EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION:

THE POTENTIALS AND PERILS OF DETERRITORIALISATION

Em tempo de coronavirus, é ainda mais preciso desterritorializar-se,
atravessar fronteiras…
Everton Machado, Facebook post, 22 March 2020

This issue of *Translation Matters* comes out in unprecedented times, when the whole of Portugal – and much of the rest of the world – is in corona lockdown. With we "non-essential" workers confined to our homes or immediate neighbourhoods, translation is arguably more important than ever – not just the various textual processes that have traditionally fallen under its rubric, but also the host of other transfers and transpositions that enable us to transcend our isolation and keep in touch with the world. With the university closed, our teaching materials and assessment procedures are translated into distance-learning formats; our conferences are *translat* from hall to screen; and we increasingly resort to emoticons to translate our ironies and sincerities in the disturbing absence of face-to-face conversation. We also feel compelled to translate our fears and needs into words in order to share comfort and solidarity, and to translate our humanity into concrete gestures towards the helpless and the isolated. And of course there is the translation that we hope is on its way in the not-too-distant future of all those efforts going on in laboratories around the world into the production of a vaccine or a pharmakon that will arrest the virus and the subsequent translation of all of that into the health and well-being of our populations.

It may seem at first sight that I am being fanciful or facetious in using "translation" so loosely. But this is not semantic libertarianism. The English verb "translate" once had a much broader range of meanings than we have been used to in recent times,[1] and there are signs that it might be expanding its purview once more. Indeed, one of the objectives of this current issue is to highlight the breadth of operations currently covered by the term, not only in the informal metaphorical domain, but also increasingly in cutting-edge translation scholarship. The medical usage, for example, has been intensely explored by Douglas Robinson in his 2017 book *Translationality: Essays in the Translational-Medical Humanities*[2] to emphasise the element of semiotic modelling evident in all

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[1] See Watson (2008, p. 76): "In Middle English, flowers, bishops, captured peoples, and the relics of saints are all translat from garden to garden, see to see, kingdom to kingdom, shrine to shrine; the soul is translat to God in mystical rapture or at death; and learning, culture, political power, and divine covenant are translat from east to west, pagan to Christian, Old to New Testament, in various manifestations of 'translatio studii et imperii', the translation of learning and empire".

[2] "The interdiscipline of TM [Translational Medicine] is 'translational' in the broad 'transitional' or 'transitive' sense that it tracks the translation of [a] medical research into clinical trials, [b] clinically trialed drugs and devices into patient care, and also, increasingly (…) [c] patient care into a phenomenology of illness and health, pain and its alleviation, treatment and healing, as organized culturally by belief and value systems surrounding the causes of and cures for illness and injury" (Robinson, 2017, p. xviii).

transformational processes,[3] while Blumczynski (2016) has underlined the ubiquity of translational phenomena in disciplines such as philosophy, theology, linguistics, and anthropology. Extensions to various other domains have been proposed by Edwin Gentzler (2017) under the rubric of "post-translation studies" and by Susan Bassnett and David Johnston (2019) as the "outward turn". In short, we seem to be entering a new era in which Translation Studies (TS) is becoming "fundamentally transdisciplinary, mobile, and open ended" (Arduini and Nergaard, 2011, p. 8). As these authors predicted back in 2011:

> Despite an original focus and fresh material content, the object of our research, namely translation, remains the same. But it will appear differently. New objects called translation will emerge, letting the already existing ones take a different shape and value. It is similar to those moments when scholarship uses new words to speak about and describe a thing, allowing the thing itself to appear different and, in addition, allowing us to see things in a fresh light. (Arduini and Nergaard, 2011, p. 11)

There is something opportune about the timing of this expansion. Given current fears that the professional translator might soon become redundant, victim of the remarkable advances in translation technology,[4] it is encouraging that we might now be entering a "trans-disciplinary research field with translation as an interpretive as well as operative tool" (Arduini and Nergaard, 2011, p. 8). The shift validates our intuition that our concepts and theories may be of use to explain and predict all manner of transformations and transfers, including in spheres far beyond the lingual.

This general issue of *Translation Matters*, then, celebrates the forays of TS into a range of adjacent – and not so adjacent – fields. Such cross-fertilisations are, in themselves, not new, of course. What has changed, I argue, with Arduini and Nergaard, is the way we view them. Instead of conceptualising the intersections as borrowings from more mature disciplines, ways of shoring up our territory with imported resources, this is now a deterritorialisation, as TS transcends its traditional borders to shed light on other areas.

A deterritorialisation of a different kind is evident in the epigraph that opens this issue, Manuel Alegre's hymn to Lisbon in lockdown. In it, we see the city hushed and still, emptied of physical life, as if holding its breath – yet, under the surface, intangibly, there is resilience, a staunch resolve bolstered by empathy and a sense of community. This immanence has been wonderfully translated into sound and image in a short video by José Costa Barbosa[5] – an elegy of lingering shots and sustained musical notes, poignantly counterpointed at the end by an auditory memory of chattering and laughter.

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[3] Translationality, Robinson explains, is about how things metamorphose, become other; it is "transformationality: the constant emergingness of everything through embodied, situated, performative interactions" (2017, p. x).

[4] Neural approaches to machine translation, which started to replace statistical methods in around 2016, have made it possible for computers to produce increasingly accurate translations in common language combinations. As a result, many professional translators now often engage in pre- or post-editing of machine translations rather than translation proper (Castilho et al., 2019; Kenny, 2017), bringing implications for translator training.

[5] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/B-WoKI8DW2F (Accessed: 20 April 2020).

Lachlan Mackenzie's English version of the poem produces quite a different sort of deterritorialisation. Catering for a reader that may not have the background knowledge of Alegre's immediate audience, it privileges the musicality of the original – the short unhurried lines of a life in suspension, the rhymes that echo somewhere with pleasing regularity, even when read so slow that we have almost lost the memory of what came before. Gone are the elements of Portuguese culture that would perhaps be most meaningful to Alegre's immediate readers – Amália Rodrigues' "Gaivota" and the discourse of *saudade* that trails in its wake; the glimpse of children's paddle boats competing with the seabirds and canoes on the water; and of course the *esplanada* with its memories of long afternoons spent in merry conviviality. In their place, the wistfulness of the tourist frustrated by bar and restaurant closures ("without coffee stands", "no spirit no wines"), yet perhaps still hoping to see something of Fernando Pessoa's city and the *fado* for which it is famed. Any literary translation reminds us of the multi-dimensional nature of "meaning" and the impossibility of capturing more than a fraction of all available interpretations. As Ortega y Gasset ([1937] 2013) once said of languages,[6] each one is a different equation of statements and silences: we silence some things in order to be able to say others. Each of these translations – Barbosa's and Mackenzie's – illuminates aspects of Alegre's poem that make sense in its medium while leaving others in darkness.

As for the various articles in this volume, they show translation operating in the service of different disciplinary areas, including education, law, linguistics, development, and literary studies. **Gisele Dionísio da Silva**'s piece, which opens the section, is concerned with sociology of translation, a domain that first began to make a mark around the turn of the millennium when theories, methods and concepts developed by sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu and Bruno Latour begin to be incorporated into TS. Focusing on the intersection between translation and book publishing, the article reviews the literature of the last two decades in order to map the various ways researchers have approached the topic. The findings reveal an interesting panorama, a field that is already quite busy with research, yet with patches that are still remarkably untouched. Translation Studies has clearly been immeasurably enriched by sociology in the last twenty years, to the extent that concepts like "habitus", "agency", "actor-network", and "symbolic capital" are now quite commonplace in its discourse. The challenge is now to reverse the influence and ensure that the sociology of publishing (or book studies, as it is sometimes called) becomes aware of the translational mechanisms operating in its field of study.

The next article, by **Marco Neves**, returns us to the bread-and-butter world of professional practice, with a focus on the "official" documents that are often a main source of income for freelancers and translation agencies. This is a very different kind of translation from the aesthetic exercise exemplified in this issue's Epigraph. The translator of legal documents cannot indulge in creative flourishes like a literary translator, but

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[6] See Ortega y Gasset ([1937] 2013, p. 29): "(...) cada lengua es una ecuación diferente entre manifestaciones y silencios. Cada pueblo calla unas cosas para poder decir otras. Porque todo sería indecible. De aquí la enorme dificultad de la traducción: decir en un idioma precisamente lo que este idioma tiende a silenciar".

instead must adhere tightly to the surface of the text, reproducing every seal, stamp, signature, even coffee stain. Cicero ([46 BCE] 2002) famously despised such work and the professionals that undertook it, denigrating the *fidus interpres* as a hapless hack, labouring anonymously in the shadows of history;[7] and if in our own days such work is to some extent compensated financially (compared, at least, to its literary *congénère*),[8] the official translator remains largely invisible. In Portugal, Neves reminds us, the position of such translators is doubly obscure because, unlike in many other countries, there is no "sworn translator" status to add veneer. Anyone can translate documents and take legal responsibility for them without any formal training or qualification. Yet in this borderland between translation and law, words have performative power: they can change people's circumstances, alter states. Arguably nothing is more important. One lapse and a property might slip from someone's hands, a responsibility shift, a case be lost. Given these implications and the demand for such work in Portugal, it is remarkable that more time is not given to it on our translator training programmes. This article, which informs about the ins and outs of certified translation, thus fills an important gap. Defining terms, identifying risks and advising about all the stages of the procedure from costing to final authentication at the notary, Neves offers valuable guidance for anyone hoping to enter the profession.

The next article, by **Jorge Almeida e Pinho**, moves into the realm of education, though not, as might be expected, translator training. Instead, it focuses on the ancillary role that translation has played in the world of language teaching since its heyday in the era of "grammar-translation". Briefly tracing the history of language teaching and translation's place in it, Pinho explains how translation fell out of favour as a language-teaching technique when the "direct method" came on the scene, only starting to regain credibility in recent years in the aftermath of the "communicative approach". It is tempting to see in this development a hint that English, which was for decades taught monolingually by native teachers who knew nothing of their students' mother tongues, may finally have peaked as the hegemonic language of the world.[9] For translation in the language classroom is a counter-hegemonic force. By constantly reminding learners of the differences between languages, activities such as those that Pinho proposes are not just useful ways of aiding comprehension and stimulating creativity, they are also ideological weapons in the struggle against uniformity of thought.

Linguistics, the domain of **Christina Karakepeli**'s article, has already had a long and fruitful relationship with translation to the point of some people believing it to be TS's rightful home. In the twentieth century, it was of course the linguists that initiated the training of translators after World War II and produced the first practice-oriented

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[7] See McElduff (2009) on the sociocultural reasons for Cicero's negative judgement.
[8] While translation as a whole continues ill-paid in relation to comparable professions, official documents often command favourable rates, charged by the page rather than by the word or character. And of course the use of templates for the most common kinds of document can speed up the translation process considerably.
[9] On the implications of this for translation, see Bennett (2019).

reflections about how translation should and should not be done.[10] Despite the pummelling they received from the descriptivists, who denounced their source-orientedness, structuralist focus, and general pursuit of equivalence,[11] linguists have continued to flood the discipline with important insights and techniques, with particularly significant contributions coming from the cognitive and corpus branches of their field, and from critical discourse analysis (CDA). Karakepeli's article, which focuses on politeness strategies as an index of power in intercultural institutional discourse, owes much to both corpus and CDA approaches. Analysing the Greek and English versions of the Treaty of Lisbon, otherwise known as the European Constitution, she uncovers an interesting series of shifts, particularly in the domain of modality, which bring implications on the level of power relations. In case we needed it, this is another reminder of the cultural embedment of language and the consequent impossibility of achieving perfect equivalence in translation. In the context of the European Union, where the different language versions of legislative charters are considered authentic legal acts in their own right,[12] this seems particularly significant.

Culture is also an important theme in **Yolanda Moreno-Bello**'s article, which transports us to the world of community interpreting in Africa. This is now translation in the service of development, vital to ensure access to key services in multilingual communities. In this region of East Kenya, where a single health centre has to serve a vast hinterland of rural villages, patients – many of whom are refugees – may not speak the language of the health practitioners. Moreno-Bello's study of the cultural factors affecting communication between health worker and patient emphasises the need for properly trained interpreters, while at the same time recognising that, in present circumstances, the service may have to be voluntary in nature (as provided by non-profit organisations like Translators without Borders).

The next article, by **David Swartz**, addresses translation from the perspective of the literary scholar. Translation has played a fundamental role in the development of literary systems, though defenders of national canons, eager to emphasise the exceptionality of their bards, have traditionally downplayed the fact. But these great authors did not pluck their ideas ex nihilo; instead, they borrowed, rewrote and revised themes and texts that were circulating at the time, importing literary models from other cultures and translating liberally (translation is of course a form of rewriting, as André Lefevere [1985, 1992] famously made very clear). In this article, Swartz explores the origins of a particular Shakespearian coupling ("the black and the beautiful") which he traces back to the fifth verse of the Song of Songs. Biblical Hebrew, we know from scholars such as Rosenberg ([1984] 2006) or Holtz ([1984] 2006), generated meaning in a very different way from

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[10] For example, Vinay and Darbelnet ([1958] 1995), Nida (1964), Catford (1965) and later Newmark (1988), Baker (1992) and Hervey and Higgins (1992).

[11] Such as Gideon Toury, José Lambert, André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett (see Hermans, 1985).

[12] This is despite the fact that, for practical reasons, most legislation is actually translated in reality (Doczekalska, 2015, p. 170).

modern languages, opening up a vast hermeneutical gap. Swartz's analysis centres upon the all-purpose coordinating conjunction *vav* (ו),[13] which links the concepts of black and beautiful in this passage. The decision of whether to translate it with "and" or "but" has had profound implications for how blackness is understood, not only in the various Bibles that have marked Western culture since Antiquity, but also in the writings of the numerous authors that have drawn upon those translations. Swartz delves into these murky depths and emerges bearing a pearl of insight that has relevance not only for our understanding of Shakespeare, but also for a range of other borrowers and reusers, from Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius to Philip Sidney and Caravaggio.

Guilherme da Silva Braga's article brings us back to the world of book publishing, but this time from the perspective of the literary translator. In its first section, we are given a glimpse of the decision-making process at work in one publishing house, in the specific case of a source-text strongly marked by a non-standard use of English in its narrative voice. The work in question, Jack Kerouac's *Pic*, features a poor black child from North Carolina, whose colloquial dialect raises tremendous challenges for translation. After a careful analysis of the techniques used by the author to represent orality in written prose, Braga discusses the various options available to the translator from within a broadly functionalist framework. The outcome is a set of guidelines for how non-standard speech might be depicted in Brazilian Portuguese, amply illustrated by excerpts from his own published translation.

Finally, **Alexandra Lopes**' article, which closes the issue, is a philosophical reflection on a very topical theme – translation as hospitality. Seeking to make sense of the ways that translation "pode constituir (…) um lugar em que uma mesmidade se deixa constantemente interpelar e habitar pela diferença", it revisits, in a more abstract way, many of the themes rehearsed elsewhere in the issue. In a prose style which blurs the boundaries between academic discourse and literary writing, this piece reminds us that language structures our world and that Derridean disseminations, in opening the door to contagion of all kinds, also promote the "ethics of responsibility" that, for her, is the ultimate goal of the translation mission.

Hospitality is a fitting way to end this issue of *Translation Matters*. From the knights that cared for sick and injured pilgrims en route to the Holy Land through to the hostels, hospices, and health centres of the present day, the word reminds us that the traveller was once lumped together with the poor and the sick as a vulnerable creature in need of shelter and protection. Venturing beyond the boundaries of his native land, whether on a pilgrimage or in pursuit of more worldly ends, the traveller was cast free of the real and symbolic networks that gave meaning to his existence and set at the mercy of those he encountered on the way.

Deterritorialisation, whether understood as physical voyaging, transcendence or immanence in the Deleuzian sense, is therefore a perilous business. It is also the fundamental condition for translation to occur. Now that Translation Studies as an area of

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[13] See Hammond (1980) on the Latin and English translations of the same conjunction in Genesis.

study is itself moving out of its comfort zone into territories inhabited by other epistemologies, it risks dilution or even annihilation. All the articles making up this issue would seem to suggest that this is a risk worth taking.

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