

neglect marginal voices because of their mediated transmission" (p. 44). The canon's formation and reshaping is to be, of course, another central issue of the new comparativism: "comparative literature courses should teach not just "great books" but also how a book comes to be designated as "great" in a particular culture, that is, what interests have been and are invested in maintaining this label" (p. 46). Summing up the authors' goals, it is affirmed: "Our report puts forward some guiding ideas about the way curricula can be structured in order to expand students' perspectives and stimulate them to think in culturally pluralistic terms" (p. 47).

As we have already said, the volume includes three answers to the 1993 Report. Dissenting in many points is Michel Rifaterre's essay, "On the Complementarity of Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies". More consently are those of Anthony Appiah ("Geist Stories") and Mary Louise Pratt ("Comparative Literature and Global Citizenship"). The authors of the papers that complete the work are researchers of american universities: Ed Ahearn and Arnold Weinstein ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time: The Promise of Comparative Literature"), Emily Apter ("Comparative Exile: Competing Margins in the History of Comparative"), Peter Brooks ("Must We Apologize?"), Rey Chow ("In the Name of Comparative Literature"), Jonathan Culler ("Comparative Literature, at Last!"), David Damrosch ("Literary Study in an Elliptical Age"), Elisabeth Fox-Genovese ("Between Elitism and Popularism: Whither Comparative Literature?"), Roland Greene ("Their Generation"), Margaret R. Higonnet ("Comparative Literature on the Feminist Edge"), Françoise Lionnet ("Spaces of Comparison"), Marjorie Perloff ("Literature' in the Expanded Field"), Mary Russo ("Telling Tales out of School: Comparative Literature and Disciplinary Recession"), Tobin Siebers ("Sincerely Yours").

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Esther Morillas y Juan Pablo Arias, eds. *El papel del traductor*. Salamanca: Ediciones Colegio de España, Biblioteca de Traducción, 1997, 509 pp.

It is no exaggeration to say that translation has become one of the foundations on which our modern life is built. Indeed, the importance of translation is now more and more widely acknowledged. This is certainly the case in the academic domain, since, for the last two decades, experts in the field have been wholeheartedly proclaiming the autonomy of Translation Studies as an independent discipline. But even the layman will concede that, in the era of supranational political decision-making, cross-border regulation, thriving international trade and global *cyberculture*, one cannot do without translation.

However, this widespread belief contrasts with the paradoxical underestimation of the translator's status and responsibilities. In the social arena, the translator's task receives low regard, probably due to the general unawareness of the specific skills and the high degree of specialization required. As for theory, many questions concerning how the personal stance of the translator influences the final product still remain unanswered. From a historical point of view, the importance of translators in the shaping of particular cultures

needs to be assessed. It is no coincidence that all these aspects are dealt with in *El papel del traductor*, edited by Esther Morillas and Juan Pablo Arias.

As its title partly suggests, this collection of papers provides a thorough and critical examination of the translator's role in the light of the increasing need for competent professionals, as the recent founding of faculties specialized in translation training in Spain clearly illustrates. Beyond these evident expectations, however, the book comes to valuable and innovative conclusions, derived from both the academic research on diverse current trends of Translation Studies and the experience of practising translators.

To help the reader, the essays are arranged thematically around four main areas. The first section offers a theoretical approach to the implications of rescuing the translator from invisibility and neutrality —thus becoming an ideologically marked intermediary, a gendered subject, a hermeneutical exegete, a vehicle of progress, etc. In this sense, translators, editors and critics are also provided with a new (ethical) framework where this shift in perception is taken into account. The second section is devoted to the history of translation. Five papers trace the work of particular translators, the constraints imposed upon them at specific points in time and the reception of certain authors and genres through translation. The third section is concerned with describing and assessing concrete translations of texts ranging from the classics to current film versions, from literary and religious masterpieces to legal and journalistic writings. Finally, the translators themselves have the floor. This first-hand information drawn from their experience in a wide variety of specific fields (TV versions, film adaptations of literary works, literary translation of novels and plays, translation as hybridisation) gives empirical evidence of the new situation facing translators, inasmuch as they take on the more prominent and visible role vindicated in this monograph.

We cannot overemphasize the quality and usefulness of *El papel del traductor*. The brief account of the book provided above speaks for itself. Naturally, it must be acknowledged that, given the professional prestige of the contributors —in most cases attached to the research group of the University of Málaga—, the result could not have been otherwise. Nevertheless, let us take this opportunity to insist on two of the main assets of this book.

First of all, the successful conjunction of theory and practice and the comprehensive nature of the work make it useful and of interest for professionals from various backgrounds. Not only will potential translators be provided with the basic guidelines for responding to the demands of their profession and weighing up the complex implications of their decisions. Teachers of translation will also be reminded of the enormous responsibility involved in the training of cultural mediators as well as persuaded that their approach to translation will have political and ideological repercussions. In addition, practising translators will be able to contrast their views with those of other colleagues and to retrieve the theoretical tenets of their work. Furthermore, the diverse fields tackled (law, dubbing, literature, TV versions) may reveal to them new professional prospects. On the other hand, other professionals might discover how the work of conscious, proficient, competent translators matching the profile outlined in this book may be extremely helpful for their business. For the purpose of *El papel del traductor* is also —and mainly— to bring to light a neglected, often unknown and unnoticed professional.

Secondly, the progressive attitude adopted by the contributors paves the way for further study and fosters critical debate in the domain of Translation Studies. In this sense, this book illustrates the increasing interest and concern that this discipline arouses in our country. What is more, the fact that the series in which it has been published is entirely devoted to translation is highly significant. Certainly, publishing houses such as Cátedra have long been making key reference works available to the Spanish-speaking public. Nevertheless, the initiative taken by the University of Castilla-La Mancha in their collection *Escuela de Traductores de Toledo* and Ediciones Colegio de España in their *Biblioteca de Traducción*, both exclusively related to translation, shows a specific and praiseworthy commitment to the subject. In this respect, the fairness of the venture is backed by the fact that international publishers such as Multilingual Matters, John Benjamins, Rodopi and Routledge are now succeeding in their corresponding series on Translation Studies.

In the case of *Biblioteca de Traducción*, the contribution to the flourishing of Translation Studies in Spain is twofold. As stated in the General Editors' Preface, the series aims firstly to make the most representative foreign classics on translation available to the Spanish public. This was the goal of the 1997 Spanish version of André Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. Moreover, *Biblioteca de Traducción* endeavours to divulge the most outstanding output of domestic research. *El papel del traductor* thus inaugurates this second orientation and unquestionably sets a standard of excellence which is to be maintained. In any event, the next two titles of the series will surely live up to expectations. Suffice it to say that Mary Snell-Hornby's *Translation Studies. An integrated approach* is to follow the path opened by André Lefevere. With regard to national projects, in *Traducción y cultura: de la ideología al texto*, Ovidi Carbonell will develop some of the ideas already outlined in his collaboration to the book here reviewed. No doubt, to offer the degree of brilliance and meticulousness he and the remaining twenty-nine contributors achieve in *El papel del traductor*.

M. Rosario Martín Ruano

Brian Hollingworth. *Maria Edgeworth's Irish Writing. Language, History, Politics*. New York and London: Macmillan, 1997.

200 years ago, the French invasion of Ireland in aid of the United Irishmen uprising against colonial rule came to a tragic end in Ballinamuck, north of county Longford, a few miles from Edgeworthstown, where Maria Edgeworth lived and wrote. She has achieved a modest reputation as a pioneer of the regional novel, and her name is generally mentioned as a forerunner of Walter Scott and a possible influence in Turgenev.

Brian Hollingworth, recently retired as Head of English at Derby University, has undertaken a survey of the reasons and influences that motivated a gentlewoman to try a new active approach to fiction in an Irish backwater, and how and why the vernacular came to be used in narrative. *Castle Rackrent* has attained a canonical niche as a 'minor classic', enshrining the term to describe abusive colonial practices. Edgeworth wrote from personal experience, as she belonged to an Anglo-Irish family, and her writings have not