translated text can be considered an autonomous entity and if translators can be acknowledged as authors considering the transformative nature of translation and the subjective, creative processes involved. The article also sheds light on the emotional and affective aspects involved in the translation process, highlighting the recurring theme of trust and the fear of translatorial non-compliance. Through examples, it demonstrates how authors can actively engage in the translation process to safeguard their narrative nuances. Case studies, including instances involving Umberto Eco, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Carlos Fuentes, and Günter Grass, illustrate various levels of authorial control and collaboration. The discussion expands to the global literary landscape, emphasising the dominance of certain languages and the dynamics between the literary centre and periphery. Ultimately, it raises fundamental questions about authorship, control, and the transformative power of translation in shaping the "world republic of letters". The article investigates the multifaceted dynamics between authors and translators, examining collaboration along a continuum from carte blanche to conflictual relationships. The extent of an author's involvement in the translation process is explored, questioning the reasons behind some authors' keen interest in ensuring accurate translations. The power imbalances within collaborations are scrutinised, raising questions about the translator's agency. The article concludes with reflections on the challenges and potential pitfalls of authors participating in the translation of their own works, emphasising the inherent plurality of interpretations in the act of translation.

**Keywords:** world literature; translation studies; literary translation; affects

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> *To assume that every recombination of elements is necessarily inferior to its original form is to assume that a draft nine is necessarily inferior to draft H—for there can only be drafts. The concept of the 'definitive text' corresponds only to religion or exhaustion.*
>
> Jorge Luis Borges, *The Homeric Versions*

This frequently cited passage from the Argentinian writer is commonly brought up as an example that shows how literature worldwide consists of the interplay of texts, meaning reading, writing, and translating. Previous literature naturally influences subsequent literature, but in turn subsequent literature also influences how we read what came before. The greatest difference between texts comes from the reader, from who they are and when they read. However, studying the relationships between authors and their translators, we repeatedly observe that it is the writers who would like to secure, at all costs, a specific way of reading their works.

In the present article, we scrutinise translation within the context of literature exploring the distinctions between translation and the original work, contemplating the role of the translator as an author, examining the apprehensions authors may harbour when their works undergo translation, and delving into the concerns that translators may share, both with living authors and their readership. Why do some writers exert greater control than others? Is it solely a matter of temperament, or is it influenced by their position in the literary hierarchy and their background? We examine prominent instances where authors have sought to control their works in various ways and explore the implications of such control for the translator.

Moreover, the article hopes to shed light on the creative processes employed by literary authors, for instance by illuminating the components of the literary work deemed most crucial by the author, those elements that must be preserved and conveyed to the target text and audience. Simultaneously, the article reveals aspects that can undergo alteration, potentially being rewritten or recreated by the translator. At times, authors can even modify their original text as a result of engaging with the translation during the translation process.

## Hierarchies in literature and translation

A significant portion of literature produced and consumed worldwide consists of translations. Their existence is entwined with several paradoxical circumstances, of which we, as readers, may not be consciously aware, rendering them particularly intriguing. Our perception of translations allows us to believe that these texts simultaneously represent the original author's creation in another language and, at the same time, exist as a form of literature that is not quite true to the original creative work. The reader of a translation, during the act of reading, may not necessarily contemplate these aspects deeply. As Theo Hermans puts it, translation functions as a self-referential endeavour, announcing its nature explicitly on the title page. In doing so, it prompts the reader to enter into a tacit agreement of suspended disbelief, as if engaging with the original work but in a distinct language. The reader commonly asserts something like, "I have read Günter Grass", simultaneously acknowledging that the consumption involved a translation (Hermans 2002: 134). Taking contemporary publishing practices into consideration, the translator appears to be intricately dependent on various factors: the source text, copyright holders, prevailing translation norms linked to reception, the publishing house, among others. In this regard, it is not customary to differentiate between translations based on whether the author is alive or deceased, whether specific rules have been established, or whether the author oversees adherence to these requirements. However, inherent in these distinctions is one of the paramount questions concerning literary texts, whether they are an autonomous entity, and in the context of translation whether the translator is considered an author.

The proposition that external influences shape the translator's work is far from novel; indeed, for over two millennia, translation has been perceived as evolving under the influence of at least the source text, the source author, or even the entire source culture. Such an assumption is so deeply ingrained in our broadest and most profound conceptualisations of translation inherited from the past, with well-known assertions suggesting that a particular translation was divinely dictated by God, the Holy Spirit, the Muse, or the transcendent spirit of the deceased source author being merely extreme manifestations of our existing beliefs about translation. In essence, translation is hegemonically conceived as operating under a pervasive influence identified by the term "sway" (Robinson 2011: 17). The concept of authorship embraces the tenets of romantic expressive theory, wherein the text is perceived as an expression of the distinct thoughts and emotions of the writer. This theory posits a free, cohesive consciousness that remains undivided by influences that can exceed or even contradict the author's original intent. The author is granted exclusive copyright, as their subjectivity is regarded as a metaphysical essence inherent in the text and all its reproductions (Venuti 2008: 136–137). The original author holds a canonical status, thus being esteemed a great writer. In contrast, the translator is perceived as a foreign imitator, a mere instrument, or even a subordinate, and consequently is automatically considered a lesser literary figure. This hierarchical distinction becomes particularly disconcerting when the translator also holds canonical status as a writer, as observed, for instance, in Nabokov's translations of Pushkin (or himself). This situation induces a certain uneasy cognitive and emotional dissonance: while we instinctively recognise that the translator must be a lesser writer than the source author, the undeniable brilliance of this particular translator as an independent writer complicates this conventional hierarchy (Robinson 2011: 150).

## The concerns of the author

Despite the often perceived mechanical, problem-free, nature of translation, or the recognition of issues solely from linguistic and cultural perspectives, both authors and their translators are emotionally engaged and sensitive to the process and its outcomes. Kaisa Koskinen affirms that our mechanisms for observing and responding to our surroundings extend beyond mere rationality; they are inherently affective. These affective responses play a crucial role in our ability to interpret, assess, and pass judgment on the events we observe and participate in. The activities of translating and interpreting, being quintessentially human endeavours, are no exception to this rule. On the contrary, they exemplify it (Koskinen 2020: 179).

The issue of trust serves as a recurring motif in translation literature and stands as a prototypical source of dramatic tension in fictionalised depictions of translators and interpreters. The concern about translatorial non-compliance is not without basis. Translators and interpreters have, at times, been prone to failure and betrayal. This heightened awareness of the potential risks intensifies the feeling of threat, rendering it more compelling and contagious. The fear of betrayal and the subsequent inclination to control translatorial activities with the aim of ensuring the mediator's neutrality, constitutes a persistently influential emotional state, a "sticky affect" (Koskinen 2020: 96).

As an illustration, the translators of the Italian novelist Italo Calvino recount the author's approach: he exhibited an exceedingly possessive stance toward his work and, upon reaching the proof stage of the translation, took pleasure in making minor adjustments in English. This allowed him to perceive that he was ultimately applying the finishing touches. Upon examination of the alterations, it became apparent that they were not merely adjustments to the translation; rather, they often entailed modifications to the narrative itself. Calvino sought to impart a different nuance to certain sentences. These reflections prompt a reconsideration of the concept of authorship. William Weaver emphasises the challenging nature of the relationship with writers, noting that when translating their work, there is a *sense of taking it away from them*. He underscores how, to translate a work, one must *take possession* of it, implying a need for authority and control in the translation process (Covi, Rose, and Weaver 1987: 90, my italics).

Renowned authors in world literature typically possess a heightened awareness of the significance of translation in conveying their work to a global audience. However, the extent of their concern and involvement in the translator's work varies, with some authors exhibiting more active participation and interest than others. Especially when dealing with translations into dominant languages, which can influence both the author's cultural and economic capital. English is today undoubtedly one such language, and to a slightly lesser extent, French, which, a century or even half a century ago, held a central position in the literary world. Addressing the relationships between the centre and the periphery in the literary world Pascale Casanova asserts that the entire literary world is dependent on the centre, to which all align. This centre monopolises trends, meaning that recognition from the periphery must be earned to become visible. The symbolic centre is Paris, given the moniker Greenwich Meridian, an agreed-upon place, a starting point for all calculations. Work currently considered fashionable receives a quality label and is declared 'present'. These works leave a mark and can transform prevailing aesthetic norms. Casanova labels the entire global literary space, characterised by hierarchy and inequality, as the "world republic of letters" (Casanova 2004).

Nevertheless, it is possible for the periphery to assert itself in the centre and enter the canon. The prestige of the centre can extend to, and be transferred onto, the periphery when central and prestigious writers publicly acknowledge literary works, or when a work is translated into the language of the centre or other major languages. Importantly, translation is not just a form of naturalisation or transition from one language to another; more precisely, it involves *littérisation*, a process of turning into literature. For instance, Latin American boom writers gained international recognition only when they were translated into French and French critics started writing about them (Casanova 2004: 134–135).[1]

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[1] In certain situations, the resolution does not involve traditional translation practices, controlled or authorised translations, or even self-translations. Some authors choose to switch the language of their writing, opting for a language with more literary significance globally. Casanova highlights instances involving Kundera, Beckett, Nabokov, Conrad, and Strindberg, who, at different points in their careers, embraced major global literary languages, either temporarily or permanently. These transitions result from a bilingualism not driven by colonial or political factors but influenced by the unequal structure of the literary world, where certain languages are esteemed while others are discredited. Authors may switch languages, not out of coercion, but due to the invisible force of language prestige within the literary landscape (Casanova 2004: 281).

## Writer and translator working together?

Patrick Hersant (2016) delineates a continuum of author–translation collaborations ranging from carte blanche and recommendation, through revision, question-and-answer, back-and-forth, to close collaboration, and, at the other end, conflictual relationships culminating in authorial appropriation. Munday (2008: 198) mentions American translator Gregory Rabassa, who remembers that while García Márquez generally allowed him considerable freedom, Vargas Llosa frequently suggested changes to the translation, with Rabassa perceiving this as Vargas Llosa's overestimation of his own proficiency in English. On the other hand, Rabassa collaborated more closely with Cortázar due to their shared interests and affinities, particularly in jazz.

The primary concern is not necessarily the level of permissiveness the author grants the translator, but rather the author's involvement in the process itself. Even with carte blanche, the author's influence, albeit affective, can still be present for the translator. To illustrate, envision a playwright in a theatre during the staging and rehearsal phase. The playwright might either grant the director complete freedom, provide specific instructions, or choose not to express any preferences at all. Why are some authors particularly interested in having their texts read correctly, that is, translated accurately, if there is a correct way to read or, at the very least, certain essential aspects that the translator should undoubtedly pay attention to? For example, Umberto Eco (Bolletieri, Zanotti 2017: 7) left friendly remarks for the translator and was knowledgeable about translation. However, some of his comments sounded more like guidelines or rules, and he still attempted to maintain control over the translation.

Regarding the titles of the documents, a distinction appears to exist between the term "note" and the term "*istruzioni*" (instructions). The former implies that the author limits themselves to providing annotations, clarifications, and glosses to the text, while the latter suggests a more proactive approach where the author gives instructions and guidance. Whereas it would be logical to assume that the author's intervention, various suggestions, and rules make the translation more literal, more precise, or the translator's task easier, it may not be the case in certain situations.

The collaboration between Cuban exile Guillermo Cabrera Infante and translator-academic Suzanne Jill Levine was fundamentally marked by a power imbalance within the creative process, Munday concludes (2008: 198), analysing the translator's memories in her book *The Subversive Scribe* (Levine 1991). Levine identifies herself as the 'translator-collaborator' of the book *Three Trapped Tigers*. The duo even proposed the neologism 'closelaboration' for the title page to describe their working method, though this suggestion was rejected by publisher. However, Levine–Cabrera Infante stands out as an exceptional case of author–translator collaboration, as the English text undergoes significant remodelling, particularly in word plays, puns, and humour. Cabrera Infante assumed the dominant role in the partnership, given that Levine was a doctoral student in her twenties during this period. They worked through the entire text together. Moreover, the book's subject matter, offering a *machista* perspective on Cuban nightlife in 1958 just before the Revolution, sharply contrasted with Levine's own beliefs. She recounts feeling creatively engaged but working on something oppressive for her. Levine suggests she experienced a sense of self-betrayal, falling under the influence of male discourse, yet also saw herself as a subversive scribe, 'transcreating' writing that challenges patriarchal discourse's boundaries. However, one can question whether this assertion is a retrospective attempt at self-justification for Levine's involvement in a project that clashed with her values, where her influence was restricted (Munday 2008: 198–199).

This seemingly ideal form of working together could turn out to be harmful for the translator: translating material involving violence, trauma, or which conflicts with one's ethical stance or religious perspectives can be emotionally burdensome (Koskinen 2020: 71). In this context, the term 'closelaboration', coined by Cabrera Infante, seems less a homage to his translator and more a deliberate indication of his active involvement in the process (Hersant 2016: 95).

Another instance of collaboration is found in Carlos Fuentes's novel *Cristóbal Nonato* (1987), translated by Fuentes and Alfred MacAdam as *Christopher Unborn* (1989). Initially, Fuentes had translated the first chapter himself for the Americas Society magazine *Review*. However, he vehemently opposed the stylistic modifications suggested by the then editor, MacAdam. Fuentes expressed strong disapproval of the translator's efforts to domesticate and standardise the text to the extent that MacAdam withdrew the alterations and published Fuentes' original translation without changes. Despite this initial discord, MacAdam was later invited to translate the entire book. Fuentes orchestrated a week-long gathering in Mexico, involving the author, translator, and editor. During this intense session, Fuentes imposed a rigorous ten-hour daily schedule to revise the target text, excluding three sections he had translated himself. Like Cabrera Infante, Fuentes exercised control over the mechanics of the translation process, even if the translation process occasionally led to inconsistencies in the original work, *Christopher Unborn*, being addressed (Munday 2008: 204–205).

Another writer also managed to summon the translators to a kind of 'uninhabited island' where they could be pressured and from which they had no possibility to leave, figuratively speaking. This case involves the German writer Günter Grass, who devised a distinctive, perhaps unparalleled, approach to assisting (or, for some, controlling) his translators. He incorporated a clause in the translation contract specifying that the translator must attend an international meeting over several days, with travel expenses covered by the foreign publisher and living costs by Grass. During these gatherings, translators had the opportunity to discuss difficulties with the author and among themselves (Letawe 2016: 131). It is noteworthy that the translators were required to come prepared with questions, placing themselves in a somewhat vulnerable position before the author, who essentially holds the authoritative role (as everyone is well aware). While there are numerous overwhelmingly positive reviews from translators who participated in these events, there is little information about any negative impressions (ibid. 136). It appears to have been an entirely positive encounter for Grass himself, and he seems to have believed that he was also liberating the translators "from the fear they may feel before publishers and readers" (ibid. 135). Fear seems to be a central theme of author–translator relationships: the author fears the potential unfaithfulness of the translators, while the translators are constantly apprehensive about the readers' and publishers' reactions. Additionally, we must not overlook the translator's fear of the author, placing the her or him in the most fearful position in this dynamic.[2]

Certain authors can be quite meticulous about word usage, while others extend their concerns to encompass their overall public image, regulating appearances on television and in the printed press. Authors with a penchant for control understandably seek translators willing to agree with their suggestions and demands. Nabokov tasked his collaborators with producing the most faithful translation of the original Russian text, a version he would sometimes significantly revise. In these cases, Nabokov prioritised not merely the quality of the translation but rather the quality of the relationship with his potential translator. This quality was gauged by the degree of faithfulness to the original text. Regardless of the specific stage in his life, Nabokov consistently sought a pliable translator who would unconditionally accept all possible corrections from the author (Anokhina 2016: 112). The English-language versions became authoritative references for translation into French. However, the process did not go as smoothly with the translators in France, as they were renowned and unwilling to tolerate interference. These translators, esteemed figures in their country, with a strong sense of professional pride, copyright awareness, and a keen sensitivity to the acknowledgment of their text authorship, were displeased with Nabokov's interventions. They perceived these interventions as unwarranted intrusions and were vocal in expressing their disapproval: "… let the translator be master of his own syntax and vocabulary.… Please limit yourself then to correcting semantic errors that I have certainly committed.… I will thus make no change to my text unless it is a case of flagrant mistranslation" (Letter from M.-E. Coindreau to Nabokov, 6 January 1964, Nabokov Papers, cited in Anokhina 2016: 117).[3] Nabokov was angered by the translators' reluctance to accept changes and insisted on having the "final say" regarding the translated text (Anokhina 2016: 118).[4]

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[2] The translators' seminars initiated by Grass significantly enhance the extratextual visibility of his translators. He extensively publicises these seminars, drawing attention to the pivotal role of his translators and providing them with a platform to express themselves. Starting from the first seminar, Grass invited journalists, recorded sessions for radio broadcasts, participated in interviews with foreign television stations, and disseminated press releases. In doing so, he not only motivates his translators to assume an authorial role ("Werdet Autoren!"), but also indirectly prompts them to scrutinise the dynamic between author and translator (Letawe 2016: 137–138).

Milan Kundera stands out as a notable example of an author who was exceptionally possessive of his texts and who harboured distrust of his translators. Expressing continuous dissatisfaction with translations, he voiced complaints through open letters to publishers, nullified and invalidated versions, and subsequently authenticated new ones. Hersant concedes that Kundera's past experiences instilled in him a deep apprehension about embellishments of his work, consequently, he unceremoniously corrected his translators, even employing a certain degree of psychological assertiveness, all to maintain absolute control over his written production (Hersant 2016: 101).

Following his exile to France in 1975, Kundera began writing in French, taking the extraordinary step of personally reviewing and correcting French translations of all his earlier Czech books. After 1985, Kundera asserted that the French version of his work was the sole authorised one, leading to an inversion of the typical translation process where the French text became the original version. This transformation underscores how translation entails not only a shift in language but also a fundamental alteration in the "nature" of a work (Casanova 2004: 281–282). Kundera's frustration escalated due to the Western reception of his novel *The Joke* as a political, anti-Soviet protest, while he intended it to be an existential exploration (Margala 2010: 39).

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[3] Hersant cites Gabriele D'Annunzio's French translator: [Some of the corrections you made] are regrettable, either because you use words that fail to convey in French what you intend to express, or because you employ awkward constructions that give the French text the appearance of a translation by an inept schoolboy. … Yes, you are 'solely responsible for your art'; but it is my responsibility to ensure the translation of your work, and thus, it is my role to be the ultimate corrector of this translation (Hersant 2016: 99).

[4] Nabokov maintained a strict and critical stance toward other translations of Pushkin, firmly asserting the belief that there is only one correct way to translate, and consequently, only one correct way to read Pushkin (Hermans 2002: 131).

Kundera employed a distinctive approach to achieve the 'perfect' translation, a process that spanned five editions until he achieved his goal. Utilising his own word-for-word translations of the original Czech text, Kundera openly acknowledged that he employed "fine solutions" and "faithful renderings" from the last two translations in the final iteration. In essence, the fifth definitive version emerges as a genuine collage incorporating elements from previous translations and Kundera's own renditions. His active involvement and direct intervention ensure the authenticity of this manuscript, distinct from counterfeits or copies. To underscore its legitimacy, this edition *omits any mention of a translator* (Margala 2010: 34). In the case of Kundera, the concept of translation takes on a comprehensive scope. Through Kundera's extensive revisions and the emergence of multiple definitive versions, the original undergoes displacement and rewriting. It can be argued that attempting to pinpoint the 'true' original in Kundera's case is an unproductive endeavour (ibid.: 37).

Some celebrated authors thus perceive their written text as the word of God, which should not be modified by the translator but rather recreated 'in His own image'. The words of Joyce or Kundera must remain unchanged even in translation, as they were originally created. James Joyce approved the text of his translator of *Finnegans Wake* but nonetheless asserted: "I do not wish to be translated, I have to stay as I am, only expressed in your language" (Margala 2010: 31). What is sanctioned for the author remains beyond the prerogatives of the translator. The author, uniquely entitled to retroactive modifications of the original (acknowledging this transformation occurs because of the translation process), enjoys privileges not extended to the translator.

Considering these frequent conflicts, coupled with challenges in handling the target language and the questionable merits of authorial intent, one might question the utility or desirability of authors participating in the translation of their own texts. Their revisions might lack skill, and their annotations divert the translator's focus to non-essential details. Moreover, their understanding of the translation process itself might occasionally reveal unexpected ethnocentrism and academic tendencies (Hersant 2016: 105).

Translation itself embodies the plurality of interpretations, and this can be a problem for some authors. The final translation is closed to further interpretations. Hermans talks about the death of the translator, the end of translation, and self-destruction when translations lack a discernible translator and are entirely equivalent to the original, ceasing to be mere translations, instead transforming into authentic substitutes for the original, i.e. an instance of definitive translation. This is typically observed in translations of sacred texts, where the aim is often to convey the same message in different languages with minor variations in wording (the God wanted to say the same in different languages with slightly different words). In contemporary terms, an authorised translation serves as a modern counterpart to an authentic translation (Hermans 2002).

The text, however, speaks to the reader. According to Eco (1985: 230), each reader "by identifying profound structures, sheds light on something that the author could not mean, but which the text nevertheless seems to exhibit with absolute clarity." If every reader has this experience when engaging with a literary text, many authors feel it is particularly crucial to comprehend and, consequently, translate their initial intention. The collaboration aims, often implicitly, to enhance the translation itself. However, the assumption that the author would possess greater knowledge about their own text than any other reader, and that their intentions would inherently be beneficial, deserves to be questioned and is not self-evident as translators are in a unique position to understand. (Hersant 2016: 103)

From the narratological point of view, the author of a fictional text communicates with readers who share a common language and cultural context. In contrast, in translation, the translator takes on the role of speaker, elucidating to someone acquainted with the context language aspects with which they might not be familiar. To some extent, the author can apprehend this, as they are uncertain about how others will interpret it. The central role here is played by the implicit author and the ideal reader. When a literary work falls into the hands of the reader, the real author's intentions have become a textual artefact. The understanding of the text is now guided by an implicit author, whose message is intended for an implicit reader (Booth 1961). "As an inscribed principle of invention and intent, the implied author is the reader's source of instruction about how to read the text and how to account for the selection and ordering of its components. It is these principles that readers reconstitute, not the real author's original activity" (Chatman 1978: 83–84). Eco's "ideal reader" (*lettore modello*) is comparable to the implicit reader whom the author considers when creating the text:

> The author must consider the Model Reader, who is capable of collaborating in actualizing the text in the manner the author envisioned and moving through the text interpretively as the author has moved generatively.... The methods he employs are varied: the selection of a language (which obviously excludes those

> who do not speak it), the choice of a type of encyclopaedia…, the selection of a specific lexical and stylistic heritage… (Eco 1981: 80)

The problem here is that the implied reader or model reader of the translation is not the same as the one considered by the author of the source text because the translator intervenes. The connection between the implied author and the implied reader is disrupted, and the translator comes into play. "It is evident that for a real reader to represent an implied reader, they must at least share the same language" (Schiavi 1996: 11). The translator thus transforms into the implied reader, not just a privileged reader as commonly assumed, but someone cognisant of the implied reader presupposed by a particular narrative. "Since the translator's task is to produce a text, this awareness will be expressed and codified within the very same text, i.e., his/her translation" (Schiavi 1996: 15).

## Is the translator an author?

Whose intentionality controls the act of writing? The conventional belief suggests that the author's intentionality governs both aspects: the author, as the sovereign subject, intends the original text and embeds that intention within the text; the translator assumes that intention and "writes" the target text, being a "writer" in this specific sense (Robinson 2011: 4). The advent of postmodernism has instilled in us the understanding that no text is original; all texts are intertexts, combinations of various preceding texts. Thus, the translator is as much an author as the writer. Two distinct approaches to literary texts emerge: text, and world. In the case of the text, the translator interprets and commits it to writing according to the possibilities and cultural context of the target language (with the understanding that variations are acceptable). This results in a new text. In the second scenario, the plot, characters, and the natural world are broadly the same, embodying the narrative conceived by the source text's author (expectations dictate that the translator doesn't tell a different story) (Bantinaki 2020).

Translation studies scholar Anthony Pym (2011) explores this question in an article titled, suggestively, "The Translator as Non-Author, and I Am Sorry About That". He acknowledges the need for more recognition and study of the translator's role and voice, aligning with the ongoing 'translator's turn'. Pym (2011) contends:

> If that means that translators, like all authors, transform texts, bring newness into the world, have complex productive cognition processes churning within them as they work, and are all different, then I have no qualms about the

> proposition at all: translators are indeed subjective in their minds and creative in their writing, as any piece of empirical research should be able to show (Pym 2011: 32).

However, he introduces a counterargument based on "ethical responsibility", drawing on Goffman's view that an author is "someone whose position is established by the words that are spoken, someone whose beliefs have been told, someone who is committed to what the words say" (Goffman 1981: 146), a position not clearly held by the translator. The translator seems not to be responsible for the truth value, only for the authenticity of the translation (Pym 2011: 32).[5]

The translation of a literary work serves as a representation rather than a mere replication of the original text. This representation is an act of writing that inevitably reflects the translator's agency while normatively preserving essential elements of the original. The term 'translation' implies a constrained representation, indicating that the translated work is (a) a distinct body of writing with its own merits and faults, not the responsibility of the original author; (b) does not create its own imaginary world, but creatively present the imaginary world crafted by another writer; and (c) is committed to portraying adequately this imaginary world in a different language and cultural context, subject to evaluation based on these considerations (Bantinaki 2019: 7).

As claimed by Robinson, the translator does not transform into *the* writer; instead, he or she becomes *a* writer, resembling the original author closely, solely because both engage in the act of writing. They draw on their own language and worldly experience to craft effective discourse (Robinson 2011: 3). According to Bantinaki "The writer of the original and the translator are not co-authors of the translation" (2019: 9), therefore each text has its own fully authorised author. Both the author and the translator take risks and both bear responsibility, though perhaps different responsibilities.

Translational activities are inherently meditational, positioning translators and interpreters as participants in communication that does not originate from them but rather represents the voices of others. This involves empathetic listening to comprehend the intentions of others, understanding the context of reception to navigate potential challenges and executing the communicative act with an appearance of detachment while concurrently conveying trustworthiness and professionalism. (Koskinen 2020: 29) The darker sides for the translator include the apprehension of potential mistreatment from those undergoing translation, the anxiety of facing possible embarrassment, shame, or guilt for not achieving amiability or fairness in their re-creations, and fearing exposure for failing. The author's emotions toward the translator and his or her confidence can be summed up as impostor syndrome (ibid.: 85). This phenomenon might also contribute to the translators' often apologetic tone in prefaces (or the desire to remain invisible in the background background and not talk about one's work at all), anticipating criticism even when it has not yet been voiced. The affective imperative to establish trust, achieved by fostering sympathy or disinterestedness, can be regarded as the fundamental emotional task underlying all other layers of translatorial affective labour (ibid.: 38).

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[5] Therefore, pseudo-translations have been employed to bypass censorship although numerous translators have faced persecution due to their attributed authorship, such as translators of the Bible (William Tyndale, Jan Hus), those of oppositional philosophy (Étienne Dolet), or those involved in more contemporary controversies (Hitoshi Igarashi, Ettore Capriolo, Aziz Nesin, all translators of Rushdie). (Pym 2011: 36)

Certain authors strive for the utmost precision and fidelity to the original text, upholding a commitment to preserve the integrity of the source material. On the other hand, there are those who are open to the idea of modifying the original, demonstrating a willingness to reshape the source material in order to exert greater control over the resulting text. In alignment with Borges's perspective, it is acknowledged that, in numerous instances, the quest for a singular, definitive, and original text may be futile and unnecessary. The article briefly outlines specific cases, though it is important to note that these examples represent only a fraction of documented instances, with probably many more undocumented occurrences. These cases serve as illustrative examples of the fluidity of texts and the intricate interplay between authorial intentions and the interpretations of translators. While these instances have predominantly come to light through the lens of translation studies, their significance extends beyond this field. These examples should be integral to literary research, contributing to a broader understanding of, or at least an earnest attempt to comprehend, the origins of texts, ideas, and words within the realm of literature.

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