"ALLEGIANCE!":
LITERARY TRANSLATION OF REFERENCE NETWORKS IN LEACOCK'S COMIC SKETCHES

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ABSTRACT: My purpose in this article is to briefly discuss the usage of notes in my translation of Stephen Leacock's (1869-1944) humorous novel *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (1912), currently in progress. After setting forth the research problem and delineating some of the main features of my object's overall and specific contexts, I reflect upon the foreignising status of my translation and test the plausibility of providing my Brazilian readers with a "hypertextual" version of the Canadian book, as I include information that is not available in the original. Alongside such debate, looking at literature as an unceasing flow of meanings and effects results inevitably in my accentuation of how liquefied the situation of those who take part within the process tends to be. Author, text, translator, reader: there are no concrete instances in the atmosphere of literature – they all blend and traverse one another in a ghostlike fashion, but we shall never be able to access and/or define with precision how such contact occurs. Translating, in this sense, in spite of resurrecting the original endeavours to make its ghost keep haunting other people.

KEYWORDS: Literature. Footnotes. Canada.

RESUMO: Meu propósito neste artigo é discutir brevemente o uso de notas na minha tradução do romance cômico de Stephen Leacock (1869-1944) intitulado *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (1912), atualmente em curso. Depois de colocar meu problema de pesquisa e delinear alguns aspectos de meus contextos geral e específico, reflito sobre o status estrangeirizador de minha tradução e texto a plausibilidade de trazer aos meus leitores brasileiros uma versão "hipertextual" do livro canadense, já que incluo informações que não estão disponíveis no original. Acompanhando este debate, entender literatura como uma incessante corrente de sentidos e efeitos resulta inevitavelmente em minha acentuação do quanto fluída tende a ser a situação daqueles que se envolvem no processo. Autor, texto, tradutor, leitor: não existem instâncias concretas na atmosfera da literatura – todas se misturam e se atravessam de forma fantasmática, mas nunca poderemos acessar e/ou definir com precisão como tal contato ocorre. Traduzir, assim, ao invés de ressuscitar o original, busca permitir que seu fantasma continue assombrando outras pessoas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Literatura. Notas de rodapé. Canadá

> In translation, hidden entities become visible, silently making conditions necessary for particular utterances, and, ironically, dispelling any notion of truth or literal meaning. In such an approach, the very concept of "meaning" is altered. What becomes visible instead is an unstable entity, cohering in the relation between the implicit and the explicit. If in translation the *non-dit* is brought to light, that which is said can be measured against that which cannot be said, unveiling another kind of meaning of any given text. (Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary translation theories*, 2001, p. 203)

Introduction: Born from another father

My purpose in this article is to briefly discuss the usage of paratexts (more specifically of notes) in my translation of Stephen Leacock's (1869-1944) humorous novel *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (1912), currently in progress. After setting forth the research problem and delineating some of the main features of my object's overall and specific contexts, I reflect upon the foreignising status of my translation and test the plausibility of providing my Brazilian readers with a "hypertextual" version of the Canadian book, as I include information that is not available in the original. In my subjective reading, critical analysis, and material practice of translating Leacock's (1912) novel a primordial discussion is one which Schleiermacher (2001) was the first theoretician to bring to light. In this same essay, originally published in 1813, Schleiermacher (2001) provides two possibilities for the translator to undertake his/her challenging task. According to the philosopher, the translator can either leave the writer as quiet as possible – forcing the reader to move in the direction of the original author – or s/he can leave the reader as quite as possible – forcing the original author to move in the direction of the reader. In the first case, Schleiermacher (2001, p. 56) continues, the translator gets consequently more worried with the source context; in the second with the target context, and each of these paths are going to provide distinct characteristics for the translated text.[1] Such dual motion would be

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[1] "Entweder der Uebersezer läßt den Schriftsteller möglichst in Ruhe, und bewegt den Leser ihm entgegen; oder er läßt den Leser möglichst in Ruhe und bewegt den Schriftsteller ihm entgegen."

converted into an omnipresent debate within the field of translation studies – a dichotomy that has survived to many years after Schleiermacher's essay, especially after Lawrence Venuti published his masterpiece *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1995).

In this book, Venuti (1995) develops a reasoning which is in parallel with Schleiermacher's one, with the difference that the latter has never named the two distinct paths for the translated textualisation or advocated with so much certainty and militancy for one of these (purportedly) opposed methods for translating – an opposition that no translation is able to evade. In a nutshell, Venuti (1995) would name the process of bringing the source text to the target reader as domestication, whereas bringing the target reader to the source text would be called foreignisation; there seems to be no disparity whatsoever between the definitions provided by both authors – Venuti (1995) has only given a label for each of the two processes. Perhaps, also due to his rather polemic manner of argumentation (his assertiveness and even radicalism, to some degree), one could say Venuti (1995, 1998, 2000) is generally more credited than Schleiermacher (2001) for having "created" such categories – notwithstanding his lack of originality, as, about two centuries ago, the latter had already been talking about that. The fact remains: Venuti (1995, 1998, 2000) is more effective in drawing attention because a major part of his theorisation is guided by these categories. If, throughout his most acclaimed works – *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995) and *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (1998) – Venuti advocates for foreignisation as the ideal translation technique, that does not seem to have ever been the purpose of Schleiermacher (20001) when he proposed his critique on the matter. This is so for Venuti (1998) presents the concepts of foreignisation and domestication not simply as possibilities – but actually as to advocate for the former and put the latter into question.

As the development of the academic discussions on translation studies would soon demonstrate, and it is worth remembering that theretofore Venuti (1995, 1998, 2000) has contributed considerably (regardless of what I see as drawbacks in his critique), such assumption ignores the varied objectives of each translation and who the readers

that are targeted are in distinct translation projects. Translators and researchers on translation have no need to be as insular and bigoted as Venuti (1995, 1998, 2000) asks them to be, after all translating is a task that goes way beyond this utopian antagonism; as a matter of fact, long ago, Schleiermacher (2001) was already aware of that and this, in my view, is what makes his critical positioning more satisfactory than that of Venuti (1995, 1998, 2000). According to the philosopher, translation should be conceived as a state which finds itself in the middle of the road between these two options (domestication and foreignisation) and not necessarily in one place or another (Schleiermacher, 2001, p. 62).[2] The translator, in Schleiermacher's (2001) view, writes his text for an educated and cultured reader, never underestimating his/her capacity to comprehend the whole of a literary piece without depending completely on the target contextual conditioning. But the translator should at the same time, also aim at providing his/her readers with pleasure and information – never pursuing just one of these – and at making them aware of the differences between the language where the text was originally written and the language whereto it has been translated (Schleiermacher, 2001, p. 63).[3] No translation, thus, can simply choose either to foreignise or domesticate; each text demands, to a certain extent, the translator to do both. Hence the impossibility of really being able to bring the author closer to the reader or the reader closer to the author – both paths happen simultaneously.

Every text is foreign and domestic at the same time, and it is high time we realized that translation, as literature, has never been about diminishing or increasing distances, but about going beyond them. Transposing distances and frontiers, the translated text is never copy and never original – it is somewhat between these two conditions. Bearing that in mind, my research explores the translation of humour as an opportunity

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[2] "Das Uebersezen bezieht sich also auf einen Zustand, der zwischen diesen beiden mitten inne liegt."

[3] "der Uebersezer muß also sich zum Ziel stellen, seinem Leser ein solches Bild und einen solchen Genuß zu verschaffen, wie das Lesen des Werkes in der Ursprache dem so gebildeten Manne gewährt, den wir im besseren Sinne des Worts den Liebhaber und Kenner zu nennen pflegen, dem die fremde Sprache geläufig ist, aber doch immer fremde bleibt, der nicht mehr wie die Schüler sich erst das einzelne wieder in der Muttersprache denken muß, ehe er das Ganze fassen kann, der aber doch auch da wo er am ungestörtesten sich der Schönheiten eines Werkes erfreut, sich immer der Verschiedenheit der Sprache von seiner Muttersprache bewußt bleibt."

to reclaim the translator's autonomy to transgress the frontiers of the foreign and the domestic. Analysing the effects of Leacock's (1912) comic discourse, and reflecting upon how such effects could be recreated in Portuguese, my project is to let the text inform my literary translation – instead of trying to apply any categorical methodology such as foreignising or domesticating the text. I use here the word "recreate" as analogous to "translate" because, make no mistake, my translation is the result of a singular reading and interpretation of *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (Leacock, 1912); and, as to get to such result, I never tried to provide my target audience with the same text in another language – especially because the advent of another language already indicates the impossibility of a same text. That is, there is no way to make out how an author would think of this or that joke if s/he wrote in another space and time, because if that were the case s/he would not be who s/he is – and his/her text would actually not exist. Apropos, and still in the words of Schleiermacher (2001, p. 88), if a translator came to a reader posing that his/her text is perfectly equal to how it should be in case the original writer had written it in the language whereto such text is being taken, the reader should thank him/her by alleging s/he is as grateful as s/she would be in case he had offering him/her a picture of such author as if s/he had been born from another father.[4] This answer is indeed rather logical, for the argument makes no sense – translating is not walking through a single preconceived path, but accepting the role of building a brand new one.

Discussion: Literary translations as zones of interaction

In the case of Leacock's narrative, and if every text asks his/her translator to move to this or that direction depending on particular effects that are manifested therein, the motivation of most of my "translation interferences" is to strengthen the sketches' humour, inasmuch as they are of paramount importance for maintaining the critical

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[4] "Ja was will man einwenden, wenn ein Uebersezer dem Leser sagt, Hier bringe ich dir das Buch, wie der Mann es würde geschrieben haben, wenn er es deutsch geschrieben hätte; und der Leser ihm antwortet, Ich bin dir eben so verbunden, als ob du mir des Mannes Bild gebracht hättest, wie er aussehen würde, wenn seine Mutter ihn mit einem andern Vater erzeugt hätte?"

discussions set forward during the novel. To (re)create humour, however, one must first understand exactly how it operates; in the words of Vandaele (2008, p. 147), "at first glance, humour is easy to define. Humour is what causes amusement, mirth, a spontaneous smile and laughter". This seems to be a rather direct description, and indeed one that could be used to explain most comic events and responses to such events no matter in which period or place they take place. Even though the acknowledged division between the comic and the tragic might, sometimes, be a little problematic (as posed beforehand), it is one that still works pretty well – which confirms the hypothesis that humour might indeed, in overall terms, be easy to define. It is not difficult to understand what can be considered humorous and what cannot when we have set in our minds that everything that is capable of causing amusement, mirth or a spontaneous smile and laughter is, per se, a humorous thing. Nevertheless, the trigger for such feelings can vary immensely; and, given the fact that humour is most often deeply related with the context wherein it was originally conceived, to move one text from one period into another or from one space into another is a process that can be rather unfavourable concerning how such humour is going to be handled. This is the reason why humour might be easy to define only at first glance; when one stops to think of it one realises that to find something funny has to do with a vast and complex set of meaning systems.

If one thinks, for instance, in the emergence of irony, such emergence proves to be caused in case something is deviating from what had been expected by readers (based on their experience and life context) – but something can only deviate from what is expected if there is something being expected. It is the inevitable variations that these "somethings" undergo when time and space interfere in peoples' values which predetermine how so many events can be found funny by some and innocuous to others. In this sense, if there is one aspect that marks the experience of reading Leacock's sketches as understood within the context whereto it belongs, such aspect is laughter. But how is laughter triggered thereby? Is humour really something "easy to define"? In *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious* (Freud, 1991), there is the articulation of a deep reflection on the matter of how people experience jokes as to

give his readers a clearer grasp on how complex the experience of laughter proves to be. At the onset of his articulation on the issue of making jokes, Freud (1991, p. 4) asks a rhetorical question: "Is the subject of jokes worth so much trouble? There can, I think, be no doubt of it". Analysing the troublesome configuration of humour – and reinforcing its interdisciplinary condition – Freud (1991, p. 16) gradually shows how, for the advent of humour, one "can appeal to the fact that there is an intimate connection between all mental happenings".

No matter how important or unimportant they think humour might be in terms of its impact on subjects' lives, its intricacy already consists in "a fact which guarantees that a psychological discovery even in a remote field will be of an unpredictable value in other fields" (Freud, 1991, p. 50). Laughter is one of the few things that accompany human beings from the moment they are born until the day they die. Of course the conditions for such experience to emerge are constructed (and, as such, can be reconstructed), but every society has its version of humour – the object of laughter is another, but laughter itself has always been there. The impact of humour, thus, is far-reaching and all-embracing: "We may also bear in mind the peculiar and even fascinating charm exercised by jokes in our society. A new joke acts almost like an event of universal interest; it is passed from one person to another like the news of the latest victory" (Freud, 1991, p. 63). There is, it seems, almost an evolutionary aspect for humour to operate; passing through generations, it plays a significant role for our individual and social development. Leacock's (1912) text is still – and shall probably always be – laughable; and I deem my project significant given the character I wish to delineate for my translation (maintaining laughter by manipulating faces). Informed by my analysis of the novel, both my translation and the reflections stemming therefrom shall dodge the attempt at picking up a finished comic piece to reposition it in another context; the goal is to keep passing the joke from generation to generation (as a continuous flow that has no beginning nor ending).

My research analysis, therefore, makes use of translation theories and techniques that give me room to let the literary discourse speak – rather than imposing how I am supposed to understand what such discourse has to say; hence my opportunity to

restore, through translation, the weight of the comic. I would be considerably gratified if my literary analysis and translation proposal succeeded to shed a new light upon the translation of laughter, inasmuch as, in my view, it is high time we provided both of these instances – translation and laughter – with the autonomy they deserve. Having said that, and following the articulations developed hitherto, the excerpt I set forth herein for my analysis and discussion concerns Leacock's (1912) usage of references within the narrative. Such references seem to be made so that comic effects are activated, so understanding them is of paramount importance for any reader. Here the narrator talks about the identity first of Jeff, the barber, and then of the people of Mariposa – the fictional town where most of the narrative takes place. Curiously, the population of the town is incredibly attached to their space while, at the same time, it also feels an extreme connection to other regions. The unnamed narrator would later explain how all these connections are frequent in Mariposa, both to the U.S. and British nations, since many of the characters have some personal bond with such places. S/he says we, the readers, would not find it curious if we had the chance of going to Mariposa and consequently learn everything s/he already knows. At this moment it becomes evident that the narrator's pride regarding the setting of the narrative also has to do with a universalising idea of the local – i.e. his/her sense of spatial belongingness is alongside his/her idea of spatial interaction.

> Then you learn for the first time that Jeff Thorpe's people came from Massachusetts and that his uncle fought at Bunker Hill (it must have been Bunker Hill, - anyway Jefferson will swear it was in Dakota all right enough), and you find that George Duff has a married sister in Rochester and that her husband is all right. In fact, George was down there as recently as eight years ago. Oh, it's the most American town imaginable is Mariposa, - on the fourth of July. But wait, just wait, if you feel anxious about the solidity of the British connection, till the twelfth of the month, when everybody is wearing an orange streamer in his coat and the Orangemen (every man in town) walk in the big procession. Allegiance! Well, perhaps you remember the address they gave to the Prince of Wales on the platform of the Mariposa station as he went through on his tour to the west. I think that pretty well settled that question. So you will easily understand that of course everybody belongs to the Knights of Pythias and the

> Masons and Oddfellows, just as they all belong to the Snow Shoe
> Club and the Girls' Friendly Society. (Leacock, 1912, p. 43-44)[5]

In order to effectively grasp the connections that the narrator wants us to understand, the reader must be acquainted with some very specific cultural elements that are not as clear-cut for contemporary Brazilians as they perhaps were for Anglophone ones of the early XIX century; so, once again, some translator's note seem pertinent. So first let us take a look at The Battle of Bunker Hill which concerns a battle that took place from 1775 until 1783, when the British defeated Americans in U.S. soil. Nevertheless, "despite their loss, the inexperienced colonial forces inflicted significant casualties against the enemy, and the battle provided them with an important confidence boost".[6] It all started when, having learned that the British were planning to send troops from Boston to occupy the hills surrounding the city, 1.000 colonial militiamen under Colonel William Prescott (1726-95) built earthen fortifications on top of Breed's Hill, overlooking Boston and located on the Charlestown Peninsula. The men originally had been ordered to construct their fortifications atop Bunker Hill but instead chose the smaller Breed's Hill, closer to Boston. In the end the outnumbered Americans were forced to retreat. However, by the end of the engagement, the Patriots' gunfire had cut down some 1.000 enemy troops, with more than 200 killed and more than 800 wounded. More than 100 Americans perished, while more than 300 others were wounded. So, even though the British were able to win the battle, it was a significant morale-builder for the

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[5] "Então você finalmente descobre que o povo de Jeff Thorpe veio de Massachusetts e que seu tio lutou em *Bunker Hill* (deve ter sido Bunker Hill, apesar do Jefferson jurar que foi em Dakota), e você descobre que George Duff tem uma irmã casada em Rochester e que seu marido está bem. Na verdade o George esteve lá no sul há apenas oito anos. Oh, a cidade mais americana que se possa imaginar é Mariposa – no quarto de julho. Mas espere, só espere, caso você se sentir curioso sobre a solidez da conexão britânica com a gente, até o décimo segundo dia do mês, quando todo mundo veste uma serpentina laranja no casaco e os *Orangemen* (todos os homens da cidade) andam em uma grande procissão. Aliança! Bem, talvez você se lembre do discurso que eles fizeram para o príncipe de Gales na plataforma da estação de Mariposa quando ele passava por aqui em sua turnê para o oeste. Eu acho que aquilo resolveu muito bem tal questão. Então você vai entender facilmente que, é claro, todo mundo pertence aos *Knights of Pythias* e aos Maçons e aos *Oddfellows*, assim como todos eles pertencem ao *Snow Shoe Club* e ao *Girls' Friendly Society*." (My translation and emphasis)
[6] © 2014 The Battle of Bunker Hill. A&E. http://www.history.com/american-revolution/battle-of-bunker-hill

inexperienced Americans, convincing them that patriotic dedication could overcome superior British military might. On the other hand, the high price of victory at the Battle of Bunker Hill made the British realize that the war with the colonies would be long, tough and costly. After all has ended, about fifty years after the battle got to an end, a 221-foot-tall granite obelisk was erected as a monument to the Battle of Bunker Hill. The monument is located on Breed's Hill, where most of the fighting took place.

The second, and rather relevant, reference that the narrator provides us with is to those he calls the Orangemen. This title stands for a "Protestant fraternity with members throughout the world. Autonomous Grand Lodges are found in Scotland, England, the United States of America, West Africa, Canada, Australia and New Zealand".[7] The reason for the name "Orangemen" is because the idea for the fraternity comes from William III, Prince of Orange, and is kept because his victory over despotic power laid the foundation for the evolution of Constitutional Democracy in the British Isles. Ultimately, the support for William of Orange in the British Isles led to the formation of Orange Societies to commemorate his victory at the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690, but the largest and longest lasting groups were the Boyne Societies in Ireland. In 1795, after the culmination of repetitive attacks against Protestants in County Armagh at what was called as the Battle of the Diamond, in which Protestants routed those who had attacked them and attempted to burn properties, it was decided to form an organisation which would protect Protestants. This body, drawing on existing Orange Clubs in the neighbourhood, was named the Loyal Orange Institution. Today, much after Leacock's novel was written, this Loyal Orange Institution continues to function, with thousands of members in Ireland many others across the world. So the Orangemen our narrator is talking about are these members of the Loyal Orange Institution, familiarly called the Orange Order, a Protestant Irish society founded and flourishing mainly in Ulster. It was established and survives up to the present moment given its purpose to maintain the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland in the face of the rising agitation for Catholic Emancipation. July 12, the anniversary of

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[7] © 2000 British History. Education: http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/history/orangemen

this victory, is their main holiday, marking the unique moment when the members wear orange-colored flowers and orange sashes and march in parades; parades passing through Catholic sections of Northern Irish cities have been a source of interreligious friction, and branches of the society have been formed in many parts of the English-speaking world.

Finally, the last references brought by the narrator (when he concludes that the reader might now easily understand that of course everybody belongs to the Knights of Pythias and the Masons and Oddfellows, just as they all belong to the Snow Shoe Club and the Girls' Friendly Society) are also a bit tricky for Brazilian XXI readers. The "Masons" is perhaps the only social society that does not require much explanation, for their organisation effectively got in Brazil and most Brazilians are acquainted with it to a certain level. Similar to the Masons, the Order of Odd Fellows is a benevolent and social society, sometimes classified as a friendly benefit society having initiatory rites and ceremonies, gradation or degrees in membership, and mystic signs of recognition and communication. Even though, in practice, it is not a religious institution most of the principles defended by the fellowship are based on the bible. Like the Masons, one of its primary aims is to provide its members with aid when suffering for the needs of life because of illness, unemployment, or other misfortunes. The name "Odd Fellow" is said to have been given (even though there is no documented proof) due to the fact that, at the time when it was founded, at the late XVII century, the idea that common laboring men should associate themselves together and form a fraternity for social unity and fellowship and for mutual help was such a marked violation of the trends of the times in England that they became known as peculiar and odd.

The "Odd fellows" organisation, like most of the ones mentioned by the narrator, had started in England or in the U.S. and later came to Canada; a different case, though, is that of The Montreal Snow Shoe Club, which was founded in 1840 by twelve well-known young men of Montreal. In fact, this was the first club of its sort in North America (and probably the world) and led the way for hundreds of other clubs like it to be established across Canada and the United States. By the time when Leacock's

novel was written, only lacrosse exceeded the total number of urban snowshoe clubs in Canada. The MSSC was thus what provided the framework for other winter and sporting clubs to be established in Montreal and in Canada. The MSSC organized an array of races, but they are best remembered for their night-time torchlit processions from McGill's Gatehouse up through Mount Royal Park, wearing their traditional take on the outfits of the old Québécois trappeurs and the infamous tasselled tuque bleu. Ultimately it was the MSSC that gave Quebec its reputation throughout the British Empire as the most sociable, colourful and cheerful place to spend winter. And lastly, the only missing reference is to the Girls' Friendly Society, a pioneer youth organisation, founded in England in 1875 and run by women, which still operates in 23 countries. Originally established to protect young working girls, the Society continues to support girls and young women, adapting to the new challenges presented by a changing world. The organisation was "officially established on 1st January 1875 by Mary Elizabeth Townsend, an Irish woman […] concerned with the fate of many working-class country girls who left home to take up urban employment".[8] By 1880, thirty years before Leacock published his novel, GFS had already nearly 40,000 Members and over 13,500 Associates when Queen Victoria became the Society's Patron.

As one might notice, therefore, the aforementioned excerpt does indeed set forth a vast array of references that might not be clear at first glance for the contemporary Brazilian reader. But is it a good idea to offer, in my translation, notes explaining what, in the original, is left in the realm of subjectivity? Well, why not? Translators' role is, after all, to deconstruct and reconstruct the original, finding out how to reinvent meanings with the fragments of a text that, in the translation, shall no longer exist, at least not "as it is". Cronin (2003, p. 10) articulates a sage critique on the idea of translators as carriers of a new garment for the original in an expressive motion and actually seems to go beyond such definition when he poses that "all translators are cultural cosmopolitans, in that going to the other text, the other language, the other

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[8] ©2014 Friendly Societies. Encyclopædia Britannica: http://global.britannica.com/topic/friendly-society

culture, involves that initial journey away from the location of one's birth, language, and upbringing". The idea of a domesticated and adapted set of frames for the original text to be received is inevitably shaken by this process of undergoing "that initial journey away from the location of one's context" (Cronin, 2003, p. 12). That is to say: thinking of a translation where notes are available for putting in the spotlight references made by Leacock's (1912) narrator does not have to do with an endeavour to take readers back to the original context, but to build a new-fangled context, where source and target atmospheres are intermingled and transformed into something else. It would be indeed very pertinent to assume that as a translator one has to allow oneself to be placed in this cultural cosmopolitanism for effectively "going to the other text […], language, […and…] culture" (Cronin, 2003, p. 13). Interestingly, Cronin (2003, p. 11) would also pose that the translator can never dodge "the element of displacement as [he] moves from the native to another language".

The element of displacement seems to be the cornerstone for the emergence of what Bahia (2006) names as "Americanity" – the concept of a continental identity shared by the spaces of America. As I see it, the translation bridge that puts together Brazil and Canada can only be successfully and fruitfully built and maintained if such continental interrelation is taken into account. This is so for the translator can never think of only how to adapt that which is foreign; he must first try to penetrate that distinct sphere of contextual reality, opening his eyes to the distance separating his and the original text – not as to fight or diminish such distance, but as a manner to understand it better, not as to try to tear down the space separating source from target, but as to give readers a range of necessary transport means for them to freely move back and forth through such space. Of course this necessity to address time and space less normatively is in this case coherent with the process of displacement related to the passage between source and target texts. In addition to that, nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind the inherent changing nature of the source text itself – even if it were never translated. That is, the source context should never be approached as a concrete, stable thing – even though it often is – because contexts are fluid, especially after globalisation impacted as one more trigger to liquefy national stereotypes. As a

matter of fact, as well put by Tim Youngs in *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, it is today clear that "the way that texts are read changes over the years" (2013, p. 4); texts and everything else do not mean now what they meant yesterday.

In this sense, not only nations have changed from the 1912 to 2017; perhaps more important is the fact that peoples' ideas of what nations consist in have also been constantly reconceived. In the book *Crosstalk: Canadian and Global Imaginaries in Dialogue*, Diana Brydon (2012, p. 41) addresses such matter in what concerns the Canadian context, arguing that "[i]ncreasingly, Canadians are aware that in Canada there is more than one nation". Such repositioning in front of the national sphere has, consequently, required the literary experience to be also adjusted; now the figure is that of "Canadian writers and readers in dialogue with the changing dynamics of space, place, and identity politics that we have come to know as the space-time compression of globalisation" (Brydon, 2012, p. 5). Such space, place, and identity changing dynamics affect, therefore, not only target, but also source texts. Concreteness is no longer applicable; the space-time compression of globalisation, and, finally, "[q]uestions of audience, community, and the shifting forms of collective imaginaries are shaping divergent directions for literary studies and cultural theory" (Brydon, 2012, p. 120). These directions, on their turn, are called as a tool "to find a language that can accommodate the shifting and vexed dialogues between aesthetics and politics; these processes, necessitate an altered attention to voice, space, and place as zones of interaction" (Brydon, 2012, p. 271). So translating *Sunshine Sketches* is, inevitably, placing me in a zone of interaction, as someone who looks for a manner to displace the literary material from the source context and accommodate it as an aesthetic and political material in the contemporary Brazilian condition. Even though Brydon's (2012) idea of space and place remodeling has been conceptually institutionalised by the structure of the globalising world map, the fact that the contemporary scenery requires subjects to propose an altered attention also to voice may be taken as a less objective assertion.

I finish this analysis alleging that, as I see it, translations that homogenise, normalise, neglect, and/or erase the differences among cultures are, thus, not the ones

most advisable for cultural dialogues – enhancing the hybridity of texts is much more profitable than turning a blind eye towards it. As a matter of fact, the translations that not only take the difference into account but, actually, give it a considerable boost tend to be capable of allowing hybridity to thrive and to become even more meaningful for the new readers. I believe divulging Leacock's production through an annotated and foreignising translation of *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (1912) by enhancing the hybridity already preset in the source text would evince the pertinence of these interfaces' emanation and potentialisation. As a result, disseminating the author's focus on Canadian identity and his ironic criticism against the ideological and political imposition of market values in the Mariposan imaginary also gives this piece the discursive power it deserves; for showing Brazilian readers how hybridisation effectively takes place all the time, even in those small towns that are taken to believe they need to become a city. The book is, no one can question that, profoundly Canadian (if the novel's contextual references, places, cities, historical events, political figures, and words used are taken into account), but such a fact is far from hindering its ability to be read and appreciated by readers who, like Brazilians, supposedly "belong to other nations". Actually, such a fact can leave the theoretical level and be evidenced by the book's very good reception in several other English-speaking countries. This can be argued because the readers do not really belong to the other nations; in fact, the nations belong to the other readers:

> A country's recognition of its selfness as a country, its commencement of this consciousness of itself, its industrious generation of the process of its becoming, cannot exist without embodied human presence. Its objectified self is a fetish, in which it continues to reproduce itself as the object of desire through the production of particular mythologies of objectification. In these, attempts are made to persuade and to coerce people to see themselves in relation to the state's processed and strategically packaged national articulations. (Itwaru, 1990, p. 9)

As the narrator reminds us repetitively throughout the development of Leacock's (1912) novel, one has to understand how it is exactly that which makes Mariposa

different and unique – what is it that makes the place a relevant town to be once again resourced to. An interpretation that one could articulate regarding such discursive guideline is that, through his narrator, Leacock (1912) is mocking this idea of an objectified self. As evinced by the previous excerpt, the objectified self is considered by Itwaru (1990) as being a fetish, that is, as being like "an object that is believed to have magical or spiritual powers, especially such an object associated with animistic or shamanistic religious practices".[9] A fair remodeling of the relationship between nation and subject would be one that does not fail to take into account how the nation as the object of desire is only seen like that due the particular mythologies of objectification mentioned by Itwaru (1990). In this sense it is not really Canada that gives meaning to Canadians; the Canadians are the ones who, consciously or not, give meaning to their country: "The state as the object of desire, the contours of whose national dream potentiates its subject-aspirants' dream of fulfillment […] fires the imagination" (Itwaru, 1990, p. 35). Moreover, the hegemonic and hierarchical formulation of this central object of desire that is idealised as an almost human-free nation takes place "by maintaining the lie that what it displays is all there is, and all there should be, that which would bring pleasure and fulfillment if adhered to, and, more so, preferably within the blinding intensity of patriotic zeal" (Itwaru, 1990, p. 11). In Leacock's (1912) sketches maintaining such lie of a major source of "pleasure and fulfillment" that everyone should aspire is what allows hegemony to manipulate Mariposans yearning; and it is Mariposans inability to achieve such desires that might give contemporary readers the opportunity to, perhaps, think differently.

Final remarks: The translator becomes the judge

After analysing the novel, I realize now that the path taken by my translation has ended up responding to my expectation to provide the new context with a text potentially able to be read by interested and curious readers – I am really confident that the project has worked, even though it is still needs to be put to test. I say that

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[9] TFD.com. The Free Dictionary by Farlex. Copyright © 2013 Farlex, Inc. http://www.tfd.com/fetish

because, after reflecting upon how to translate some specific moments of the narrative, I concluded that my translation of *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (Leacock, 1912) would include a consistent number of footnotes, which looks rather natural when it goes to academic texts – or even literary ones, but generally directed specifically to cultured and/or educated readers (which is more the result of a tradition than it is of anything else). When it goes to literary texts whose most likely audience is the common subject – that subject who lives outside the walls of the university – authors, publishing houses, and even translators are often reluctant to add either glossaries or footnotes to the publications, assuming that such attributes would not be adequate. Notwithstanding such spread – but preposterous – assertion, it is true that this aversion regarding this sort of material extra to the work per se is sometimes surpassed by innovative publishing projects in the contemporaneity. Therefore, I understand that my proposing to bring notes in a humorous narrative – whose readers are not necessarily part of the academia – as a strategy to elaborate upon Stephen Leacock's (1912) contextual references is crucial for my project to take place the way I have conceived it, even though it might not be seen as something conventional, as mentioned heretofore (especially given the fact that such notes were not there before).

However, the assumption that artefacts such as glossaries, notes, and footnotes are more likely to be appreciated by more academic, cultured, and learned readers than they would by the common subject is nothing but a misguided conjecture. Defining concrete barriers between readers based on age, education, social class, or regional context has been, in my view, taking place way too obsessively – a questionable necessity to objectify something as subjective as literature. I have the impression that, in many occasions, the translation project of a book is more worried with what permeates the context whereto it is being taken than with the book itself – a necessity to control in my view contrary to the idea of literary discourses. In *The Translation Studies Reader* (2000), edited by Venuti, some articles discuss the relevance of notes for cultural interchange through the reading of translated pieces. In the article "Principles of Correspondence", Eugene Nida (2000, p. 137) advocates for the usage of such literary devices for they reinforce the fact that "cultural discrepancies offer less

difficulty than might be imagined, especially if footnotes are used to point out the basis for the cultural diversity; for all people recognize that other peoples behave differently from themselves". Notes would be, in this sense, beneficial for readers to overcome some cultural discrepancies and to learn about the culture of the other. Of course these cultural discrepancies might be desirable in some cases as for them to strengthen readers' consciousness about cultural diversity – so "the translator becomes the judge as to the extent to which he finds it necessary to explain the source text's reference network to the target-language audience" (Nida, 2000, p. 306).

Bearing there in mind, I believe my readers may or not find the reading of notes as a productive experience, but I doubt such issue is enhanced or diminished by the fact that they are or not part of academia – their context influence, but does not define their reading. Regardless of how often translation projects require us to make a guess concerning the reading of the other, I am not in the position of judging such a thing; as a matter of fact, nobody is. Every guess is nothing but a guess. When one says readers like or dislike this or that thing, one forgets their relationship with the literary material is constructed and reconstructed in a disorganised and non-linear fashion, there is no way to regulate that; in this sense, the categories that are created for these readers to fit in withdraw their opportunity to go beyond such pre-given categories. I dare say that many people in academia do not like reading notes, and that many people outside of it would probably love to do so; however, with all the conditional training they are given, I would not be surprised if some of these people never had an opportunity to manifest their preferences – and felt comfortable doing so. In the end, it is rather difficult to say you like something when you are constantly pressurised to commend something else. Let me make myself clear here: I do agree that it is high time the wall separating academia and the real world was destroyed, but for such wall to be put down it is important for the manner whereby such relationship is amenable to occur to be carefully readdressed. To serve the needs of society does not necessarily entail one's adaptation to its flaws, it entails his/her attempt at combating such social defects, at trying to solve them. That is, in order to fit within the outside real world,

academic thoughts should be articulated not as society wants, but as it needs – the university exists not to serve society, but to change it.

All things considered, I have to admit I do not know if, for Leacock, my notes would make any difference – I do not know if he would care and, to be honest, I would not be interested in having such information and have no idea why it would have any relevance whatsoever. As the translator, I do not see myself in the position of deciding what is the concrete meaning of a fictional piece and/or what the author wanted to say when he wrote this or that. My translation, thereby, is the result of my reading; objectively and subjectively, such reading is subsumed in my version of the novel, which encapsulates many notes and adaptations motivated by what I deemed relevant to grapple utilising strategies that would probably be distinct if another translator were summoned to carry on the task. There is no universal translation and there is no universal reader. Apropos, expecting my readers to appreciate a literary tool that is generally applied only when it goes to a specific (more cultured) literary audience is not analogous, in this sense, to ignoring their condition – it means I am putting such condition into question (readers exist, of course, but they are not concrete and controllable robots). Nevertheless, it is also true that, both inside and outside academy, readers are finally getting the attention they deserve – and in translation studies one could say that has happened due especially to the gradual growth of reception theory. Such attention demonstrates, both in the field of literature and of translation, how readers are, and have ever been, an integral part of the literary material they experience – and which experience them. As such, they deserve to be put in the spotlight. This nonetheless does not mean, as implied, one can categorically allege that a certain thing is good for one audience and/or bad for another; it is up to the reader to decide that. We know as a given fact that some texts surprise its readers; what we tend to forget is that this or that reader might also surprise such texts. Looking at literature as an unceasing flow of meanings and effects results inevitably in my accentuation of how liquefied the situation of those who take part within the process tends to be. Author, text, translator, reader… there are no concrete instances in the atmosphere of literature – they all touch one another in a ghostlike fashion, but we shall never be able to access

and/or define with precision how such contact occurs. Translating, in this sense, is not about resurrecting the original; but about allowing its ghost to keep haunting other people.

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