

The Translator's (In)Visibility in Late 19th-Century United States: The Intriguing Case of Edgar Saltus

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TIAGO ALEXANDRE NUNES CARDOSO

ABSTRACT

Despite its importance, up to this day there are not many books or articles fully dedicated to the evolution of translation in the United States or the work of American translators: A gap remains to be filled in regard to what we know about these agents and the context in which they worked. In this way, the goal of this thesis is twofold: On the one hand and more broadly, it attempts to contribute to the study of the history of translation in the United States by looking at the late 19th century; on the other hand, and this being the main focus of the thesis, it provides an illustrative example through the analysis of the works of Edgar Saltus. When combining the two perspectives, a common trait arises: the study of the (in)visibility of the translator. As will be analysed, throughout the 19th century a domesticating approach to translation was exercised in the United States, which would lead translators to follow ongoing norms, either consciously or as a result of certain rules set by another agent: publishers. As a consequence, this culminated in the former's invisibility, much like what happened to Edgar Saltus, whose translations on the whole follow the *zeitgeist* of the times when it comes, for instance, to the American admiration for everything French, the desire to keep a certain distance from England, and the application of the plain style and exact term. This thesis therefore poses the following question: To what extent is Edgar Saltus invisible in his translations and how does the analysis of his work help contribute to the study of the (in)visibility of the translator in late 19th-century United States? The attempt to answer this question will hopefully provide new information on a subject that has not received the attention it deserves.

KEYWORDS: 19th-Century; Belle Époque; Edgar Saltus; France; Gilded Age; History of Translation; Literary Translation; Translator's (In)Visibility; United States

RESUMO

Apesar da sua importância, até aos dias de hoje não existem muitos livros ou artigos científicos que se dediquem completamente à evolução da tradução nos Estados Unidos ou ao trabalho dos tradutores norte-americanos: Há, portanto, lacunas a preencher no que diz respeito ao que sabemos sobre estes agentes e o contexto no qual trabalhavam. Neste sentido, a presente dissertação tem dois objetivos: Por um lado e de forma mais ampla, pretende contribuir para o estudo da história da tradução nos Estados Unidos ao observar o final do século XIX; por outro, e sendo este o enfoque da dissertação, é providenciado um exemplo ilustrativo através da análise dos trabalhos de Edgar Saltus. Ao combinar as duas vertentes, um aspeto em comum surge: o estudo da (in)visibilidade do tradutor. Como irá ser analisado, ao longo do século XIX uma abordagem domesticadora na prática da tradução era exercida nos Estados Unidos, o que levava os tradutores a seguir normas em vigor, quer de forma consciente ou como resultado de certas regras impostas por outro agente: as editoras. Consequentemente, tal levava à invisibilidade do tradutor, o que foi

o que aconteceu com Edgar Saltus, cujas traduções de modo geral seguiam o *zeitgeist* dos tempos no que toca, por exemplo, à admiração norte-americana por tudo o que era Francês, ao desejo de manter uma certa distância de Inglaterra, e à aplicação do *plain style* e termo exato. Esta dissertação coloca então a seguinte questão: Até que ponto é Edgar Saltus invisível nas suas traduções e como é que a análise do seu trabalho ajuda a contribuir para o estudo da (in)visibilidade do tradutor no final do século XIX nos Estados Unidos? A tentativa de dar resposta a esta questão irá, espero, dar a conhecer nova informação sobre uma temática que não tem recebido a merecida atenção.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Belle Époque; Edgar Saltus; Estados Unidos; França; Gilded Age; História da Tradução; (In)Visibilidade do Tradutor; Século XIX; Tradução Literária

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Introduction

Despite its importance, up until now the work of American translators and the context in which they worked have not been explored as much as we might expect. In this way, the aim of this thesis is twofold: on the one hand and more generally, it attempts to contribute to the study of the history of translation in the United States (US) by taking a look at the late 19th century; on the other hand, and this being the primary focus of the thesis, it provides an illustrative example through the analysis of three works by Edgar Saltus. When combining the two perspectives, a common element arises: the study of the (in)visibility of the translator. As shall be demonstrated, throughout the 19th-century a domesticating approach to translation was practiced in the US, which would lead translators to follow ongoing norms. This resulted in their invisibility, much like what happened to Saltus.

To corroborate this statement, three aspects in line with the *zeitgeist* of the times and their implication on Saltus' choices will be analysed: 1) the American admiration for everything French; 2) the desire to keep a certain distance from England; and 3) the application of the plain style, which resulted in the adaptation or omission of certain passages concerning characters and space, and the pursuit of the exact term, which lead to the inclusion of some French words and the use of the *mot juste*. The insertion of a footnote in one of Saltus' texts that clearly alludes to his agency as a translator seems to be the only true instance where a foreignizing strategy was put forth. In light of these findings, this thesis thus poses the following question: To what extent is Saltus invisible in his translations and how does the analysis of his work help contribute to the study of the (in)visibility of the translator in late 19th-century US?

As interesting, in my view, as this question may be, what is perhaps even more fascinating is that Saltus' career as an author is not particularly known or talked about today, let alone his work as a translator. In fact, to the best of my knowledge and research, none of the stories here analysed have ever been critically examined. The most detailed studies on Saltus—Ruth Elizabeth Stephenson's *Literary Techniques Background, and Ideas of Edgar Saltus* (1953) and Claire Sprague's *Edgar Saltus* (1968)—mention the translations that he published, and Stephenson's work even comments on the introductions that Saltus added to them, but neither analyse their content. It seems,

therefore, that this is the first attempt made to study the works that Saltus left behind and investigate how (in)visible he is in them.

In this way, Chapter 1 starts by providing a theoretical approach to the (in)visibility of the translator, focusing on Venuti's (1995) seminal work, *The Translator's Invisibility*, in order to discuss the characteristics of domesticating and foreignizing approaches to translation. Though it is Venuti's terminology that will be used to examine the extent to which Saltus is an invisible translator, this chapter will also cover the notions of 'agency' and 'habitus,' which can help us further understand (in)visibility and thus better evaluate Saltus' translational output.

Chapter 2 aims to examine the context in which Saltus produced the works here analysed. A brief look into the culture and society of the Gilded Age will first be taken, followed by an approach to translation in 19th-century US with regard to translators' (in)visibility in hopes of better comprehending the translational context that Saltus was surrounded by.

Chapter 3 observes the impact of Belle Époque France in the culture and, especially, literature of the US, in line with the works translated by Saltus which were all French and published during this time period. Having done this, an overview of Saltus' life and work will be provided before we go on to analyse his translations.

Chapter 4 is then dedicated to the study of Saltus' translational output. With the analysis of his three works—*After-Dinner Stories* (1885), *Tales Before Supper* (1887), and *The Story Without a Name* (1891)—we will attempt to detect and examine Saltus' (in)visibility in hopes of reaching a conclusion and situating it in the late 19th-century American approach to translation.

Finally, a conclusion revealing the shortcomings of this study and aspects that should be further explored will be added at the end of the thesis.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Reflections on the (In)Visibility of the Translator

The (in)visibility of the translator can be interpreted in various ways. Therefore, it seems pertinent to first clarify that, throughout this study, namely in the analysis of Saltus' translations, the translator's (in)visibility is understood and will be used as Venuti (1995) conceptualised it. Thus, the dichotomy domestication/foreignization (further examined below) will guide my interpretation of Saltus' strategies in the three works here analysed. At the same time, and because visibility/invisibility—as well as domestication/foreignization—are abstractions and polar opposites in a spectrum (Liu, 2013; Paloposki, 2011), we should also look at this duality in a more simplistic way, that is, and using Liu's (2013, p. 27) words, “whether or not the translator's mediating role is visible to the client and the end-user” at intratextual and paratextual levels (see, e.g., Koskinen, 2000). In this way, the concepts of ‘agency’ and ‘habitus’ (also further explored below) can be used and woven into the discussion of (in)visibility and help strengthen the analysis of Saltus' translations. As such, (in)visibility will be now be examined in light of Venuti's (1995) terminology and, after that, an overview of the notions of ‘agency’ and ‘habitus’ and their relevance to this study follows.

1.1. Venuti and The Translator's Invisibility

Stemming from an article from 1986 which intended to discuss translating practices, *The Translator's Invisibility* (Venuti, 1995) focuses on the Anglophone context, particularly on the American and British one, and discusses the way translation has been and is perceived—a way that downgrades the importance of (literary) translators and does not vest them with the visibility Venuti hoped for, making them invisible (Venuti, 1995, pp. 1, 41). By visibility we understand what is at the same time Venuti's (1995, p. 17) goal with his publication: “To make the translator more visible so as to resist and change the conditions under which translation is theorized and practiced today, especially in English-speaking countries.” Specifically regarding the position of the US towards the presence of the translator, Venuti (1995, p. 17) assesses “a complacency that can be described...as imperialistic abroad and xenophobic at home.”

But how can visibility and invisibility be interpreted and set apart, so that we are able to decipher whether a translator is visible or invisible? To this end, Venuti (1995, p. 24) introduces the notions of ‘domestication’ and ‘foreignization.’ More than notions, these are also strategies which dictate the (in)visibility of the translator in a given work.

The domestication strategy has to do with producing an intelligible translation that erases all traces of the intervention of the translator and the presence of the foreign ‘other’ as to make readers feel as though they are before an original work, adapted to the new sociocultural context and dominant tastes in the target culture (Venuti, 1995, p. 5). This ‘fluency’ (Venuti, 1995, p. 2), which is inherent to the “ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values” (Venuti, 1995, p. 20), is at the root of the translator’s invisibility, since—despite being a translation—there are no signs of the presence of the person who wrote it. This ‘illusion of transparency’ (Venuti, 1995, p. 1) marginalises translators and, paradoxically, makes them marginalise themselves in turn, and the attention ends up going to the author of the original work¹ (Venuti, 1995, p. 2). This is also in line with the individualistic notion of authorship² in Anglo-American culture—as will become clear in Chapter 2—which relegates translation to a second-order representation, given that “only the foreign text can be original, an authentic copy, true to the author’s personality or intention, whereas the translation is derivative, fake, potentially a false copy” (Venuti, 1995, p. 7). By adopting this strategy, translators contribute to their invisibility and produce a not very faithful translation. This can be witnessed in all three of Saltus’ works, especially in *After-Dinner Stories* (1885) and *The Story Without a Name* (1891).

When it comes to the foreignization strategy, which Venuti also calls ‘resistance’ in the context of his argument about contesting the hegemony of Anglophone values in the practice of translation (Venuti, 1995, p. 24), this is used with the aim of rendering visible, using Munday’s (2008, p. 145) words, “the presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the [source text] and protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture.” This presence can be manifested through the insertion of comments and footnotes, for example (Venuti, 1995, pp. 2, 26). In the end, this strategy results in such a faithfulness to the source text that it contorts the target language, resulting

¹ At the same time, we should note that the foreign author is no longer operating on his/her own terms, given that he or she has been domesticated in order to serve the interests of the importing power.

² As noted by Bassnett (2013, p. 107), “the invisibility of the translator can also be determined by the level of individualism that informs the concept of authorship in a given culture at a particular time.”

in a text that is not fluent and easy to read but which purposely sounds foreign, challenging the reader at every step and sending him or her ‘abroad’ (Venuti, 1995, pp. 20, 192). In this way, the ethnocentric brutality of translation—linked to the erasure of the linguistic and cultural differences of the source text and the consequent hegemony of the English language—is avoided and these same differences which make up this ‘other’ are deeply accentuated in the target text (Venuti, 1995, p. 20). In Venuti’s (1995, p. 20) words, for this strategy to work, it “must do wrong at home, deviating enough from native norms to stage an alien reading experience.” According to Venuti, by implementing this strategy the translator contributes to his or her visibility and produces a more faithful translation.

Venuti sees himself as a supporter of the foreignization strategy, but he recognises that, although he believes translators are free when it comes to the choice of the strategy used, they inevitably find themselves constrained linguistically, culturally, ideologically, and economically (Venuti, 1995, p. 19). Publishers, who sometimes exclude translators from any rights to their translation (Venuti, 1995, p. 10), and the law—the American one in this case—that through employment contracts, typically accompanied by low wages, depicts a peripheral and subsidiary image of the translator (Venuti, 1995, pp. 8, 11), corroborate this stance. It is important to note that the choice between a domesticating and foreignizing strategy can be a deliberate decision made by the translator in the light of the surrounding sociocultural values (Venuti, 1995, p. 30), as will be made clear in the analysis of Saltus’ translations.

In 2008, Venuti published a second edition of his book, and some changes in his discourse can be found. The one that perhaps stands out the most has to do with Venuti’s transition from conceiving translation as ideology to conceiving it as ethics, highlighting that “what hangs in the balance is an understanding of the ethics of an intercultural relation and its potential cultural and social consequences” (Venuti, 2008, p. 268). In other words, he now defends that the notions of ‘domestication’ and ‘foreignization’ “indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards a foreign text and culture,” in which “‘fluency’ and ‘resistancy’ indicate fundamentally discursive features of translation strategies in relation to the reader’s cognitive processing” (Venuti, 2008, p. 19).

This edition thus aimed to deepen the issues discussed in 1995, but also provide an updated explanation of certain ideas in order to respond to a number of questions raised by some scholars, who criticise Venuti’s stance on foreignization “partly because of the

vagueness of terminology but also because it has been considered elitist or internally contradictory” (Paloposki, 2011, p. 41). Some of this criticism was made still in the 20th century, shortly after Venuti’s (1995) publication. Among these we find, for instance, Anthony Pym (1996, p. 165), whose piece is indeed entitled “Venuti’s Visibility” and in which he stresses that in Venuti’s (1995) book “the theorist-translator is seen and talked about; the figurative practical translator is apparently not,” and even though Venuti (1995) supports “translational resistance” his work ends up showing that this “has not brought more democracy, has not changed domestic values, and has been banished to the fringes” (Pym, 1996, p. 167); Douglas Robinson (1997, p. 95), who argues that a more effective way of stressing the visibility of the translator is not through a foreignizing strategy but through a “radical domestication³” of the text; and Gillian Lane-Mercier (1997, p. 58), who defies the nature of Venuti’s dichotomy between visibility and invisibility:

At second glance, however, the two categories are not so easily distinguishable, for if my hypothesis that literary sociolects invariably manifest the translator's subjectivity is valid, *both* strategies reveal the presence of the translating subject. As a consequence, Venuti's invisibility vs visibility dichotomy has limited theoretical viability, for what seems to hold for literary sociolects can be seen to hold for the translation process as a whole. While it is true that Venuti constantly reminds his readers that fluent strategies produce the *illusion* of transparency, of the translator's invisibility and of the source text's non-problematic insertion into the target culture, the nature of his argument is such that he appears to fall prey to this very illusion, shifting from the illusion of the translator's invisibility to the translator's invisibility *per se* so as to be in a better position to attribute negative value to invisibility and positive value to visibility.

But how can the question of the translator’s (in)visibility be addressed in a more recent light? To this end, the concepts of ‘agency’ and ‘habitus’ prove useful and are discussed below in hopes of expanding our understanding of Venuti’s framework and later complement the analysis of Saltus’ translations and his (in)visibility.

³ A radical domestication would imply, for instance, changing the names of people and places. If a given work is set in an English-speaking country and one of the characters is named ‘Mary,’ changing it to María (Spanish) or Marie (French) would constitute a radical domestication of the source text (Ožbot, 2016). Another example is the use of slang, which distinctly reflects the language and culture of this ‘other’ (Emmerich, 2017, p. 152). In Sánchez Galvis’ (2013) words: “[A] foreignizing effect could be achieved by using radical domestication, i.e. using unconventional modifications to the standard written target language....Not being accustomed to reading dialectal texts, the reader will find the translation not to be too fluent.”

1.2. 'Agency' and 'Habitus': Two Concepts to Further Understand (In)Visibility

Though Venuti's (1995) contribution does not leave behind the importance of the environment and socioeconomic constraints surrounding translators and their work, a bigger emphasis on the sociological facet of translation only came about exactly with the 'sociological turn' in Translation Studies in the mid-1990s and the 2000s (Angelelli, 2014; Inghilleri, 2005; Tyulenev, 2015; Wolf, 2007, 2010). This 'turn' stressed the roles of the several agents of translation and their agency, "shedding light on what professionals...do and why and how they do it" (Alvstad, 2013, p. 208) and consequently allowing us to better understand translators' strategies and their intrinsic (in)visibility.

But what do we mean by 'agents' and 'agency'? To put it simply, we can say that an 'agent' is anyone—e.g., a revisor or editor—involved in the process surrounding a translation, "from production and distribution to consumption and critical metadiscourses" (Khalifa, 2014, p. 11), and that triggers cultural innovation and exchange (Buzelin, 2005; Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010; Milton & Bandia, 2009; Wolf, 2007).

As for 'agency,' this can be defined as a relational and ever-evolving "willingness and ability to act"; willingness in the sense that it "describes a particular internal state and disposition," while ability "relates the concept of agency to constraints and issues of power(lessness), highlighting the intrinsic relation between agency and power" (Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010, p. 6). In this way, we might argue that these two concepts might make translators feel empowered, like they have a say in their profession (Buzelin, 2011, p. 6). One way to do this is through paratextual agency, that is, e.g., the use of prefaces and footnotes—as Saltus did—through which they might discuss translation strategies, attitudes to their work and general knowledge, and provide relevant information that translators⁴ believe their audience does not know. As such, translators reinforce their perception of their own role and especially their visibility⁵ (Alvstad, 2013, 2014; Chesterman, 2009; Emmerich, 2013; Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010; Paloposki, 2009, 2010).

However, the power held by translators and all the different agents may be constrained for multiple reasons. In the case of translators themselves, their 'voice' may

⁴ At the same time, we should keep in mind that other agents, such as editors, might also have a say in what is included in paratextual information (see, e.g., Genette, 1997).

⁵ Paloposki (2010, p. 89) raises an interesting point regarding the visibility translators acquire through the use of footnotes: "Interestingly, it is precisely their visibility that often seems to be the problem with accepting footnotes: they leap to the eye (Henry 2000: 239), or prevent the reader from enjoying the "pleasure of the text" as they interrupt the reading process."

be influenced by their own ideology and the *zeitgeist* of the times and that might be noticeable in the target text, sometimes on purpose and sometimes unconsciously (Giddens, 1984; Lee, 2010; Paloposki, 2009; Robinson, 2001; Tyulenev, 2014). As Tyulenev (2015, p. 25) rightly points out, we should remember that translators are “persons with biographies”; “products of their unique socializations”; people who have “their own political and ideological agendas”; and also “gendered individuals” (see also Chesterman, 2009).

Other constraints are imposed through the requirements and rules set by individuals and groups who request translations and manage the literary system, which can also be referred to as ‘patrons⁶’ (Lefevere, 1992). Through these rules they assert their authority over translators for economic and ideological reasons (Guénette, 2016; Milton & Bandia, 2009; Mossop, 1988; Pinho, 2011; Tyulenev, 2015).

These agents often ask translators to adopt a “commerce-oriented” position and get the job done quickly, leading to the latter’s subservience (Lee, 2010; see also Ferreira-Alves, 2011, p. 116). This will inevitably influence translators’ strategies and, though “different models of translation coexist, [with] some involving more subservience than others” (Buzelin, 2011, p. 11; see also Pym, 1998; Wolf, 2010), in general these lead to translators’ invisibility⁷. At the same time, we should not forget that all of this also depends, among other factors, on “the position of the translator in question, on the literature to be translated, and the expectations of the readers” (Paloposki, 2009, p. 189)—as will be addressed in the analysis of Saltus’ translations—which reinforces the idea that agency is situated in time and space (Giddens, 1984; Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010, p. 7).

Just as translators might not be aware of their decisions and need for “social acceptability” (Lee, 2010, p. 19; Lefevere, 1992), other social agents such as publishers might sometimes not be aware of their actions while ‘blinded’ by their own interests (Tyulenev, 2014; Valdeón, 2021). Indeed, most of the time, agents and the decision processes behind translation as well as its effect on the new public are governed by norms (Paloposki, 2009; Toury, 1995). Norms are powerful constraints on translators’ power,

⁶ Lefevere distinguishes between differentiated and undifferentiated ‘patronage.’ Patronage is differentiated when “economic success is relatively independent of ideological factors, and does not necessarily bring status with it,” opening doors to free market; it is undifferentiated when “the ideological, the economic, and the status components, are all dispensed by one and the same patron” in a totalitarian system where, e.g., a preferred writer is given pensions (Lefevere, 1992, p. 17; see also Milton & Bandia, 2009, p. 3).

⁷ A recent study by Liu (2013, p. 54) indeed concludes that “visibility is rewarding in terms of social exchanges and learning experience, but not in terms of pay and prestige.”

but can themselves be changed by individual acts of agency, if these should become fashionable and set a new social trend (Hanna, 2014, p. 63; Toury, 1999).

In this way, and to better comprehend the dichotomy between “individual agency” (agent) and “collective normative behaviour” (structure; see, e.g., Hanna, 2014, p. 64), the notion of ‘habitus’ can also be useful. For that, we can draw on the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Daniel Simeoni.

For Bourdieu, habitus is a “subjective but not individual system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86). These internalised social structures which govern practice are the product of past and present experiences which stay with agents throughout their lives (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). In other words, habitus comprises a set of dispositions which ‘dictate’ how agents act and react. As Inghilleri (2005, pp. 134-135) stresses though, these “can be regulated and shared without [necessarily] being the product of conformity to codified, recognized rules or other casual mechanisms,” which might indicate that translators are able to determine their own (in)visibility. In this sense, habitus can be “both structured and structuring” (Tyulenev, 2014, p. 173).

Despite its usefulness, Bourdieu’s concept of habitus and its application has been criticised due to a general dismissal of other agents besides the translator and adoption of an individualistic, static, and mono-cultural position favouring structure over agency (Buzelin, 2005; Khalifa, 2014; Meylaerts, 2008; Sela-Sheffy, 2005; see also Hanna, 2014, p. 63; Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010, p. 7), which can hinder the understanding of translators’ (in)visibility.

In this sense, looking at Simeoni’s (1998) interpretation of ‘habitus’ proves useful. For Simeoni (1998, p. 32), “the habitus of the translator is the elaborate result of a personalized social and cultural history.” He believes that translators are subject to norms, but that they are still responsible for their decisions and able to exert their agency (Simeoni, 1998, p. 26). However, Simeoni (1998, p. 12) also stresses that, throughout history, translators have adopted a submissive behaviour, and this willingness to accept established norms has led to a decrease in the importance of their work and, consequently, to their invisibility. At the same time, and remembering the constant connection between all the agents in translation and their agency, Simeoni (1998, p. 17) advances that “given the interplay of influences to which we-as-social-agents are all subjected, it is far from clear which kind(s) can be said to be the most active, which the most tenuous, or which

come first or last, in general terms,” which problematises the assessment of (in)visibility and takes studies on the subject and their relevance even further.

Finally, this growing focus on the cultural, psychological, and most of all sociological nature associated with translators and the importance given to agency and habitus—which, as demonstrated, help understand why translators adopt some strategies and not others, and, consequently, their (in)visibility—has led to what Chesterman (2009) called “Translator Studies.” More than a supplement, we can think of it as a field itself, and in this field three relevant branches which determine translators’ work and agency are highlighted: 1) a cultural branch, which takes into account ethics and values, ideologies, and traditions; 2) a cognitive branch, which encompasses mental processes, emotions, and translators’ attitudes to their work as exposed in, e.g., prefaces and notes, in which translators can explain “why they translate[d] a given text”; and 3) a sociological branch, which deals with translators’ observable behaviour, status and public perception of the translator’s profession, and social networks (Chesterman, 2009, pp. 17-19). Taken together and shifting the object of research from translations themselves to people—that is, the translator and the other agents involved—these branches make up what can be called the “*agent model*” (Chesterman, 2009, p. 20).

In light of these concepts and perspectives, the question that now arises is: How can we study the role and power of translation and, in particular, translators, in 19th-century US as to later understand the work of Saltus? More specifically, to what extent is Saltus (in)visible in his translations? Were his choices made consciously—manifesting his agency as a translator—or were they a product of his habitus and the *zeitgeist* of the times? Before an answer can be provided, let us first take a look at the sociocultural and translational climate surrounding Saltus at the time of production of his translations.

Chapter 2. Translating in Late 19th-Century US

In the late 19th century, the US entered an era known as the Gilded Age^{8,9}. This followed several centuries of turbulence, marked by events such as being under the control of the British from 1607 to 1783; emerging as an independent nation guided by Enlightenment values; going through a ‘second war of independence’ in 1812 mostly due to British restrictions on US trade; the signature of the Monroe Doctrine and westward expansion; the economic growth after the ‘Panic’ of 1837 (which would last until the end of the century, despite ups and downs along the way); the rise of the women’s suffrage movement in the 1840s; urban growth in the 1850s; and a civil war between 1861 and 1865 on the issue of slavery (see, e.g., Allitt et al., 2003; Berkin et al., 2008; Davidson, 2015; Grant, 2012; Remini, 2009). But how ‘golden’ really was this era, sociopolitically and culturally speaking, and how can we assess the position of translation and translators during this period as to later understand the translational output of Edgar Saltus?

2.1. A Sociopolitical and Cultural Overview (1865–1900)

With the end of the Civil War, the urbanised Union (North), the winner, grew stronger and, at least on paper, slavery was abolished; the rural Confederacy (South) was generally impoverished (Davidson, 2015, p. 158; Remini, 2009, p. 142; Wright, 2001, p. 201). With the victory of the Union, a powerful nation with a stronger national government emerged (Allitt et al., 2003, p. 186; Veenendaal, 2003; Wells, 2012, p. 147). Not only the government but also the national book trade would grow stronger and further develop a sense of cultural unity, especially with the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 (Carlisle, 2009, p. ix; Eiss, 2014, p. liv).

⁸ This was a term first introduced by Mark Twain in his book *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* (1873, co-written with Charles Dudley Warner), which he used to characterise this time period (1870–1900) for what it was: a period of contradictions and disparity, in which the richest nation in the world saw social inequality and poverty levels growing (Bush, 2019, p. 9; Salisbury, 1982, p. 621; White, 2017, p. 702).

⁹ With regard to literature—the focus of the thesis—two main periods can be highlighted before the start of the Gilded Age: 1) the Early National Period (1776–1828), during which American literature struggled to find its own voice and break away from European moulds; and 2) the American Renaissance (1828–1865), during which the depth of the human mind and the exaltation of the self over society were explored with Transcendentalism; later Dark Romanticism came about in the 1840s; and Realism gained strength from the 1850s onwards. The first major boom of a true and unique body of literature emerged in this period. It is important to add that, associated with the literary output in the country, there was a growing feeling of individualism in American society, in line with the Anglo-American notion of authorship, which, as mentioned, is also reflected in the way translation was perceived (Berkin et al., 2008; Billy, 2014; Brown, 1990; Crane, 2007; Davidson, 2015; Dunham, 2003; Mott, 2001; Phillips, 2018; Yothers, 2006).

The 1870s would represent a tremendous sociocultural shift in people's lives, felt until the end of the century. These changes could be found in the way people: 1) dressed, with ready-to-wear clothes; 2) ate, with an enormous variety of products available at grocery chain stores; 3) learnt, with the number of universities growing and including, besides the standard curriculum (mathematics and reading/writing), classes of American history and arts; and 4) had fun, with sports such as golf and baseball and amusement parks becoming popular forms of leisure (Carlisle, 2009, p. 48; da Silva, 2018, p. 9; Davidson, 2015, p. 129; Hayes, 2015, p. 15; Kraig, 2013, p. 487; Kraus, 1978, p. 165; Smith, 2006, p. 14; Timmons, 2005, p. 118). These changes in the way people consumed and spent their time were also a direct result of mass production and advertising, now an important pillar of US economy (Carlisle, 2009, p. 37; Hamlin, 2017, p. 94; Volo & Volo, 2007, p. 92).

The transition from the 1870s to the 1880s saw drastic changes in the way workplace was understood, with the corporation emerging as the dominant form of managing business and new forms of organising labour, such as Frederick Winslow Taylor's scientific management of work, coming about (Flanagan, 2017, p. 432; Porter, 2006; Timmons, 2005, p. 29). Such a scenario would not be possible without the massive influx of immigrants that arrived in the country seeking the 'American Dream.' Mainly Europeans, it is thanks to these 'unskilled' immigrants that the sectors of industry, mining, and agriculture were able to expand and dominate the international scene, creating a nation, at least on paper, further away from their (British) past and with an individual notion of self (Moch, 1996, p. 125; Mueller, 2009, p. 329; Wyman, 1993).

Due to all of these factors the US economy grew at an unprecedented rate (Bush, 2019, p. 10; Engerman & Gallman, 2000; Korom Jr., 2013, p. 12), but socially things were not as bright. Dangerous working conditions, along with growing poverty and inequality, led to several strikes for a better life (Carlisle, 2009, p. 7; Grant, 2012, p. 223; Remini, 2009, p. 183). Despite large donations by philanthropists, such as Andrew Carnegie and John Rockefeller, this was not enough to tackle the growing social inequality, most visible in cities (Siegler, 2016, p. 268; Whaples, 2013, p. 79; Worth, 2015, p. 11). On the one hand, rising metropolises such as New York City became the centre of skyscraper construction and arts (Barrows, 2007, p. 111; Carlisle, 2009, p. 132; White, 2017, p. 511); on the other hand, cities were overpopulated spaces of crime and disease (Carlisle, 2009, p. 3; Foner, 1980, p. 151).

In the light of these problems, at the beginning of the 1890s the Progressive Movement emerged, seeking to solve the nation's sociopolitical issues (Buenker & Buenker, 2021; McGerr, 2005). In spite of the Panic of 1893, the government quickly got back on its feet after 1897 and prosperity would last, in spite of some dips, until World War I (Berkin et al., 2008, p. 473; Rockoff, 2000). But it was not only economically that the nation thrived: public high schools began to emerge (Potter, 1967, p. 315; Wilson, 1985, p. 12); corporations started to be regulated through antitrust laws (Berkin et al., 2008, p. 584; Carlisle, 2009, p. 12; Kazin, 2017, p. 451); and progressives “championed amendments introducing a federal income tax, direct election of senators, alcohol prohibition, and women's right to vote” (Brown & Barganier, 2018, p. 121).

With regard to literature, the last three decades of the century were the era of Realism and Naturalism. We can underscore the work of, e.g., Stephen Crane, Henry James, Kate Chopin, and Mark Twain, who produced unidealized and truthful depictions of life (Berkin et al., 2008, p. 641; Carlisle, 2009, p. 152; Crane, 2007, p. 165; Gerbi, 1973, p. 364; Hutchinson, 1994, p. 8; LeMaster & Wilson, 2013). Twain in particular contributed to the formation of an American identity through the various regional dialects and accents of his characters, leaving British times behind—just as Saltus seems to do in his translations, following the *zeitgeist* of the times regarding literary identity (as will be discussed in the following section and later in Section 3.2 on Saltus' life and work).

Not as strong in the US but an equally important movement—especially because it is the one Saltus is associated with—is Decadentism (further explored in Section 3.2). Originating in Europe, namely in England but with stronger presence in France, it can be found in US literature mostly from 1890 to 1920 (Stableford, 1998; Weir, 2008). Through the Decadent movement, authors sought pleasure by cynically and artificially writing about the world, and everything that was sick, morbid, and perverted about it (Murray, 2016, 2020; Weir, 2008, 2018).

Realism, though, would dominate the literary scene of the Gilded Age, and the works produced during these years took the cementing of a ‘distinctive’ American literature one step further (Lathbury, 2006; Newlin, 2019; Quirk & Scharnhorst, 1995). But in order to create and develop such a literature the US first needed, from the very start, translation's—or shall we say, translators'—crucial support.

2.2. *Visible or Invisible? Translators in 19th-Century US*

To have a clearer perception of the status of translation and, more specifically, the (in)visibility of the translator at the time of publication of Saltus' works, this section will cover the entirety of the 19th century—and not just the Gilded Age as that could perhaps be too limiting.

Before examining this century, though, we should go back in history and recall that the US has been a multilingual territory from the start (Boggs, 2007, p. 1; Gentzler, 2006, 2012; Venuti, 2009; Woodsworth, 2000, p. 81) and that the first book in English printed in North America was, in fact, a translation: *The Whole Booke of Psalmes Faithfully Translated Into English Metre* (1640), by clergymen Richard Mather, Thomas Weld, and John Eliot, from Hebrew. In the 18th century—as for the 19th century—the top two countries having an influence on US literature, excluding England (see Gross, 2007), were Germany and France (Frank & Essmann, 1999, p. 157; Tatlock, 2012, p. 9; Venuti, 2009, p. 323; Zacharasiewicz, 2010, p. 251). French works in particular stood out, not only because French was the leading language in the world system at the time but also because of the country's literary prestige: This had a direct impact on which works were translated into English, and French literature abounded¹⁰ (Morrison, 2016, p. 40; Sapiro, 2015, p. 323).

On that note, it makes sense to address what was the 'classic' way of translating in France well into the early-19th century. In short, up until the end of the 18th century and 'only questioned' around the 1830s in France (Bereaud, 1971; Léger, 2010), the 'Belles Infidèles'—translations in which the target text was adapted to please the public and avoid what went against the epoch's 'taste' (Ballard, 2007; Bereaud, 1971; Macedo & Reuillard, 2017)—ruled the translation scene. Given France's influence, it can be argued that their presence in the practice of translation in the US was felt as well. Indeed, throughout the entire 19th century, many abridged or adapted translations—which, in a way, might resemble the 'Belles Infidèles'—were dominant in the country. In this way, one conclusion can be drawn: a domesticating strategy and, therefore, translators' invisibility, was strongly preferred. Furthermore, we should not forget the country's heritage: Since the 17th century for the US and even before when it comes to England, a domesticating strategy ruled the Anglophone translational scene (see Venuti, 1995, pp.

¹⁰ The influence of France on the Gilded Age culture and translation scene will be discussed in Chapter 3.

43, 88). Thus, let us now see how domestication played out until the last decade of the 19th century, when Saltus published his last translation.

We can start with the publication of "A New Translation of Virgil's First Pastoral," which appeared in the *Kentucky Gazette* in 1806 and demonstrated that already at the beginning of the new century there was interest in publishing "Americanized Vergilian texts in popularly accessible venues" (Dexter, 2011, p. 41). Not only is this version "Americanized," clearly drifting away from what would be a foreignization strategy and the visibility of the translator in Venuti's (1995) terms, but it is also published in a venue which can be accessed by most people—which reinforces the need for domestication if we recall the country's desire to create a culture of their own.

Not only French but other languages were making their way into the US to be translated—and English was one of them. From the moment the new nation was born it was clear that the English language too needed to suffer modifications if a new identity was to develop (Rafael, 2014, p. 342). Indeed, "Anglo-centrism was not unquestioned during the country's formative stages....Independence from the British also needed to entail linguistic independence" (Gentzler, 2006, p. 109). Ten years later, Rafael (2016, p. 104) took this argument further: "The fact remained that English was the language of the British colonizer. It could not become the language of the new republic without first being transformed—or, better yet, translated—into a distinctly American idiom." With this last passage, we can see how—even though a translator in the broad sense of the word is not involved—the English language was domesticated in the US.

Even in subjects such as mathematics, the adaptation of foreign works would gain strength. Attending to Preveraud's (2015) study, we observe how two translations of Adrien-Marie Legendre's *Eléments de Géométrie* (1794)—one by John Farrar (1819) and the other by Charles Davies (1828)—fit into this narrative: both altered the French original and looked more like adaptations than translations to fit a different purpose.

In the late 1830s and early 1840s, the US experienced its first publishing boom (Nance, 2009, p. 23), a result of the increase in both domestic and European book trade (Cottenet, 2017, p. 23). Not only was the publication of national works growing, but also the number of translations in the country which, in turn, fostered national literature—which could have meant one more step towards British liberation (as shall be explored in Saltus' translations). For example, "the numerous translations of classic and romantic

German texts...rendered the ambitions of American authors for the achievement of a sense of cultural autonomy plausible” (Zacharasiewicz, 2010, p. 256). Once again, we see how domestication comes into play, as through the adoption of foreignization this achievement would have been hindered.

However, this liberation did not see the light of day immediately. As Cottenet (2017, p. 21) exemplifies, “the development of American branches for British publishers, and British branches for American imprints, is attested in the 1830s by Saunders & Otley’s New York branch...and Wiley and Putnam’s pioneering opening of a London branch.” In this direction, Steele’s (R. Steele, 2019, p. 3) study further adds that several translations of works authored by French writer Pierre-Jean de Béranger published in the US were a copy of material originally published in England. Given England’s predisposition to domesticate the target text, it is clear how this strategy would only gain strength in US territory, as the national literature was still very much dependent on foreign works.

Steele’s (R. Steele, 2019, p. 3) findings put forward another important aspect: “The trans-Atlantic culture of reprinting enabled by the lack of effective copyright for works published in periodicals, or for anything first published abroad.” More reprinting equalled the dissemination of works in which the invisibility of the translator dominated.

Furthermore, until 1891, US authorities believed that an author’s copyright did not include the right to forbid others from translating his or her work (Hoffheimer, 2013, p. 170). Copyright policies seem to be a problem for mainly one reason: If they were approved and authors had a say in what works could be translated—and potentially in what way—a domesticating strategy and eventually the many changes a text would suffer in order to meet the dominant tastes in the target culture would not see the light of day. Adapting a given work, even if not drastically, could mean trouble for the publisher.

For instance, the already mentioned work *Eléments de Géométrie* had three other translations—two in the 1840s and one in the 1860s—all of them with a specific educational purpose to please different tastes, and ultimately each text appeared to be an original: “Elias Loomis[‘s] (1849) [was designed] for civil higher education; Francis H. Smith[s’] (1867), for Virginia Military Institute and James Thomson[s’] (1847), for high schools students” (Preveraud, 2015, p. 680). In line with these adaptations in the 1840s, another example that symbolises the desire for the cultural construction of the new nation,

thought possible through domestication, is Emerson's support of John Aitken Carlyle's 1849 translation of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* (1472). The original, in Italian, is poetry; Carlyle, however, turned it into prose. Emerson's approval of this decision might lead us to raise the question posed by Straub (2016, p. 86): "Is this change a form of appropriation that 'Americanized' Dante more than a poetic rendering could have done?"

By the 1850s the US "represented the largest potential literary market ever up to that time" (Homestead, 2005, p. 108), with "translations from languages other than English and reprints of English works jointly [constituting] a market share of...30 percent" (Boggs, 2007, p. 32). In other words, there were a great many works in which the translator was invisible. In this decade, the 1855 rendering of the Bible by Andrews Norton corroborates this stance. Through Scanlin's (1988, p. 53) work, we learn that this translation broke with the archaisms of the King James version, with the pronoun 'thou' for the first time being changed to 'you,' making the reading more intelligible and adapting the text to the current US public—and the latter should not be forgotten. As Boggs (2006, p. 21) points out, most translations were pieces published in magazines and newspapers rather than actual books, especially in the first half of the 19th century. It can be argued that translations were more likely to reach readers through magazines and newspapers than books, which once again justifies the need to pay attention to what is translated and how fluent—in Venuti's (1995) interpretation of the term—a work is so as to not pose a threat to nation-building and the demands of the target culture.

Despite the absence of copyright laws, many publishers respected the 'courtesy of trade,' and abstained from printing each other's works. This gesture was in everyone's best interest for two reasons: 1) Whoever distributed a foreign text first was its 'due owner' and was therefore supposedly free from rival editions; and 2) Drawing up print plates was expensive (Arping, 2018; Boggs, 2006, p. 20; Gross, 2007, p. 322). This shows how publishers were money-oriented. In Tatlock's (2012, p. 9) words: "Publishers were guided not necessarily by national interests but rather by such concerns as pleasure and profit." Keeping in mind that these houses were hypothetically free from rival editions, this also means that there would not be two translations of a same text and a comparison would not be possible—and neither was their faithfulness¹¹.

¹¹ The question of fidelity shall be stressed in the analysis of Saltus' translation of Gautier's *Avatar*, included in *Tales Before Supper*.

Also important to highlight regarding publishers is the fact that, in competing for volume sales, many spread out advertisements warning readers about defects and errors in British translations (Hoffheimer, 2013, p. 176). The desire to distance themselves from the past and emerge as a new and unique country is clear. By the mid-19th century, in terms of literature and culture, it was not the same US from 30 years back: British translations, following a domesticating strategy and therefore adapted to their values, would hamper the goals of what would be an American translation destined to an American public, so these advertisements do not seem odd.

Finally, a preference for domesticating strategies could not be clearer when we think about how “American publishers and editors often deterred competition by...omitting the original author’s name” (Beal, 2009, p. 106). If the author of the source text is not on the cover nor mentioned elsewhere, one automatically assumes to be before an original—which is precisely the intention behind the domestication strategy. Thus, the translator was not anonymous, but in the target text he was invisible and his agency nowhere to be found.

In fact, anonymous translations were uncommon in the US, but there is one we can highlight to further stress the anti-foreignization feeling: the 1870 anonymous translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid* published in the newspaper *Winsted Herald*. Clearly stating that the aim of the translation was to serve as a “pedagogical tool for attracting students to Vergil,” it allows us to understand how loose renderings “into informal English replete with colloquialisms and a wide range of topical references to nineteenth-century life in the United States” (Dexter, 2011, p. 39) were a reality in the world of translation.

In 1870, the Act of 8 July took translation rights one step further (Venuti, 1998, p. 54). However, as Beal (2009, p. 109) demonstrates, this was a rather limiting move. As will be pointed out after the quotation, the Act was not passed with the intention of slowing down domestication:

In the 1870...Act...translations were mentioned for the first time, but within a strictly American context. From then on, an author’s permission was needed to publish translations of an American work in the United States. The edition of that translation could be copyrighted as a new work, and as such, prohibit other translations in the same language within U.S. borders. The law, however, made no mention of foreign creators. It clearly applied only to American authors.

First, exclusive translation rights only applied to translations of works by US authors published in US territory. In this way, not foreign ideas but national ones were being translated: a translation into French, for example, would not jeopardize the cultural development of the country, as the original work could always be consulted as to verify any potential deviations. Furthermore, this French translation had to be unique, for only one translation in that same language could circulate, which limited the just mentioned deviations. Hence, this exclusive copyright was only meant to cover American authors, so that foreign works could continue to be translated and reprinted. Regarding foreign works, several translations in the same language could still be published, which meant that:

These were forced to share the American market, to publishers' increasing consternation over diminished profits. Authorizations from foreign authors were not a prerequisite for obtaining American copyright for editions of translations of their works. Such authorizations were useful, however, for obtaining early proofs ahead of the competition and, afterwards, as a marketing device: claims of being the "only authorized edition" and "translator for the author" were common in American book titles and advertisements between 1870 and 1891. (Beal, 2009, p. 109)

More translations inevitably increased the likelihood of comparison between publishers' output—and an assessment of the faithfulness among the translations in question. This could have had put in perspective the tradition of domestication in translation, but a foreignizing strategy was destined to be unsuccessful in the country—despite some attempts. Bayard Taylor's translation of Goethe's *Faust* (1790) in 1871 is one of them. Shaped by the German tradition, it created a challenge to US readers, who were "suspicious of new metres and unaccustomed forms of expression" (Taylor, 1871, p. x). Another example is Julia Evelina Smith's 1876 translation of the Bible, in which the "principle of concordant" that was applied throughout explains why the book was not exactly popular (Scanlin, 1988, p. 58).

Still in the 1870s another translation can be mentioned—but this time representing the status quo: William Cullen Bryant's 1876 translation of Homer's *The Iliad*, which, according to Venuti (2009, p. 324), resulted in a "strongly domesticating translation that adhered to current English usage, avoided archaic syntax and diction, and employed the Latin names for the Greek gods."

Since 1886, the international book market has been controlled by the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, “which requires publishers to buy distribution or translation rights for books from their original publisher or literary agent during the period to which the copyright law applies,” also granting the author “a *droit de regard* over the translated work (choice of publisher and translator, quality of the translation, changes in the text)” (Sapiro, 2016, p. 85). Although by 1887 several nations had signed the treaty (Leffler, 2020, p. 148), the US would sign it 100 years later in 1989. In the absence of this treaty, US publishers could continue to disseminate works that removed and rephrased certain parts of the source text. That was the case with Nathan Haskell Dole’s translation of Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* (1877) in 1886. Curiously, three years later, Dole revised his work and reinstated the omitted excerpts, which had been erased due to the “realism [of the novel which was] too intense for our Puritan taste” (Dole, 1886, p. vi). Although this represents a step in the direction of faithfulness and, by Venuti’s (1995) logic, the visibility of the translator, it shows how by the end of the 1880s domestication remained *en vogue*.

Another good example is the translation of Eça de Queirós’ *O Primo Basílio* (1878) by Mary Serrano in 1889. In the preface, Serrano (1889, p. 5) made clear that her work softened and even deleted some passages, on the grounds that “while the interest of the story itself remains undiminished, the ethical purpose of the work will thereby be given wider scope.” We can wonder whether such a decision was deliberately made by the Serrano or if the publisher had something to do with it and exercised its agency.

Precisely in this direction we can highlight Henry James’ 1890 translation of Alphonse Daudet’s *Port Tarascon* (1860), which stood out for the elements that had been omitted due to the publisher’s fear that some readers might take offence in the vocabulary used (Boyer, 2002, p. 18), as French literature was known for its immorality despite the US obsession—*Saltus* included—with the country (further explored in Chapter 3).

In 1891 the International Copyright Act was passed, guaranteeing that copyright was extended to foreign writers and to translations (Boggs, 2006, p. 21; Homestead, 2005, p. 148). Still, like the Act of 1870, this one too had its restrictions in favour of publishers, as it only applied “to works by foreign authors provided their countries of origin could prove reciprocal protection of American literary works, or were members of an international association” (Cottenet, 2017, p. 24). The first condition is particularly relevant, as it protected the interests of US publishers. However, internally it did not prove

fruitful, because even though it was now on paper stipulated that “translation was and needed to be an exact copy” (Boggs, 2007, p. 149), publishers continued to recycle existing—meaning domesticated—translations (France, 2006, p. 239).

Even though by 1899 the US had signed copyright agreements with various countries—such as France and Great Britain in 1891, the German Empire in 1892, Portugal in 1893, Mexico in 1896, and the Netherlands in 1899 (Boggs, 2007, p. 147)—which could have had, at last and eventually, sparked an interest in taking a chance on foreignization, the reality is that “adaptation [was still] as much in evidence as translation in the strict sense of the word¹²” (Hale, 2006, p. 371).

It is therefore not surprising to witness that in her study Lauth (2011, p. 3) asserts that her work will shed light on the “often invisible tradition of foreign-bent [poetry] translation” in the US between 1830 and 1915 with—and beyond the number of case studies the time period should be stressed—“five case studies spanning eighty years.”

American agents of translation thus “learned the way to build up their own vernacular culture through the active translation of foreign literatures and cultures without taking a risk of their own language’s [sic] being weakened by too much foreign influence” (Furuya, 2015, p. 6). In turn, what seems to have remained weak was the visibility of the translator, which Saltus knows one or two things about.

¹² By “translation in the strict sense of the word,” total foreignization is not being advocated. As pointed out before, domestication/foreignization is a continuum, so a combination not only is possible but also desired—that is, most functional (literary) translations come somewhere between the two in a compromise between extreme fidelity to the original and extreme fluency in the target text. As Boyden (2006, p. 124) put it: “From my perspective, domestication and foreignization constitute opposite but complementary strategies for the accommodation of linguistic differences. While the domesticating strategy accommodates cultural items (authors, texts, periods, movements, or whatever else) by indigenizing or assimilating them, the foreignizing strategy does so by underscoring their particularity.”

Chapter 3. Between France and the US: Understanding Edgar Saltus and His Milieu

The aim of this chapter is to contextualise the cultural, literary, and translational impact of Belle Époque France on late 19th-century US as to later be able to discuss Saltus' life and work. Indeed, before we get to the analysis of Saltus' translations, the influence of everything French on the American mind must be addressed. In this way, we will first start by briefly characterising the cultural scene of the Belle Époque in France; then, we will see how Americans were influenced by this world and what implications this had for the practice of literature and translation in the US; and, finally, after having gone through these two sections, we may now direct our attention to Saltus' habitus and understand the personal, sociocultural, and literary journey of the man at the centre of this thesis.

3.1. *La Belle Époque Goes West: The Influence of French Culture on Fin-de-Siècle US*

3.1.1. A Culture-Oriented Overview of France (1871–1914)

The expression 'La Belle Époque' is used to describe the period usually between the end of the Franco-Prussian War (1871) and the start of World War I (1914). Not only applicable to France but to most European countries, these were 40 years of peace, something rare in the continent which justifies the use of this expression after the end of the war, as the four previous decades had been more optimistic times (Churton, 2016; DiFilippo, 2015; Kalifa, 2021; Kelley, 2021; Prigent & Tichey, 1990). There was a *joie de vivre* associated with socioeconomic prosperity and cultural and technological developments. France embodied this period par excellence, becoming the artistic and cultural centre of the world (see, e.g., Gordon, 2018, p. 30; Hewitt, 2003; Kershaw, 2015).

Yet, the elegance of the Belle Époque did not extend to the entire country. It was, in fact, an urban phenomenon, especially a Parisian one¹³. Throughout this period, Paris was the world capital of bohemia, luxury, entertainment, and arts. In short, it was where cultural innovation was produced and exported from. Every pleasure could be fulfilled in the city, and elites from other countries came to Paris to be in touch with the most recent

¹³ However, just as the Gilded Age in the US, this was also a period of stark contradictions: poverty remained strong in Paris' slums; government corruption and distrust was rampant, with cases such as the Dreyfus Affair; and pleasure was also ruled by misery, with alcoholism, crime, and prostitution levels rising (Arwas, 1978, p. 71; Churton, 2016; Harison, 2019, pp. 164, 168; Harriss, 2004, p. 113; Kalifa, 2021, p. 5; Martin, 1999, p. 229; McAuliffe, 2011, p. 186; Merriman, 2017; Mesch, 2013, p. 200; Rudorff, 1973).

trends (Benjamin, 1969; Jubin, 2021; Rearick, 2011; Santos, 2019; Willms, 1997). It is therefore not surprising that foreign writers such as Ivan Turgenev, for instance, chose the ‘writers’ hub’ and the most cosmopolitan European city to start off their careers with shocking and innovative works (Burke, 2009; McAuliffe, 2011; Schapiro, 1978).

The Universal Expositions of 1878, 1889, and 1900 cemented the magnificence of Paris. The 1878 exposition meant to symbolise the country’s recovery from the Franco-Prussian War and display the head of the Statue of Liberty before its completeness and shipment to the US (McAuliffe, 2011, p. 70; Qaiser, 2013, p. 10; Roche, 1998, p. 12; Sutherland, 2003, p. 29). The exhibition of 1889 sought to celebrate the centenary of the first year of the French Revolution, and the famous Eiffel Tower was built as the entrance to the fair (Dupuy, 2014, p. 493; Jonas, 2000, p. 243; Jones, 1994, p. 225; Williams, 2017, p. 172). Lastly, the 1900 exposition—the largest ever with 52 million visitors—solidified Paris’ nickname as the ‘City of Light,’ as this year’s event celebrated the turn of the century through the theme of electricity featuring the ‘Grande Roue de Paris,’ the world’s largest ferris wheel at the time (Brauer, 2014, p. 231; Ganz, 2010, p. 114; Geppert, 2010, p. 94; Mandell, 2019; Sitzia, 2011, p. 261; Tran, 2013, p. 268).

As just mentioned—and now delving into the characteristics and particularities of art and culture in late 19th-century France, particularly in the capital—Paris was the quintessential writers’ hub, a place of intense literary activity (Bancquart, 1997; Guth, 1981; Leroy & Bertrand-Sabiani, 1998; Milne, 2013). After the last years of Realism, with authors like Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant, came about new movements such as Naturalism, Symbolism, and Decadentism, with figures such as Émile Zola, Jean Moréas, and Joris-Karl Huysmans. Broadly speaking, the last two movements shone a light on feelings of alienation and pessimism regarding society and life itself, addressing taboo subjects through the use of metaphorical (Symbolists) and morbid (Decadents) language (McGuinness, 2000; Porter, 2019; Sitzia, 2011; Unwin, 1997).

Literature—despite being the focus of this thesis—was not the only art form to grant Paris the grandiosity that Saltus so admired. Before examining the influence of France on late 19th-century US culture, let us briefly take a look at other forms of artistic expression that made Paris the cultural centre of the world:

- Architecture and design: Originating in the late 1880s, Art Nouveau was the newest development in the field (McAuliffe, 2011, p. 5; Sternau, 1996). Glass and

steel, pastel colours, and sinuous curves could be found in building facades and furniture (Borsi & Godoli, 1989, p. 11; Ettesvold, 1983, p. 4; Facaros & Pauls, 1996, p. 76; Hanser, 2006, p. 133; Johnston, 2007, p. 110; Thibaut-Pomerantz, 2009, p. 158). Colours were later taken to a new extreme with the display of the first neon lamp, created by Georges Claude in 1910 (Bishop & Coblenz, 1982, p. 378; Cleveland & Morris, 2013, p. 663). In public spaces, the transparency and verticality of constructions (Cardinal-Pett, 2015, p. 383; Rheims, 1966, p. 78) and the momentary yet exuberant metro station entrances designed by Hector Guimard are representative of the Art Nouveau (Hanser, 2006, p. 133; Sitzia, 2011, p. 262).

- Cinema: France was a pioneer in early cinema technology, with the creation of the cinematograph and the world's first public projection of a movie by the Lumière brothers in 1895 (Rennert, 1990; Rudorff, 1973, p. 301; Semarne, 1987).
- Fashion: With its roots in Paris, *haute couture* would make the city the beauty and fashion capital of the world. By the turn of the century there were dozens of houses of high fashion (Rearick, 2011, p. 35; V. Steele, 2019; Tierney, 1986, p. 17).
- Music: Salon music and the opera dominated the musical scene, with musicians such as Claude Debussy, Jules Massenet, and the Russian Igor Stravinsky rising to stardom (Brody, 1987; Kimball, 1995; Resick, 2017; Ross, 2017).
- Painting: The force of Impressionism in the 1860s and 1870s influenced French art immensely, not least because of the artistic counterreactions, such as Symbolism and Fauvism (Clement, 1994; Haine, 2006, p. 24; Rudorff, 1973, p. 246). In graphic design, colour lithography was introduced by Jules Chéret, the "father of the modern poster" (Arwas, 1978, p. 40; Meggs, 1998, p. 184).
- Sports and leisure: Both for watching and playing, activities such as horse racing and gambling with the opening of the Casino de Paris in 1890 made entertainment an ever-evolving force (Corona, 2002, p. 55; Dauncey & Hare, 2014; Gordon, 2018; Harison, 2019). The development of the aviation and automobile industries with, e.g., the circulation of the De Dion-Bouton model contributed to the spread of leisure (McAuliffe, 2011, p. 164; Moynahan, 2007, p. 59).
- Theatre: Popular and independent theatre and the rise of cabaret performances, such as the Can-Can, with the creation of spaces such as the Moulin Rouge in 1889 provided vivid depictions of Parisian everyday life (Churton, 2016; Jubin, 2021; Nettleton, 2019, p. 195; Rudorff, 1973, p. 45; Wardhaugh, 2017).

3.1.2. La Belle Époque in the US (1871–1900)

Through their long-time alliance with its ups and downs along the way, France and the US have nonetheless always remained allies (Blumenthal, 1970, 1975; Cloonan, 2018). They have shared Enlightenment values and established literary relations from the start (Duroselle & Doering, 1979; Jospin, 2004; Stern, 1994) and, from a US perspective, for example, the Louisiana territory was cheaply sold to the country, Jefferson strongly admired French culture, and one of the most emblematic US symbols, the Statue of Liberty, was offered by the French in 1886¹⁴ (Allen, 2007; Duroselle, 1978; Portes, 2005).

It is therefore not surprising to learn that, already in mid-century, Oliver Wendell Holmes (1858, p. 143) wrote that “Good Americans, when they die, go to Paris.” This would only become more true in the next decades, as “beginning about 1875 French-American cultural and diplomatic relations entered a so-called golden age that continued unabated until the end of the First World War” (Allen, 2007, p. 65), not least due to the fact that from 1870 to 1918 France was the only major European republic, something that appealed to US values (Gildea, 1988, p. 1; see also Boggs, 2006, p. 22).

In this time period we find precisely the Belle Époque, during which Americans “adopted French values [and the Parisian lifestyle] as the ultimate standard” (Sourieau, 2005, p. 728; see also Duroselle, 1978, p. 80; Goetz, 1986, p. 8; Haight, 1988). Many crossed the Atlantic to learn, relax, and contemplate artworks, a trip indispensable to some (Clayson, 2019, p. 130; Crain, 2016; Duroselle & Doering, 1979, p. 494; Levenstein, 1998; Méral, 1989, p. 16; Wang, 2018, p. 30; White, 1927, p. 243).

Thus, the question now is: What was the impact of the French Belle Époque on late 19th-century US culture (architecture and painting; fashion; and music and theatre) and, more specifically, literature, as to further understand some of Saltus’ choices in his translations?

When it comes to architecture and painting, many American students went to Paris and studied at the École des Beaux Arts, with some staying there permanently (Araujo, 2005; Blumenthal, 1970, p. ix; Weinberg, 1991; White, 1927, p. 236). Those who came

¹⁴ It should also be mentioned that the French, even if not at the same level, admired Americans too. James Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Edgar Allan Poe are good literary examples, as they had significant influence on 19th-century French literature and translation (Cottenet, 2017; France, 2006, p. 238; Sourieau, 2005). The same happened with French painters, for example, who went to the US to further explore their artwork, such as Edgar Degas and Paul Philippoteaux (Araujo, 2005, p. 908).

back influenced the architecture, interior design, and painting of Washington DC¹⁵ and New York City, for instance, which by the turn of the century helped forge a distinct and individual creation (Gournay, 2005, p. 84; Murphy, 2018; Paredes, 2007; Van Zanten, 2017; Zalewski, 2009). With the French influence came, for example, the spread of ‘hôtels particuliers’ (Gournay, 2005, 2007; Gréber, 1920, p. 16) and a new type of building called the ‘French flat,’ whose name stemmed from its popularity in the French capital and, “like all things Parisian, [it] was warmly received by the late 19th-century New York metropolis” (Crain, 2016).

In these constructions one could find Art Nouveau motifs and especially French Renaissance and 18th-century French furniture (Howlett, 2004; Lewis et al., 1987; Murphy, 2018). The US paintings therein displayed evoked Paris, especially at night, as contemporaries sought in the French capital “a way out of or an alternative to their boredom and disenchantment with the cities [and nightlife] of the United States” (Clayson, 2019, p. 153). This boredom justifies the country’s dependence on French and, specifically, Parisian painting (Burns, 1996, p. 41; Lessoff, 2017, p. 156; May, 2014). Thus, it is understandable how, “by the mid-1880s, French paintings began to outnumber and overshadow American ones in the private galleries of America’s wealthiest collectors” (Mazaroff, 2018, p. 110). Poster art, which grew ever more important in US culture from the 1890s, also took inspiration from Toulouse-Lautrec’s and Eugène Grasset’s works (Iskin, 2014; Kotynek & Cohassey, 2008, p. 42; MacLeod, 2008, p. 192).

Regarding the fashion industry, the allure of *haute couture* did not escape the sight of the American upper class. The sophisticated yet bold garments fomented the desire for the high fashion of Paris (Gournay, 2005, p. 83; Perry & Smith, 2006, p. 120; Stamper & Condra, 2010), and the many fashion magazines that came about corroborate this stance (Kotynek & Cohassey, 2008, p. 35; Shrock, 2004, p. 87). Traveling to the French capital to shop became a ritual: According to Levenstein (1998, p. 150), “since stops at Parisian jewelers, consertières, shoemakers, and even lorgnette makers were also mandatory, fashionable upper-class women would come to Paris for four weeks of nonstop shopping twice a year.” Whether bought in Paris or imported, the reality is that French high fashion seemed to pervade US society. As Levenstein (1998, p. 150) also points out, by the end of the 19th century “the top French fashion houses were selling close to two-thirds of their

¹⁵ In the last three decades of the century, the city kept being referred to, in architectural terms, as ‘Paris in America’ (see, e.g., Allen, 2007; Paredes, 2007).

products to foreigners, so many of whom were American that they used ‘American’ as the generic term for foreigner.”

Besides architecture, painting, and fashion, performing arts such as music and theatre also drew inspiration from French sources. As with painters, musicians too went to Paris to study music and learn from voice teachers, which in turn helped shape US music and take their opera further, especially that of New Orleans already inspired by French music since the previous century (Doherty, 2004; Fauser, 2005; Levy, 1983; Taylor, 2005). The aid of French influence proved helpful, as by 1889 “American opera stars were to be heard throughout Europe” (Bomberger, 2002, p. 52). Not only opera but also theatre plays continued to be adapted and translated from French in these decades (Blumenthal, 1975, p. 248; Gentzler, 2006, p. 111; Lombard, 1969).

Finally, of all French arts, literature seems to be the one that had the most impact on late 19th-century US culture, with literary translations from French surpassing any other (European) language by far (Goetz, 1986; Jones, 1940; see Figure 1 below for the year of 1890).

	1830	% of total	1890	% of total
Latin	31	12.3	54	13.4
Greek	22	8.8	47	11.7
French	103	41.0	106	26.4
German	33	13.1	81	20.1
Italian	16	6.4	16	4.0
Spanish and Portuguese	10	4.0	8	2.0
Celtic	4	1.6	8	2.0
Scandinavian and Dutch	1	0.4	24	6.0
Russian and E. European	5	2.0	17	4.2
Eastern	20	8.0	35	8.7
Miscellaneous	6	2.4	7	1.7
Total	251		402	

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percentage and may therefore not add up to 100%.

Figure 1. Translations in the Nineteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue (NSTC) by source language, with French in the lead in 1830 and 1890. Please note that the NSTC is “based on the catalogues of the Bodleian Library, British Library, Cambridge University Library, Trinity College Dublin, National Library of Scotland, Newcastle University Library, Library of Congress, and Harvard University Library” (France & Haynes, 2006, p. 135): Only two of these institutions—Library of Congress and Harvard University Library—are in the US, so this should be taken into consideration when examining the data. Source: France and Haynes (2006, p. 137).

The figures brought by Jones (1948, p. 528) corroborate and take these statistics further: In the last three decades of the 19th century, US publishers brought out English translations of the works of, more or less, 260 different French authors.

But why all this success? Besides the fact that French was the *lingua franca* of the world at the time, what continued to draw Americans to French literature was the “prestige of French literary tradition and critical acumen” (Sourieau, 2005, p. 726; see also Blumenthal, 1975; Furlong, 2019; Lemoine, 2006; Sapiro, 2015).

More than the literature’s prestige however—“and largely because of the American legacy of Puritanism” (Braun & Lainoff, 1978, p. 16)—it was the immorality of the stories that, in turn, most appealed to US readers (Blumenthal, 1970, p. ix, 1975; Jackson, 1966, p. 40; Russo, 2001, p. 223; Wang, 2018, p. 45). Such immorality, found especially in novels and short stories (see, e.g., France, 2006, p. 241), was not only related to sexual behaviour and conjugal unfaithfulness but also to moral corruption, the “painful realities of life¹⁶” (Åhnebrink, 1961, p. 19), and (tragic) deaths, which evoked scenes “heedless of purity, of honesty, and of justice” (Child in White, 1927, p. 240; see also, e.g., Blumenthal, 1975; Braun & Lainoff, 1978, p. 129).

Although publicly such content was condemned, in private Americans would devour the French works that came in (Blumenthal, 1975; Jones, 1940). As France (2006, p. 230) put it, “the very dangers imputed to French literature heightened its appeal to some readers and writers, particularly in the last two decades of the century,” not least because “Americans, who usually were inclined to think of life in ideal and optimistic terms, [found pleasure in] reading French authors who excelled in describing life’s ugliest realities” (Blumenthal, 1975, p. 232). Indeed, as explored in Chapter 2, the ‘Gilded Age’ also had its dark side, and through French translations this side of life could be found. As Åhnebrink (1961, p. 19) summarised, a “scientific-industrialized America with its economic and social issues was less in harmony with a romantic attitude toward life. Idealism and romanticism faded in a period which called not for dreams or wishful thinking, but for [the ugly] truth and exactness.” In this sense, French literature was perceived as that ‘other’—a dangerously attractive force that, for its differences, lures Americans in.

¹⁶ Indeed, Saltus (1890, p. 73) himself claimed that those who “did not paint existence as we would like it to be, but as it is” could not be accused of immorality: “To call them immoral on that account is to be a paradoxist indeed.”

This explains why, for instance, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*—published in France in 1856 and almost banned on account of immorality—was such a triumph in the US as soon as it was published in English there in 1881 (Blumenthal, 1975, p. 187). Not only recent French books but also classics were translated. The passion for immorality, also found in older works and in line with the literature's prestige, fostered translations such as Thomas Sergeant Perry's rendering of Madame de La Fayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) in 1892 and William Walton's philosophical¹⁷ translations of Voltaire (France, 2006, p. 234). Newest publications were, of course, a favourite target nonetheless, with Daudet, Balzac, and especially Zola¹⁸ being, according to Blumenthal (1975, p. 232), the three most popular French writers in the US at the turn of the century.

After this brief contextualisation of the American allure for French literature, one has to ask: Who was, then, working on the dissemination of translations from French among the American public, how, and why?

Starting with translators, one of the reasons they brought French texts into English was “not only to reveal to the public the art of French prose writers, but also to discover new artistic forms” (Lemoine, 2006, p. 315), in hopes of developing a national tradition and their own work based on the “realism and vigor” of French literature (Braun & Lainoff, 1978, p. 240). Many translators knew that “translating a foreign literature may become a strategy to take position, or improve one's position, in a national literary field” (Buzelin, 2011, p. 9).

Inspiration from French literature can be found, for instance, in Frank Stockton's short story *The Lady, or the Tiger?*, stimulated by Maupassant's *La Parure* (Fusco, 1994, p. 2); in Henry James' prefaces to his translations, in which he presented his thoughts on writers such as Balzac and Zola, just like Saltus did (France, 2006, p. 241; Sourieau, 2005; Wang, 2018); and in the Decadent works of James Huneker and Vance Thompson, who “attacked conventional morality” (Knight, 1996, p. 36) and kept introducing the American public to French, and especially Parisian, literature (Kotynek & Cohassey,

¹⁷ Though novels and short stories were a preferred target, since they could provide immorality galore, at the end of the century Science Fiction, largely thanks to Jules Verne and translations of his books, also started to develop in the US (Bozzetto & Evans, 1990, p. 5; Edwards, 2006, p. 167).

¹⁸ Zola was, without doubt, the most talked about—and precisely in spite, or because of, the criticism surrounding immorality (Jackson, 1966; Verhoeven, 2010; White, 1927). In fact, the first translations in English of Zola's books were published in the US and, in the last 22 years of the century, “thirty-one American publishers brought out, counting duplications and new editions when it is possible to ascertain these, something like one hundred and eighty books of this author” (Jones, 1940, pp. 520-521).

2008, p. 37). In the case of Decadentism, the movement to which Saltus belonged, French literature and subsequent translations in the field were believed to “be good for Americans,” and were seen “as a kind of collection of ‘self-help’ books” in the sense that it could “help America to become something other than what it was” (Weir, 2008, p. 49).

Frank Norris’ works, for example, and now turning to Naturalism, clearly show just how strong the French influence was, in this case regarding Zola (thanks to whom Naturalism first spread across the US; see, e.g., Leary, 1980; Marriott, 2002). As Braun and Lainoff (1978, p. 140) advance:

Similarities have been drawn between *McTeague* (1899) and *L’Assommoir* (1877), between *Vandover and the Brute* (1914) and *La Bête Humaine* (1890), between *The Octopus* (1901) and *Germinal* (1885). Leon Howard has called *McTeague* “the best example of French naturalism in nineteenth-century American literature.”

Still concerning Zola, the respect for the French author was such that some translators, like the multinational Lafcadio Hearn (who curiously shall be mentioned in the analysis of Saltus’ translation of Gautier’s *Avatar*), “bitterly criticized poor translations of Zola” (Braun & Lainoff, 1978, p. 106). With regard to the admiration and influence of French literature, Hearn is also a great example: Not only “were [his] the first English translations of François Coppée, Philippe-Auguste, Comte de Villiers de l’Isle-Adam, Guy de Maupassant, and Pierre Loti”, thus familiarising American readers with lesser-known French writers, but “his first book [was actually] a translation of six tales by Gautier (1882)” (Braun & Lainoff, 1978, p. 106).

Finally, Kate Chopin’s mid-1890s translations of Maupassant remind us of the importance of the aforementioned notion of immorality, directly connected to the fascination of American authors with French literature. Not able to find such ‘realism’ at home, “impersonating Maupassant transported Chopin to unfamiliar, if not forbidden, territory and allowed her a license that was impossible in her writing of local color fiction” (Sempreora, 1994, p. 86). Who also drew inspiration from Maupassant was Henry Cuyler Bunner, whose output in fiction:

Changed as his stories began to imitate more and more the Maupassant model, especially his short-story sequence *Short Sixes*, first published in *Puck* and then collected in an 1891 volume. The success of this collection prompted Bunner to try his own hand at translation by “Americanizing” a series of Maupassant texts,

again printed in *Puck* before being collected in book form in 1893. (Fusco, 1994, p. 2)

The great interest in everything French was therefore not synonymous with faithfully translating a given work, not least due to the domesticating tradition of the country as discussed in Section 2.2: French literature, too—and especially because of the explicit content—was “often toned down and abridged” (Åhnebrink, 1961, p. VI).

For example, Katherine Prescott Wormeley’s 1896 translation of Balzac’s *La Comédie Humaine* was later considered “wooden, insensitive, or inaccurate” (France, 2006, p. 238). All this makes us wonder whether certain textual choices were deliberately made by translators or if they were rather a product of publishers’ policies. Let us not forget that, if it is the translator who brings the source text into English, it is the publisher who spreads the work across the country: Its agency cannot be overlooked.

One of the aspects that elucidates the power behind publishers’ decisions is when they sell translations that, in fact, are not translations at all. Jones’ (1940, 1942) research on Zola in the US proves just that. Hence, what was important was Zola’s ‘authorship’; not the spread of a different culture nor the work of the ‘translator.’ This happened twice to Zola in the US, as Jones (1940, p. 522) explains:

No surer proof of an author's popularity can be found than in the appearance of volumes bearing his name, yet his in name only. This happened at least twice in the case of Zola. One bore the title *Emile Zola's First Love Story*. It is a highly imaginative account of a youthful romance of Zola, translated from an unknown source by Max Maury. The other was *The Two Duchesses*. This is an extremely interesting novel, based upon a *cause célèbre* in Parisian high life of 1882, the suit brought by the young duchesse de Chaulnes against her mother-in-law, the duchesse de Chevreuse, for the custody of the former's children. Yet interesting as it is, it is most certainly not by Zola, but probably by some hack of republican prejudices, and is mostly concocted from the printed reports of the trial. But it was sold to American readers as by Zola.

Two years later, Jones reinforced his findings after discovering the origin of the second book, *The Two Duchesses*. The book was, in fact, a translation from French, but instead of having been written by Zola, the original belonged to a lesser-known author, Alexis Bouvier. Bouvier’s status might explain why the publisher assumed it would be easy to get away with their decision to advertise the book as if Zola was the original author. In

this study, Jones (1942, p. 25) also adds that the title page of the target text reads as follows: “*The Two Duchesses. A Story of Today. The Latest Paris Sensation. By Emile Zola. Translated from the French by Myron A. Cooney.*”

This is a very interesting description, because not only does it strengthen the US admiration for all things French and Parisian—given that the book is “*The Latest Paris Sensation,*” depicts the society of the Belle Époque (“*A Story of Today*”), and is supposedly written by Zola originally—but it also demonstrates how powerful titles could be, and publishers were well aware of this.

Indeed, this is precisely another reason why publishers must be factored into the discussion surrounding the production of translations: Quite often, in the end, the titles of translations were in their hands, and sometimes they were adapted to such an extent that translations were sold with practically unrecognisable titles (France, 2006, p. 242; Jones, 1940, p. 523). This was the case with Zola’s *Thérèse Raquin*, which appeared in translation in 1892 under the title *The Devil’s Compact. A Vivid Translation from the French* (Lüdeke, 1941, p. 136). Once again, we can scrutinize this title as to understand publishers’ intentions: Not only is it advertised as an immoral work, given that the reader is before the “*Devil’s Compact,*” but it is also added—so that there is no doubt—that this is a “*vivid*” translation from French, which is one more reason why the book should be read.

Zola’s novels and his increasingly popularity can help us interpret another curious phenomenon regarding the titles chosen by publishers, who exploited them to the maximum in order to lure readers in and sell their translations as Laing Hill (2020, p. 108) demonstrates:

In the United States, other novels by Zola were marketed to stress their connection [amongst themselves]. One American publisher released its translation of *Nana* in 1880 with the subtitle Sequel to “*L’Assommoir,*” to associate it with Zola’s first overseas sensation, but the renown of Gervaise’s daughter seems to have been so profitable that the publisher re-released *L’Assommoir* two years later with the subtitle *Nana’s Mother*. When the same press published its version of *Germinal* in 1885, the novel was called *Nana’s Brother: Son of “Gervaise” and “Lantier” of “L’Assommoir.*

Lastly, regarding titles, those given to collections of translations—and that therefore do not have an original title, like Saltus’ *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper*—can

also be telling of this desire from publishers to attract readers into buying the so beloved French works. The already mentioned Henry Cuyler Bunner, who decided to translate Maupassant's stories, grouped them into a collection in 1893 whose title was *Made in France: French Tales Retold with a United States Twist*. And, even though not all of the target texts "are so divorced from Maupassant's original texts as Bunner's title suggests" and despite the fact that Bunner "does relocate several stories to the United States [while retaining] French geography, customs, and manners in others" (Fusco, 1994, p. 2), we must not fail to understand how the title of the collection points to a domestication strategy, without even having to open the book. If "*Made in France*" was an invitation, "*Retold with a United States Twist*" was a clear message to the readers that this compilation was for their perusal and delight—regardless if, in the end, "translations were pumped up in title and watered down in content" (Laing Hill, 2020, p. 26).

This realisation leads us to a third and final aspect concerning the agency of publishers: Their wish to profit from French translations. As has been discussed, French works were extremely tempting, and publishing houses knew this. Indeed, the last two aspects—selling translations that might not be translations after all and editing titles to make them more appealing to the US public—can very well be thought of as ways to ultimately generate money. Already back in the day, figures like Lafcadio Hearn had this opinion regarding translations from French. As Lemoine (2006, p. 312) advances: "Failing as they did to reflect the spirit of the originals, these 'spurious,' 'expurgated,' 'bogus translations' 'mangled, garbled, interpolated, deformed or emasculated the original.' Their sole merit had probably been 'to sell and read easily'" (Hearn's words in single quotation marks).

Hearn's remarks that these translations were meant to "read easily" reinforces, once more, how publishers were aware of the textual domestication they practiced, and the following passage from Lüdeke's (1941, p. 135) study on Zola in the US could not make that clearer:

In the prefatory note to *L'Assommoir* the publisher modestly claimed that the adaptation of the French original to American taste had been accomplished "with literary ability, combined with tact, delicacy and refinement" and that the translator "has done his work in such an able and thorough manner, that it seems almost incredible it could have been written other than in English.

In the last line of the excerpt, we can see how the translation is talked about like it was an original work, therefore denouncing the impossibility of the translator's visibility. Along these lines, we can think of how, after publication and having a second read, translators might point out to publishers that some parts were incorrectly translated into English and thus distorted the source text, creating an unfaithful rendering. As might be expected, some publishers were not keen on attending to these remarks, at least not the one who sold Hearn's translation of Gautier's *Une Nuit de Cléopâtre*, given that it "refused him the right to correct the plates" (Lemoine, 2006, p. 312).

Clearly, "French fiction could be hot property" (France, 2006, p. 241). But was it "hotter" for translators or publishers? That is, who was in fact responsible for all the possible changes in target texts and the domesticating strategy herein found?

Indeed, without the support of reports on both parts, it can be hard to tell. For instance, in an 1898 translation of Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* by Charles Tergie published by Brentano's, who also published Saltus' *Tales Before Supper*, we can notice a slight but relevant change in the subtitle of the translation in comparison to the original. The subtitle in the source text reads "Chronique Du Xix Siècle," which would be translated to "Chronical of the 19th Century," but that is not what we find in the target text. Rather, this part was transformed into "A Story of Provincial France." In this sense, Walther (1974, p. 105) poses the following question regarding Tergie's choice: "Pensait-il, de cette façon, attirer les lecteurs familiarisés avec les romans de Balzac et notamment ses *Scènes de la Vie de Province*?" However, without access to deeper information about who in fact suggested this subtitle, there is no way of knowing whether this change was deliberately made by the translator, following the line of thought suggested by Walther, or rather commissioned by the publisher with the very same intention. Therefore, both the attenuations and exaggerations Walther (1974) finds in translations of Stendhal's works in *fin-de-siècle* US can either be attributed to translators or publishers.

In the aforementioned *The Two Duchesses*, now known to belong to Alexis Bouvier, in the original the heroine of the story is named "Gabrielle Danileff"—but in the translation she is referred to as "Gabrielle, princess Galitzin," "the actual surname of the real duchess de Chaulnes. Presumably M. Bouvier had to respect a libel law that Mr. Cooney could ignore, or this was perhaps done in the American translation to give added interest and verisimilitude" to the narrative (Jones, 1942, p. 28). But was this decision

made by the person who brought the story into English or the house behind its publication?

Lastly, we can return to the French author that has been constantly mentioned in this section, Zola, to further understand the translator–publisher duality. In John Stirling’s (pseudonym of Mary Neal Sherwood) translation of *L’Assommoir*, several parts differed from those in the source text in such a way that the adoption of a domesticating strategy cannot be denied. As Lüdeke (1941, p. 135) tells us:

Whole paragraphs are reduced to one or two sentences, whole speeches cut down to a few words, and these often as inept as they can be. The vitally important tone that is embodied in the various shades of Parisian argot, of French slang, has evaporated and in its place is left a weak, listless and colorless English that handles even what is left of the original text with complete freedom, supplanting French expressions with English ones of an entirely different meaning and adding summarily stock English phrases that have nothing to do with Zola’s words.

Clearly, the translation was produced with the American public in mind. Let us remember that this is the same translation whose publisher stated that the target text had been produced “in such an able and thorough manner, that it seems almost incredible it could have been written other than in English.” What is not one hundred percent obvious is whether such a rendering was entirely in Stirling’s hands, and the publisher was approving of the decisions made, or if any guidelines were indicated to the translator before commencing the task.

While it may not be entirely clear whose decision it is to make certain changes to the translations from French, what is undeniable is that, in the end, “the reader [is promised] exotic contact with the foreign, but domesticated” (R. Steele, 2019, p. 24). In other words, although target texts still needed to be ‘Americanized,’ what mattered most was where the original came from: the exciting, dangerous, and immoral France (Jones, 1940, p. 521).

Did this happen with Saltus’ translations as well? How can the changes made in his renderings be analysed? Like the translations in this section mentioned, do his also comply with the dominant taste in the US in the country’s approach to French culture? Before an answer can be given, let us then first take a look at the life and work of the man behind the focus of this thesis.

3.2. *Life and Work of Edgar Saltus*

Edgar Evertson Saltus was born, it is thought, on October 8th, 1855, in New York City. Some scholars say it was on October 5th (Bloom, 1987, p. 3516) and others that it was not in 1855, but in 1858 (Van Vechten, 1918, p. 37). His family was quite affluent and had a big presence in the city. However, that would not prevent his parents from getting a divorce when he was seven years old. His brother Francis (a bigger literary success than Edgar at first but that soon after fell behind; cf. Cahill, 2018, p. 36; Hahn, 1967, p. 95) stayed with his father, Edgar with his mother.

After finishing high school, he briefly studied at Yale for two semesters; next, he studied and travelled throughout Europe, next to his mother; and, finally, he returned to the US and earned a Law degree¹⁹ from Columbia University in 1880. His studies in cosmopolitan environments and the ideas he absorbed from German philosophers, such as Schopenhauer, and French writers—whom he personally knew and admired—such as Paul Verlaine and Joris-Karl Huysmans (Cahill, 2018, p. 37; Quinn, 2015, p. 65; Van Doren, 1922, p. 27) would soon reflect on his literary works, namely the pessimistic and decadent traces in these present (Ljungquist, 1999, p. 215; McKittrick, 1951; Van Vechten, 1918, p. 43). On the other side of the Atlantic, where he met other personalities such as Victor Hugo and Oscar Wilde and became “the pampered only child of an adoring mother” (Saltus, 1925, p. 21), Saltus dedicated himself exclusively to the literary world.

Especially prolific between 1884 and 1895—during which he produced the translations here analysed—he published his first biographical work in 1884, entitled *Balzac*—indeed a biography of the French author in which Saltus displays his knowledge of everything French; then, in 1885, came his first philosophical book, *Philosophy of Disenchantment*, and, in 1887, his first literary work, *Mr. Incoul’s Misadventure*²⁰. What his productions have in common, in a broad sense, is the “spectacle of imperial Rome as interpreted to him by French decadence: that lust for power and sensation, those

¹⁹ Curiously, a connection between the law and Balzac—the author of Saltus’ first collection of translations—can be made. On Saltus’ *The Truth About Tristrem Varick*, published in 1888, Weir (2008, p. 207) comments: “Certainly the legal details impart a degree of realism into the sensational story, and in this respect Saltus was doubtless inspired by a similar density of legal detail in Balzac’s *Eugenie Grandet*.” Four years before, Saltus (1884, p. 55) had already stressed in his biography of Balzac how *Eugenie Grandet* was “the model of what a novel should be.” We may also add, as Weir (2008, p. 36) does, that still in *The Truth About Tristrem Varick* a “fairly direct reference to Huysmans’s *À Rebours*” can also be found.

²⁰ In his first literary work, we can witness the presence of French literature. As Weir (2008, p. 30) notes: “Saltus’s heroine has read Balzac’s novel and seeks to pattern her own life after Mlle. Grandet’s. Early on she says to Mr. Incoul, ‘I could not become your wife unless you were willing to make the same agreement with me that Eugénie Grandet’s husband made with her to live as though they were not married.’”

incredible temples, palaces, feasts, revelries, blasphemies” (Van Doren, 1922, p. 28), which translated into adultery and murder and helped him criticise New York society, “whose members spent most of their time in Paris; at dinner they would wave away whole courses untasted; [and men] spoke to their wives in French before the servants” (McKittrick, 1951, p. 29; see also Correll, 1993, p. 319). In sum, we can argue that Saltus “wrote French decadent novels in English and set them in New York City” (Weir, 2008, p. 50).

Inherent to these strands is something that is paramount in all his works: the allusion to pessimism as a way of interpreting everyday life, a “lack of faith in anything but an esoteric hedonism, devoid of social or moral considerations” (Hart & Leininger, 1995, p. 583), resembling French works of his time. In other words, Saltus was “almost a Frenchman in his mode of thinking and of writing, he took the French view of art, and was rather glad, perhaps, that it offended what he looked upon as the absurd conventionalism of his countrymen” (Anonymous author in Robinson, 1891).

Even though love was not impossible or unattainable (Ljungquist, 1999, p. 218), for Saltus happiness—whether individual or collective—was unachievable and pain was unavoidable (Quinn, 2015, p. 65; Thacker, 2018), and this hints at why he chose to translate the stories that I shall be considering here. This pessimistic vein can, nonetheless, be perceived as skepticism and boredom, as a “product more of diffidence and disillusion than anything else” (Weir, 2008, p. 30).

This *ennui* was fought, a lot of times, through the presence of female characters. Although throughout his life Saltus was not the best husband, in his work we can observe how women had great importance and personality and sometimes even outshone men, whether these were the husbands or simply admirers (see Quinn, 2015, p. 68). However, this ‘starring role’ did not stop female characters from, in the end, being left in the midst of chaos. This perception of women also had to do with how some American men saw their wives. According to some critics, such as Quinn (2015, p. 66), European authors in their majority opted for the “virgin-whore dichotomy,” while Saltus and some of his contemporaries, broadly speaking, believed that their wives were “goddesses²¹”—regardless of whether they were treated that way (French, 1965; Gillette, 1972; Hahn, 1967, p. 144; Hicks, 1969, p. 183; Kazin, 2013, p. 109; Parry, 2005, p. 109; Saltus, 1890,

²¹ The opposite—that is, believing in women’s inferiority—was, of course, also common (see, e.g., Weir, 2008, p. 46).

p. 63). This is an important detail, as it will help understand some of Saltus' choices regarding the female figure in his translations.

This perception of women, pessimism, and destruction, besides being a result of personal events, is a consequence of the sociocultural context by which Saltus was surrounded. Living in a *fin-de-siècle* US, Saltus and other decadent writers faced a paradox. On the one hand, the country kept growing due to the expansion of capitalist values and technological evolution (Murray & Hall, 2013, p. 19); on the other hand, it was exactly these circumstances that, in these authors' view, could not save civilisation from its eventual decline nor develop a real literary tradition. Trying to get away from Puritan and Victorian values also played a big part in breaking with the establishment (Weir, 2008, p. 155; cf. Hext & Murray, 2019, p. 16).

In this sense, and as will become clear in the analysis of the translations, some figures such as Saltus realised that American literature could only be forged by distancing themselves from England, aware as Americans “[are to be] more susceptible to the influence of English authority than are the English themselves” (Thompson, 1889, p. 118). Still, and though Saltus' heart was in Paris as will become even clearer below, we should also mention that he made several were trips to London (McKittrick, 1951; Sprague, 1968); that, though not to the same extent as for French literature, he also admired British decadents (Weir, 2008); and that some of his works were even published in England before they were printed in the US (see, e.g., Wheeler, 1888, p. 273).

Therefore, and unlike some of his contemporaries, he did see greatness in England, English writers, and London. For instance, one year after the publication of his last translation, *The Story Without a Name*, Saltus (1892, p. 119) wrote that “[Rome] compared with Alexandria as London compares with Paris; it had a splendor of its own, but a splendor that could be heightened.” But this splendour should only be heightened overseas, for at home Saltus and his contemporaries knew that there needed to be a departure from English culture if there was to be space for the development of the American literary scene. As Saltus (1889, p. 582) noted in 1889:

[The] fiction as we happen to have, while admirable in many respects, is native only in that the coloring has more or less of a local tint. Eliminate that tint, give it another, and the characteristics differ not at all from those to which the English novelist has accustomed us; they perfectly express a relative impression of What Should Be and What Should Not; they rarely express What Is.

A year later, Saltus (1890, p. 75) would go on to explicitly denounce the “prudery of Anglo-American prejudices,” meaning that the content he deemed relevant and that he included in his own works could not be inserted into the seemingly everlasting Puritan sphere—and so France appeared to be the only country Saltus and other decadents, such as Huneker and Thompson, could truly draw inspiration from as to express “What Is.” This “febrile fashion against Victorian taboos” (Hicks, 1969, p. 155), stemming from Saltus and his colleagues, becomes increasingly evident in the early 1890s with the creation of the magazine *M'lle New York*. Considered the most advanced of magazines “in its art work, its decadent fiction and poetry, and its allegiance to France...it entirely rejected English influence and both the American press and American literature” (Knight, 1992, pp. 7-8). The goal was, indeed, to go “against the American grain by promoting a type of culture that was—as Huneker put it—'more Parisian than Paris'” (Weir, 2008, p. 42).

Saltus was therefore torn between adhering to the traditional European aesthetics at the same time he was trying to get away from those same ideas (Fletcher, 1987, p. 479; Murray, 2016, p. 158). But, in the end, the only solution seemed to reside in the search for pleasure and beauty in “the strange, the perverse, the sick and the diseased” (Gable, 2017, p. 102)—found in French literature—with the aim of educating the population about the French reality and the dangers of modernity through the immorality inherent to French works (Cotkin, 2004, p. 144; Spiller et al., 1963, p. 1074; Volpicelli, 2019, p. 216)—an immorality that was frowned upon but, as discussed in the previous section, American readers delved themselves in. This passage from McKittrick’s (1951, p. 27) study highlights Saltus’ immorality stemming from French inspiration:

Everything was laid to French influences. *A Transaction in Hearts* [book by Saltus published in 1889] was greeted by the *New York Tribune* with a long and scurrilous notice that was headlined "IMPURE FICTION: THE GALLIC TAINT IN AMERICAN NOVELS." In it there was a key phrase. "Until recently," the reviewer wrote, "American fiction, if frequently defective in art, was irreproachable from a moral point of view."

In the same year *A Transaction in Hearts* came out Saltus’ brother passed away, but that did not slow down his productivity (Weir, 2008, p. 206). The next decade, however, would bring him bitterness and disappointment, which reinforced his pessimism and affected the quality of his writing (Cahill, 2018, p. 41; Hahn, 1967, p. 98; Stephenson,

1953, p. 16): he went through one divorce and one separation, direct causes of his lack of presence as a husband and violent behaviour; scandals related to the pathological and erotic disposition *à la française* of some of his works; and his mother's death.

In 1892, nonetheless, he produced what is considered his best book, *Imperial Purple* (Cahill, 2018, p. 38; Weir, 2008, p. 23), in which the descriptions of Roman emperors abound with French words (see, e.g., Weir, 2008, p. 39). Even though he had plenty of success with this publication, Saltus was still struggling economically: living like a *dandy*—specifically in Paris which he visited frequently—and following the latest trends made him need money²². In 1893, he started working as an editor for newspapers and magazines, for instance *Harper's Bazaar*, “and even signed contracts for the ‘scissors and paste’ books” (Sprague, 1968, p. 25). This is something that embarrassed the author, since it suggests that Saltus “was accepted by mass more than by avant-garde media” (Sprague, 1968, p. 85; see Spiller et al., 1963).

In France, more precisely in the capital, Saltus felt better about himself and his work (Hahn, 1967, p. 95); France was his “*patrie physique*” (Sprague, 1968) and only in Paris was there space for his production (Pattee, 1930, p. 228; Ljungquist, 1999, p. 218). Whether in America or Europe, his life was to remain full of contradictions: Saltus claimed to be bored—yet, until 1895, maintained a fierce and fast writing rhythm; he criticised the individual and society but in the midst of his skeptical and immoral ideas he also advocated for compassion and felt the need to please; and walked on a tightrope between “art for art's sake” and the desire to teach above all (Cotkin, 2004, p. 150; Ljungquist, 1999, p. 216; Sprague, 1968, p. 29; Weir, 2008).

Between content and style, the latter was for Saltus the most important part of a text: everything was about rewriting and repolishing (Monkshood, 1903, p. liii; Pattee, 1930, p. 229). More often than not, he would sacrifice content over style (DeBoer, 2001; Peacock, 2003, p. 363), “painfully searching *à la Flaubert* for the perfect words” (Quinn, 2015, p. 65), just like his colleagues Lafcadio Hearn, who “also learned much from Flaubert's quest for perfection, from his attention to detail and the right word” (Lemoine, 2006, p. 316), Walt Whitman (Schmidgall, 2014), James Lane Allen (Knight, 1935), Ambrose Bierce (Grenander, 1971), and Henry James (Jacobson, 1983).

²² Saltus led a bohemian life—that of the Belle Époque—however he stated he did not identify with those practices. In fact, he repudiated the nobility and high bourgeoisie, but nonetheless admired their vices (Freedman, 1986, p. 391; Knight, 1992, p. 4; McKittrick, 1951, p. 23).

Instead of focusing all his attention on characters and on their growth and development (Sprague, 1968, p. 60), Saltus appeals to the reader's conscience and transmits sensations through the way he picks and places words: French words and the *mot juste* (Hart & Leininger, 1995, p. 583; Stephenson, 1953, p. 2; Weir, 2008) and “short and nervous sentences” (Van Vechten, 1918, p. 45) characterise his production—that of his translations included. As shall be demonstrated, some passages concerning the depiction of space and characters were modified, as to become shorter, and some even omitted; and the use of the exact term, mainly through the inclusion of French words which evoked certain definitions better than the word in English could, is clear. Lafcadio Hearn, George Washington Cable, Anna Bowman Dodd, and Henry James, too, for example, made use of French terms in their works, and James did so to the point that “one can sometimes be forgiven for thinking that a James novel is actually a translation into English from an unknown French original, with a few phrases left in the original language to give local colour” (Fussell, 1993, p. 141).

Regarding the removal of ornamentation and perceived redundancies related to the description of space and characters, we should not forget the presence and influence of the Protestant Plain Style, which has dominated Anglo-American writing for decades. After Bernstein (1986, p. 225), Venuti (1995, p. 5) mentions the “authoritative plain style” as a factor contributing to the dominant taste for transparency. Contemporaries of Saltus such as Mark Twain, who “had a remarkable talent for creating and bringing characters to life in just a few short sentences...never using an unnecessary or wrong word” (Thum, 1979, p. 158); Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman, whose “short sentence-structure” revealed a “true Yankee sense of economy” (Anderson, 1974, p. 77); and Stephen Crane, who made use of “short sentences and phrases” and “brief descriptions” (Fagg, 2005, p. 8), are great illustrative examples. Indeed, we cannot forget that this style of Saltus was still in its early stages when we produced his translations and, in light of these mentions, we can deduce that his way of writing—from choosing *le mot juste*, using French vocabulary, and preferring shorter descriptions—followed the *zeitgeist* of the times (as shall be elaborated in the analysis of the translations).

Between 1896 and 1899, Saltus did not publish any book. He would end up passing away in New York from a long-term illness on July 31st, 1921²³, neglected “in

²³ Given that the translations here studied were produced between 1885 and 1891, it would not be of a great pertinence to go into detail about Saltus' life and work in the 20th century.

semi-obscurety” (Stephenson, 1953, p. 29), in great part due to his European taste that introduced themes to which the American people could not relate and his cynicism about life (Peacock, 2003, p. 364; Van Doren, 1922, p. 27; Weir, 2008, p. 26).

Even though he is now recognised as one of the most acclaimed names in decadent literature (Francescato, 2009; Quinn, 2015, p. 65; Weir, 2008, p. 22; cf. Riggenbach, 2009, p. 27), Saltus did not leave the biggest of legacies, let alone at a translation level. As already indicated in the Introduction, and to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time an attempt to critically analyse his translations is made. This legacy, or lack thereof, is corroborated by the scarce information there is about his occupation as a translator, with some works mentioning his poetic, critical, and journalistic practices but not his translational ones: “[An] historian, novelist, and religious writer, he was also an essayist, biographer, critic, dramatist, and poet” (Elledge, 2004, p. 289). Indeed, based on the most in-depth studies there are dedicated to his life and work, namely Stephenson’s (1953) and Sprague’s (1968), it is possible to infer that other scholars’ unfamiliarity with this side of Saltus may have to do with the fact that, with regard to translation, he only has a total of three publications—those here studied—which, not least, were published within a six-year span: *After-Dinner Stories* (1885), a collection of four short stories by Honoré de Balzac; *Tales Before Supper* (1887), containing a narrative by Théophile Gautier and a short story by Prosper Mérimée; and, lastly, *The Story Without a Name* (1891), translated from Jules Barbey D’Aurevilly.

Besides the fact that all of these were written during Americans’—Saltus, of course, included—beloved Belle Époque, the reason why Saltus chose to translate these works might not be far to seek. First, all of them had been positively received in France for their cleverness (see, e.g., Grelé, 1904; Kessler, 1995; Théophile Gautier, n.d.; Vachon, 1999). Also, it was the first time that all these source texts were being published in English in the US. Lastly, being at the beginning of his literary career, an output stemming from the allure and popularity of French literature could enhance his presence immediately. It is not by chance that two of his first works were a biography on Balzac’s literary activity and a collection of translations of four short stories by none other than the same French author. Furthermore, the content of these stories relates to what would be his own literary production: *The Red Inn*, *Madame Firmiani*, *The ‘Grande Bretèche,’* and *Madame de Beauséant* all take place in France and allude to deadly events.

Concerning the other two books—*Tales Before Supper* and *The Story Without a Name*—the most likely explanation for why they were chosen²⁴, besides the same factors above mentioned, has to do with the literary movements they inserted themselves in: Decadentism. Mérimée aside—the author of the short story in *Tales Before Supper* was a Romantic, though his story, just like all of Saltus’ translations, happens in France and death is present²⁵—Gautier and especially D’Aurevilly were known for the decadent traces of their works (see, e.g., Carter, 1958; Lethève, 1963; Smith, 1953). As Sprague (1968, p. 85) remarked, “for Flaubert, Leconte de Lisle, Gautier, and D’Aurevilly, [Saltus’] admiration is unqualified.” In hindsight, we can see how these translations might have influenced Saltus’ own literary output, given that the aforementioned aspects are also found in works such as *Madam Sapphira* (Saltus, 1893), *Enthralled* (Saltus, 1894a), and *When Dreams Come True: A Story of Emotional Life* (Saltus, 1894b).

For the first two collections of translations Saltus used the pseudonym Myndart Verelst; in his last work he used his real name. The reason why Saltus used this pseudonym in the first two books might be because, at the time these were published, he was still taking his first steps in his literary career. Perhaps out of fear that the rendering of the source texts did not go right, Saltus decided to play it safe and use a different name. It can also be that it was not him, but the publishers, who asked him to do this thinking the same thing. This is maybe why, in 1891, Saltus signs under his own name, as by then he had had experience and both Saltus and the publisher who brought out *The Story Without a Name* felt confident in his work. This difference between his first two works and his last one might also have to do with the authors he was translating from, given that Balzac and Gautier, for instance, stood out more than D’Aurevilly, and so both agents—Saltus and the publishers—perhaps had to be a bit more careful about the name of the person that was translating these works. Lastly, and as will be touched upon at the end of the analysis of the translations, Saltus’ *After-Dinner Stories* was not a huge success moneywise: Could Myndart Verelst’s unpopularity (see Correll, 1993, p. 319) have contributed to dropping this persona altogether after *Tales Before Supper*?

²⁴ At this point, and for the sake of clarity, we will assume that Saltus exercised his agency and took the initiative to translate these texts, and that they were not produced upon publishers’ requests. An attempt to examine whether this is what happened will be made at the end of the analysis of the translations.

²⁵ Saltus’ translation of Mérimée’s *La Vénus D’Ille*, as will be further explored in the next chapter, is the most intriguing of his productions, as the conclusions drawn diverge from the rest of the findings.

Much like the study of Saltus' translational output in general, the reasons behind the use of this pseudonym seem to remain unknown—and therefore we can only speculate as was done above. But, pseudonym or no pseudonym, one thing Saltus' works have in common: his translational invisibility.

Chapter 4. Trapped in the Domestication Cage? An Analysis of Edgar Saltus' Translational Output

Between 1885 and 1891, Saltus enriched American culture with translations of works by Balzac, Gautier, Mérimée, and D'Aurevilly, which resulted in the creation of *After-Dinner Stories* (1885), *Tales Before Supper* (1887), and *The Story Without a Name* (1891). As mentioned, for the first two collections he resorted to the pseudonym Myndart Verelst; for his last translation he used his own name. Yet, they hold many more similarities than differences. By analysing these works we can learn that three common aspects interconnect Saltus' production: 1) all of them have an introductory note, in which he took the opportunity to display his knowledge of literature and the French literary scene, as well as highlight his own worth; 2) from the changes made and the reasons for them, it is also possible to observe Saltus' esteem for France and wish to not accentuate England's presence, following the *zeitgeist* of the times; and 3) a literary style based on the use of shorter sentences and a quest for the precise term, which resulted in changes regarding the length of the descriptions of characters and space and in the use of French words and the search for the exact term through, for example, the inclusion of the *mot juste*. For this reason, each of my analyses of Saltus' works is subdivided into three sections, corresponding to these three common aspects. Other secondary modifications—that is, changes that are not inherent to every target text but that should nonetheless be pointed out—will be discussed before the final assessment of Saltus' (in)visibility.

4.1. *After-Dinner Stories*

In 1885 Saltus published *After-Dinner Stories*, a collection of translations of four short stories by Balzac. Before we explore how these texts were translated into English, let us first take a brief look into each narrative as to better locate and understand the analysis that will be made. Following the order by which they appear in the collection, *L'Auberge Rouge* (published in 1831 in *La Revue de Paris* and in 1846 in *La Comédie Humaine*, published by Furne; translated by Saltus as *The Red Inn*) tells the story of three men who spend the night in a room in Andernach—two French doctors and a German businessman—with the latter confessing to be carrying a lot of money with him. In the morning after, one of the doctors and the businessman are found missing and dead, respectively. After confusing the reader as to whom is responsible for the crime and greed,

the narrator suggests that it was the ‘missing’ doctor who killed the German businessman to get rich.

Moving on to *Madame Firmiani* (published in 1832 in *La Revue de Paris* and in 1842 in the final edition of *La Comédie Humaine*, published by Furne; Saltus kept the same title in his translation), this story too discusses money and death. Madame Firmiani’s husband has died, and she is waiting to collect his money. In the meantime, she became romantically involved with Octave, whose uncle thinks he is almost poor because he spends all his money on Madame Firmiani. After knowing that the couple will soon inherit all of the late husband’s money, Octave’s uncle is suddenly approving of the relationship.

In the third story, *La “Grande Bretèche”* (published in 1831 by Gosselin and in 1845 in *La Comédie Humaine*, published by Furne; translated by Saltus as *La “Grande Bretèche”*), a man who is staying at an inn in Vendôme discovers a manor in ruins close by. He decides to go there and enter the house, but each night he could not do it and, after asking locals why, he learned that Madame de Ferret, the late owner, had a secret lover and one day, when her husband got home earlier, she hid the lover in the closet and swore she was faithful to her husband. Suspicious, her husband walls up the closet and Madame de Ferret’s lover is stuck inside forever. Due to this event, and through legal measures, she forbade anyone from entering the house once she died.

Lastly, *La Femme Abandonnée* (published in 1832 in *La Revue de Paris* and in 1841 in the final edition of *La Comédie Humaine*, published by Furne; translated by Saltus as *Madame de Beauséant*, a change that will be explored in Section 4.4) tells the story of a viscountess, with the same name, who is abandoned twice—once by her husband and later by Gaston, a young man who she falls in love with. However, Gaston’s mother does not want him to be with the viscountess, as her desire is for him to marry another lady who is much richer. Madame de Beauséant is aware of this and asks him to make a choice: her or the new lady. Pressured by all sides, Gaston chooses the new woman, and after reading Madame de Beauséant’s farewell letter, he commits suicide.

After this overview of the four short stories, let us now see how they can help us assess and understand Saltus’ (in)visibility. Before we do that, though, there is an introduction to decode first.

4.1.1. Introductions: A Provocative Paratext

Immediately at the beginning of this piece, we find “BALZAC” (Verelst, 1885, p. 7) written in capital letters, which suggests that the following excerpt is either addressed to this author or is about him. Indeed, it is both.

Saltus starts by comparing men and women to houses. Some meet the eye, some do not, “but now and then the observer happens upon one that possesses a refreshing individuality of its own” (Verelst, 1885, p. 7). He adds that the street in which we can find that house is also a “charming accessory” (Verelst, 1885, p. 8). Here, in my view, can be drawn a comparison between content and style. To Saltus, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, style is of utmost importance; content is secondary: the house therefore represents style; the street—that “charming accessory”—the content. This distinction is accentuated when Saltus adds that such street may even be worse than previously thought; indeed, it can be the “mouldering avenue of a forgotten town” (Verelst, 1885, p. 8). The importance of style can also be found elsewhere in the introduction, for instance when Saltus employs the exact term—that is, the aforementioned use of French vocabulary and the inclusion of the *mot juste*—such as “*paté de foie-gras*” (Verelst, 1885, p. 14), “*cortége*” (Verelst, 1885, p. 21), “*rex poetae minores*” (Verelst, 1885, p. 23), and “*disinvoltura*” (Verelst, 1885, p. 26), and when he describes how Balzac chose and placed words. Regarding the latter, Saltus notes that Balzac “cover[ed] thirty or forty sheets with an outline of ideas and phrases” with the aim of finding the “term that would best express his meaning” (Verelst, 1885, p. 19)—precisely like Saltus. In fact, “it took Balzac ten years to form a style that suited him, and almost as many more to form another that pleased the public” (Verelst, 1885, p. 25). Not only does this paragraph highlight the importance to Saltus of how a work is written, but it also reveals that pleasing readers, as pointed out in the previous chapter, was important to him. In hindsight, this may hint at the way the stories herein were translated. In a way, then, Saltus takes Balzac’s habitus into consideration and in Balzac sees his reflection as a human and artist, and intends on showing the reader exactly that.

Saltus goes on to discuss Balzac’s status at the date the translation was published, noting that he had never been so popular and admired, which “make[s] up for the neglect of earlier years” (Verelst, 1885, p. 9). Speaking highly of the author, Saltus accentuates the power of his opinion by adding that Balzac rejuvenated the French language, which before him and the “victorious riot of the romantics” was “in such poverty that writers

stammered through their phrases with the hesitancy of paralyzed old age” (Verelst, 1885, p. 9). Once more, we see how style is of vital importance for Saltus. This could not be any clearer than when, without vacillating, he accuses these writers of being “ignorant of the delicacies of style and form” (Verelst, 1885, p. 9). There were then, at the time, two kinds of authors—“romantics and imbeciles” (Verelst, 1885, p. 10)—and Balzac was neither, given that he made some enemies but not in vain, as he produced “gorgeous fictions” (Verelst, 1885, p. 10).

The lack of morality Saltus could be accused of²⁶ can be somewhat reinforced by this remark, since it indicates that as long as beautiful works were being produced, making enemies was okay. According to Saltus (Verelst, 1885, pp. 10-11), Balzac was also not a Romantic, as he preferred the truth over the beautiful, a preference which was gaining stronger presence. To this preference contributed the Revolutions the French witnessed in 1830, and people now wanted—as did Saltus—the truth, not comforting words: “It is facts that are asked for now, and in France the more unpleasant they are the more palatable they seem to be” (Verelst, 1885, p. 11). This reality fascinated Saltus and is one of many reasons why, as has been presented, his heart and soul were in France. Like him, Balzac told the truth and did not adorn it, and Saltus goes as far as saying that “the manufacture of fiction from facts was begun by Balzac” (Verelst, 1885, p. 11) and that he “has employed a realism such as no other writer has had the power to suggest” (Verelst, 1885, p. 16): the admiration Saltus has for Balzac is crystal clear. More than speaking the truth, Balzac did it while managing to stay “pure in morals and sincerely religious”²⁷ (Verelst, 1885, p. 17) and not forgetting the dreamy component of fiction and life, and this is how

²⁶ In 1889, the American novelist and socialite Anna De Koven (1889, pp. 305-306) provided an elaborate condemnation in this regard: “The American race has many faults and many limitations, but, as a rule, it is honest and clean in instinct and independent in action. Recently, however, the proverbial national weakness, imitiveness, is leading to a most grievous departure from the straight path....Edgar Saltus, with his crisp, epigrammatic style, manufactured out of anglicized French words, characteristic of Balzac and Gautier, his pessimistic philosophy and most defective morals stands at the head of the list.... Mr. Saltus has but a little way to go along the road which he has traveled from the monograph on Balzac to a “Transaction in Hearts” before the blank wall of both wicked and meaningless stupidity is reached, and silence or a painful and doubtful regeneration must be his only recourse....Do such moral monsters [Saltus’ characters] exist in this young country of ours, with its magnificent moral schooling and its superb and virile development?...Is the interest, the sensation aroused by such disclosures, a means toward that spiritual exaltation which is the aim of all true art or a help to happiness, which is presumably the aim of all human effort? No, there is no such intention, there is no such result, and it is time that there should be some protest against such writers, and against a literature which is so thoroughly un-American and so causelessly impure.”

²⁷ This is an interesting remark, not least because Saltus adds that Balzac, being “pure in morals and sincerely religious” was the “antithesis of the typical Frenchman” (Verelst, 1885, p. 17). Indeed, Saltus only became a more religious man in his third marriage, that is, after producing the translations herein. Thus, if these qualities Balzac held represent the opposite of what French men were, Saltus was indeed—and to his contentment—a true French soul.

he went on to write *La Comédie Humaine*, which Saltus comments in detail. This work is a “wooded labyrinth” (Verelst, 1885, p. 12) and, at times, the reader needs to go back and forth to understand the action (Verelst, 1885, p. 13) due to the events being recent and ongoing. Nonetheless, it is a work worth reading, not least because it revolves around Saltus’ dearest country, providing “a description of life and manners in France from the Restoration to the Coup d'État” (Verelst, 1885, p. 12).

This kind of labyrinth is hard to create, and Saltus uses Anthony Trollope to show just that, noting that he “tried something of this kind, but on a much narrower and shallower scale” (Verelst, 1885, p. 13). This is important because Saltus could have mentioned an American, German, or even French author—but he chose an English writer.

If any doubts remained about how France and England are not on the same level for Saltus, these would be erased when he discusses society and characters in the work of both authors: “Where the one depicted a fraction of the higher classes of English society, the other took all humanity, or, to speak more exactly, all French humanity for his province, and analyzed each of its vices and virtues with microscopic eye” (Verelst, 1885, p. 15). It is curious to note how not only are Balzac’s characters better developed than Trollope’s, but also how Saltus starts by saying “all humanity,” only ‘correcting’ to “all French humanity” later, as if France represented humanity in its entirety.

Nonetheless, Trollope’s characters—even though they are not as human and authentic as Balzac’s (Verelst, 1885, p. 15)—are pleasant to know, particularly the women. Once again, we can see how Saltus uses this introduction to talk about what matters to him. Thus far, he has managed to include France and literary style, and now he brings up another topic of importance in his stories: the female character. What is more, not only does he mention the Duchess of Omnium, from Trollope’s story, but he accentuates this character’s importance and personality by making a reference to two of Balzac’s works which are included in this collection of translations—*Madame Firmiani* and *Madame de Beauséant*: “The Duchess of Omnium might have had her doubts about Madame de Beauséant, but we may be quite sure that she would have been glad to know Madame Firmiani” (Verelst, 1885, p. 14).

After offering his opinion of Balzac’s work, he addresses certain comments that were made about *La Comédie Humaine*, not sparing any criticism. One of the comments has to do with the fact that the book has too many details, and here we can witness how

Saltus separates the art from the artist—and in fact commences to be critical of Balzac’s writing. First, Saltus suggests that the reader is not obliged to read everything, nor are the book and the author “unsurpassed”; indeed, “details are so easy to skip!” (Verelst, 1885, p. 16). In retrospect, this suggests how Saltus would translate Balzac’s stories, as will soon become clear. He continues to criticise Balzac, but the reader soon understands that this is a ‘good critique’ and that the French author remains at the top of Saltus’ list:

Balzac never knew half so well as Gautier how drapery should be handled; he lacked the insolence of Dumas’ gayety; Baudelaire’s ability to have an attack of nerves on paper was not possessed by him; Hugo could plant adjectives in such a fashion that they exploded like bombs before his reader’s eyes, and in this art Balzac was uninstructed. In none of these accomplishments was he adept, but he had something worth them all—solidity. (Verelst, 1885, pp. 16-17)

Indeed, despite not writing “with the rapidity of Dumas, nor with the magnificence of Hugo, [he kept going] with the continuous effort of the tortoise that distances the hare in the end” (Verelst, 1885, p. 25). Can a comparison be drawn here between Edgar and his brother Francis, who started off his literary career earlier but then Edgar ended up surpassing him years later?

Although in some aspects Balzac could learn from other French writers, in the end he was still better than all of them: he had charisma and originality, two things that are hard to get. To strengthen his argument, Saltus even attacks figures such as Alfred de Musset and Émile Zola. Regarding de Musset, he proclaims that “The French Academy...accepted [him] not because he was a poet but because he was a man about town” (Verelst, 1885, p. 21), and when it comes to Zola, he claims that the author does not know how to be original: “What he [Balzac] built was constructed with a cement of his own invention. The cement is still obtainable, but the secret of its application died with him. *Demandez plutôt à Zola*” (Verelst, 1885, p. 17).

Balzac’s personality was sure to attract ‘nay-sayers,’ and in face of this situation, he “contented himself with putting up the price of his manuscripts” (Verelst, 1885, p. 18). Saltus certainly admired this move, as he knew innovators— like him—were prone to be frowned upon.

As has been mentioned previously, Saltus manages to separate the art from the artist, and adds that “when at last fame and riches came, so too did death” (Verelst, 1885,

p. 20), meaning that, when it comes to handling and being able to spend money, Balzac was not as strong as he was a writer. If moments before Balzac was better than Dumas artistically, in terms of wealth he was nowhere near the author of *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*: “Secretly he envied Dumas, not for the work he did, nor for its quality, but for the sums that he received for it, and for his consequent and immense prodigality” (Verelst, 1885, p. 21). What is more, he enhances that Balzac’s debts were not due to *dandy* behaviour, as he “spent but little time in Bohemia” (Verelst, 1885, p. 22), unlike Saltus. Reading this, one could infer that Saltus, even if not explicitly, wished he could be more like Balzac—both in terms of managing money (see Verelst, 1885, p. 24) and artistic excellence—but possess Dumas’ bank account.

On this note, Saltus continues to address the bohemian aspect of life and literature, and the dangers in it. Even though the characters created by Balzac did aim to get richer, they worked for it, and so his works did not offer a wide perspective on this side of life. Those who did include it in their work and lives, such as Henri Murger and Pétrus Borel, fell behind: “Bohemia is the easiest place in the world to go to, but it is one for which but few return tickets are issued” (Verelst, 1885, p. 23), and with this addition Saltus finds a way to once again criticise other French authors as to enhance Balzac’s merit.

Saltus also takes the opportunity to mention his own book on Balzac’s life and work, published the year before. With the aid of a footnote, he directs the reader to *Balzac* (1884)—“¹ *Balzac*. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston” (Verelst, 1885, p. 20)—noting that what he is including in this introduction has already been explored in his previous publication, and therefore creating a feeling of trust in the reader who is in this way assured that Saltus knows what he is talking about.

He also highlights his knowledge when summarising the four stories chosen for inclusion in this collection, as if he was letting readers know that he was capable of, in a few words, summing up the plot of each piece. In this way, not only does Saltus show that he knows the stories well and that the reader can therefore trust his word, but he also transforms the perception of those who will read the stories afterwards, as they already know what to expect and Saltus’ commentary will remain with them. Besides providing a summary, he also demonstrates how the stories are interconnected, even if that means spoiling the end for the reader. Indeed, when mentioning *La Grande Bretèche*, he warns that “readers to whom Rastignac [character from *La Comédie Humaine*] has been something more than a fiction will doubtless be interested in knowing that he recently

died, millionaire and peer of France” (Verelst, 1885, p. 28). With this decision, he also keeps the reader’s attention, since now he or she will have to read this collection at least until the third story to see this end unfold.

Finally, the last paragraph of the introduction singles Saltus out. If thus far he has been able to secure that the person reading is aware that his words and thoughts are worth paying attention to, he ultimately does so when alerting the reader to three observations.

First, he states that the four stories “are now for the first time presented to English readers” (Verelst, 1885, p. 28). It is curious to note that not only are these stories important because it is the first time they were translated to English, but also the fact that Saltus refers to English readers in its entirety—not just Americans. We can then infer that, to make it seem like everyone who was proficient in English was able to read this collection, being from England was not a pressing issue in this case. Indeed, in these stories, “there is little if anything in them which could offend the American matron, or, for that matter, even her British cousin” (Verelst, 1885, p. 28), which again can be interpreted as a clue regarding the strategy adopted in the target texts. Still in this passage, we can observe how Saltus takes the opportunity to draw an expected and clear distinction between the two countries: the US is the “matron,” Britain the “cousin.”

Finally, Saltus mentions that these stories were “selected from others of equal value” in *La Comédie Humaine* but that “any special praise of them is unnecessary,” since “they have been received with warm welcome in other lands and other tongues, and it is only fair to suppose that they will not go a-begging now” (Verelst, 1885, p. 28). For Saltus, this is the perfect way to end the introduction. On the one hand, he acknowledges the importance of Balzac and his stories, “pure” and “delightful”; “after-dinner stor[ies] in fact” (Verelst, 1885, p. 26). On the other hand, he takes pressure off his shoulders and is able to conduct the reader’s thought. One can ask: By “any special praise of them is unnecessary,” is Saltus trying to glorify Balzac while indicating that his translations might be better than the French texts? What is more, if these stories “have been received with warm welcome” elsewhere, why would it be any different with Saltus’ translations?

4.1.2. Closer to France, Farther From England

One of the first aspects that can be put forth in regard to Saltus’ admiration for France has to do with the dedications present in *L’Auberge Rouge*, *Madame Firmiani*, and *La Femme*

Abandonnée. In these three stories, we can see that before commencing the text, Balzac addresses loved ones. In *L'Auberge Rouge*, he dedicates the story to “MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS DE CUSTINE” (Balzac, 1846, p. 359); in *Madame Firmiani*, to his “CHER ALEXANDRE DE BERNY, Son vieil ami, DE BALZAC” (Balzac, 1842a, p. 231); and in *La Femme Abandonnée*, to “MADAME LA DUCHESSE D’ABRANTÈS, Son affectionné serviteur, HONORÉ DE BALZAC” (Balzac, 1842b, p. 300). All three dedications are missing from Saltus’ collection. There are two reasons I find compelling. One of them is related to the fact that, because he likely did not know these people and to respect Balzac’s feelings for them, Saltus decided it was best to leave these parts out. Perhaps he could have translated the dedications and include the French original using footnotes or endnotes, for instance, and in this way maintain alive Balzac’s words and feelings towards his loved ones, but maybe Saltus found these too personal and to include them would be ‘crossing a line’—a line between an author that, at this time, represented for Saltus the ideal of French literature, and a translator whose introduction in this collection allows him to now play safe. In turn, however, this may lead to a perception of the domestication of the target text, given that the traces left behind by the original author, Balzac, are now gone and omitted to the American public.

The other explanation goes along these lines. Did Saltus—or the publisher—think that it was best to remove these dedications? On the one hand, keeping them if they were translated into English would not cause trouble to the readers—and, in fact, they might even appreciate learning about the people Balzac was fond of. On the other hand, if keeping these dedications would not, in fact, disturb the reading, they might have, in turn, stressed the “un-American” roots of the stories, reminding readers that they are about to read not original works, but translations. Perhaps these are not such far-fetched assumptions, given that other American translators—contemporaries of Saltus—and publishers did indeed keep and translated Balzac’s dedications—and not only the name of the person it was directed to but also the text that accompanied it (for Katharine Prescott Wormeley’s translations, the most prolific American translator of Balzac, see, e.g., Balzac, 1888a, 1888b, 1891a, 1891b, 1892a, 1892b; and for George Burnham Ives see Balzac, 1898, 1899a, 1899b).

Be as it may, when looked through the lens of the (in)visibility of the translator, we can argue that the omission of these dedications in Saltus’ translations might point to a domestication of the target text in both of the assumptions put forth.

As presented in Section 3.2, Saltus' love for France took in the whole country, but was particularly strong for Paris where he felt he belonged. Hence, there are several moments in his translations where he seems to have felt the need to adjust some of the negative claims made about the country—and especially the capital—in the source texts. When the narrator in *Madame Firmiani* proclaims that “rien n'est terrible, surtout à Paris, comme des soupçons sans fondement: il est impossible de les détruire” (Balzac, 1842a, p. 241), Saltus takes it to heart. As the French capital is where he finds himself, both personally and artistically, this is a harsh criticism of the city: there seems to be no other option but to completely bury this in his mind and omit the sentence in the target text.

In line with this perspective, this story offers us another example of how Paris lives in Saltus' head and heart and becomes a refuge. Being a refuge it is therefore safe, and so no ugly or ill-intentioned words should characterise the city—but that is what happens in the description of the environment surrounding Madame Firmiani: “Aussi était-elle désirée, par trop de gens pour n'être pas victime de l'élégante médisance parisienne et des ravissantes calomnies qui se débitent si spirituellement sous l'éventail ou dans les *à parte*” (Balzac, 1842a, p. 241). When translating the sentence into English, Saltus did not throw away the part about chatter and defamation—but he did hide from the reader that these took place in Paris: “In brief, she was sought after by too many people not to become a victim to the refined gossip and delicious calumnies that are whispered behind a fan” (Verelst, 1885, p. 108).

It has been discussed how Saltus' work is driven by pessimism and that the French capital is the remedy for this ‘disease’ of his. We can almost dare to add that he might have been ‘happy’ in Paris—as nowhere else could he get such freedom to be himself. When Monsieur de Merret from *The ‘Grande Bretèche’* claims that in Vendôme, a commune southwest of Paris “où tout le monde thésaurise et où les moeurs sont contenues dans les bornes d'une modestie digne d'éloges, qui peut-être devient la source d'un bonheur vrai dont ne se soucie aucun Parisien” (Balzac, 1845, p. 108), it is as if saving up money and being modest create a world where Parisians do not want to be. From another perspective, and trying to get into Saltus' thoughts, that part of the paragraph could be synonymous with ‘all Parisians like to spend money irresponsibly and are conceited.’ In this way, it perhaps comes as no surprise that the translator decided to simply include that “at Vendôme, where every one is niggardly...” (Verelst, 1885, p. 153)

and omit the rest of the sentence. Given that the commune is commented upon and Paris is not, once again we realise that the city had a special place in Saltus' heart.

Finally, there is one more instance representative of Saltus' special care for the capital. In *Madame de Beauséant*, we learn that “En 1822, au commencement du printemps, les médecins de Paris envoyèrent en Basse-Normandie un jeune homme qui relevait alors d'une maladie inflammatoire causée par quelque excès d'étude, ou de vie peut-être” (Balzac, 1842b, p. 300). The issue with this statement is that it implies that maybe Paris could not offer a solution to the man's problem, and he had to go to Normandy to seek medical help. However, if this is not how the passage was perceived—given that the countryside or regions by the ocean, such as Normandy, could offer silence, rest, and fresh air, remedies commonly prescribed to patients at the time (the same happens in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, for example; for theoretical information see, e.g., Quinlan, 2000, p. 5)—why would Saltus remove Paris from the equation? In the English version, the young man is still sent to Normandy but there is, in fact, no information about where he is leaving from: “In the spring of 1822 a young man, recovering from an illness caused by dissipation or over-study, was sent to Normandy to recuperate” (Verelst, 1885, p. 165).

As for Saltus' esteem for the whole country, there are two passages in *The Red Inn* that can be highlighted because he simply omitted them from the translation. The first has to do with serving the military—and all the dreams or prospects of a better life that are shattered because of it:

A cette époque, plusieurs enfants de famille arrachés à leur stage médical par la récente loi sur la conscription due au général Jourdan, avaient naturellement mieux aimé continuer leurs études sur le champ de bataille que d'être astreints au service militaire, peu en harmonie avec leur éducation première et leurs paisibles destinées. (Balzac, 1846, pp. 362-363)

There are various aspects in this paragraph that must be considered: several medical internships were cancelled; conscription was implemented; and the people who were training to become doctors could not perform their job, even though those were needed, as they were required to be in the front line. This is an image that does not elevate France to the level set by Saltus and, instead of possibly editing some of the words or go around their meaning, he opts to simply disregard this part and not include it in the story.

Another situation which is not flattering to the French can be found in the moment that two doctors from France arrive in the town of Andernach, Germany, controlled by the French at the time though, and enter the 'Red Inn.' Simultaneously, a German businessman named Walhenfer comes in. Seeing the two men, Walhenfer comments that "A votre air et à l'état de vos vêtements, je vois que, comme moi, vous avez fait bien du chemin" (Balzac, 1846, p. 369). Here, one might infer that the current physical aspect of the two men can be used as an object of ridicule—or at least Saltus might have seen it that way, as in the English version no mention of the look and clothing of the doctors is made and it is merely acknowledged that all three characters came from some place far away: "I see that like myself you have had a long journey to-day" (Verelst, 1885, p. 47).

If the changes Saltus made regarding France point to a domestication of the target text in order to comply with his and the country's admiration for all things French, the changes made in passages where England or the English are mentioned also follow the *zeitgeist* of the times and the desire to increase the distance, from a literary and cultural point of view, between the US and their former rulers.

In *Madame Firmiani* and *The 'Grande Bretèche,'* this is done by addressing what is now the history of the British Empire. When the narrator in *Madame Firmiani* mentions the riches of the Empire, suddenly this wealth is attributed to the Orient—where, by the time the collection came to life, the British were: "Maintenant, croyez que, pour les richesses de l'Angleterre, l'auteur ne voudrait pas extorquer à la poésie un seul de ses mensonges pour embellir sa narration" (Balzac, 1842a, p. 232) thus becomes "And now please to believe that not for the wealth of the Orient would the writer embellish his narrative with the slightest of poetic fictions" (Verelst, 1885, pp. 90-91). By the publication of the French original—and if we think about, for instance, in the East India Company—the British had gone a long way from simply trading with countries in East and Southeast Asia such as India and China to establish influence and imperial dominance over these territories. We should also remember that Americans, Saltus included, were aware that their country too had been under British governance not longer than a century ago, and so it must have been an easy decision to change the text and claim that this prosperity did not belong to Britain, but to Asia. In *The 'Grande Bretèche,'* there is an omission which can be related to the oldest alliance between two nations: England and Portugal. Here it is important to remember that Saltus had a good knowledge of history, so he was certainly aware of this everlasting diplomatic relationship, and perhaps that is

why “cinquante pièces d'or espagnoles qu'on nomme des portugaises et qui valaient environ cinq mille francs” (Balzac, 1845, p. 105) are now “fifty Spanish gold-pieces which all in all were worth about five thousand francs” (Verelst, 1885, pp. 147-148)—with no mention of the Portuguese²⁸.

In *The Red Inn* and *Madame de Beauséant*, too, we can find examples to support the claim that a certain distance from England and its feats was desired. When in *The Red Inn*, talking about tetanus, the banker's wife says that “les Anglais ont trouvé le moyen de traiter sans danger cette maladie-là par l'acide prussique” (Balzac, 1846, p. 385), in the translation Saltus removes the part about how the English perform the task without hurting the patient: “In England I hear they give prussic acid” (Verelst, 1885, p. 77). Not only does he hide the fact that the English take on this task without harming those suffering, but he also leaves out entirely the part about how they found a cure. If we focus on the target text, the information that was given to the reader only alerts to the fact that, in England, prussic acid is used—and no explanation is added to elaborate on the fact that the component is the cure and, what is more, a cure which does not inflict pain.

Finally, in the last story of the collection, *Madame de Beauséant*, Gaston de Nueil is introduced by the *valet de chambre* when he arrives at Courcelles. On his way, he passed by a courtyard—but not just any courtyard:

Malgré l'intrépidité de l'amour, il ne put cependant se défendre d'une violente palpitation quand, après avoir traversé une grande cour dessinée en jardin anglais, il arriva dans une salle où un valet de chambre, lui ayant demandé son nom, disparut et revint pour l'introduire. (Balzac, 1842b, p. 311)

The fact that this grandiose space was “dessinée en jardin anglais” was apparently sufficient for its removal from Saltus' translation: “But in spite of the intrepidity of his love he was unable to quell a violent palpitation when a lackey, after asking his name, disappeared, and then, returning to usher him in, held a door open and gravely announced him” (Verelst, 1885, p. 178).

4.1.3. Plain Style, Exact Term

²⁸ At the same time, we should not discard the possibility that this choice might also have been made for stylistic reasons, as to shorten the sentence in the interests of a plain style.

The changes made in the target text regarding France and England are not the only aspects confiding the translator's invisibility. Indeed, the style adopted by Saltus—which, as previously examined, simplifies sentences which directly affect the description of characters and space and makes use of French vocabulary and the *mot juste*—may be understood as a domestication, given the Anglo-American taste for the plain style as discussed above.

4.1.3.1. Plain Style: Characters

Starting with the characters, one can pay attention to how their physical aspects are cut down in half for the sake of precision. At the end of *The Red Inn*, we can read that “some good-looking officer” (Verelst, 1885, p. 85) would come to the rescue of Victorine. However, if we consult the French version, we understand there is more to this officer's appearance. He was not merely “good-looking,” or, in other words, we comprehend why that is so: he was “un officier mince et pimpant, qui aura une moustache bien frisée” (Balzac, 1846, p. 390). If we add these characteristics together, we indeed get a “good-looking” character—but we also skip the reasons that help us understand what it is that makes him attractive.

In *Madame Firmiani*, guessing who this might be, several characters try their luck finding out. When the narrator gets to the two old ladies herein, before they try and guess anything about Madame Firmiani, these two characters are thoroughly described:

DEUX VIEILLES DAMES (*femmes d'anciens magistrats*). LA PREMIÈRE. (Elle a un bonnet à coques, sa figure est ridée, son nez est pointu, elle tient un Paroissien, voix dure.)—Qu'est-elle en son nom, cette madame Firmiani? LA SECONDE. (Petite figure rouge ressemblant à une vieille pomme d'api, voix douce.). (Balzac, 1842a, p. 235)

Comparing the French and English versions, some differences can be emphasised: First of all, and though this is not related to the physical aspect, there is no mention of the two ladies being “*femmes d'anciens magistrats*”; secondly, the first woman is no longer wearing a “*bonnet à coques*” (nor is she holding the “*Paroissien*²⁹”); and thirdly, the other woman still has a red face, but now it is not similar to a “*vieille pomme d'api*”—rather, it simply resembles a pomegranate, more exotic than an apple and no longer old: “*Two*

²⁹ The “*Paroissien*” was a Catholic prayer book, quite popular in 19th-century France.

old ladies. The first (wrinkled face, pointed nose, harsh voice). “Who was this Mme. Firmiani?” *The second* (little red face like a pomegranate, soft voice)” (Verelst, 1885, p. 95).

Madame de Beauséant also provides us with another two examples that represent Saltus’ preference for a sparse pared-down style. The first concerns a movement the viscountess makes with her right hand as to let Monsieur de Nueil know he should have a seat: “[Avec] sa main droite, main blanche, presque transparente, sans bagues, fluette, à doigts effilés, et dont les ongles roses formaient un ovale parfait, elle montra une chaise comme pour dire à Gaston de s'asseoir” (Balzac, 1842b, p. 311). For a description of a hand, perhaps this is too long a list, filled with details which are not relevant enough to be kept in the translation—or at least Saltus seems to think so. In this way, only the first three characteristics mentioned in the original are transported to the English text, with Saltus disregarding the fact that Madame de Beauséant’s hand was also delicate, her fingers slender, and her pink nails had an oval shape: “With her right hand, which was pale, transparent and ringless, [she] motioned Gaston to a seat before her” (Verelst, 1885, pp. 178-179).

After commenting on her hand, the narrator proceeds to describe her face—but only in Balzac’s story:

Les contours de sa petite tête, admirablement posée sur un long col blanc; les traits de sa figure fine, ses lèvres déliées et sa physionomie mobile gardaient une expression de prudence exquise, une teinte d'ironie affectée qui ressemblait à de la ruse et à de l'impertinence. Il était difficile de ne pas lui pardonner ces deux péchés féminins en pensant à ses malheurs, à la passion qui avait failli lui coûter la vie, et qu'attestaient soit les rides qui, par le moindre mouvement, sillonnaient son front, soit la douloureuse éloquence de ses beaux yeux souvent levés vers le ciel. (Balzac, 1842b, p. 312)

After an already long account of Madame de Beauséant’s right hand, Saltus is again faced with the decision of translating the viscountess’ features, which he decided he would not do as they are not present in the target text: The American reader will have to imagine the character’s face and expression.

Besides this situation, there is another interesting detail in Saltus’ translations concerning the characters. Whenever they start elaborating on the particulars of a given story, in the first person, the translator cuts down the additional information they provided

the reader with. To illustrate this assertion, two examples from *The Red Inn* and *The 'Grande Bretèche'* will be used. Regarding the first narrative, one of the doctors is informing the reader about a story he was told by a German man named Walhenfer:

Il me serait assez difficile de la reproduire dans les mêmes termes, avec ses interruptions fréquentes et ses digressions verbeuses. Aussi l'ai-je écrite à ma guise, laissant les fautes au Nurembergeois, et m'emparant de ce qu'elle peut avoir de poétique et d'intéressant, avec la candeur des écrivains qui oublient de mettre au titre de leurs livres: *traduit de l'allemand*. (Balzac, 1846, p. 362)

By comparing the French and English texts, we realise that Saltus did not let the doctor tell the American people about how Walhenfer interrupted and digressed from his train of thought several times; he also did not include the fact that these thoughts were poetic and perhaps relevant—calling them, in turn and briefly, “the best.” There are, therefore, missing parts in the doctor’s recollection of the event:

It would be difficult for me to reproduce it in the same terms which he employed, consequently I have written it out in my own way, leaving the mistakes to the Bavarian, and serving up the best of it with the candor of writers who forget to put "Translated from the German" on their title-pages. (Verelst, 1885, p. 35)

The same happens one more time in this story when the hostess, Victorine, explains to the banker that Monsieur de Taillefer has a disease whose name she always forgets—despite the fact that Monsieur Brousson is constantly reminding her of which disease it is. This clarification, however, is missing from the translation. In this way, in French we have that Monsieur de Taillefer “est sujet à une maladie dont je n'ai pu retenir le nom, quoique monsieur Brousson me l'ait dit assez souvent, et il vient d'en avoir un accès” (Balzac, 1846, p. 384) and, in English, that “he is subject to a disease, the name of which I never can remember, and he has just had an attack” (Verelst, 1885, p. 75).

Moving on to *The 'Grande Bretèche,'* there is an episode in which the doctor confesses to a list of terrible stories, which, of course, arouses the interest of everyone around, and he ends up telling what they are about:

—Ah! madame, répliqua le docteur, j'ai des histoires terribles dans mon répertoire; mais chaque récit a son heure dans une conversation, selon ce joli mot rapporté par Chamfort et dit au duc de Fronsac: —Il y a dix bouteilles de vin de Champagne entre ta saillie et le moment où nous sommes. —Mais il est deux heures du matin, et l'histoire de Rosine nous a préparées, dit la maîtresse

de la maison. —Dites, monsieur Bianchon!... demanda-t-on de tous côtés. A un geste du complaisant docteur, le silence régna. (Balzac, 1845, p. 95)

The problem with this excerpt is that the doctor, before going directly to his terrible stories, starts immersing himself in other narratives. The fact that he mentioned that every tale has its time to be told, meaning that now was not the ideal time for that, and uses a metaphor to illustrate his position was possibly too long an explanation to Saltus: ““AH, madam,” the doctor answered, “I have some terrible stories in my repertory.” From all sides came the request that he should tell one. When silence had been obtained, Bianchon, with a complacent gesture, began as follows” (Verelst, 1885, p. 127). Besides the doctor’s intervention, the hostess’ interference was ignored as well.

Lastly, when returning to his home, Monsieur de Merret remembers how there was “Une petite table de nuit était près du lit, et je vis dessus une *Imitation de Jésus-Christ*, que, par parenthèse, j’ai achetée à ma femme, ainsi que la lampe” (Balzac, 1845, p. 100). The expression “par parenthèse” alone is mutually exclusive with the idea of not adding many details to a story, so Saltus readily passes over that part and chooses to also not include that the book was bought for Madame de Merret: “Near the bed was a table on which I noticed a copy of the “Imitation of Jesus Christ.” I afterwards bought it, and the lamp too” (Verelst, 1885, p. 137).

Finally, there is also a pattern which can be identified whenever qualifying adjectives such as “cher/chère” (“dear”), “pauvre” (“poor”), and “bon/bonne” (“good”) are employed: they are removed from Saltus’ narrative. In *The Red Inn*, Walhenfer, who at a certain point is the “bon Allemand” (Balzac, 1846, pp. 361, 362, 370), turns simply into “the German” (Verelst, 1885, pp. 34, 36, 49); “la pauvre fille” (Balzac, 1846, p. 361) is now just “daughter” (Verelst, 1885, p. 35); and when Walhenfer becomes a “pauvre Allemand” (Balzac, 1846, p. 374), in Saltus’ version he is, once again, “the German” only (Verelst, 1885, p. 56). In turn, *The ‘Grande Bretèche’* and *Madame de Beauséant* show how the words “cher/chère” and the name they are qualifying can be prone to being omitted. When Monsieur de Merret tells Rosalie that there is a way she can pay a thousand francs a year, he calls her “chère enfant” (Balzac, 1845, p. 111), but Saltus does not: “A thousand francs a year for you, if you manage to tell Gorenflot to leave a crevice at the bottom” (Verelst, 1885, p. 159). Regarding the last story in the collection, there is an instance where Madame de Beauséant declares her passion for Monsieur de Nueil, in

which the main character states: “Mon cher trésor, si cependant tu n’as pas conçu la plus légère idée de liberté...viens!” (Balzac, 1842b, p. 332). Such form of address is not, however, found in the English translation: “And now, if it is possible that you have not had the slightest thought of freedom...come” (Verelst, 1885, p. 212).

4.1.3.2. Plain Style: Space

Regarding space, the analysis of this collection offers us five instances where the description of places has undergone several changes. Inverting the normal order by which the stories appear, we will first start with *Madame de Beauséant*. In this story, and when summoned, Monsieur Gaston de Nueil walks in a living room where the viscountess could also be found reading a book:

A l’angle de la cheminée, où, malgré la saison, brillait un grand foyer, et sur laquelle se trouvaient deux candélabres allumés jetant de molles lumières, il aperçut une jeune femme assise dans cette moderne bergère à dossier très-élevé, dont le siège bas lui permettait de donner à sa tête des poses variées. (Balzac, 1842b, p. 311)

In this passage, three objects can be identified: a fireplace; two lighted candelabra; and a modern armchair with a very high backrest and a low seat. Yet, only two make it to the English version, and with some modifications: “At the angle of the hearth, in which, in spite of the season, a bright fire was burning, he saw a lady, young and perfectly dressed, sitting in a high-backed arm chair” (Verelst, 1885, p. 178). The two lighted candelabra with sparkling soft lights were entirely removed from the text, and though the “high-backed arm chair” is present, the fact that it is modern and has a low seat was not included.

In the third story, *The ‘Grande Bretèche,’* the narrator speaks directly to the reader and describes a house that stands close to the main village in the story—and those reading will soon find out that this is the place which gives the title to the story. Almost at the end of the thorough depiction of the house, we learn that “Par ces brèches irrégulières, vous pourriez observer la parfaite harmonie qui existe entre la façade du jardin et la façade de la cour” (Balzac, 1845, p. 96). Unlike Balzac, Saltus does not offer such a detailed account of the same sight: “Through the holes a view can be had of the court-yard” (Verelst, 1885, p. 129). The holes are no longer “irregular”; the garden is not mentioned, nor is its facade; the courtyard is included but its front is not; and ultimately, without the presence of the

garden, the “perfect harmony” that exists between the two places cannot be evoked. This small example is, however, part of a bigger one. Before getting here, the narrator in Balzac’s story first provides a more general, but complete characterisation of the place:

A une centaine de pas environ de Vendôme, sur les bords du Loir, dit-il, il se trouve une vieille maison brune, surmontée de toits très-élevés, et si complètement isolée qu'il n'existe à l'entour ni tannerie puante ni méchante auberge, comme vous en voyez aux abords de presque toutes les petites villes. Devant ce logis est un jardin donnant sur la rivière, et où les buis, autrefois ras qui dessinaient les allées, croissent maintenant à leur fantaisie. Quelques saules, nés dans le Loir, ont rapidement poussé comme la haie de clôture, et cachent à demi la maison. Les plantes que nous appelons mauvaises décorent de leur belle végétation le talus de la rive. Les arbres fruitiers, négligés depuis dix ans, ne produisent plus de récolte. (Balzac, 1845, p. 95)

Saltus’ translation of this part of the text proves that, even though he did not intend to include all the details in the source text, he was also selective about those we wanted to keep in his story—and there does not seem to be a reason behind these choices but the will to keep some aspects and disregard others. Indeed, some of these were transported to the English version and did not suffer any modifications; others were included but did undergo some changes; finally, some aspects were not mentioned at all. In this way, in the target text we can read that:

On the banks of the Loire, a short distance from Vendôme, there stands an old house, brown, gabled and solitary. There is no other house near it; there is no tannery, nor even one of those taverns that are usually to be found on the outskirts of small towns. Extending down before it to the river is a garden, where the once orderly box-trees that marked the alleys now inter connect at will. The house itself is partially concealed from sight by a number of willows. The sloping shore is covered by a luxuriant growth of weeds. The fruit-trees, neglected for years, no longer produce. (Verelst, 1885, p. 127).

Starting with the aspects that were kept in the translations, we have, for instance, the tannery and the taverns which, both in the French and English texts, can be found in the periphery of small towns, and trees that grow and manifest themselves as they wish. These details are untouched but, as mentioned, there are others that were slightly modified. One of them is related to the physical place of the ‘Grande Bretèche,’ which is now found “a short distance from Vendôme” but in Balzac’s words “une centaine de pas environ” separate the two. Saltus, therefore, simplified one hundred steps to “a short distance.” The

same happened with the structure of the house. To keep it simple and direct, the translator transformed “surmontée de toits très-élevés” into “gabled”—the idea and mental picture are still there, but in a few words, and thus not only is the space abridged but so is the description which the reader is going through. “Les plantes que nous appelons mauvaises” is also shortened to “weeds” and the trees have now been “neglected for years,” instead of having been abandoned “depuis dix ans.” Finally, willows also decorate both stories, but in Balzac’s it is mentioned that these “grew quickly like a hedge”—unlike Saltus’ translation, where no such observation is made.

Lastly, the attention is turned to *The Red Inn*, where two more examples can be put forth. The first one clearly demonstrates how there was a conscious decision to prioritise the action of the story over the space. Admiring the people around him, the doctor soon was distracted by the appearance of a man who walked into the room:

J'admirais ces visages égayés par un sourire, éclairés par les bougies, et que la bonne chère avait empourprés; leurs expressions diverses produisaient de piquants effets à travers les candélabres, les corbeilles en porcelaine, les fruits et les cristaux. Mon imagination fut tout à coup saisie par l'aspect du convive qui se trouvait précisément en face de moi. (Balzac, 1846, p. 361)

In the target text, the doctor’s contemplation and distraction were added, but there is no sight of the objects that surround the characters: “I was looking admiringly at the smiling faces of the guests, when suddenly my attention was attracted by the appearance of the man who sat opposite to me” (Verelst, 1885, p. 34). The expressions of these characters through decorative objects such as candelabra and crystals were omitted from the translation, and the action shall continue without them.

Lastly, and going from indoors to outdoors, it is possible to witness how the French doctors’ promenade through German lands and the places of interest in these found were completely disregarded by Saltus. Indeed, between the paragraph “Thus far they had journeyed like artists, philosophers and observers. From time to time the roads over which they passed led them to the summit of a hill” (Verelst, 1885, p. 38), a myriad of views, be it nature or man-made constructions, were entirely hidden from the target text. Saltus thus exercises his agency and decides that his reader will not have access to the “paysages de la Souabe, entre Mayence et Cologne,” which are characterised by “[une] nature forte, riche, puissamment accidentée, pleine de souvenirs féodaux,

verdoyante” (Balzac, 1846, p. 363), nor the “grand hôpital de l’armée gallo-batave” and the “colonnes de marbre dont est orné le palais electoral” (Balzac, 1846, p. 364).

4.1.3.3. The Exact Term

After going through the description of characters and space, there is one final point that can be studied: Saltus’ search for the exact term. Such a search resides in the inclusion of French words and expressions and the use of the *mot juste*.

One of the ways this is achieved is through the linguistic correction of certain names. Directing our attention to *The Red Inn*, we see that, in the last page of the story, a reference is made to Jeanie Deans and her father, two characters from Lord Byron’s *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). However, Balzac does not call the female character by her name, Jeanie, as she is now Jenny—likely a domestication for the French reader: “L’honnête homme, cette espèce de puritain assez semblable au père de Jenny Deans,...haussa les épaules en me disant: —Imbécile, pourquoi lui as-tu demandé s’il était de Beauvais!” (Balzac, 1846, p. 390). Realising that the character’s name is wrong, Saltus makes the correction in the English version: “The honest man, a species of Puritan not unlike the father of Jeanie Deans,...shrugged his shoulders and hissed at me, “Idiot that you are! What possessed you to ask him if he was from Beauvais?”” (Verelst, 1885, p. 85).

The same situation happens in *Madame Firmiani*, but instead of a character it is now a place’s name that is amended. The real village of Gretna Green in Scotland, still standing on its feet today and holding its status as the “marriage capital of the UK” (VisitScotland, n.d.), is mentioned—but as “Greatna-Green” (Balzac, 1842a, p. 245). Faced with this situation, Saltus proceeds to rectify this mistake and the two characters are now “married at Gretna Green” (Verelst, 1885, p. 115). Can these two modifications in the translations be seen as an attempt to domesticate the text—despite the fact that Saltus does this in order to, from an orthographic point of view, be able to employ the right words? Even though these were not correctly spelled in the source texts, keeping them as they were would constitute a more faithful translation in the sense that the terms used in the original works were not modified and, therefore, inclined towards a foreignization strategy—which is not what happened, as the two words were corrected for the American reader. An attempt to get away from domesticating the text towards

foreignizing it could be achieved, for instance, through the inclusion of these words as they are in Balzac's story and the addition of a translator's footnote explaining that this is how they were written in the original.

Along these lines, and in the same way Balzac adopted a domesticating strategy when including Jeanie Deans in *The Red Inn*, so did Saltus in *Madame de Beauséant*. Before becoming the viscountess of Beauséant, Claire was known by her birthname: Claire de Bourgogne (Balzac, 1842b, p. 334). However, in Saltus' text, we see that he chose to transfer her name into the English language: She is no longer "de Bourgogne," but "of Burgundy," and the Latin name Clara, which gained strength throughout the 19th century and became more popular than the traditional English noun "Clare," replaced "Claire" (Verelst, 1885, p. 217). A similar approach was undertaken in the *The Red Inn*. Having travelled through Europe, Germany included, Saltus was most likely aware of how first names were written. When Walhenfer tells the reader a story about the two French doctors he met, he knew that one of them was named Prosper, but he did not know the name of the other doctor. In this way, "Si vous le permettez, je l'appellerai Wilhem, pour donner plus de clarté au récit de cette histoire" (Balzac, 1846, p. 365). If we keep in mind that Walhenfer was German, the translator's decision to switch from "Wilhem" to "Wilhelm"—the way the name is spelled in German—makes sense: "For the sake of clarity, I will, however, with your permission, call him Wilhelm" (Verelst, 1885, p. 40). In this situation, too, a footnote could have been added to explain that, even though Saltus opted to use the name "Wilhelm," in the source text it was written "Wilhem" but the change seemed to him appropriate. This is not, however, what happens in the translation.

To conclude this section and the analysis of *After-Dinner Stories*, it is worth adding that the quest for the exact term can also be found in Saltus' decision to keep some French words, maybe due to the strength they carry and for which English synonyms would not be sufficient. Among them, and briefly, we find words such as "naïveté" (Verelst, 1885, p. 47), "attaché" (Verelst, 1885, pp. 79, 94), "liaison" (Verelst, 1885, p. 106), "aplomb" (Verelst, 1885, pp. 111, 175), "fief" (Verelst, 1885, p. 129), and "roué" (Verelst, 1885, p. 187). Regarding the dichotomy domestication/foreignization, this aspect can be very interesting. On the one hand, by keeping the foreign borrowings Saltus seems to be adopting a foreignizing strategy—given that some of these words would inevitably increase the difficulty of comprehending the text and, therefore, not grant readers an easy reading and make them realise they are before a translation. What is more,

we should stress that all the aforementioned terms are italicised, which might indicate that Saltus does, in fact, perceive them as foreign. On the other hand, it has been demonstrated how some authors, such as Henry James and George Washington Cable, for instance, used French words and phrases in their works, accustoming the reader to such vocabulary. On that note, can keeping the French terms be seen as an act of domestication anyway, given that American readers might have enjoyed bumping into these words and, in this way, can the translation be following the target public's taste for everything French?

4.2. *Tales Before Supper*

Saltus' second collection of translations, *Tales Before Supper*, is composed of two works. One of them is Gautier's *Avatar*, published in 1856 in the newspaper *Le Moniteur Universel*, with the first hardcover edition published in 1857 by Michel Lévy Frères, and for which Saltus kept the same title; the other is Mérimée's *La Vénus D'Ille*, published in 1837 in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and whose title in English is *The Venus of Ille*.

As was done for *After-Dinner Stories*, a summary of the two texts follows. Starting with *Avatar*, this is the story of a man, Octave, who falls for a Lithuanian countess. However, the countess is married. Knowing he had no chance with her, he falls ill and tries one last time to conquer the countess' heart by asking Balthazar, a physician he knows who is able to magically swap minds, to perform his abilities on him and the countess' husband, Olaf. Olaf is now Octave, and vice-versa. After realising what is wrong, Olaf challenges Octave to a duel to the death, but both are incapable of causing harm to their real bodies. The two men decide to go meet Balthazar for him make the exchange. Octave, knowing the countess will never love him, does not return to his body. The physician takes over Octave's dead body and fakes his own death.

The second story, *The Venus of Ille*, focuses on a cursed statue and the problems it has brought to those near it. The narrator is invited by Monsieur de Peyrehorade to his son's, Alphonse, wedding, and the day before they find a bronze statue. They are intrigued by it, as they have heard stories about bad things happening to those who decided to touch it. The night before the wedding, in a bet, Alphonse slips the ring onto one of the fingers of the statue, forgets he had done it as he was drunk, and the next day the narrator knows

that the statue had closed her finger, showed up in Alphonse's room, and that he was found dead, with the statue returning to her place after that. The statue was then melted down and transformed into a bell for the town's church, and ever since its installation the crops have been ravaged by frost—twice.

4.2.1. Introductions: A Provocative Paratext

Once again, Saltus added an introduction before his translations—so, once again, this is where we shall start the analysis of the collection. Broadly, this piece can be divided into two parts. One of them is about Théophile Gautier, the author of the first story, *Avatar*, and the other about Prosper Mérimée, the author of the second text, *The Venus of Ille*. While informing the reader about the French authors, once again Saltus finds a way to enhance his presence by displaying his knowledge of French literature.

Starting with Gautier, there is a back-and-forth game that Saltus plays with the reader with regard to how he feels about the writer. By deconstructing the introduction, we realise that Saltus has more positive things to say than negative. Indeed, one day when Saltus was at “the green room of the Paris Opera³⁰” (Verelst, 1887, p. 9), there was a man that, hoping to get a bad reaction from the audience, claimed “the most beautiful thing in the world [to be] a beautiful edition of Gautier” (Verelst, 1887, p. 9). Saltus does agree with the audience, but the reason why Saltus decided to include this episode is nonetheless curious. Did he want the reader to doubt Gautier's greatness? Or, perhaps, the polar opposite: By showing that Gautier is, in fact, prodigious, so will his translation of Gautier's story be “beautiful” and, in this way, draw the reader in?

Saltus goes on to demonstrate his respect for Gautier, whose “mental retina was an oscillating rainbow” of ideas (Verelst, 1887, p. 9) and, out of all the great names of French literature, it was he “who possessed the clearest perception of color” (Verelst, 1887, p. 10). Saltus is clearly successful in reinforcing Gautier's figure, noting that he was the “the smile of youth, health, and good looks” (Verelst, 1887, p. 13), but once he starts criticising other French authors to strengthen his argument, as was done in *After-Dinner Stories* (1885), some contradictions can be found. Though he continues to use de Musset to enhance Gautier, as he did for Balzac, claiming that Gautier's “facture is

³⁰ It is interesting to note that Saltus did not have to add this anecdote but chose to start the introduction this way, mentioning Paris before he even started to present the author.

irreproachable, which De Musset's is not" (Verelst, 1887, p. 13) and that Gautier is the "smile" while the latter is "the sob" (Verelst, 1887, p. 13), it is uncertain to present Saltus' position when we get to Hugo and Balzac. With all his compliments of Gautier, one wonders whether this is Saltus' favourite French author. In fact, "Hugo, it may be noted, rhymes with ego, not richly, perhaps, but well" (Verelst, 1887, p. 13) and, what is more, Gautier's "effects are never unintentionally grotesque, as Hugo's often are" (Verelst, 1887, p. 13).

From this perspective not only would one assume that Victor Hugo is not praised by Saltus but also that Gautier is better than the author of *Les Misérables*. But not quite, as for Saltus "Hugo is the voice of a century" (Verelst, 1887, p. 13). Not only does this seem contradictory when compared to what has been said about Gautier, but it also goes against Saltus' stance in *After-Dinner Stories* (1885): Apparently, two years later, Balzac is no longer the best; for if Hugo is the "voice of a century," "Balzac [is] the echo" (Verelst, 1887, p. 13). So, the question remains: Who is the best after all? Is it Gautier, Hugo, or Balzac? One might say it is Gautier, given that "no one in all probability will ever be able to write as richly as [he]" (Verelst, 1887, p. 30) and even Balzac "called him a magician" (Verelst, 1887, p. 19), but now the reader might be, and understandably so, confused. With these comparisons and statements Saltus shows how he has a vast knowledge of French literature, but at the same time, as demonstrated, he also contradicts himself and this can put his knowledge in jeopardy—but he soon remedies the situation. By talking France and literary style, and also the female figure, Saltus immediately earns his place back in the spotlight while discussing Gautier's work.

Regarding France, before admiring it as would be expected, Saltus surprisingly starts by offering criticism. Despite his favourite authors living in a time where French literature is the most splendid of all, he tells the reader that it has not always been this way, censuring the era of Classicism harshly. In Saltus' words, French literature before the beginning of the 19th century, "if not next door to a pauper, lived practically in the same street" (Verelst, 1887, p. 10). Though in a negative light, Saltus offers his opinion on the evolution of his beloved country, and once again proves his knowledge on the subject. Those days were behind them though, and Gautier and the France that followed Classicism were one and the same—both superb and intriguing: "He was tall and robust; his hair was a wayward flood; his eyes were blue and victorious. He was the image of Young France" (Verelst, 1887, p. 11).

Through his description of Gautier, Saltus reminds the reader that style is the most important feature of a text. For Gautier, as for Saltus, “the inexpressible does not exist” (Verelst, 1887, p. 11), and the words found and the way they are placed in the sentence were unparalleled. With a “taste for the exotic” (Verelst, 1887, p. 16) and a “knowledge...wider than encyclopædic” (Verelst, 1887, p. 17), his style and ideas, who “were born duchesses” (Verelst, 1887, p. 11), could be compared to a woman. As previously pointed out, the female figure was also a recurring and important figure in Saltus’ works, and he uses this to further characterise Gautier. Although women did not fall in love with Saltus normally, the same did not happen to Gautier; indeed, when the author “set out to charm that gracious lady whose name is Fame³¹,” women’s hearts were effortless won (Verelst, 1887, p. 11). However, and despite his esteem for the female figure, Gautier’s biggest problem was that is ‘writing muse’ “ha[d] a thousand toilettes” (Verelst, 1887, p. 15). Taking Saltus’ previous metaphor, perhaps Gautier made use of a palette with too many colours and, what is more, when these translated into literary style, he “did not even polish it” (Verelst, 1887, p. 19). This is, without a doubt, devastating for Saltus, but he assured the reader that “once a muse, always a muse” (Verelst, 1887, p. 16). Or is it? If the woman is beautiful enough to be compared to Gautier’s writing, why is it that he “wrote for poets and for men” (Verelst, 1887, p. 15) only? From this statement we might establish a connection between the way Saltus saw women and the way he treated them. As formerly discussed, the female figure played a big role in his literature, but not always, if ever, in his personal life. This remark thus catches the reader’s attention, but perhaps not in the way Saltus might have intended.

Nonetheless, we can still take the opportunity to further extend the meaning of such observations by focusing on the fact that, for Saltus, “Gautier wrote in verse before he discovered that it is more difficult to write in prose” (Verelst, 1887, p. 13). Is poetry, then, for the common individual, and prose “for men”? If so, not only is Saltus is *a* man, but *the* man who translated Gautier’s work—and consequently a translator worthy of attention. If writing in prose is more difficult than in verse, so is translating that same text, and Saltus has done it.

³¹ The metaphor here created further develops the argument that Saltus’ admiration for women was strong, as fame—which was important to Saltus whether he liked to admit it or not—appears in the image of a “gracious lady.”

When it comes to Mérimée, Saltus spends less time discussing how he feels about the writer, maybe because the story that was chosen is also shorter than Gautier's. Notwithstanding, he does not hold back on the compliments and, in fact, does not negatively criticise the author once—as he has done with his supposed favourite writers, Gautier and Balzac. In fact, “Mérimée was in a certain sense even more erudite than Gautier. He was a professional archaeologist, an historian salaried by the state, a *fumiste* of literature” (Verelst, 1887, p. 23).

His attributes are also strengthened by the way he carried himself, wanting to get along with people and not steal anyone's spotlight. As a matter of fact, for the whole of his career as a writer, “he acted like that Englishman who refused to speak French correctly that he might not be taken for a professor of languages” (Verelst, 1887, p. 24). Once again, we understand how England can be perceived. Saltus could have chosen any other nationality, but decided to go with an “Englishman” as a figure which represents a “know-it-all” or someone who thinks too highly of himself. This is also in stark contrast with Saltus' description of Mérimée, which accentuates the Englishman's feeling of preponderance.

If Mérimée's attitude was important, even more so was his literary style, which was “sob[er] [and] ascetic” (Verelst, 1887, p. 29). The reason why Saltus might have been so drawn to Mérimée's “sobriety” was because this quality translated into what was his own literary style: narratives that are not “unburdened by an unnecessary word” (Verelst, 1887, p. 25). In short, it is like Saltus is talking or wants to talk about his own writing while discussing Mérimée's: he, too, craved to create stories guided by a “logical, precise, plain spoken, and undeclamatory” style (Verelst, 1887, p. 30).

After dissecting the introduction, it is possible to further develop the argument that Saltus might have seen a bit of Gautier and Mérimée in himself—or wanted to, at least. The pessimism that followed Saltus' way of perceiving life was also a reality for Gautier. In spite of all that was and could be accomplished, “Victory had deserted his eyes, and in them had come a shadowy nostalgia, the regret of unsailed seas and unexperienced pleasures” (Verelst, 1887, p. 23). Looking at this passage from this point of view and, even though not explicitly, this approximation towards Gautier has the power to edify Saltus' presence in this collection—they understand one another and, consequently, Saltus can be trusted to distribute Gautier's story among the American people. Through Mérimée, he shows that his own lack of sentimentality and pessimistic

vein might be, more than a fruit of experience, a “mask” to hide his deepest fears and clash of contradictory approaches to society:

It was said that he was an atheist, or, what is worse, a materialist, that he was without sentiment, without affection, without a heart. But after the posthumous publication of his "Lettres à une Inconnue," it was discovered that he had worn a mask, it was found that he had beliefs, nay, superstitions even, and that his heart could bleed as well as another. (Verelst, 1887, p. 25)

Finally, one can acknowledge how Saltus lures readers in and makes sure that not only do they go through the introduction, but that they will also stay until the final page is read. After all, who would not like to witness two stories in which “the action in both is as sinewy as it is dramatic [and] nervous” (Verelst, 1887, p. 29)? Nonetheless, what is even more interesting than this remark is that Saltus has a back-up plan in case whoever is reading is not as in love as he is with the stories, therefore finding a way to be both daring and cautious. Regarding *Avatar*, “little need be said; the reader is the best of critics” (Verelst, 1887, p. 14), so if the person holding the book gets to the end and dislikes the story, Saltus entrusts he or she with the responsibility of knowing how to appreciate and analyse a narrative, which gives the reader a sense of superiority and subsequently takes the blame away from the translator and places it on the story itself. When it comes to *The Venus of Ille*, Saltus assures that Mérimée tells the story “as though he were giving evidence before a grand jury. He presents facts, not hearsay” (Verelst, 1887, pp. 29-30)—and who can argue against facts?

One might agree that “Gautier was the torch of an epoch, Mérimée the rapier” (Verelst, 1887, p. 30): perhaps with this collection, Saltus is happily both.

4.2.2. Closer to France, Farther From England

Like the four short stories in *After-Dinner Stories*, this second collection of translations too has something to offer when it comes to Saltus’ esteem for France and wish to avoid stressing the presence of England, especially *Avatar*³².

³² After the analysis of the three books here studied, Section 4.4 will make clear that there are nonetheless contradictions or aspects that cannot be fully explained in Saltus’ translations. To that end, *Tales Before Supper* is a very good example which will be used to discuss this further.

Commencing with France, there is a very interesting situation in the translation of Gautier's work. France is not being criticised, nor are the French or even Paris, as these might be the reason for Saltus to edit some of the content in a given passage, as previously demonstrated in the analysis of *After-Dinner Stories*. Instead, when the narrator discusses the personality of Octave de Seville, he clarifies that he is "un personnage tout uni, incapable de se jeter au glacier de Manfred ou d'allumer le réchaud d'Escousse" (Gautier, 1857, p. 7). At first glance, this passage seems harmless and purely descriptive—but for Saltus perhaps it is not. Victor Escousse was an early 19th-century French author, who died at the very young age of 19—but Saltus' problem was not with him: it was with de Musset. As asserted before, Saltus was not a fan of de Musset, who made a reference to the late Victor Escousse in the poem *Rolla*: "Quand on est pauvre et fier, quand on est riche et triste, / On n'est plus assez fou pour se faire trappiste; / Mais on fait comme Escousse, on allume un réchaud" (de Musset, 1840, p. 323). Not wanting to give de Musset a platform in his own translation, Saltus opts to go around the content of the sentence. Now, Monsieur Octave is "incapable of...setting a river on fire" (Verelst, 1887, p. 38). The element of fire is still present, but the reader no longer witnesses 'Escousse's stove' burning, but a river: de Musset was completely removed from this part of the text.

In *The Venus of Ille*, once again Saltus finds himself before what we might have considered an insult to the French. The narrator, who is visiting the town of Ille in Roussillon—which, also in real life, has a strong Spanish influence due to the various battles between France and Spain over the territory until 1659 when Spain ceded the province to the French (for more details see, e.g., Chambers, 1873, p. 93)—is trying to understand what the two men next to him are talking about. When one of them stops chatting, the narrator thinks to himself: "Il parlait catalan; mais j'étais dans le Roussillon depuis assez longtemps pour pouvoir comprendre à peu près ce qu'il disait" (Mérimée, 1837, p. 432). Given that the narrator not only has been in town for a while now—so he should be able to speak or understand Catalan—but he is also from Saltus' beloved Paris, it might be offensive to consider that he can only understand "à peu près" what one of the men was saying. With this in mind, in the English version we can observe that the narrator's proficiency has increased: "He spoke Catalonian, but I had been long enough in Roussillon to understand pretty well what he said" (Verelst, 1887, p. 189). The narrator no longer understands Catalan "more or less," but "pretty well."

Another instance that reflects Saltus' praise for France can be found when the narrator is contemplating the giant statue in front of him, which, up close, resembles Venus: “— Bah !, avec quoi? dit l'autre. Elle est de cuivre, et si dure qu'Étienne a cassé sa lime dessus, essayant de l'entamer. C'est du cuivre du temps des païens; c'est plus dur que je ne sais quoi” (Mérimée, 1837, p. 432). It might very well be that this Étienne is simply a name chosen randomly, and not the Parisian sculptor Étienne-Maurice Falconet—given that I did not find anything relating him to the fact that he broke his metal file while carving a statue of Venus. However, I did manage to learn that he “produced small sculptures of mythological figures, such as Venus and Cupid” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021): *Venus of the Doves*, in permanent exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, is one example. Being not only a successful French sculptor but also a Parisian, Saltus was probably not too pleased with the idea of letting the reader know that the sculptor failed to crack the statue. With this in mind, it is maybe not surprising to witness that Saltus decided to omit this event in the English text: ““Bah! what with? ” said the other youth. “It is of the copper of pagan times, and harder than I don't know what” (Verelst, 1887, p. 189).

When it comes to the desire to distance himself from England, Saltus offers the reader three situations for analysis in *Avatar*. The first concerns famous places in England's capital, London, namely Hyde Park and Saint James Palace. As for the park, Saltus did not have a problem with the fact that the carriage in question could be found there: “Une magnifique calèche...était attelé[e] de la plus belle paire de chevaux qui ait jamais piaffé à Hyde-Park” (Gautier, 1857, p. 22) thus becomes “[A] magnificent open carriage...[to which] was harnessed...as handsome a pair of horses as ever paraded in Hyde Park” (Verelst, 1887, p. 48). The issue occurs when it is mentioned that such horses could be also be spotted “à Saint-James au Drawing-Room de la reine Victoria” (Gautier, 1857, p. 22), given that Queen Victoria was left out of the English version: The horses now “drew up before Saint James' Palace during a drawing-room” (Verelst, 1887, p. 48). The most logical or seductive explanation for this omission is that, throughout her reign, Queen Victoria's alleged conservative values which she wanted to impose on the British went against Saltus' fascination for everything repugnant, twisted, and avant-garde.

Secondly, one can interpret Saltus' translation regarding the moment when Alfred Humbert shakes Monsieur Octave's hand: “En débitant cette tirade d'un ton moitié fâché, moitié comique, il secouait vigoureusement à la manière anglaise la main du comte qu'il

avait prise” (Gautier, 1857, p. 114). The way he did it—strenuously—does not seem to be problematic, but the fact that the strength applied is synonymous with England does. Thus, the power of the handshake is included in the target text, but not the idea that such movement could be associated with English manners: “Uttering this tirade in a half angry, half humorous tone, he took the count's hand in his and shook it vigorously” (Verelst, 1887, p. 116).

Finally, we can see how this departure from England is also related to the contemporary desire to create an American identity. While discussing Shakespeare, Monsieur Octave touches upon *Love's Labour's Lost* (Gautier, 1857, p. 17), one of the playwright's earliest comedies. It is noticeable that Gautier kept the original title in his work, which would be expected given that American English was not nearly as widespread as it is today, but the same was not done in the translation. Indeed, the word “labour,” written in British English, was changed to “labor,” and therefore we realise that the title of Shakespeare's comedy is now “Love's Labor's lost” (Verelst, 1887, p. 45). This is a clear demonstration of the application of a domesticating strategy, meant to meet the interests of the American reader at the same it contributed to the consolidation of American English and, ultimately, the country's identity.

4.2.3. Plain Style, Exact Term

4.2.3.1. Plain Style: Characters

Concerning the characters of the two stories, there are not many differences to point out when comparing the French and English texts. In fact, and unlike what happens in *After-Dinner Stories*, every portrayal, feeling, and thought is transported to the translation without barely suffering any changes to the best of my analysis. The two aspects that can be studied in this regard have to do with the use of interjections and qualifying adjectives.

Regarding the interjections, we can first turn to *Avatar*, more specifically the part in which the narrator is interpreting Monsieur Octave's thoughts and how he should overcome the situation he is in. Regrettably, “Sa suprême espérance s'écroulait. Eh quoi! il avait eu recours à des moyens terribles, étranges” (Gautier, 1857, p. 139). The narrator's exclamation is, however, missing from Saltus' translation: “His supreme hope had failed. He had had recourse to strange and terrible methods” (Verelst, 1887, p. 136). As for *The Venus of Ille*, we can see that “Voilà qui était beau à voir comme ils se renvoyaient les

balles. Paf! paf! Jamais elles ne touchaient terre” (Mérimée, 1837, p. 428) becomes “It was beautiful to see how they returned each other the balls. They never touched the ground” (Verelst, 1887, p. 181) and “Demain, au grand jour, vous la verrez, et vous me direz si j’ai raison de la croire un chef-d’oeuvre. Parbleu! vous ne pouviez arriver plus à propos!” (Mérimée, 1837, p. 430) now reads “To-morrow you shall see her by daylight, and tell me if I am right in thinking the statue a masterpiece. You could not have arrived more opportunely” (Verelst, 1887, p. 185). The removal of such interjections does not (negatively) affect the action nor alter the characters’ behaviour, but it remains intriguing to observe their omission in the translations as if they were, in fact, obstacles to the achievement of a more direct and plain style.

With respect to qualifying adjectives, we witness the occasional amputation of words such as the previously mentioned terms “cher/chère” and “bon/bonne.” In *Avatar*, this takes place, for instance, in the translation of “Pardonnez, cher docteur, cette description de journal de mode à un amant pour qui ces menus souvenirs prennent une importance énorme” (Gautier, 1857, p. 24) to “Forgive me, doctor, this fashion-plate description” (Verelst, 1887, p. 50) and of “Patience, mon cher malade; vous allez comprendre tout à l’heure que je ne me livre pas à une digression inutile” (Gautier, 1857, p. 54) to “Be patient, you will see in a moment that I am not digressing” (Verelst, 1887, p. 71). Once again, there does not seem to be a specific reason for the omissions other than the wish to keep the text more concise. What is more, these are the only two “dear” that were left out of *Avatar*, as several other instances where the French terms “cher/chère” appear were kept in the target text. The same happens with the translation of the word “good” in *The Venus of Ille*. Only the pair “bonne vierge” (Mérimée, 1837, p. 427) lost the adjective which qualified the noun: This “good virgin” simply turns into “virgin” (Verelst, 1887, p. 180). All other terms characterising the characters—“vieux/vieille (“old”), “cher/chère” (“dear”), and “pauvre” (“poor”), for example—made their way to the English version. An attempt to decipher why this is will be undertaken, as previously stated, in Section 4.4.3.

4.2.3.2. Plain Style: Space

As for space, only *Avatar* allows for a critical analysis. Indeed, no changes to objects, landscape, or structures were made in *The Venus of Ille* and, as a consequence, in this

section only the translation of Gautier's story can be examined—and, curiously, even *Avatar* only offers one example that can be studied. This instance is a long description of the gardens surrounding the hotel, and all the changes made in the target text involve species of plants. Due to the length of the illustration, the paragraph in question will be divided into three separate parts. Firstly, we learn that “Dans les anfractuosités de ces roches, le cactier raquette, l'asclépiade incarnate, le millepertuis, la saxifrage, la cymbalaire, la joubarbe, la lychnide des Alpes, le lierre d'Irlande trouvaient assez de terre végétale pour nourrir leurs racines” (Gautier, 1857, pp. 39-40). Yet, in the translation, only “The crevices of the rocks held soil enough to nourish the roots of rich plants and flowers” (Verelst, 1887, p. 61). Without exception, all the aforementioned plants—the cactus, the milkweed, the St. John's wort, the saxifrage, the ivy-leaved toadflax, the houseleek, the Alpine catchfly, and the Irish ivy—were omitted from the English version. Soon, so would many other species.

As the narrator kept describing the magical gardens, he notes that “Les murailles latérales qui fermaient ce paradis terrestre disparaissaient sous un rideau de plantes grimpantes, aristoloches, grenadilles bleues, campanules, chèvre-feuille, gypsophiles, glycines de Chine, périplocas de Grèce dont les griffes, les vrilles et les tiges s'enlaçaient à un treillis vert” (Gautier, 1857, p. 40). In this case, the first set of plants was transported to the English text, but we once again observe how their enumeration remains a ‘target’ in the translation: “The walls that inclosed the sides of this miniature paradise disappeared under a curtain of climbing plants, of which the stalks, shoots, and tendrils formed a trellis of green” (Verelst, 1887, p. 61). The lateral walls, the idea of paradise, and the mesh of green embellish Saltus' text, but the species doing so are hidden from the reader.

Lastly, the same situation repeats itself. In the paragraph that follows the one that has just been examined, Balzac makes a transition from small flowers to big trees—but this variance would not make any difference to Saltus:

Un peu en arrière des masses de rocaïlle, étaient groupés quelques bouquets d'arbres au port élégant, à la frondaison vigoureuse, dont les feuillages contrastaient pittoresquement: vernis du Japon, thuyas du Canada, planes de Virginie, frênes verts, saules blancs, micocouliers de Provence, que dominaient deux ou trois mélèzes. (Gautier, 1857, p. 40)

Though American readers learnt that there were various groups of trees with thick vegetation making up the garden, they never got to know which: “Just behind the rock-

work stood several groups of slender trees, whose thick foliage contrasted picturesquely” (Verelst, 1887, p. 61). Farewell to all the Chinese lacquer trees, Eastern white cedars, hackberry trees from Provence, and larches.

4.2.3.3. The Exact Term

Some nouns vary in degree. Whether whatever they represent is weaker or stronger, smaller or bigger, there is almost always a simpler term to designate the exact word we are thinking about. In the case of *Avatar*, there is one instance where this can be verified through the English translation, and it concerns the passage of time. When Gautier mentions that Hindus use “mots appartenant à des langues qu'aucun peuple ne parle plus depuis des milliers d'années sur la surface du globe” (Gautier, 1857, p. 53), in the target text a way to reduce “des milliers d'années” to a single word which covers a great amount of years is found—“æons.” In this way, in the English version one reads that “they mumble words that no child of earth has lisped for æons” (Verelst, 1887, p. 71). With this small but nonetheless important modification, the preference for a plain style is noticeable.

As an historian himself—or lover of history—it looks like Saltus might have felt compelled to make some changes in this regard in the two stories he translated. Starting with *Avatar*, we see that his passion for the Roman Empire steered him into replacing one female figure from Greek mythology by her Roman ‘counterpart.’ Talking about Countess Labinska and her marriage to Count Olaf, Gautier makes a comparison between her and the titaness Phoebe; Saltus, however, invokes Diana³³. We therefore learn that “Aux temps mythologiques, Phoebé descendit bien des cieux en rayons d'argent sur le sommeil d'Endymion; mais elle n'était pas mariée à un comte polonais” (Gautier, 1857, p. 50), but in the English translation it is “Diana [who] descended in silvery rays upon the sleeping Endymion, but then Diana was not married to a Polish count” (Verelst, 1887, p. 68). Can such change be interpreted as part of a domesticating strategy? After all, were the name “Phoebe” from Greek mythology to be kept, it could certainly disrupt the reading of some Americans—unlike her Roman ‘equal,’ “Diana,” undoubtedly more famous in the US and whose name, therefore, would not lead readers into thinking that

³³ For further clarification on the differences between Phoebe and Diana see Child (1845).

they were before a translated text (for corroboration of this train of thought see, e.g., Chambers & Chambers, 1888; Clare, 1881; Smith, 1878, 1886; Thomas, 1892).

In *The Venus of Ille*, Saltus' expertise can be noticed as well. When the narrator is trying to puzzle out what happened to Monsieur Alphonse, he remembers that in "Valence des braves se servaient de longs sacs de cuir remplis de sable fin pour assommer les gens dont on leur avait payé la mort" (Mérimée, 1837, p. 449). These "des braves" were, in fact, not random workers, but hired assassins from Italy with particular presence in the 16th and 17th centuries (see, e.g., Chisholm, 1910, p. 437). A member of this group would be called 'bravo,' and the precise term for the plural form of the word would be 'bravi'—just as Saltus informs the reader: "Suddenly I remembered having heard that at Valencia *bravi* used long leather bags filled with sand to stun people whom they had been paid to kill" (Verelst, 1887, p. 218). The approach that was taken to examine the use of French words in *After-Dinner Stories* and whether their existence was a sign of a domestication or foreignization strategy can be applied here as well. On the one hand, the use of the term "*bravi*" can be perceived as an act of foreignization, given that the plural form in Italian is being used and is italicised, which suggests that Saltus is treating the word as foreign. On the other hand, the singular form of the term—"bravo"—was not foreign to Americans. If we consult Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, we can see how this term was already in use in the US by the time Saltus translated Mérimée's text: A 'bravo' is someone who is "A daring villain; a bandit; one who sets law at defiance; an assassin, or murderer" (Webster, 1857, p. 123). Thus, in the continuum that the duality domestication/foreignization is, we might wonder where this stylistic decision is placed.

Finally, we can observe that in *Tales Before Supper*, too, Saltus kept some French terms in the English translations. In *Avatar* we can find the words "blasé" (Verelst, 1887, p. 37) and "*chef-d'œuvres*" (Verelst, 1887, p. 48), and in *The Venus of Ille* terms such as "*mourre*" (Verelst, 1887, p. 191) and "*procureur du roi*" (Verelst, 1887, pp. 219, 220, 223).

The first two terms—"blasé" and "*chef-d'œuvres*"—can be found in Webster's dictionary, which indicates their presence in the English language and, therefore, they should not pose a problem to the reader's comprehension. Furthermore, we should note that "blasé," unlike the rest of the aforementioned terms, is not italicised, which might mean that Saltus sees it as already naturalised into the English language and does not

consider it as a borrowing. Treating these two terms as if they were actual English words does not therefore represent an attempt to foreignize the text—but it does not domesticate it either, given that, at the end of the day, they remain French after all. Nonetheless, it can once again be stressed that the decision to keep the French words might have stemmed from the desire to produce a target text that attended to the readers' expectations and dominant taste for everything French at the time—and, in this sense, it can be argued that we are somewhat closer to the far left side of the spectrum and before the adoption of a domestication strategy.

While in *Avatar* the decision to keep the words employed by Gautier might not cause any difficulties at the level of textual comprehension, we might assert that the French words kept in *The Venus of Ille* were almost of mandatory use and might render their respective passages unintelligible for American readers. The game “mourre,” French for “morra” in English, did not seem to be very well-known at this time in the US—on the basis that the word does not appear in Webster's dictionary and the few American books that talk about it include the name of the game in italics, which confirms its foreign roots (see, e.g., *American Journal of Archeology*, 1885, p. 472; Davis, 1887, p. 749; Shinn, 1877, p. 51). Thus, perhaps there was not much way around it and keeping the French term seemed appropriate, given that both words—“morra” and “mourre”—could seem foreign to the reader.

As for the title “procureur du roi,” it is important to remember that, despite the fact that England has a long history of monarchy and therefore the English language possesses the equivalent “public prosecutor,” the US has never had a king or queen since its independence. Therefore, the same situation seems to repeat itself. Besides the fact that “public prosecutor” might not have fully conveyed the mental picture inherent to “procureur du roi,” which maybe is why the French terms was kept, replacing it by “public prosecutor” could have left American readers uncertain of the meaning of this title.

In this way, in both situations, we can go back to one of the episodes brought up in Section 2.2 on the (in)visibility of the translator in the US: Emerson's support of John Aitken Carlyle's translation of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*. As was mentioned, the source text in Italian was written in poetry but Carlyle turned it into prose in the English version, which led me to the question also posed by Straub (2016, p. 86): “Is this change a form of appropriation that ‘Americanized’ Dante more than a poetic rendering could have done?” In other words, would the terms “morra” and “public prosecutor” end up sounding

more foreign than the French “mourre” and “procureur du roi,” in the sense that English words would be employed but the comprehension of the text was maybe not rid of obstacles? A strategy that could have been adopted is, once again, the inclusion of footnotes. The English terms could have been used and, so that no doubts remained about what they stood for, a footnote would explain what these meant—but such decision was not made.

With this remark, one more work has been analysed and we are getting close to the end. But, before that happens, there is still one story left to study—and it does not have a name.

4.3. *The Story Without a Name*

Last but not least, we have *The Story Without a Name*. Translated from D’Aurevilly’s *Une Histoire Sans Nom*, published by Alphonse Lemerre in 1882, this is the story of Lasthénie, a girl who lives with her mother and her maid and one day is raped by a local priest during a sleepwalking crisis. Without knowing she got pregnant, her belly starts showing and her mother verbally attacks her for her sin. The baby is born, yet dead, and with all the pain Lasthénie stabs 18 needles in her chest until her death. 25 years later, her mother recognises the ring the same priest who raped Lasthénie is wearing and realises what had happened to her daughter, feeling ever remorseful.

Just like Saltus had a lot to say in *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper*, in *The Story Without a Name* this is no different—so let us examine another of Saltus’ introductions one last time before moving on to the analysis of his last translation.

4.3.1. Introductions: A Provocative Paratext

Unlike in his previous works, this time around Saltus did not choose to translate short stories but a novel. Yet, and similarly to *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper*, he once again made use of an introduction to let readers know his thoughts on the author of the original work, in this case Jules Barbey D’Aurevilly. Indeed, instead of presenting D’Aurevilly with the aim of alerting the reader to the existence of a source culture, Saltus

takes the opportunity to leave his impressions of the writer—just like he had previously done for Balzac, Gautier, and Mérimée.

On that note, we can start with the admiration Saltus has for D'Aurevilly, which can be confirmed when he states that he “was not merely an artist; he was a church” (Saltus, 1891, p. 5). His respect, though, went beyond the art of writing, as Saltus equally revered the fact that, as a man, D'Aurevilly had beliefs: “His beliefs were few perhaps, yet so sacredly serious that to preserve them intact he pretended to have none at all” (Saltus, 1891, p. 8). Given that Saltus was stuck between pleasing and not pleasing and went against the grain of American literature at the same time he attempted to contribute to its formation, D'Aurevilly's behaviour allured and inspired him. Unlike Saltus, D'Aurevilly “wrote for himself” and “fame he let pass by” (Saltus, 1891, p. 18), which might be another indication of why Saltus' esteem for the author was so significant: D'Aurevilly knew what we wanted and stood for, so if he decided to be a pessimist it would be out of choice, and not need like Saltus.

Saltus also highlights D'Aurevilly's superiority by contrasting him with Zola, since “if it be alleged that he [Zola] believes in God, one may query whether the compliment is returned” (Saltus, 1891, p. 5). It is curious to note how Saltus continues to use Zola to indirectly elevate other authors' reputation, given that the same happened in the introduction of *After-Dinner Stories* (1885). It is then possible to infer that not only is Saltus mentioning Zola with the aim of stressing D'Aurevilly's talent but also to show the reader that he has a broad command of the actualities of French literature. Besides Zola, he uses yet another contemporary of his to illustrate D'Aurevilly's greatness, this time Flaubert. The author of *Madame Bovary*, in fact, refused to have a conversation with D'Aurevilly because, and in Flaubert's words, “I hear he talks better than I do” (Saltus, 1891, p. 14). A story by an author of such calibre most certainly deserves a read, and its translation is only a few pages away.

However, Saltus does not offer compliments only: he also characterises D'Aurevilly negatively. In a clear way, he explains why, as an author, “D'Aurevilly is very attackable” (Saltus, 1891, p. 16). He states that D'Aurevilly “called his work-table a piano, yet it would have been more exact perhaps had he called it a palette” (Saltus, 1891, p. 16), given that—and drawing a comparison between colours and literary production—he had a wide range of shades but applied them without thinking which colour would be best for each feeling he tried to convey. This might have to do with the

fact that, and unlike Balzac—as we can observe in the introduction of *After-Dinner Stories*—D’Aurevilly did not revise his text: “On his multicolored manuscripts not a correction is to be found; he wrote at one breath...stopping only to vary the color of the ink” (Saltus, 1891, p. 17). This could be a deal-breaker for Saltus because, as we know, style was imperative for him. Indeed, he has already proven this in *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper*—and in the introduction to *The Story Without a Name* (1891) this could not be more explicit:

In connection with this it may be noted that in literature only three things count, style, style polished, style repolished; these imagination and the art of transition aid, but do not enhance. As for style, it may be defined as the sorcery of syllables, the fall of sentences, the use of the exact term, the pursuit of a repetition even unto the thirtieth and fortieth line. Grammar is an adjunct but not an obligation. No grammarian ever wrote a thing that was fit to read. (Saltus, 1891, pp. 17-18)

Thus, we can infer once more that the content of a literary work is important but never as important as the style adopted by the writer; for the plain style to be applied and accompanied by the *mot juste*, some parts of the text are prone to inevitably suffer modifications. That is exactly what happened in the first two collections, and what will happen in Saltus’ translation of D’Aurevilly’s novel as well.

In addition to discussing D’Aurevilly’s writing, Saltus mentions that D’Aurevilly had a lot of enemies at the time he wrote *Une Histoire Sans Nom* (Saltus, 1891, p. 13), not least because of his *dandy* behaviour³⁴—a behaviour that, as has been pointed out, Saltus too adopted even though he did not want to be perceived that way—from the “boots of soft leather” to the “insolence at the end of the tongue” (Saltus, 1891, pp. 12-13). All these descriptions of D’Aurevilly’s personality add to the author’s depreciation and Saltus’ enhancement, as the latter conveys the feeling that he knows what he is talking about and, consequently, knows how to produce a translation worthy of consideration.

³⁴ Saltus adds that D’Aurevilly, at the beginning of his career, made “two acquaintances, the muse and George Brummell, esq. A little later he made a third. The first awoke his life, the second colored it, by the third it was marred. The latter of course was a woman” (Saltus, 1891, p. 6). Once again, we see that Saltus uses the female figure to either compliment or criticise other authors. This *dandy* behaviour, besides being supported by Brummell, an acclaimed figure of *dandyism* and the most influential man in 19th-century men’s fashion (see, e.g., Kelly, 2006), was also positively and negatively influenced by women. The former was a muse, the latter an actual woman—a woman who destroyed D’Aurevilly’s life or way of living: the female figure not only can be divine but rather dangerous too.

This idea that Saltus' production deserves attention can be further strengthened when we read that "in the accompanying story frequent mention is made of the Norman town of St. Sauveur" (Saltus, 1891, p. 6). Given that Saltus is very careful in his choice of words, was the segment "accompanying story" deliberately and purposely included? That is, is Saltus trying to say that it is the story that accompanies the introduction and not the other way around? If so, we are before a clear exaltation of the translator's paratext, almost in detriment of the main text. Along these lines, Saltus also points out that D'Aurevilly "might have entitled [his novel] a Story Without a Smile" (Saltus, 1891, p. 11), in this way manifesting how he feels about the content of the work and transmitting this thought to the reader. Given the country's desire to access the world depicted in French literature—a world that is not afraid to expose the 'ugly truth,' unlike most of US fiction—this comment can be seen as an invitation and as a confirmation that the content of the target text will most likely interest and please American readers.

With this introduction Saltus also finds a way to refer to *Tales Before Supper*. Even though he does not explicitly mention the collection, he draws a comparison between *Avatar* and D'Aurevilly's work, with Gautier's story being "unquestionably the foremost of his minor masterpieces" (Saltus, 1891, p. 9). With this statement, Saltus demonstrates that he chose the best story to translate, and this might tempt the reader to go check for himself if this is true or not, namely by recurring to Saltus' translation. What is more, he characterises Gautier in a positive light, adding that his mission to charm and create a fantastical world was successful (Saltus, 1891, p. 10). However, unlike D'Aurevilly, Gautier's stories lacked realness, and this was the strong point of D'Aurevilly's narrative (Saltus, 1891, p. 9): "[By] drawing characters of such diabolic egotism...the reader turned from the portraits to the mirror, and looked reflectively at himself" (Saltus, 1891, p. 10). If this was not enough to convince the reader to start reading *The Story Without a Name* immediately after finishing the introduction, Saltus adds that, when the French text was published, "somewhat to the author's dismay it startled even Paris" (Saltus, 1891, p. 11). If the inhabitants of Paris—aware of the immorality that could be expected from French literature—were astonished by the events depicted, what other reason would the American reader need to devour the entire book?

Almost 30 years later, in 1919, a new edition of *The Story Without a Name* was published. No changes were made to the translation, but the introduction was almost completely rewritten.

In the 1891 version, there was no clear indication on the cover of the book that the reader would find an introductory text written by Saltus. In 1919, however, we are immediately faced with the subtext “With impressions of the author by EDGAR SALTUS.” On the one hand, the latter highlights Saltus’ prominence and knowledge; on the other hand, his role as a translator is completely dismissed, unlike the 1891 edition where in the cover we can read “TRANSLATED BY EDGAR SALTUS.” In terms of visibility, the 1891 translation is more advantageous, as it clearly highlights Saltus’ role—despite the fact that this is not synonymous with being visible in the translation itself—whereas the 1919 version makes it look like only the introduction was his work, and not the book in its entirety.

Another curious aspect of the latest version is that, from the beginning, it is made clear that the introduction is no random paratext and that Saltus will use it to critique D’Aurevilly. Indeed, when we get to the introduction, it is interesting to note the difference between the title given to this part in the two editions: In 1891, this piece was simply entitled “Introduction”; in 1919, it carries the name “Barbey D’Aurevilly.”

Following the same division adopted for the 1891 edition, this introduction can be separated into various parts. One of them has to do with the critiques directed at D’Aurevilly, both good and bad. Starting with the positive aspects, Saltus still finds D’Aurevilly’s way of living “enviable” (Saltus, 1919, p. 7), which, in turn, means that Saltus wanted a piece of D’Aurevilly’s ways. This encompassed his sense of self and approach to literature. Regarding the first one, once again Saltus stresses that D’Aurevilly “wrote for himself” (Saltus, 1919, p. 7) and that the way he carried himself made him not need the approval of others, even if with the “leveled eyeglass [and] curl of the lip” (Saltus, 1919, p. 12) came attached an “easy insolence” (Saltus, 1919, p. 12). Saltus aspired to obtain such a lifestyle; to be the sole judge of his work while having the reassurance that “on the boulevards he was Somebody” (Saltus, 1919, p. 18). After almost 30 years, Saltus does not continue to admire D’Aurevilly’s *dandyism* only: his admiration for his literary work has also persisted. Given that in Decadent America, which remained strong until the publication of this new edition, one of the ways to impress the reader was to invoke a reaction through the use of the horrible, frightening, and macabre, it is not shocking to learn that Saltus praises D’Aurevilly for creating a story that “surprise[s] an unsuspecting reader in bed and make[s] him shriek with fright” (Saltus, 1919, p. 6).

This is also why Saltus adds, once again, that D'Aurevilly's book should have been named "The Story without a Smile" (Saltus, 1919, p. 19): this would attract many American decadents and, consequently, the chances of his translation circulating among them would be higher. These authors, wishing to get away from the "inflated proprieties of the Victorian régime" (Saltus, 1919, p. 19), would find much more comfort in Saltus' translation and French literature than in the life which surrounded them. In fact, Saltus even asserts that he "would rather have written *Salammbô*³⁵ than own New York" (Saltus, 1919, p. 6).

If D'Aurevilly's content was well-regarded by Saltus, his style, however, had faults. As in the 1891 edition, Saltus points out that D'Aurevilly did not revise his work, and while "an ability to write in that fashion may indicate the genius, [it] hardly [indicates] the purist" (Saltus, 1919, p. 11). Speaking of geniuses, Saltus goes on to give his opinion on them: "Geniuses often write badly and as much the better for them. Balzac is atrocious. It is only in inferior artists that you get what young ladies call style" (Saltus, 1919, p. 11). With this paragraph there are two aspects that should be highlighted. One of them has to do with the fact that, once again, Saltus resorts to the female figure to push forward his disparagement. By 1919, many bittersweet moments had stamped his two marriages and later his relationship with Marie Saltus³⁶, and this might be why these "young ladies" are used as a weapon to condemn Balzac's work. The other aspect is related to the idea of Saltus using other French authors to display *connaissance*, namely by mentioning Paul Bourget and Georges Ohnet and addressing Balzac—whose stories made *After-Dinner Stories* possible—and Gautier, one of the authors present in *Tales Before Supper*. We can see that, in 1919, Saltus' perception of Balzac has radically changed and the compliments Saltus gave him 34 years ago no longer apply. Regarding Gautier, Saltus' respect for him lingers on. In fact, and even though he prefers D'Aurevilly's "morgue" to the "ballet in [Gautier's] mind" (Saltus, 1919, p. 21), he stresses Gautier's superiority: "He was the torch of an epoch of which Barbey is now the ghost" (Saltus, 1919, p. 23). We cannot help but notice how this idea of "the torch of an epoch" had years before also appeared in the introduction to *Tales Before Supper*, when Saltus claimed that "Gautier was the torch of an epoch, Mérimée the rapier" (Saltus, 1887,

³⁵ *Salammbô* is a novel written by Gustave Flaubert, first published in 1862.

³⁶ Saltus' first wife, Helen Read, left him due to all the altercations, and the couple got divorced in 1891. In 1893 Saltus got married to Elsie Walsh, who just as Helen Read would denounce Saltus' egoistical and spoiled behaviour; by 1901 they had grown apart. Finally, in 1911 Saltus married Marie Giles, with whom he stayed until his death in 1921 (see, e.g., Sprague, 1968; Stephenson, 1953).

p. 30). This might indicate that, despite not having translated a lot of works, Saltus did not lose track of his previous collections, which may cement the confidence of readers in his work should they have read *Tales Before Supper* and recall this passage. It might also be that Saltus used this expression frequently; nonetheless, the first assumption certainly sounds appealing.

Finally, Saltus tells the reader a funny story:

Barbey d'Aurevilly wanted obscurity and acquired it so amply that when I presented an earlier translation of *The Story Without a Name*, a local critic, who contrived to be both complimentary and amusing, said I had invented Barbey and that the vile story was my own vile work. (Saltus, 1919, p. 5)

With this segment, not only does Saltus engage with the reader but he also reinforces his role as a translator when he mentions that there is already an edition of *The Story Without a Name* published. As for the “vile story [being his] own vile work,” one might decide if this is actually not accurate after analysing the translation and the several changes made.

4.3.2. Closer to France, Farther From England

Following the same logic used in the study of the two previous works, this section will start with the analysis of mentions of France in the target text. First, and similarly to *After-Dinner Stories* and more specifically the stories *The Red Inn*, *Madame Firmiani*, and *Madame de Beauséant*, we can observe that D'Aurevilly's work too was accompanied by a dedication. In this case, it was written for the novelist Paul Bourget, and was a “très petit monument, mais d'une chose très grande—mon amitié pour vous [Bourget]” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 6). For this dedication, Saltus acted in the same way he previously had: He did not translate D'Aurevilly's words. As exemplified in the analysis of *After-Dinner Stories*, the dedication could have been translated into English—as was done by Wormeley and Burnham Ives in their translations of Balzac—but once again that does not happen.

Delving into the text, we see how Saltus' love for France, in spite of all, did not constitute an obstacle to the depiction of historical events. Indeed, in the same way we read in French that, when the Revolution was unfolding, “le sang des échafauds inondait la France” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 188), we also witness, in the target text, that “the blood of scaffolds inundated France” (Saltus, 1891, p. 152). At the same time, we can also

understand that this image of destruction and death—though striking and morbid, as Saltus’ works were—was not something that Saltus would want to repeat many more times. Mindful of the fact that his esteem for the country ought to be accompanied by historical accuracy, he does not hide the fact that the Revolution had devastating effects on the people and the government. However, Saltus does slightly soften this reality in one moment of the story, perhaps in hopes of keeping France’s integrity intact:

La Révolution française marchait alors comme une fièvre putride, et elle allait entrer dans la période aiguë du délire. A Olonde, on ne le savait pas! La sanglante tragédie politique qui allait avoir la France pour théâtre, les deux malheureuses châtelaines d'Olonde ne s'en doutaient même pas, du fond de la tragédie domestique qui avait pour théâtre leur sombre logis. (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 179)

This description was transported to the English version in its entirety, with the exception of the terms “putride,” in “fièvre putride,” and “sanglante,” in “sanglante tragédie politique.” With this paragraph, the idea that what was happening was absolutely distressing comes across clearly: The Revolution could indeed be compared to a fever. In Saltus’ mind, however, that seemed to be enough, and reinforcing that this fever was putrid was perhaps unnecessary. The same holds true for the adjective “bloody.” What is more, we already had the confirmation that “the blood of scaffolds inundated France,” so emphasising this mental picture and further undermining the country’s situation was maybe not in Saltus’ plans. Thus, this paragraph in the English version now reads:

The Revolution was galloping like a fever, the crisis of delirium was at hand. The two miserable chatelaines of Olonde overcome by the domestic tragedy of which their dwelling was the theatre, knew absolutely nothing of the political tragedy which was about to have France for a stage. (Saltus, 1891, pp. 144-145)

The next example resembles Saltus’ intervention in *Tales Before Supper* when a poem by de Musset was invoked by the narrator in *Avatar*. The simple allusion to the writer did not go against Saltus’ esteem for France but, considering that we was not fond of de Musset, he opted to not include that part in the translation—and the same happens with another French personality in *The Story Without a Name*: Jacques Bridaine. Bridaine was a well-known French Catholic preacher and missionary, holding 256 missions throughout various regions of France (see, e.g., Eijnatten, 2006, p. 133). Given that when he translated D’Aurevilly’s story Saltus was not religious and the fact that the country he

loves, France, is surrounded by decadent art and realism, not religion, perhaps Saltus thought that by not including Bridaine he would be doing a favour to the ‘image of France.’ Hence, the passage “L’austère capucin qui parlait alors de l’Enfer avec une énergie de parole qui rappelait le formidable Bridaine, ne paraissait pas fait pour semer dans les âmes autre chose que la crainte de Dieu” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 13) turned into “The monk who was fulminating then on the terrors of hell hardly seemed apt to sow anything else than the fear of God” (Saltus, 1891, p. 24).

Lastly, and as commented on before, Saltus’ love for France was great—for Paris, even greater. Ashamed of what her daughter had allegedly done, Madame de Ferjol considers the capital as a place they could escape to in order to hide Lasthénie’s pregnancy from the village: “Elle aurait pu s’en aller avec sa fille, par exemple, dans cet immense Paris où tout se noie et disparaît, ou dans quelque ville, à l’étranger” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 137). Saltus’ translation of this excerpt, though it conveys the message of the source text, is slightly different in regard to the scope of the verbs used: “She thought of losing herself and her daughter in the immensity of Paris, and she thought too of taking her to some foreign city” (Saltus, 1891, p. 120). The idea surrounding the vastness of Paris remains present, as would be expected, but the part related to the fact that “tout se noie et disparaît” (“everything drowns and disappears”) in the capital is gone from the translation. Madame de Ferjol and her daughter would get lost in Paris—but to take their mind off of Lasthénie’s condition: once they were there, they would not “disappear” or let alone “drown.” The French capital, after all, represented everything Saltus dreamed of. He, too, could get lost there, yet never fade—and neither will the characters.

Crossing the River Thames and arriving to the analysis of England in the target text, we can observe that the country’s presence in the translation did not, once again, escape Saltus’ sight. The first example that can corroborate this affirmation is found in the way the name of William Shakespeare was transported to the target text. If the French version rightly spells the playwright’s surname in the two occasions it appears in the text, the English version fails to do so: “Shakespeare” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 119, 219) is now “Shaksper” (Saltus, 1891, pp. 107, 172). The reason why this is particularly relevant is because—despite all the debate around his surname and its spelling—by the time Saltus translated D’Aurevilly’s story, the great majority of his contemporaries used, indeed, “Shakespeare.” In short, since the beginning of Shakespeare’s literary production until mid-19th century, roughly, comments came about regarding his authorship, and the big

question was the following: Did his texts really belong to him—he, Shakespeare from Stratford-upon-Avon—or were they the work of London’s Shakspeare? By 1891, when *The Story Without a Name* was published, there was barely any doubt that the correct spelling was Shakespeare and it was he the canonical poet and playwright we all recognise today (Haney, 1906, p. 61; Hastings, 1959, p. 486; Whalen, 2015, p. 50).

Given Saltus’ choice, can we say that with this decision he was looking to diminish Shakespeare’s importance, not only proving his own “secondary or tertiary involvement with English...literature” (Sprague, 1968, p. 84) and redirecting the playwright to the times when his authorship was questioned, but also moving away from England’s cultural and literary influence? What is even more interesting is that, if we return to *Tales Before Supper*, published only four years prior to this translation, we realise that in 1887 Saltus was aware of how Shakespeare’s surname should be spelled. In the story *Avatar*, the playwright is mentioned twice—and his surname is missing the first “e.” It might have been that in *Avatar* Saltus had correctly written Shakespeare’s surname because of Gautier, but that is not the case: Gautier’s “Shakspeare” (Gautier, 1857, pp. 17, 138) is correctly amended to “Shakespeare” (Saltus, 1887, pp. 45, 135). This might prove that the spelling in *The Story Without a Name* was not an honest mistake, but a deliberate choice.

The spelling of Shakespeare’s surname is not, however, the only instance where Saltus attempted to take the attention away from England:

La baronne de Ferjol, de son nom Jacqueline-Marie-Louise d’Olonde, s’était éprise du baron de Ferjol, capitaine au régiment de Provence (infanterie), dont le régiment, dans les dernières années du règne de Louis XVI, avait fait partie du camp d’observation dressé sur le mont de Rauville-la-Place, à trois pas de la rivière la Douve et de Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte, qui ne s’appelle plus maintenant que Saint-Sauveur-sur-Douve, comme on dit Strafford-sur-Avon. (D’Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 23-24)

At first glance, this excerpt does not seem to collide with the interests of Saltus and his contemporaries. However, if we focus on the last line, we see that “Strafford-sur-Avon,” in English Stratford-upon-Avon, has been mentioned—and in this way so has England. It is therefore not surprising that the comparison made in the source text between Saint-Sauveur-sur-Douve and Strafford-sur-Avon was omitted in the translation: “Born Jacqueline-Marie-Louise d’Olonde, she had been captivated by the Baron, then a captain

of an infantry regiment which during the last years of the reign of Louis XVI was quartered at St. Sauveur as a guard” (Saltus, 1891, p. 32).

To conclude this section, it is interesting to note that with this small passage we can also analyse, one last time, Saltus’ position towards France. Reading D’Aurevilly’s text, it is possible to identify three French locations: “Provence,” “Rauville-la-Place,” and “Saint-Sauveur-sur-Douve.” In the English version, however, only “Saint-Sauveur-sur-Douve,” the main village in *The Story Without a Name*, has been included—and, what is more, abbreviated to “St. Sauveur.”³⁷ The other two provinces did not make their way to Saltus’ translation: France remains in his mind, Paris in his heart.

4.3.3. Plain Style, Exact Term

4.3.3.1. Plain Style: Characters

By analysing *The Story Without a Name*, it is possible to observe one last time how Saltus adopted the literary style *en vogue* in the stories he translated. To this end, we are again focusing on the same three aspects and the changes surrounding them: characters, space, and the pursuit of the exact term.

Regarding the characters, and for the sake of clarity, the analysis can be separated into behaviour and condition. Following this order, the first example concerns the moment when the monk, already mentioned in the previous section, was preaching to the people in the church Madame de Ferjol and Lasthénie regularly attended. Struck by the monk’s manner, the believers directed all their attention to absorbing his words:

En l’écoutant, toutes les têtes étaient penchées sur les poitrines, toutes les oreilles étaient tendues vers cette voix qui planait, comme la foudre, sous ces voûtes émues. Deux de ces têtes seulement, au lieu d’être penchées, se relevaient un peu vers le prédicateur, perdu dans la pénombre, et faisaient d’incroyables efforts pour le voir... C’étaient les têtes de deux femmes,—la mère et la fille. (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 12)

The way the characters behaved—both mother and daughter and the rest of the people in the church—is comprehensively illustrated, but only in the French version: “In listening

³⁷ It is also noticeable that the four instances where St. Sauveur is referred to as a “petite ville” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 25, 65, 191, 194) are gone from the translation.

to it every ear was turned, every head was bowed, save two, the heads of a mother and daughter” (Saltus, 1891, p. 23).

Moving the focus away from the two main characters to Agathe, their maid, there is a moment in the story where, already after Lasthénie’s secret was out in the open, the maid attends mass. While on her way, the narrator takes the opportunity to make a few repairs about her behaviour and habits:

La vieille servante avait toujours trouvé le moyen d'aller “prendre une messe” aux paroisses voisines d'Olonde, comme elle disait. Elle y allait, la tête couverte de la cape de son mantelet noir, par-dessus sa coiffe, et pas plus là, contre le portail de l’église, où elle se tenait juxta le bénitier pour sortir la première, la messe dite, elle n'avait été plus reconnue qu'au marché de Saint-Sauveur, quand elle y allait le samedi faire les provisions de la semaine. (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 177)

In the passage, it is possible to identify five aspects that characterise Agathe: she always found a way to attend mass; her head was covered with the cloak of her black mantle; she was standing against the door of the church, next to the holy water font; she goes to the market of St. Sauveur every Saturday; and she was not admired at the church nor at the market. Only two of the characteristics in this enumeration, however, were revealed in the target text: “Now, Agathe had not missed one, and she had excited no more curiosity in the church than she had in the market-place” (Saltus, 1891, p. 143). Those that were kept concern the fact that Agathe always attended mass and that she was ignored both at the market and at the church. The way she is dressed, how and where she is, and that she went to the market on Saturdays were removed from the translation entirely. Once again, there is proof of how a plain style is preferred.

Another passage at the beginning of the story, when the narrator is still introducing the characters to the reader, can be examined. In this case, we talk about Lasthénie, and how there was “Rien de plus innocent, en effet, et de plus fillette. Lasthénie de Ferjol (Lasthénie! un nom des romances de ce temps-là, car tous nos noms viennent des romances chantées sur nos berceaux!) Lasthénie de Ferjol sortait à peine de l'enfance” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 30). Given that Saltus takes the opportunity to reduce the word count in the portrayal of characters (and space) when considered possible, it is perhaps not startling that he decided to remove the narrator’s intervention in the translation: “There was indeed nothing more innocent, nothing more girlish, than Lasthénie de Ferjol.

She was then just merging from childhood” (Saltus, 1891, p. 38). Lasthénie remains innocent, girlish, and just became an adult, but the comment on how all names, including Lasthénie’s, come from novels was fully ignored. If this information was parenthetical to D’Aurevilly, maybe American readers will not lose much if they do not have access to it.

Touching upon both behaviour and condition, we can examine the part when Madame de Ferjol tries to get the truth from Lasthénie, even though the latter is just as clueless as the former about what happened:

Elle s'arrêta. On voyait que cela lui coûtait immensément, ce qu'elle venait de dire! mais elle l'avait dit! Elle s'était avouée l'égale de sa fille dans la faute. Elle n'avait pas reculé devant cette humiliation,—la dernière ressource qui lui restât pour savoir la vérité qu'elle brûlait de connaître! Elle s'était résignée à rougir devant son enfant, elle qui avait une si grande idée de la maternité et du respect qu'une fille doit à sa mère!... Parce qu'elle lui apprenait aujourd'hui une chose que personne n'avait sue,—dont personne au monde ne s'était douté—et que le mariage avait si heureusement cachée, elle se dégradait comme mère, aux yeux de Lasthénie, et c'est pour cela qu'elle avait tant tardé à faire ce dégradant aveu!... Elle ne l'avait fait qu'à la dernière extrémité, mais elle en avait bien longtemps roulé en elle-même la pensée! Quel effort n'avait-il pas fallu à son âme robuste pour se résoudre à cet aveu qui l'abaisserait dans l'âme de sa fille? Mais enfin elle s'était domptée et elle l'avait fait! Seulement ce fut en vain. Lasthénie n'en fut pas touchée. (D’Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 125-126)

Enraged by Lasthénie’s unresponsiveness, we can see how Madame de Ferjol is desperately trying to make Lasthénie reveal her sin, adopting multiple approaches to make her confess—but to no avail. This moment of exasperation and what is going through Madame de Ferjol’s thoughts is heavily illustrated by D’Aurevilly, but Saltus does not let the character express her despair nearly as long:

She stopped. The effort to say what she had must have been immense, but she said it. She had not recoiled before the humiliation of admitting her parity to her daughter. It was her last resource, the ultimate hope of earning the secret she burned to know. But the effort was futile. Lasthénie remained unmoved. (Saltus, 1891, p. 111)

Indeed, we can see that the part of the text that begins by “Elle s'était résignée à rougir devant son enfant” and ends in “Mais enfin elle s'était domptée et elle l'avait fait!” was omitted in its entirety from the translation. Though readers of the target text witness Madame de Ferjol’s general efforts in trying to get her daughter to speak, they do not

learn that these encompassed blushing in front of Lasthénie and her perception of what maternity should be; that this is not only her daughter's shame but her own, and that she would not let herself be humiliated.

Now solely focusing on the aspect of condition, we can analyse the moment when Lasthénie was close to her death. Though her mother and Agathe failed to notice Lasthénie's state, several were the features that exposed her fragility:

Elles n'avaient remarqué ni dans sa figure depuis longtemps d'une pâleur désespérée, ni dans l'égaré de ses yeux, de la couleur de la feuille des saules et des saules pleureurs, car elle en avait été un qui avait assez pleuré de larmes ni dans l'affaissement de son corps inerte, si étrangement voûté, rien qui pût leur faire croire qu'elle allait mourir. (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 188)

The young girl's eyes, and also her body as a whole, are meticulously commented on, but that is not what happens in the target text:

Mme. de Ferjol and Agathe had not noticed in her face, which had been despairfully pale so long, nor in the expression of her eyes, nor yet in the weakness of her body, anything to make them think she was about to die. (Saltus, 1891, p. 152)

The inclusion of the elements mentioned above—the eyes and the body as a whole—was maybe enough for Saltus, and explaining why these portrayed Lasthénie's feeble condition might have seemed unnecessary and repetitive. In this way, her eyes no longer resemble the colour of weeping willows and her body is just weak, but not inert nor strangely hunched.

4.3.3.2. Plain Style: Space

The analysis of space in *The Story Without a Name* can also be divided into two parts: interior, meaning home decoration; and exterior, namely landscape. When it comes to interior decoration, two examples can be put forth.

The first revolves around the moment when Madame de Ferjol, accompanied by Lasthénie and Agathe, decides to go back to her château as to hide Lasthénie's secret. It had been a while since they were last spotted there, so the narrator provides an update on the situation: "Le château d'Olonde...ouvrit ses paupières, un matin, c'est-à-dire ses

persiennes noircies et moisies par l'action du temps et des pluies, et l'on vit passer aux fenêtres la blanche coiffe de la vieille Agathe” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 181-182). As several years had gone by, we could imagine that the shutters looked worn-out and dirty, just as the narrator describes. It so happens that Saltus either thought that this would be obvious or that it would simply not evoke any special feelings in the reader, in fact only delaying the realisation that would follow, and as such he excluded these details from the translation: “Her château...opened its eyes, or rather its blinds, again, and the white headdress of Agathe was seen in the windows once more” (Saltus, 1891, p. 146).

Not involving blinds but a table this time, another example can be studied. When still living in St. Sauveur before Lasthénie’s sin, and in celebration of “the big laundry of Spring”—strictly commemorated by the aristocracy—Madame de Ferjol and her daughter are folding the linen sheets:

Rentrées donc chez elles, elles se placèrent avec empressement, comme à une tâche agréable, en face l'une de l'autre, à la table ronde, faite d'un lourd acajou ronçeux, de la salle à manger et elles se mirent à plier des draps, de leurs quatre mains aristocratiques.... (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 50)

The problem with this passage is that the characters not only are folding sheets at the end of a table, but this table is also not a regular one. Indeed, this piece of furniture decorating the room is round and made of robust mahogany. To focus exclusively on the action and keep going forward with the story, Saltus hides these two characteristics from the reader and creates a simpler narrative: “So soon therefore as they reached home they immediately sought the dining-room, and at the table, one in front of the other, they set their aristocratic hands to work” (Saltus, 1891, pp. 54-55).

Concerning the exterior space, there are three instances which, arranged in a way that conveys a gradation line, confirm that Saltus did not have a problem with reducing descriptions involving landscape. The first one is found when the reader gets to know the house where the main characters live. Looking outside the windows, we understand that these “n’avaient pour perspective que ces montagnes s’élevant, escarpées et droites, à trois pas des yeux, comme un mur verdoyant d’espalier” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 79). In the target text, the view from Madame de Ferjol’s house was not as exciting or, at least, detailed, since the windows’ “only perspective was the mountains before them” (Saltus,

1891, p. 75). These mountains are no longer rising, steep, covered in green grass, and so very close to the characters: they are just like any others the reader could think of.

In the next example, and in terms of quantity, more changes can be stressed. Curiously, this one too is about Madame de Ferjol's home, but the exterior now covers more than just the mountains. If describing mountains alone seemed problematic, Saltus might have had difficulties choosing between what to keep and what to let go of when, at the beginning of the story, we learn that:

Certes, si les lieux ont une influence, et ils en ont une, à coup sûr, cette maison, en pierres grisâtres, qui ressemblait à quelque énorme chouette ou à quelque immense chauve-souris, abattue et tombée, les ailes étendues, au bas de ces montagnes, contre lesquelles elle était adossée, et qui n'en était séparée que par un jardin, coupé, à moitié de sa largeur, d'un lavoir dont l'eau de couleur d'ardoise réfléchissait, en noir, la cime des monts dans sa transparence bleue, oui, une pareille maison avait dû ajouter son reflet aux autres ombres d'où émergeait le front immaculé de Lathénie.... (D'Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 45-46)

Let us then take a look at the translation of this passage:

Surely if places have an influence, then this gloomy mansion, which looked like an enormous owl or some immense bat that had fallen with wings outstretched at the foot of the mountains against which it lay, must have added a shadow of its own to the other shadows from which the immaculate forehead of the girl emerged. (Saltus, 1891, p. 52)

Within the first line there are two clear modifications. The first has to do with the intervention of the narrator on whether “places have an influence” on human behaviour. According to the source text, they do, and “à coup sûr.” However, in the English version, the question hovers: D'Aurevilly assures the reader that such influence exists; Saltus does not confirm nor deny the impact of (exterior) space on the characters' behaviour. The second change is related to the simplification of the outside of the building. Whereas in the French version we understand that “greyish stones” make up the exterior walls, in the target text this is abbreviated to a mere “gloomy.” The garden mentioned in the source text is also gone from the translation, as is the wash house whose water reflected, in black, the tops of the mountains. With all these visual effects disappearing from the English text, it is surprising to note that a description as lengthy as “an enormous owl or some immense bat that had fallen with wings outstretched at the foot of the mountains against which it

lay” was included. The most logical reason behind this decision might have to do with the fact that not only are the owl and the bat mysterious animals but the bat has also died, and quite drastically, which might fulfill the desire of the American public for uncanny and shocking descriptions.

Finally, a three pages long paragraph is a perfect example of how Saltus’ attention was not directed towards the characterisation of space, particularly nature and landscape. Between the beginning of this paragraph—“Sa vie extérieure n'avait pas changé” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 74)—and its end—“qui sonnait ce que Dante appelle “l'agonie du jour qui se meurt”” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 77)—there are multiples instances where descriptions of space, whether interior or exterior, appear. However, what was a very lengthy illustration turned into a mere half-page report:

Her life, externally, had not changed; it was the same round of household duties, the same needlework in the embrasure of the same window, the same visits with her mother to church, and the same walks with her along the mountain slope. These walks as a rule were taken late in the afternoon, and from these vesperal promenades the ladies rarely returned until they heard the Angelus rising under their feet and mounting toward them from the depths of the little valley where the black Romanic church crouched and sounded what Dante has called the agony of the dying day. (Saltus, 1891, p. 73)

Nowhere to be found is the elaborate and colourful narration of the surrounding mountains, “aux pentes vertes, sur lesquelles tressaillent ces ruisseaux qui se gonflent ou se dégonflent, selon les saisons, mais ne cessent jamais d'en descendre,” where, during the day, “[elles] faisaient un écran éternel contre [l]es rayons [du soleil]” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 75), and at night, the moon, “qu'on ne voyait pas, éclairait d'une pâle lueur lactée la pauvre lucarne du ciel” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 76). After the sunrise but before the sunset, these “montagnes circulaires, aux sommets qui se baisaient presque” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 76), and which do not have the “maigreur et de la chaude rousseur des Pyrénées, avaient, le soir, avec le tapis de prairie qui les couvre, leurs boules de buissons, foisonnant par places, leurs arbres vigoureux qui se penchent se tordent ou s'échevèlent sur leurs pentes” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, pp. 75-76). Finally, on the land involving the mountains, “les vapeurs s'élevant du sol et de toutes ces eaux courantes qui en arrosent l'herbe, mettaient comme un blanc burnous de brouillard nacré sur les vastes robes vertes” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 76).

Thus, all the vivid and clear visuals that could have been found between the two sentences in the target text were entirely left out: Only the first sentence and the last were transported to the English version; all the other parts in the middle are for the perusal of the readers of the original only.

4.3.3.3. The Exact Term

Saltus' quest for the precise term did not end with the publication of *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper*: Traces of the application of the exact word are also identified in *The Story Without a Name*. First, we have a familiar situation: the use of terms with roots in the French language and the decision to keep French words or even expressions.

Commencing with the former, we have terms such as “grandeur” in the translation of “Elle n'était plus qu'une ruine, mais c'était une ruine comme le Colisée. Elle en avait la grandeur et la majesté” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 193) to “She was but a ruin, but a ruin like the Coliseum; she had its grandeur and its majesty” (Saltus, 1891, p. 155); “contredances” (Saltus, 1891, p. 66) as the English equivalent of the French “contredanses” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 65); and “ambuscade” (Saltus, 1891, p. 125) to mean “embuscade” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 142). This last choice is particularly interesting given that “the synonym ambush is older by a century, but English made room for *ambuscade* in the late 16th century anyway, [a] word [that] was borrowed into English from Middle French” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

When it comes to the use of French words and expressions, we have the term “tête-à-tête” in “She lived in that tête-à-tête with her daughter” (Saltus, 1891, p. 147), which was translated from the French “Elle pensait toujours à ce tête-à-tête” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 182), and the word “enceinte,” found in the translation of “une malheureuse qu'on avait cru grosse” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 127) to “an unfortunate girl who was thought to be enceinte” (Saltus, 1891, p. 112). Neither term is italicised and the latter is particularly fascinating, as not only was the French word “enceinte” not used in the source text but this choice must have been clearly thought through by Saltus, given that synonyms like “impregnated” or “ingravidated” already existed and were employed at the time (see Webster, 1857, p. 542). In this sense, Saltus also opted not to translate the saying “Autre temps, autres mœurs!” (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 192), perhaps because an equivalent in

English would not hold as much strength as its French counterpart. With the use of italics, Saltus thus pronounced “*Autre temps, autres mœurs!*” (Saltus, 1891, p. 154).

Regarding this use of French terms, the same conclusion drawn in the analysis of *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper* applies: Were these intended to stress the presence of a source culture to the point of creating obstacles to the readers’ comprehension of the text—and therefore producing a foreignizing strategy—or were these terms kept because the translation would still be intelligible and look like an original work at the same time it succeeded in fulfilling the dominant tastes of the target audience? As what happens in the two previous collections, I would argue that the second option—in line with the rest of Saltus’ choices in all the works here analysed—is the most appropriate answer.

Concerning the use of the words “grandeur,” “contredances,” and “ambuscade,” we can observe how these might not have been too problematic for the American reader, given that all of them can be found in Webster’s (1857) dictionary and in other texts published close to the year in which *The Story Without a Name* was out (see, e.g., Carlyle, 1899; Harrison, 1906; Roemer, 1888; The New York Times, 1898). With regard to the ‘purely’ French words and expressions—“tête-à-tête,” “enceinte,” and “Autre temps, autres mœurs”—we can once again claim that despite the foreignness inherent to them, these might have been kept in the target text with the reader in mind. One thing would be if, throughout the translation, there were hundreds of these occurrences, which would mean that a foreignizing strategy had been adopted; another is the occasional appearance—and, in this case, three times—of French words, which could actually please American readers by giving them a taste of France and, in the end, resemble any given work by, for instance, the already mentioned George Washington Cable, Anna Bowman Dodd, or Henry James.

The search for a ‘more to the point’ narrative and plain style is also observable in the decision to provide more exact time periods. In this way, “Un jour sous la Restauration,—ni plus ni moins qu'un quart de siècle” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 191) is transformed simply into “TWENTY- FIVE years later” (Saltus, 1891, p. 154) and “Pour mon compte, j’ai vécu là vingt-huit jours” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 9) becomes “I lived there nearly a month” (Saltus, 1891, p. 20). In the first example, the time period remains the same—the only difference being that a quarter of a century was simplified into a more immediate calculation, 25 years. However, in the second example, we see how twenty-

eight days were transformed into “nearly a month.” While the latter may not seem as exhaustive as the former and is, indeed, a simpler way of saying ‘almost’ the same thing, it can make the reader wonder whether this time period is closer to 25 or 30 days. Another example is the translation of “Dans les dernières années du dix-huitième siècle qui précédèrent la Révolution française” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 7) to “One day just prior to the French Revolution” (Saltus, 1891, p. 19). While the time period given by D’Aurevilly is quite lengthy, Saltus’ is much shorter thanks to the selection of a precise date.

Finally, the desire for the exact term led Saltus to make one more change to D’Aurevilly’s text. Madame de Ferjol, ashamed of herself for not realising Lasthénie’s problem, claims that “Je me suis endormie, comme vos disciples ingrats dans le jardin des Oliviers” (D’Aurevilly, 1882, p. 98). After some research, Saltus’ translation—“Like the ungrateful disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane I have fallen asleep” (Saltus, 1891, p. 91)—seems to make sense. In fact, the name of the garden in D’Aurevilly’s story was mistaken for the mount on which such place stands. This mount, located in Jerusalem, is called ‘Mount of Olives,’ and the garden at its foot, as indicated by Saltus, the ‘Garden of Gethsemane’ (for more information see, e.g., Babcox, 2013; Petruccelli et al., 2014). The inaccuracy found in the source text is therefore corrected in the English version, which shows that applying the exact term also encompassed the rectification of any given original mistakes. In turn, we can argue that such a decision strengthens the domestication strategy used throughout the translation, given that using ‘Garden of Olives’—following the French text—could have been done with the aid of a footnote to explain why the correct designation was, in fact, “Garden of Gethsemane.”

4.4. Diction and Contradiction: Final Remarks

Before a final review of Saltus’ domesticating strategy in his three works is made, let us take a look at three other aspects that, while not as extensive as the ones already analysed, should also be put forth—not least because of the contradictions found within them. Firstly, it will be demonstrated that certain passages involving the female figure—so important to Saltus—differ from those in the source texts; then, it will be argued that some parts in the target texts—besides those related to characters and space and the pursuit of the exact term—were written with not just any reader in mind, but the American

reader specifically; and, finally, as touched upon previously, some changes in *Tales Before Supper* that do not have a clear explanation will be further examined in hopes of solving the mystery.

4.4.1. The Female Figure: Not Gone and Not Forgotten

The importance of the female figure for Saltus can be detected in all three works, and what is particularly curious about this is that some of these passages not only point out to this importance but some of them are also contradictory. This is in line with how wives were perceived in *fin-de-siècle* US: As already discussed, some were “goddesses,” others were not. In this way, some parts where the female figure had previously been marginalised were adapted as to show her more respect, either through omissions or direct changes; other parts remained the same, and the female figure was therefore relegated to an inferior position with regard to men.

Starting with *After-Dinner Stories*, the stories *Madame de Beauséant* and *The ‘Grande Bretèche’* provide three good examples. In *Madame de Beauséant*, we can first witness how the enhancement of masculinity in opposition to the capacity of the female figure is dealt with. When comparing Monsieur de Nueil and Madame de Beauséant, in Balzac’s text, we understand that the male figure comes off as much more confident and important and has a sense of direction: “La vicomtesse a eu d’autant plus de tort dans ses escapades que monsieur de Beauséant est un galant homme, un homme de cour: il aurait très-bien entendu raison. Mais sa femme est une tête folle...” (Balzac, 1842b, p. 306). This contrast, which paints Madame de Beauséant as someone who is incapable of success and Monsieur de Nueil as a charming, high-ranking man, is nowhere to be seen in the translation: Saltus’ respect for the female figure is present. At the same time—and this applies to all the changes of this same nature—Saltus could have put his ideology and that of the *zeitgeist* of the times aside. The fact that he has not and was influenced by his habitus—here and in some of the following instances—can certainly make us wonder whether this can be seen as an act of domestication, given that these modifications comply with the target culture.

The respect for the female figure can be observed twice in this story, only this time Saltus did include his account of the event. Trying to charm Madame de Beauséant, Monsieur de Nueil compliments her—and the former is not unhappy with his approach.

However, and even though in the French text Madame de Beauséant's response conveys strength and decisiveness, the narrator's intervention soon destroys such interpretation:

Madame de Beauséant, à qui celle surprise ne déplut sans doute point, lui tendit la main par un geste doux, mais impératif; puis, rappelant un sourire sur ses lèvres pâlies, comme pour obéir encore aux grâces de son sexe, elle lui dit....
(Balzac, 1842b, p. 313)

To be polite, Madame de Beauséant offers her hand to Monsieur de Nueil, which would not be problematic given that she does so assertively—but it seems that Saltus does not share this opinion. What is more, when Madame de Beauséant brings a smile to her lips before speaking her mind, she does so because, as a woman, “she simply must.” These two components of the source text were left behind in the English version: “Mme. de Beauséant was not altogether displeased by this dumb compliment. She called a smile to her lips and said...” (Verelst, 1885, p. 180). The moment Madame de Beauséant extends her hand, even if done with assertiveness, is removed from the target text, as is the reason behind the smile she projected—and whose lips are no longer “pâlies,” as the lack of colour could indicate weakness. In the target text, then, Madame de Beauséant appears as a woman who is confident in herself and her actions.

Still in *After-Dinner Stories*, the story *The 'Grande Bretèche'* offers us the chance to understand how female characters, for Saltus, were not all the same: If men had different occupations and behaviours, why would not women? This perspective is put to the test when, giggling, Rosalie states that she does not intend to get married, and the narrator comments that “Elle se remit promptement de son émotion intérieure, car toutes les femmes, depuis la grande dame jusqu'aux servantes d'auberge inclusivement, ont un sang-froid qui leur est particulier” (Balzac, 1845, p. 107). In light of Saltus' position and the *zeitgeist* of the times, this passage might present some problems. The first objection has to do with the fact that Rosalie “se remit promptement de son émotion intérieure.” Since the character was laughing when evoking the desire not to get married, it seems that her behaviour was somehow deserving of punishment given that she soon stopped and “recovered from her emotions.” The second issue is related to the “sang-froid qui...est particulier” to women. The idea that being cold or harsh is inherent to women, and not just one in particular but all of them, does not appear to bode well for Saltus. Presented with these views, Saltus might have felt he had no option but to entirely dismiss this passage from the readers.

One last example can be retrieved from Saltus' last translation, *The Story Without a Name*. When Agathe starts realising Lasthénie's physical and mental condition, she asks the young girl how much pain she is in. Lasthénie, unaware that she was pregnant, would always claim to be fine. The narrator in D'Aurevilly's story knew, however, that this was not true:

Mais c'est l'histoire de toutes les jeunes filles, ces douces stoïques, de répondre qu'elles ne souffrent pas, quand elles souffrent. Les femmes sont si bien faites pour la souffrance; elle est si bien leur destinée; elles commencent de l'éprouver de si bonne heure et elles en sont si peu étonnées, qu'elles disent longtemps encore qu'elle n'est pas là, quand elle est venue! Et elle était venue. Lasthénie, évidemment, souffrait. Ses yeux se cernaient. (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 74)

After stating that all young girls suffer, the narrator proceeds to justify why that is: Women were designed and are destined to endure suffering. This is quite a statement, given that we are before the generalisation of all women, not just Lasthénie. Mindful of this, Saltus opted to remove this part from the English version and simply included that “It is a way young girls have, of denying that they suffer when they do. And Lasthénie evidently was suffering. Her eyes were hollow” (Saltus, 1891, p. 73). Keeping the idea that all women were meant to suffer, from the beginning to the end, almost like it was a role they must fulfil, does not align with the perception of women that Saltus and some of his contemporaries had—even if only in their stories.

This differentiation between Saltus' idea of the female figure in his literary production and in his personal life was palpable, and sometimes the line separating the two was clear in his stories. Thus far, we have observed how the female figure seems to be held to a higher level of importance in the translations than in the source texts, sometimes even attaining what might be called ‘gender parity,’ but soon we find contradictions in this discourse.

The incongruencies in question can be found in the three works and one example will be provided for each. Addressing them chronologically, we will start with *After-Dinner Stories*, more specifically *Madame Firmiani*. In the previous comparisons, we could almost get a sense of independence coming from the female figure. This independence would manifest itself in various areas, but apparently not in the financial department in the case of the second story of *After-Dinner Stories*. Indeed, when Monsieur de Bourbonne claims that “Les femmes s'entendent bien plus à manger une

fortune qu'à la faire" (Balzac, 1842a, p. 246), Saltus apparently agrees: "Women understand how to squander a fortune, but as to making one" (Verelst, 1885, p. 117). The statement in itself could simply be a mere side note, and with the aim of faithfully transporting Balzac into English it could be that Saltus decided to keep the passage. However, we have seen how omitting and changing parts of the source text does not seem to be problematic for Saltus, both in general and in the depiction of the female figure. Thus, we realise that this segment from *Madame Firmiani* could have easily been prone to transformation as to make the female character seem more capable and autonomous, but that is not what happened.

Advancing to the second book, *Tales Before Supper*, the story *Avatar* also has something to offer in this regard. When Monsieur Octave de Seville explains his feelings for Countess Prascovie Labinska directly to her, "Prascovie, émue, se leva, et, par un mouvement de gracieuse pitié féminine, passa son mouchoir de batiste sur mes yeux" (Gautier, 1857, p. 36). Given that being "cold-blooded," for instance, should not be generalised to all women, perhaps the ability to show pity should not either. That is, nonetheless, what happens both in the French and English version: "Prascovie rose in extreme agitation, and, with a motion of gracious feminine pity, pressed her delicate handkerchief to my eyes" (Verelst, 1887, p. 59). This time, Saltus did not hide or transform the excerpt, which is curious because by keeping a strict correlation between being a woman and displaying pity, Saltus deviates from the image he had managed to previously create of women being individuals and not a homogenous group.

Lastly, we turn our attention to *The Story Without a Name* to find contradictions in Saltus' thoughts and position regarding women. Indeed, a light has already been shed on the observation that follows when Saltus' introductory piece was discussed. Commenting on D'Aurevilly's earlier career path, Saltus noted that D'Aurevilly made "two acquaintances, the muse and George Brummell, esq. A little later he made a third. The first awoke his life, the second colored it, by the third it was marred. The latter of course was a woman" (Saltus, 1891, p. 6). This is a perfect example to illustrate the dichotomy between the woman as a literary figure and the woman as a living, breathing human being. Here, clearly, we are talking about the latter, and Saltus does not refrain from pointing out that it was inarguably a woman who tarnished D'Aurevilly's life. Saltus' women could get away with their actions—but perhaps only if they were characters in one of his stories.

4.4.2. For American Readers, One Last Time

As was possible to verify, many were the changes made in the three works regarding the description of characters and space, as to comply with a plain style, and the search for the exact term, for instance through the inclusion of English words with roots in the French language. We can argue that these decisions are illustrative of a domesticating strategy, and the way they bent to the tastes of the target culture is verifiable. But, besides these, there are a few other instances that, while they do not fit into the aforementioned fields, should also be analysed as they, too, demonstrate that certain choices might have been made with not just any reader in mind, but the American reader in particular.

Two of these decisions are present in *Avatar*, the first story in *Tales Before Supper*. At the beginning of Chapter V, the temperature of the rooms in the hotel where doctor Balthazar Cherbonneau was living is mentioned: it was between “trente-cinq ou quarante degrés de chaleur” (Gautier, 1857, p. 63). Aware that these numbers were representative of the Celsius scale, and that the unit Americans knew and used was Fahrenheit, Saltus decided to make the conversion: The temperature in the room now “exceeded a hundred degrees Fahrenheit” (Verelst, 1887, p. 79).

If Celsius was a unit of measurement that could cause some problems to American readers if it was kept in the target text, so could the term “Petites-Maisons” (Gautier, 1857, p. 159). Previously known as Maladrerie St. Germain, Petites-Maisons was the name of a real psychiatric hospital in Paris renewed in 1557 (see, e.g., Biraben, 1989, p. 167; Burdett, 1891, p. 472). This was probably something that the majority of Americans did not know, and so it was replaced by “lunatic asylum” (Verelst, 1887, p. 150) in the English text likely with the aim of not creating obstacles to the reader.

Going back two years to *After-Dinner Stories*, the story *Madame de Beauséant* brings us two aspects deserving of attention and directly related to the idea of bearing the American reader in mind: One of them is the title of the story in the target text; the other is the footnote that Saltus left. Concerning the title of the story, we can observe how in the English version we are no longer before an abandoned woman (“La Femme Abandonnée”) but simply “Madame de Beauséant.” When the readers finish the story, they will have understood that Madame de Beauséant was, in fact, left behind twice, but they do not immediately get that information from the title. Could it be that such a change was made as to not give away the plot? At the same time, with this decision, are the

chances of the reader being interested until the end of the story higher, given that with the new title it is not clear what will happen? Finally, let us not forget the importance given to wives and literary female figures by Saltus and his contemporaries. In this way, could a title alluding to the abandonment of the female character drive American readers away, despite the interest in everything French?

Regarding the footnote, in which “¹ The reader is referred to *Le Père Goriot*. [Translator's note.]” (Verelst, 1885, p. 169), there are several aspects that can be discussed. First and foremost, it is interesting to note that this is the only footnote Saltus added in his career as a translator. Secondly, by redirecting the reader to another of Balzac’s productions, Saltus once more demonstrates his knowledge of French literature. Finally, we can assert that the inclusion of the footnote is especially related to the respect for the reader. In short, this footnote comes as a result of the appearance of Monsieur d’Ajuda-Pinto in the story and, since he is only mentioned twice in it and throughout the entire collection, Saltus might have felt compelled to let the reader know that it is in *Le Père Goriot* that this character dominates the narrative and has a more complex relationship with Madame de Beauséant. Attentive to the fact that not all American readers would know about the existence of Monsieur d’Ajuda-Pinto, Saltus briefly indicates that for more background on the character all they need to do is consult *Le Père Goriot*. To the best of my analysis, this is the only instance—in all three works—where we can argue to be in the presence of a foreignizing strategy. Saltus could have simply written “The reader is referred to *Le Père Goriot*,” and not have added “[Translator’s note.],” which could still give the idea that the story was an original. However, that is not what happened, and with this inclusion Saltus clearly tells readers—or reminds them—that *Madame de Beauséant* is, indeed, a translation.

Despite these changes and explanations for the reader’s sake, one or two contradictions can also be spotted—as has happened in the section on the female figure. The first one has to do with currency. Continuing with *After-Dinner Stories*, in *The Red Inn* thirty acres that “valent bien environ soixante mille francs” (Balzac, 1846, p. 370) are still “worth every sou of sixty thousand francs” (Verelst, 1885, p. 48) and, in *Madame Firmiani*, “cent mille francs dus à une tromperie légale” (Balzac, 1842a, p. 246) translate into “a hundred thousand francs that come from a legal trickery” (Verelst, 1885, p. 118). In *The Venus of Ille* too, and this time from *Tales Before Supper*, “douze cents francs de diamans” (Mérimée, 1837, p. 439) become “twelve hundred francs' worth of diamonds”

(Verelst, 1887, p. 208). Keeping these decisions in mind, we may wonder why the unit of currency was not converted to dollars, given that the temperature in Celsius was converted to Fahrenheit. In other words, in the same way that American readers were unlikely to know the equivalent of “trente-cinq ou quarante degrés de chaleur,” perhaps the same thinking could be applied to these monetary amounts. In this case, I believe that the choice to keep the French currency represents the same situation described in the analysis of Saltus’ decision to keep certain French words and expressions: To give readers a real taste of France and satisfy their need of the French way of life. Moreover, given that the action in the three books is set in France, it makes sense to keep using francs instead of converting them to dollars.

It is also worth noting that in *The ‘Grande Bretèche’* there is a sum of money, more precisely “quinze mille francs” (Balzac, 1845, pp. 104, 106), that was translated as “ten thousand francs” (Verelst, 1885, pp. 145, 148). Given that this occurs twice in the story, it does not look like this is a typographical error but rather a deliberate decision. The reasons behind it, just like some of Saltus’ choices—especially in *Tales Before Supper*—remain a mystery.

Lastly, *The Story Without a Name* provides one final instance for analysis. Already far away from the town where all the neighbours knew them, Madame de Ferjol and Lasthénie find themselves secluded at their château—and for such isolation a comparison is drawn:

Les murs du jardin, qui depuis longtemps n'était plus cultivé, étaient assez hauts pour cacher les deux recluses, quand elles avaient besoin de faire quelques pas au dehors pour ne pas mourir de leur solitude, comme cette énergique princesse d'Éboli, verrouillée par la jalousie de Philippe II dans une chambre aux fenêtres grillées et cadénassées, mourut de la sienne, en quatorze mois, n'ayant d'autre air à respirer que celui qui lui sortait de la bouche et qui lui rentrait dans la poitrine, s'asphyxiant d'elle-même, effroyable torture!... Au bout de quelques jours, du reste, Lasthénie ne descendit plus au jardin. (D'Aurevilly, 1882, p. 154)

The two main characters of the story are therefore likened to Ana de Mendoza, also known as the Princess of Éboli. Mendoza was a 16th-century Spanish aristocrat who was married to Rui Gomes da Silva, first Prince of Éboli, by (the future) King Philip II. After her husband’s death, she spent three years in a convent, returning to public life soon after and forming an alliance with the King's undersecretary of state, Antonio Pérez. Years

later, in 1579, they would be accused of treason and arrested. Mendoza died, still in prison, in 1592 (for more information on the Princess of Éboli see, e.g., Dadson, 2011, 2020; Kamen, 2000, p. 98). Although we can argue that she was the most famous woman in Spain at the time, by 1891 when Saltus' translation was published it is very likely that the great majority of Americans did not know who she was. In this way, in the target text we read that "The walls of the uncultivated garden were sufficiently high to conceal the two recluses when they cared to take a few steps in the open air. Soon, however, Lasthénie left the garden to itself" (Saltus, 1891, p. 133). The Princess of Éboli and her story—meaning the resemblance of her situation and that of Lasthénie and her mother—were excluded, and the attention is solely focused on the two characters that the reader is already familiar with.

4.4.3. Making Sense of *Tales Before Supper*

No other mystery in the three works translated by Saltus is greater than the way the stories *Avatar* and *The Venus of Ille* were transferred into English. As mentioned in the analysis of *Tales Before Supper*, Saltus' second collection differs from *After-Dinner Stories* and *The Story Without a Name* in terms of the changes that were made.

In the case of *Avatar*, this is particularly clear in the description of characters and their actions and thoughts, which were transported in full to the target text without exception—unlike what happens in the works that preceded and succeeded *Tales Before Supper*, in which some details were transformed or omitted for the sake of plain style.

After a lot of research, I believe that the reason behind the way the story was translated has to do with Saltus being aware that another translator and colleague of his, the already mentioned Lafcadio Hearn, had also translated Gautier's text. Perhaps Saltus knew that he had to withdraw from omitting or adapting certain parts of the source text in case the two translations were ever compared and there was a search for the 'best one,' with 'best one' meaning that which had transported Gautier's narrative 'more faithfully' into English.

In fact, Hearn had translated *Avatar* much earlier, in 1878. Yet, he did not manage to find a publisher that wanted the translation "on account of the Midwestern puritanism

of the seventies³⁸” (Lemoine, 2006, p. 304). For some time, it was believed that Hearn had thrown the manuscript away but, as we know today, he kept it after all (Lemoine, 2006, p. 305; New York Public Library & State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1965, p. 676; Randall, 1967, p. 207; Société Théophile Gautier, 1991, p. 165).

Unaware of this, it could have been that Saltus ‘knew’ that Hearn was no longer trying to publish his translation and took the opportunity to publish *Avatar* before Hearn thought about trying to do it again. In this way, in 1887, Saltus published *Tales Before Supper*, and one year later the two translators, Hearn and Saltus, curiously came together to release *Tales From Théophile Gautier*. This collection included the stories *Avatar*, *Jettatura*, and *Clarimonde* and unleashed the great debate—which continues to this day—around the authorship of the translation of *Avatar*. Indeed, in 1937, Jacob Blanck asked the question: “Avatar—Hearn or Saltus?” (Blanck, 1937, p. 2498), and no definite answer was obtained. To complicate things further, in *Tales From Théophile Gautier* there is no indication of which texts were translated by Hearn or Saltus. Rather, it seems as though the three stories were a joint effort, but this theory quickly is discredited once we refer to the Issue 13 of “Bulletin de la Société” (Société Théophile Gautier, 1991), dedicated to the work of Gautier. Apparently, the tale *Jettatura* was translated by “M. de L.” (Société Théophile Gautier, 1991, p. 175), whose identity was impossible to pin down. Can this be a pseudonym of either Saltus or Hearn? The question remains. Be as it may, and given that *Clarimonde* had been previously translated and published by Hearn before the appearance of this collection in 1888, it is very plausible—and this is usually the consensus—that *Avatar*, both in *Tales Before Supper* and *Tales From Théophile Gautier*, was translated by Saltus despite Hearn having translated it earlier (Société Théophile Gautier, 1991, p. 175).

Nonetheless, the idea that Saltus did not produce the translation is still not entirely off the table. To reiterate, several questions can be posed as to come up with an explanation for the translation of *Avatar* and the way in which it was done: 1) Was Saltus aware of Hearn’s 1878 translation, in which case the reason why fewer changes were made to the French text might have been to get closer to the original in case Hearn decided to try one more time to publish his version?; 2) Did Saltus commit plagiarism altogether

³⁸ Given that “Hearn’s fondest ambition then was to ‘latinize’ the English language” (Lemoine, 2006, p. 316), we might wonder whether a foreignization strategy was adopted in his rendering of *Avatar*, since this would have led to an ‘un-Americanised’ target text that could shock, perhaps more than intended, the American reader.

(see Blanck, 1949, p. 232)? This would be unlikely, as Saltus and Hearn were colleagues and knew about each other's publications, so once *Tales Before Supper* was out, Hearn could have immediately realised what Saltus had done; 3) Is, in fact, the *Avatar* in *Tales Before Supper* an earlier effort by Hearn, of which Saltus borrowed some parts, and, having discovered it, Hearn suggested having it published in *Tales From Théophile Gautier* one year later by coming together and producing a collection together³⁹?; and 4) Is *Avatar*, both in *Tales Before Supper* and *Tales From Théophile Gautier*, after all, a single effort by Saltus? As it is not clear who the translator of *Avatar* was in any of the editions of *Tales From Théophile Gautier* (1888, 1909, and 1923; see Société Théophile Gautier, 1991, p. 175) and taking into consideration that in *Tales Before Supper* and in the 1923⁴⁰ edition of *Tales From Théophile Gautier* there are no differences, we can infer that Saltus is indeed the only translator: Had it been Hearn, or had Saltus taken advantage of Hearn's text, some changes would have been made to every *Avatar* published after 1887.

This last statement can finally be corroborated with the help of none other than the already mentioned Jacob Blanck. Blanck wondered for several years who the translator of *Avatar* was (Blanck, 1937, 1949), and in 1963 he seems to have found an answer: "Mr. Whitman Bennett of New York City has in his possession (June, 1959) the manuscript of Hearn's translation of "Avatar" and it most definitely is not the translation published in *Tales before Supper*, 1887" (Blanck, 1963, p. 103).

If we take Blanck's word and trust that the research carried out by Société Théophile Gautier in 1991 is accurate, we can positively declare that Saltus is, in fact, the one who translated *Avatar* in all of the collections and editions discussed. Still, no explanation for the lack of changes in the characters' interactions and behaviours can really be put forth and we go back to the very start: Did *Avatar* suffer fewer modifications when compared to *After-Dinner Stories* and *The Story Without a Name* because Saltus knew about Hearn's manuscript and, for fear of being considered the less 'faithful' translator, chose not to edit some of the parts of the text? The enigma continues.

³⁹ This theory can only be sustained if we assume that Hearn was not hurt or upset that Saltus used his earlier translation as an inspiration for the 1887 publication.

⁴⁰ Unfortunately, I only had access to the 1923 edition. Both the 1888 and 1909 versions seem to be untraceable, and for the 1909 edition "apparently only one copy of this book is known [and] the publishers have no record of it" (Randall, 1967, p. 207).

As for *The Venus of Ille*, there is no mysterious story involved, but the way in which it was translated surely is puzzling. Even more so than in *Avatar*, the plain style we witnessed in Saltus’ two other works is not present: no changes, big or small, were made to the characters’ attitudes and looks or the space surrounding them. We could argue that this has to do with the length of the story, which did not allow for great modifications, but *Madame Firmiani* and *The ‘Grande Bretèche’* are even shorter in comparison and, as demonstrated, several changes were made to the source texts.

Thus, the number of words does not explain why there are no changes when it comes to involvement of the characters in the action and space, so one could think that the times these appear might—but they do not. There are several instances where the characters’ behaviour and physical appearance are explored in detail, and where we might have expected Saltus to have made some cuts, as he did so frequently elsewhere. The same applies to spaces, both indoors and outdoors. For the sake of conciseness, two tables comparing both French and English versions—one for the characters (Table 1) and one for space (Table 2)—follow.

Table 1. Passages concerning the characters in *The Venus of Ille* which we might have expected to have undergone modification in the light of the changes made in the other translations.

<p>Devisant de la sorte, nous entrâmes à Ille, et je me trouvai bientôt en présence de M. de Peyrehorade. C’était un petit vieillard vert encore et dispos, poudré, le nez rouge, l’air jovial et goguenard. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 428)</p>	<p>Chatting in this way we entered Ille, and I soon found myself in the presence of M. de Peyrehorade. He was a little old man, still hale and active, with powdered hair, a red nose, and a jovial, bantering manner. (Verelst, 1887, p. 181)</p>
<p>Sa femme, un peu trop grasse, comme la plupart des Catalanes lorsqu’elles ont passé quarante ans, me parut une provinciale renforcée?, uniquement occupée des soins de son ménage. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 428)</p>	<p>His wife was a trifle stout, as are most Catalans when they are over forty years of age. She appeared to me a thorough provincial, solely occupied with her house keeping. (Verelst, 1887, p. 182)</p>
<p>C’était un grand jeune homme de vingt-six ans, d’une physionomie belle et régulière, mais manquant d’expression. Sa taille et ses formes athlétiques justifiaient bien la réputation d’indefatigable joueur de paume qu’on lui faisait dans le pays. Il était ce soir-là habillé avec élégance, exactement d’après la gravure du dernier numéro du Journal des modes. Mais il me semblait gêné dans ses vêtements; il était roide comme un piquet dans son col de velours, et ne se tournait que tout d’une pièce. Ses mains grosses et hâlées, ses ongles courts, contrastaient singulièrement avec son costume.</p>	<p>He was a tall young man of twenty-six, with a regular and handsome countenance, but lacking in expression. His height and his athletic figure well justified the reputation of an indefatigable racquet player given him in the neighborhood. On that evening he was dressed in an elegant manner; that is to say, he was an exact copy of a fashion plate in the last number of the Journal des Modes. But he seemed to me ill at ease in his clothes; he was as stiff as a post in his velvet collar, and could only turn all of a piece. In striking contrast to his costume were his large sunburnt hands and blunt nails. They were a</p>

C'étaient des mains de laboureur sortant des manches d'un dandy. (Mérimée, 1837, pp. 428-429)	laborer's hands issuing from the sleeves of an exquisite. (Verelst, 1887, p. 183)
En parlant ainsi, il tirait de la première phalange de son petit doigt une grosse bague enrichie de diamants, et formée de deux mains entrelacées; allusion qui me parut infiniment poétique. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 439)	He drew from his little finger a heavy ring, enriched with diamonds, and fashioned into two clasped hands, an allusion which seemed to me infinitely poetic. (Verelst, 1887, p. 200)
Mademoiselle de Puygarrig avait dix-huit ans; sa taille souple et délicate contrastait avec les formes osseuses de son robuste fiancé. Elle était non seulement belle, mais séduisante. J'admirais le naturel parfait de toutes ses réponses; et son air de bonté, qui pourtant n'était pas exempt d'une légère teinte de malice, me rappela, malgré moi, la Vénus de mon hôte. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 440)	Mademoiselle de Puygarrig was eighteen years of age. Her slender, graceful figure formed a striking contrast to the stalwart frame of her future husband. She was not only beautiful, she was alluring. I admired the perfect naturalness of all her replies. Her kind look, which yet was not free from a touch of malice, reminded me, in spite of myself, of my host's Venus. (Verelst, 1887, p. 202)

Table 2. Passages concerning space in *The Venus of Ille* which we might have expected to have undergone modification in the light of the changes made in the other translations.

Je descendais le dernier coteau du Canigou, et, bien que le soleil fût déjà couché, je distinguais dans la plaine les maisons de la petite ville d'Ille. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 425)	I was descending the last slope of the Canigou, and though the sun was already set I could distinguish on the plain the houses of the small town of Ille. (Verelst, 1887, p. 177)
Monuments phéniciens, celtiques, romains, arabes, byzantins, vous verrez tout, depuis le cèdre jusqu'à l'hysope. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 429)	Phœnician, Celtic, Roman, Arabian, and Byzantine monuments; you shall see them all from the cedar to the hyssop. (Verelst, 1887, p. 184)
Je montai enfin à la chambre qui m'était destinée, accompagné de M. de Peyrehorade. L'escalier, dont les marches supérieures étaient en bois, aboutissait au milieu d'un corridor, sur lequel donnaient plusieurs chambres. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 431)	Accompanied by M. de Peyrehorade I ascended at last to the room arranged for me. The staircase, the upper half of which was in wood, ended in the centre of a hall, out of which opened several rooms. (Verelst, 1887, p. 187)
Nous entrâmes dans une chambre bien meublée, où le premier objet sur lequel je sortais la vue fut un lit long de sept pieds, large de six, et si haut qu'il fallait un escabeau pour s'y guinder. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 431)	We entered a well-furnished room where the first object on which my gaze rested was a bed seven feet long, six wide, and so high that one needed a chair to climb up into it. (Verelst, 1887, p. 188)
La pluie de la veille avait d'ailleurs tellement détrempe le sol, qu'il n'aurait pu garder d'empreinte bien nette. J'observai pourtant quelques pas profondément imprimés dans la terre: il y en avait dans deux directions contraires, mais sur une même ligne, partant de l'angle de la haie contiguë au jeu de paume et aboutissant à la porte de la maison. (Mérimée, 1837, p. 449)	In any case, the evening's rain had so softened the ground that it could not have retained any very clear impress. Nevertheless, I noticed some deeply marked footprints; they ran in two contrary directions, but on the same path. They started from the corner of the hedge next the racquet-court and ended at the door of the house. (Verelst, 1887, pp. 218-219)

As we can observe, some of the descriptions above—regarding both characters and space—are quite lengthy and ornamented, yet none of them suffered any alterations or omissions, unlike certain passages from *After-Dinner Stories* and *The Story Without a Name* in which such modifications were made as to comply with a plain style. Therefore, if we only took into account these tables and disregarded all the other small changes made in *The Venus of Ille* as previously analysed, as well as the rest of the changes made in *After-Dinner Stories* and *The Story Without a Name*, we could argue that Saltus had closely followed and faithfully translated the works here analysed. As we now know, though, that was not the case—so let us review and conclude why Saltus’ domesticating strategy in his three works makes him an invisible translator, in line with the *zeitgeist* of the times.

4.5. *Edgar Saltus: An Invisible Translator*

After analysing the translations and understanding Saltus’ invisibility, perhaps we should end this study asking ourselves: To what extent was the decision to adopt a domesticating strategy made by Saltus, and to what extent did such decision stem from publishers’ policies? Indeed, it is not easy to answer this question. Without the help of essays or reports on both ends, it is difficult to know whether Saltus domesticated the source texts because he knew that if he did not follow this strategy his works would probably not be published or received in a positive light⁴¹, or if it was the publishers who exercised their agency and asked Saltus to respect certain norms.

Indeed, and as previously indicated, it was the first time that all these works were being published in English in the US, so the possibility that Saltus was the one who proposed to translate the stories—especially regarding the first two works, given that in the late 1880s he was still making a name for himself—is as likely as it having been the publishers taking the first step and inviting Saltus to translate the stories here analysed. This is particularly relevant in the case of *After-Dinner Stories*, given that Saltus had published *Balzac* one year before; and *The Story Without a Name*, due to the fact that Saltus shared the same literary movement and ideas with D’Aureville. As stressed by

⁴¹ As Buzelin (2011, p. 9) notes: “Not all translators followed the norms of their time, but only those who did were likely to gain recognition from colleagues who would preserve their historical legacy.”

Paloposki (2009, p. 189), we should not forget that this decision is inherently related to “the position of the translator in question, on the literature to be translated, and the expectations of the readers,” as previously discussed in the theoretical chapter.

Had Saltus made use of his paratextual agency to talk about his choices in the three works, it would certainly be easier to evaluate the extent to which he had a say in the strategy adopted. However, as we know, Saltus did not use the introductions he added to discuss translation in general nor the difficulties he could have had in bringing the texts into English, but to display his knowledge of French literature and give his opinion of several French authors, including some that were not even the authors of the source text⁴².

In this way, Chesterman’s (2009) cognitive branch is not found in Saltus’ works and we do not know why he decided to translate these particular stories—and can only speculate as was done before starting the analysis of the translations—nor be sure whether his translation strategy followed the *zeitgeist* of the times as a result of his own agency as a translator or if the publishers provided him with certain rules to abide by. Using Simeoni’s (1998, p. 17) words again, “given the interplay of influences to which we-as-social-agents are all subjected, it is [indeed] far from clear which kind(s) can be said to be the most active, which the most tenuous, or which come first or last”—and this only complicates the assessment of the (in)visibility of the translator.

What we can observe, though, is that whether the way the target texts came out were a product of Saltus, the publishers, or even a joint effort, in the end a domesticating strategy dominated in his translations, pandering to the fashions of the day through: 1) the changes made to satisfy American readers’ mental picture of France; 2) the desire to turn the attention away from England by modifying certain passages; 3) the adoption of a plain style in the description of characters and space, as well as the search for the exact term; and 4) the adaptation of some parts of the target text as to cater to Americans’ way of life, for instance with the conversion of Celsius to Fahrenheit. The only instances where

⁴² In this way, we could argue that Saltus contributed to his own invisibility. What is more, in 1889, after already having published *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper*, Saltus (1889, p. 582) had this to say in his essay “The Future of Fiction”: “The scores and paintings which Europeans produce may continue yet awhile to pleasure both ear and eye, but as for fiction translated, it is like a pressed flower—the charm, the aroma and life, have gone.” First, to the best of my research, this is the only time Saltus has specifically discussed the role of translation. Second, it is not entirely clear what he means by “[fiction translated] is like a pressed flower.” Is he saying that translated works cannot capture the essence of the originals and, consequently, the author of the source text is on a higher level than translators? If so, perhaps this is another tool to help us further understand Saltus’ domesticating strategy and resulting invisibility, given that Saltus himself does not elaborate on the role of translation elsewhere and, when he does, he does not seem to stress the work undertaken by translators nor the tasks and difficulties inherent to such a job.

Saltus seems to have tried to resist these pressures and demonstrated that habitus does not need to be synonymous with conformity can be found, to a lesser extent as was discussed, in the inclusion of some French words (particularly those italicised) and, to a greater degree—and indeed a trace that is inherent to a foreignizing strategy—in the use of a footnote to refer the readers to a publication that would help further understand Balzac’s narrative, in which not least the remark “translator’s note” was added.

In this way, we can conclude—and remembering that the dichotomy domestication/foreignization is but a continuum—that Saltus is, indeed, an invisible translator in all of his three works, seeming to have been influenced by the values circulating in his habitus.

Even if, as stated, it is not clear who exercised their agency more strongly—Saltus or the publishers—there are some comments, all made when the three works came out, that might be of interest and shine a little light on these two agents.

Regarding *After-Dinner Stories*, there are two quite lengthy accounts that make us think about the habitus involving translators and publishers. The first is a paragraph by a writer for *The Dial* who comments on the quality of Saltus’ translations, and it is interesting to note that, already by this time and in line with the discussion on the agency of translators and publishers, he or she wonders who is responsible for the changes made:

They include “Madame Firmiani” and three other sketches of about the same length. Neither of these volumes⁴³ approaches the standard of accurate and faithful translation which is demanded by an author of the consequence of Balzac. The object of translating Balzac is not, we apprehend, to furnish amusement for idle novel-readers. With the great masters of literature, translation is resorted to for the purpose of bringing them within reach of persons of the class to whom they address themselves in their own language. It is done with the understanding that a certain loss is inevitable, but it should also be undertaken with a conscientious determination that this loss shall not be increased by any substitution of the translator’s judgment for that of the writer himself. All books are not intended for all readers, and no literature can be in a healthy condition which insists upon a general acceptance of the standards which are justly enough upheld in the nursery. If Balzac is to be translated at all, it should be as he has written, and not as some translator or publisher thinks he ought to have written. (*The Dial*, 1886, p. 256)

⁴³ Before *After-Dinner Stories* other collections of translations of Balzac are presented.

The other remark is especially significant, as it comes from none other than George Coombes, the owner of the publisher who brought out *After-Dinner Stories*. Discussing his relationship with Saltus and the ‘success’ of the book, here is what Coombes said:

I never wrote Mr. Saltus that the book had “fallen flat; I may have said I had not made much out of the book, which will be evident from the fact that only 3,150 copies were printed in all, viz: 1,000 in cloth at \$1.25 retail; 105 cloth at \$1, and 2,000 in paper at 50c., of which last 250 are now on hand. The trouble was when last June, 1886, I dissolved partnership with Mr. Duprat, at 5 East 17th street, the first 1,000 had been sold and Mr. Duprat should have paid the copyright. Mr. Saltus would not wait, and as the agreement was made between him and myself, I was liable. I paid Mr. Saltus while he was in Paris for the first 1,000 in paper, which I printed after I had moved to 275 Fifth avenue. As soon as Mr. Saltus returned, without calling or writing to me, he began proceedings against me by summons, and being liable, I paid the royalty that Mr. Duprat ought to have paid. I further paid Mr. Saltus his royalty on every copy sold to date, that is out of the second 1,000 in paper. He had an idea that I had printed and sold many more. (Coombes in *The American Bookseller*, 1887, p. 7)

When it comes to *Tales Before Supper*, we cannot, once again, be sure whether it was Saltus himself or Brentano’s, the publisher, that was behind Saltus’ translation strategy. Nonetheless, it is curious to note that the year after the publication of the collection, Brentano’s continued to advertise the book and added that it was “translated from the French of Gautier and Merimee, by Myndart Verelst (the translator of the *After-Dinner Stories* from Balzac) and preceded by an introduction from Mr. Edgar Saltus,” and that the “tales are regarded as masterpieces of their respective authors” (Brentano’s, 1888, p. 109). First, we can observe that the publisher does not hide the fact the collection is made up of translations. Second, the fact that they added that Myndart Verelst was “the translator of the *After-Dinner Stories* from Balzac” could lure Americans readers in and make them buy the book, given that Saltus has previously translated from the French and can therefore be trusted. Lastly, though this is the only instance in which the translator’s work is discussed, even if only to make profit, we should also note that Brentano’s added that the “tales are regarded as masterpieces” of Gautier and Mérimée, which further attracts Americans into buying the collection but, in turn, does not highlight Saltus’ work in transferring them into English. Given that, as previously examined, the domesticating strategy used in *Tales Before Supper* is not as evident as in *After-Dinner Stories* and *The Story Without a Name* and, therefore and according to Venuti’s terminology, results in a more faithful rendering, maybe we could have expected something along the lines of “a

faithful translation from the French”—yet that did not happen, and the focus seems to be more on the authors of the originals than on Saltus’ labour.

Finally, *The Story Without a Name* can also be looked at from the publisher’s print advertisements—but whereas Brentano’s shone a light on the fact that the stories were translations, the patrons from Belford and Co., who brought out Saltus’ last work, do not do so. Indeed, the way they promoted *The Story Without a Name* makes it look like the entire book is an original (Table 3).

Table 3. Belford and Co.’s print advertisements of *The Story Without a Name*.

“Clubman (throwing down book)—“D-n Saltus and his book! Here I have let my dinner spoil over his ‘Story Without a Name.’”” (Belford and Co., 1891, p. 10)
“Read Edgar Saltus’ “A Story Without a Name,” just published by Belford and Co., 834 Broadway, New York.” (Belford and Co., 1891, p. 11)
“At Macy’s (Chorus of women voices)— Please let me have a copy of Saltus’ “A Story Without a Name.” (Belford and Co., 1891, p. 26)
“10,000 copies of “A Story Without a Name,” by Edgar Saltus, was sold in advance of publication.” (Belford and Co., 1891, p. 28)
“Edgar Saltus’ “A Story Without a Name” has captured New York readers.” (Belford and Co., 1891, p. 34)

The decision to avoid mentioning that Saltus is the translator and not the original author seems both profitable and unprofitable. On the one hand, in 1891 Saltus was a prominent name in American literature—indeed, his masterpiece, *Imperial Purple*, would come the year after. Mentioning his name as an author rather than a translator might therefore have sounded more appealing, especially if we take into account that in his two other works Saltus used the pseudonym Myndart Verelst instead of his real name, so it could look like this was the first time Saltus was translating from French. On the other hand, and precisely related to the idea that *The Story Without a Name* was originally written in French, it is rather strange that the publisher did not take advantage of American readers’ desire to consume French narratives. All in all, perhaps both perspectives were considered and, at the end of the day, advertising the book as a creation of Saltus might have looked more seductive. In turn, the omission of Saltus’ work as a translator goes hand in hand with the outcome inherent to the adoption of a domesticating strategy: It renders him invisible.

Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was twofold: On the one hand and more broadly, it aimed to contribute to the study of the history of translation in the US by looking at the late 19th century and the context in which translators worked; on the other hand, and this having been the main focus of the thesis, it provided an illustrative example through the analysis of the translational output of Edgar Saltus. The combination of these two perspectives would, in turn, lead us to the study of the (in)visibility of the translator. As I hope was demonstrated, we can observe how the adoption of a domesticating strategy—in line with the *zeitgeist* of the times—rendered Saltus invisible in his three works. In her seminal book *Transnationalism and American Literature: Literary Translation 1773–1892*, Boggs (2007, p. 6) states that “American writers conceptualized and practiced translation as American literature.” This could not be more true in light of the American domesticating tradition and Saltus’ translations as proof of it.

Still, and though we know, for instance, thanks to Griffith’s (1931, p. 75) study, that Saltus’ translations of Balzac’s stories were an important contribution to the dissemination of the author in the US, who at the time was not widely known in the country, we do not know much about the impact of *Tales Before Supper* and *The Story Without a Name* in the US and many other aspects here presented still need to be further analysed.

Indeed, despite the questions raised in this thesis and some of its findings, much more research should be done not only on the history of translation in the US, but also and especially on Saltus’ translational output. As stated, this is, to the best of my knowledge, the first attempt made to critically analyse Saltus’ work as a translator, which, by no means, is synonymous with having achieved a perfect examination of his translations. In this way, some topics must be further explored.

One of them has to do with Saltus’ use of a pseudonym in the first two works. Even though we tried to make sense of this before the analysis of the translations, we can only speculate. In this sense, coming to a conclusion on why Saltus signed under ‘Myndart Verelst’ in *After-Dinner Stories* and *Tales Before Supper* would not only add to the study of Saltus’ invisibility—not least because either as Myndart Verelst or Edgar Saltus he was invisible—but also contribute to potential studies on the use of pseudonyms in (the history of) translation, both in the US and abroad.

Another aspect that should be further examined is Saltus' translation of Mérimée's *La Vénus D'Ille*. As was demonstrated, the way the text was transferred into English—in comparison to all the other translations produced by Saltus—is rather puzzling, as there are almost no significant changes with regard to the study of his (in)visibility. Understanding why this is would help immensely in the assessment of Saltus' agency and, possibly, that of the publisher.

Finally, we should also keep in mind that, despite the American tradition of domesticating approaches to translation, the opposite—the foreignization of source texts—also took place in the country in the (late) 19th-century (as demonstrated by, e.g., Lauth, 2011). Just like more studies are needed on Saltus' work as a translator, more attention should also be given to this seemingly *invisible* facet of translation in the US, which this thesis gave but little devotion to because of the domesticating nature of the case study—but that other works can shine a light on.

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The references below follow APA Style 7 guidelines.

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