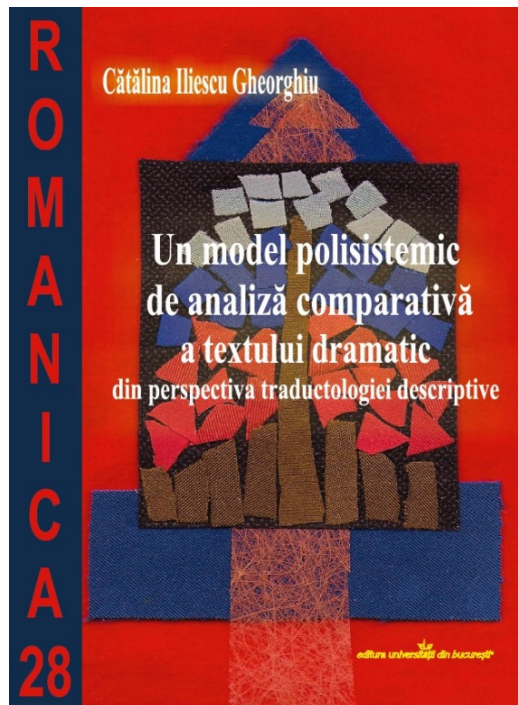


A Field Defining Study

Book Review: Cătălina Gheorghiu Ilescu, *Un model polisistemic de analiză comparativă a textului dramatic din perspectiva traductologiei descriptive* (A Polysystemic Model of Comparative Analysis of the Dramatic Text from the Perspective of Descriptive Translation Studies) (București: Editura Universității din București, 2018)



Cătălina Ilescu Gheorghiu's recent book *Un Model Polisistemic de analiza comparativa a textului dramatic din perspectiva traductologiei descriptive* (A Polysystemic Model of Comparative Analysis of the Dramatic Text from the Perspective of Descriptive

Translation Studies) is a meticulously crafted and unprecedented comparative study of two translations of the play *The Third Stake* by the celebrated Romanian writer Marin Sorescu within the theoretical frame of the model for descriptive and functional translation studies created by Jose Lambert and Hendrik Van-Gorp.

The crucial goal of the comparative analysis between the two existing translations by Andreea Gheorghitoiu and respectively, Dennis Deletant is to demonstrate how the translators' choices vary in terms of the levels of theatricality and cultural adaptability in the target language, although admittedly, they are both focused, by different degrees, on the literary value of the text and only secondarily on its dramatic or performative elements. Iliescu Gheorghiu bases her analysis on abundant materials and documentation both in the source and target language from the various versions of the play's manuscripts, to its several "official versions," to recordings of actual performances both in Romania and the United Kingdom, to interviews with directors, actors and spectators thus establishing a solid meta-textual corpus of information that informs her equally punctilious comparative analysis of the two translations. Equally important Iliescu Gheorghiu's comparative study of two English texts, one by a Romanian native speaker who did not collaborate with the author in the process of translation, and the other a native speaker of English who collaborated very closely with the author, is the analysis of the cultural, political, in a word contextual details embedded in each translation, and the degrees by which the texts lean either more towards a method of acceptability (i.e. with more attention to the target language and culture) or adequacy (i.e. leaning more towards the source culture and language).

In preparation of the detailed comparative analysis of the two translations, Iliescu Gheorghiu does an excellent job exploring in some depth the codified meanings, tropes and artistic strategies used by Sorescu in the creation of his play as an ingenious system of subversion and denunciation of the political situation of the time, namely the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu that would escape the notorious and draconian censorship at work in all the areas of public expression, the arts above all. This exploration serves as a necessary and productive background of the translations themselves particularly as

analyzed through the model Lambert Van-Gorp which places particular importance on the socio-political contexts of the source or target languages/cultures that are at play. Against this background she proceeds to analyze and compare in dizzying depth and minutia, the two translations against the original and against one another in a multilayered fashion, considering everything from cultural contexts, syntax, lexical choices, even diacritics, levels of colloquialism, of literarity and most importantly, levels of performativity and orality. Although as she affirms several times in her study, both translators seem principally concerned with the literary values of the text than with its dramatic or theatrical aspects, it is the translation of the English native speaker that displays heightened degrees of theatricality. Dennis Deletant does this, according to Iliescu Gheorghiu by taking into consideration the communicative values of various enunciation and their projected effect in a context of British culture and audiences composed of native English speakers. The extensive Appendices at the end of the study offer an impressive body of examples through which Iliescu Gheorghiu groups lines from the original text together with their equivalents in both translations thus offering abundant proof for the entirety of the comparison and equally for the usefulness and viability of the model Lambert Van-Gorp in both analyzing translations and in the actual process of translation of dramatic texts.

Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu's book promises to be a field defining study in the areas of translation and performance studies combined that could be of great value not only to translators in general, to translation scholars, but in particular to translators of dramatic texts, to directors and actors alike whenever working with foreign texts. For as she so eloquently demonstrates, when it comes to the translation of dramatic texts, it is the accumulated details of communicative intensity, orality, performative potential and cultural discernment in the target language that make for a most valuable work of transposition of the respective work of art from one linguistic universe into another.

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