

Portuguese Translations of Polish Literature Published in Book Form: Some Methodological Issues*

Hanna PIĘTA

University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies

Abstract

The aim of the present paper is twofold. On the one hand, it is to offer an outline of the author's ongoing PhD research on cultural relations between Poland and Portugal through translation. To do so, the project's background, main goals, central questions, rationale and methodology are briefly elucidated. On the other hand, the paper seeks to exemplify how a series of working definitions can be formulated with regard to corpus selection in a study focused on translation flow from one culture to another. More specifically, the reasoning that led to establishing working definitions is explained and various examples of borderline cases (e.g. weakly marked or unmarked translations) are given. The paper ends with some remarks on the initial findings and future research avenues.

1. Introduction

The current PhD project, which commenced in 2008 and is due to be completed by 2013, is concerned with investigating the cultural relations between Poland and Portugal through translation. The PhD is part of a wider ongoing research project with the programmatic title *Intercultural Literature in Portugal 1930-2000: a Critical Bibliography*.¹ The central question of my own research is that of translation archaeology:² what literature was translated from Polish into European Portuguese, by whom, how, where, when, for whom and with what effect? More importantly, what was not translated, and, if so, for what

* The author would like to thank the CETRA 2009 teaching staff for their useful comments, which substantially contributed to the final shape of this paper. Especial thanks are also due to Professors João de Almeida Flor, Teresa Seruya and Alexandra Assis Rosa, who graciously contributed their time and intuitions to this study. Last but not least, warm gratitude goes to the European Society for Translation Studies (EST) for their generous support.

¹ The issues concerning the wider project will not be addressed further in this paper. For a general outline see Seruya 2009.

² As Pym (1998: 5) puts it, "translation archeology is a set of discourses concerned with answering all or part of the complex question 'who translated what, how, where, when, for whom and with what effect?'" It can include anything from the compiling of catalogues to the carrying out of biographical research on translators."

reasons? Accordingly, the primary purpose is to draw a general map of the Portuguese translations of Polish literature published in book form from 1855 (the date of the first translation published in book form) to date. The ultimate goal, however, is to contribute to the total sum of knowledge on the cultural exchange between the two polysystems (cf. Even-Zohar 1990; Lambert 1995) concerned.

The choice of this particular topic was motivated, first and foremost, by the fact that hardly any systematic empirical research on the translational transfer from Polish into European Portuguese (or, for that matter, from European Portuguese into Polish) has been carried out to date. As a matter of fact, most of the existing studies from the field (Lima 1938; Almeida 1967; Milewska 1984 and 1991) lay emphasis exclusively on the literary relations prior to the 20th century. Research into the most recent Portuguese translations of Polish literature is therefore still lacking. Such a study may prove to be very beneficial from a double point of view: not only can it contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms of inclusion of foreign literary works in a given (in this case Portuguese) culture, but it may also help to explore the way in which cultural relations between two (semi)peripheral languages (in this case Polish and Portuguese) are shaped.³ The lack of systematic study referred to above was the main reason why Milewska (1991: 154) suggested as early as two decades ago that the time was ripe for the study of Portuguese translations of Polish literature. At present, such a study promises to be very fruitful due to the existence of a sufficiently rich body of available unstudied data, research tools, methodological models, as well as an increasingly intensive institutional framework for cooperation between the two countries in question. My personal bias or the so called *telos*, i.e., my heightened interest in translational phenomena, as well as my previous academic experience gained during the MA studies in Portuguese culture and, last but not least, my Polish background are also important reasons behind the research. Accordingly, it seems that the two basic conditions stipulated in the following quotation are fulfilled:

[a]ny research should be justifiable on at least two grounds. First, it should not have been done before. Second, the people carrying out the research must have an interest

³ The terms semi-peripheral (with regard to Polish) and peripheral (when it comes to Portuguese) are taken from Heilbron (1999) and concern these languages' place in international cultural transfer achieved by means of translation.

in it. Both conditions have to be fulfilled if the work is to make any human sense (Pym 1998: 15).

As far as the temporal scope is concerned, 1855 has been chosen as the starting point because no translation in book form seems to have been published prior to this date. The long period under consideration (1855-2009) proves to be compelling from a double point of view: not only does it witness major ideological shifts in the Portuguese target culture (cf. Zurbach 1997; Rosa 2003; Seruya, 2009), but it also allows us to gain more nuanced insights into the socio-political transformation processes observed in the Polish source culture.

2. Methodology⁴

Since the investigation in question centres upon the collection and processing of data, it can, almost necessarily, be classified as an empirical research. Clearly, this is not to say that the research itself is theory-free, nor that its conceptual components are ignored. Here as elsewhere, common sense is paramount and more important than terminological or boundary problems. It must be stressed that by classifying it as empirical I mean that, in principle, the emphasis is placed more on seeking new information derived from data analysis than on intellectual reinterpretation of ideas and concepts as such.

The current research may be further (sub)categorized as an observational (or natural) one, mainly due to the fact that it consists in studying existing data on translational phenomena, just as they occur in their natural setting. Bearing in mind the particularly pioneering nature of the research, the exploratory approach, as described in Gile (1998: 72), seems to be the most suitable one.⁵ For Gile "exploratory" refers to

endeavours primarily concerned with the analysis of situations and events in the field without any prior intent to make a *specific* point, ask a *specific* question or test a *specific* hypothesis. (loc. cit., italics in original)

⁴ The terms, distinctions and ideas presented in what follows in this section are based on Gile (1998 and 2008) and on Williams and Chesterman (2002).

⁵ Many thanks are due to Andrew Chesterman for having brought this model to my attention. Any remaining defects are, of course, my own responsibility.

In other words, “exploratory research, where the potential for innovation is high, is almost by definition one which may *lead* to hypothesis rather than one which is *driven* by them” (Gile 2008, italics in original). This, in turn, means that the data collection and analysis are antecedent to posing any *concrete* query or to formulating any *detailed* claim. It also signifies that the research starts with a preliminary holistic notion of the object of study and that the task of cutting away unnecessary data is postponed until a clearer and more nuanced picture about what *is* necessary is gained. Again, this is not to say that the exploration is carried out at random. Quite the reverse, it is guided by some *tentative* and *overall* expectations which, ideally, should lead to precise hypotheses to be tested in the subsequent stages of the investigation. In the present exploratory research the expectations (of an almost embarrassing simplicity) run as follows: (a) it is expected that a translational flow of literary texts from Polish into European Portuguese indeed exists; (b) this flow is likely to lead to the formulation of general claims on the nature of Polish-Portuguese cultural relations; (c) it is conceivable, nay expected, that the data analysis will reveal and hopefully explain important mechanisms of inclusion of foreign works in the Portuguese receiving culture. The above list of expectations, incomplete and insufficiently theorized as it is, serves merely to show that, although hardly anything is known about the matter at the outset of the project, the research is guided by a set of preliminary ideas about the anticipated outcome of the study.

3. Data collection

Taking into account (a) the pioneering nature of this project resulting from the absence of any previous studies concerning most recent Polish-Portuguese translational transfer, (b) the exploratory approach used in the research and (c) the intent to deliver a panoramic overview of Portuguese translations of Polish literature, the initial stage consisted in compiling an extensive, ideally complete, archaeological list of the respective translations. This, in turn, implied finding target texts. In the absence of any existing reliable list of Portuguese translations of Polish literature, the data was collected from a variety of secondary sources, such as catalogues, databases, bibliographies, memoirs, periodicals, encyclopedias and the like. A note should be taken of the fact that use and reliability of bibliographical sources

proved to be a fairly complex issue *per se*. For the sake of simplicity and due to space limitations this is a point I am not enlarging on here.⁶

Although common sense might suggest that problems involving the definition of the object of study should be solved at the outset of the research, such an approach appeared to be self-limiting and counter-productive, given the exploratory nature of the endeavour. Besides, as Anthony Pym (1998: 55) importantly suggests, "the very function of the object is to take us beyond the world we already know". Accordingly, in the initial stage of the research an attempt was made to gather as much information as possible. In practice, such an inclusive and undifferentiated approach implied registering any text considered to be of at least remote interest for the study, on no matter what grounds. In other words, the first phase consisted in compiling what Pym (1998: 42) calls a catalogue, the main function of which is to "approach maximum completeness so as to enable any particular piece of information to be found". This particularly general catalogue encompassed both first editions and reprints of Portuguese translations of Polish literary and non-literary texts published in periodicals and non-periodicals in Portugal and outside its borders. In order to confirm the importance of the time scope chosen for this research (1855-2009), the catalogue had also room for texts published prior to 1855. Not surprisingly, the data accumulation led to a piling up of a plethora of texts (602 to be precise), which proved to be impossible to handle within the time available for this research. Additionally, and more to the point, the catalogue was far from complete and the striving for completeness soon turned out to be little more than a pious wish.

Nonetheless, the catalogue provided a sufficient amount of information which can serve as a basis for the selection of a more limited and homogeneous set of texts. This set will then form the research corpus, i.e., "a list of translations drawn up according to strictly controlled criteria" (Pym 1998: 42). Once such a selective approach was employed, the ideal of completeness ceased to be a matter of prime importance. Again, as Pym (1998: 49) has usefully reminded, "[t]he problem is not whether or not a corpus should be complete. It is instead whether or not our questions are important enough for us to invest in a certain degree of completeness." Even though, as mentioned above, no specific questions guide the

⁶ But see, in this respect, Pieta 2010a.

present investigation, there is little doubt that it is likely to be an intriguing research avenue that merits, at the very least, some scholarly effort.

In what follows I will present a number of reflections which led to the setting up of five working definitions applied when selecting the research corpus of Portuguese translations of Polish literature published in book form. It should be added, however, that the exclusion of the remaining data does not render it useless. Quite the reverse, it is hoped that once the latter corpus is built and analysed, the focus of this ongoing research will be placed on other texts from the catalogue.

4. Working definitions

As already mentioned, selecting a corpus out of an extensive catalogue of Portuguese translations of Polish texts implied formulating a series of *working* definitions. As its name indicates, a working definition is a set of strictly operative distinctions considered suitable for the purposes of a particular research. Unlike *stable* definitions, which tend to be formulated toward the end of work (cf. Pym 1998: 55), working definitions are far from serving as an eternally fixed truth. Rather, they concern provisional criteria by which lists are constituted. In Pym (loc. cit.) a further distinction is made between *inclusive* definition which, roughly speaking, "is used to group as many items as possible", and *exclusive* definition, which "selects items of importance from within an initial corpus". However, one needs to remain alert to the fact that, paradoxically enough, "even inclusive definitions must be called on to do a bit of excluding" (Pym 1998: 60). For the sake of maximum completeness, I opted for the former variety when it comes to defining general categories such as "translation", "literature" and "book form". For the sake of research feasibility and corpus homogeneity, I decided to employ a more exclusive approach with regard to more specific categories, such as "Polish literature" and "Portuguese translation" (the key words here being Polish and Portuguese, respectively).

4.1. *Translation*

Since the project in question adheres most closely to the descriptive translation studies paradigm, it considers target texts to be facts of the target culture (Toury 1995: 26). Furthermore, as it happens in descriptive translation studies, the current investigation accounts for Toury's concept of "assumed translations." So, following Toury's famous recommendation (1995: 32), a translation was taken to be "all utterances which are represented or regarded as such within the target culture, on no matter what grounds." Much open and relativistic though it may seem, the definition referred to posed many problems and eventually turned out to be a somewhat insufficient guide for the research in question. Firstly, due to the fact that, as Pym pointed out, "Toury doesn't really tell us how to prove a text is *not* a translation" (1998: 61, italics in original). Secondly, because the definition fails to provide us with further indications concerning the status-related claims. Acknowledging the arbitrariness of Toury's approach, Sandra Halverson (2004: 347) has rightly emphasised that "not every person in the culture is in a position to make identifying claims about translations that will be immediately or non-controversially accepted by the other members of that culture." By corollary, the application of Toury's criteria led to the piling up of a series of borderline cases where significant doubt arose. These instances could not be easily solved by the application of the definition of assumed translation alone. I shall now present two problematic examples of such cases in greater detail.

4.1.1. *Unmarked translations*

Unmarked translations or pseudo-originals (terms taken from Pym 1998: 60) are instances of translation falsely passing for original discourse. In my research I came across a Portuguese text entitled *Hedwiges, Rainha da Polónia* [*Hedwiges, Queen of Poland*]. The work dates back to 1855 and was published anonymously, without any mention of the text being a translation of any kind. However, although the label "translation" or, for that matter, any other word belonging to the same semantic field was not used (neither in peritext nor in epitext), it could seem to be justified on the basis of both demonstrable genetic parentage with existing Polish work the current research managed to identify (the original *Jadwiga* by Olimpia Chodzko, published in 1836), and manifest textual similarity with the source text (a closer analysis made it possible to trace the narrative elements back to the Polish

antecedent). The claim of originality was therefore contested and the fraudulent original came to be unmasked. However, a note should be taken of the fact that, to my knowledge, before the interlingual plagiarism was exposed no single claim on the translational status of the text had been made. Therefore, it appears to be safe to say that in the Portuguese target culture the text has been unanimously received as an original piece of discursive act and not as a translation. Should it then be included into the corpus of Portuguese translations of Polish literature?

4.1.2. *Weakly marked translations*

Weakly marked translations (cf. Pym 1998: 60) are cases in which a clear demarcation between translation and original can hardly be reached, mainly due to a great number of transformations that occurred, making it virtually impossible for texts to be considered translations of antecedent texts. Take, for instance, the Portuguese novelisation of an Italian silent film produced by Enrico Guazzoni in 1912 and broadcast in Portugal one year later. The text in question dates back to 1913 and advertises its status as follows: "*Script of 'Quo Vadis?' The most brilliant success of the contemporary cinematography*" (my translation).⁷ Again, peritexts and epitexts belonging to the Portuguese receptor culture convey no information whatsoever as to the possible translational character of the Portuguese novelisation. So what we are dealing with is a discursive phenomenon where the label "translation" is not used and where the genetic relationship with any other existing Polish text appears to be missing. By corollary, the analysis of the explicit metatextual indications might suggest the novelisation has been perceived by the Portuguese receptor culture as an original piece of writing. Yet, one can easily trace the narrative elements (such as plot, setting, main characters and the like) back to the Polish historical novel *Quo Vadis?* by Henryk Sienkiewicz, published in 1896. Do the narrative affinities between the two texts suffice for the basis for the inclusion of this novelisation into the corpus of Polish literature in Portuguese translation?

With a view to solving the doubts that the application of Toury's concept had given rise to, the tripartite *status/origin/features* model for studying translation put forward by Dirk

⁷ The original title reads: *Argumento 'Quo Vadis?' O mais brilhante sucesso cinematografico [sic] da actualidade.*

Delabastita (2008) was employed. By making a radical analytical distinction between (a) the claimed or perceived status of texts, (b) their *stemma* and (c) their features as perceived from a number of possible perspectives, the scheme put me in a better position to study the full range of virtual possibilities offered by the Polish-Portuguese translational transfer. The three-dimensional view of the somewhat messy discursive reality, aligned to Toury's concept of assumed translation, gave the latter definition an even more inclusive character and enabled me to include into the corpus the above-mentioned borderline situations (i.e. weakly marked translations, unmarked translations, and, for that matter, all the other ambiguous cases). Thus, owing to its demonstrable narrative features, irrespective of its origin and regardless of any status-related claims that could reasonably be posited about it, the text mentioned in 4.1.2 was considered translation for the purposes of this research. Likewise, the corpus covered cases (such as the one mentioned in 4.1.1) where the label "translation" is not used, even though it seems more than legitimate due to demonstrable realities of its genesis (i.e., origin) and manifest existence of cross-cultural similarities with an existing text (i.e., features).

All this brings us to a working definition of translation which runs as follows: for the purposes of the present research, a text is considered a translation if at least one of the three elements – its status, its origin or its features – sets up any reasonably conceivable relationship with an already existing text in a language other than Polish.

4.2 Portuguese translations

As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the research corpus comprises Portuguese translations of Polish literature published in book form. The focus of this section will therefore be centred upon the working definition of Portuguese translations (my key word here being Portuguese and not so much translation). However, before formulating the working definition, a few points must be made.

First and foremost, it should be born in mind that, unlike Polish, Portuguese is a widely spoken language, with the estimated number of native speakers ranging over 200 millions. In quantitative terms, it ranks as the 6th most widely spoken language of the world (cf. Krieger 2003). Portuguese is also a language with multiple dialectal varieties and with two main dialect groups: those of Brazil and those of the so called Old World. Moreover, it must

be pointed out that Portuguese is the official language of 7 states: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé and Príncipe. It is also one of the official languages of the special administrative region of Macau (together with Chinese) and East Timor (alongside Tetum). Although all these countries are known to exhibit linguistic, historical and political affinities, the literary and cultural exchange between them is rather scarce, especially when compared with Anglo-Portuguese or Franco-Portuguese relations. Accordingly, one can hardly speak of a homogenous lusophone culture, let alone of a coherent lusophone publishing industry. All things considered, when trying to define Portuguese translations, a more selective approach was needed. Moreover, the application of inclusive linguistic and territorial criteria would result in an excessively large and an undifferentiated corpus. Therefore, for the sake of corpus homogeneity and research feasibility, I decided to apply linguistic and territorial criteria in a particularly exclusive manner.

The application of such criteria resulted in the following working definition: for the purposes of the present research by Portuguese translation I mean any text originally published in a language other than Portuguese which was rendered into European Portuguese and was published in Portugal. Note that a publication is considered to be published in Portugal if the publisher has his registered office in the country, the place of printing or place of circulation here being irrelevant. When a publication is issued by a publisher who has registered offices in two or more countries, it is considered as having been published in the country where it is issued.

This, in turn, means that translations into European Portuguese published outside the Portuguese borders (such as *Eis a Polónia*, published by the Polish publishing house Interpress or *Quo Vadis?*, published by the Spanish S.A.E.P.A.) were excluded, irrespective of their circulation on the Portuguese book market. An exception was made for a Portuguese retranslation of *Quo Vadis?* published in Barcelona in 2004 by the international Mediasat Group S.A.. I decided to include this text in the corpus because, though published outside Portuguese borders, the translation was meant for exclusive circulation with the Portuguese journal *Público*. Besides, as of 2006, Mediasat Group has operated in Portugal with its brand office in Lisbon (i.e., Mediasat Portugal). Significantly, whether they circulate on the Portuguese book market or not, translations into the non-European Portuguese (i.e., the one spoken in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Macau, Mozambique

and São Tomé and Príncipe) were not accommodated in the corpus. In practice this criterion led to the exclusion of such texts as, for instance, *O Faroleiro e outros contos* (Sienkiewicz 1962) or *A Lei do Cnute e Contos* (Reymont 1963), both published in Rio de Janeiro by Delta.

4.3. Literature

In order to retain its inclusive approach, the research accounted for a particularly ample concept of literature put forward by Patterson (1995: 256). The definition runs as follows:

a piece of writing is 'literature' not because it possesses certain characteristics that other pieces lack, but because its readers regard it – for a variety of reasons – *as literature* (italics and single inverted commas in original).

A particular notice should be taken of the conspicuous analogy between the aforementioned functional definition of literature and the relativistic definition of assumed translation, as proposed by Toury (see section 4.1). As a matter of fact, Teresa Seruya (2009: 74) gives this analogy a more conspicuous character when she coins the term "assumed literature." The definition's greatest merit, apart from its almost absolute flexibility, is that it enables us to avoid losing precious research time over debates concerning ontological concepts.

However, inclusive as it seems to be, the definition itself did not really solve all the problems of the rather messy discursive reality and so the question of finding out whether the Portuguese readers regard a specific text as literature or not remained to be solved. And this is where more specific pragmatic criteria for selection came to the fore. One pragmatic method of verifying the possible literary status of a piece of writing consisted in extracting as much information as possible from the peritextual indications, to use Genette's (1991) terminology. By peritextual elements I mean all the textual material that introduces a text proper, such as blurb, table of contents, introduction, preface, lay-out, annotations, all of which may help to convey the message "this is literature" or, more importantly, "this is literature of a specific kind." However, as Genette rightly reminds us, peritexts express the editor or author's intention behind the text. Significantly, what they cannot possibly tell us is how convincing they turn out to be in practice. So we continue in the dark as far as the readers' considerations are concerned. Peritexts become even less reliable when one realises

that they are "modified unceasingly, according to periods, cultures, genres, authors, works, editions of the same work" (Genette 1991: 262). Accordingly, it soon became clear that peritexts serve merely as an indication of what a particular piece of writing is intended to be. Thus, when attempting to pragmatically define what the Portuguese readers consider as literature, a different approach was needed.

The different pragmatic angle referred to was offered by the study of epitexts produced in the receptor culture, i.e., archival documents, literary criticism, catalogues, relevant interviews, correspondence and so on. It appears to be safe to say that it is the epitext that contains important data on the actual reception of a particular piece of writing in a given (in this case Portuguese) culture. However, the preliminary findings have shown that many epitexts tend to be inspired by the information extracted from the correspondent peritexts and therefore, in order to avoid entering into a vicious circle, some caution is in order. Nonetheless, if carefully studied, epitexts can be particularly helpful when assessing the function given to the text by the end user (in this case the Portuguese readers). Consequently, it seems arguable to suggest that the matching of information provided in peritext and epitext can confirm or counter the agreement between expectation and delivery within the same receptor culture. If we assume, for good reasons it seems, that it is the epitext that contains data on the reception proper, in cases where the available peritexts and epitexts do not agree on the status of a given text, the primacy should be given to the information contained in the epitext.

In cases where neither peritext nor epitext provide explicit status-related information, in order to verify whether a specific ambiguous subgenre should be hosted under the vast umbrella of the particularly inclusive definition of literature, I resorted to a theoretic criterion, which consisted in using the Universal Decimal Classification (hereinafter referred to as UDC). The infinitely extendable system, created by Paul Otlet and Henri la Fontaine at the end of the 19th century and from then on continually revised, encompasses ten ample categories of discursive acts, irrespective of the medium they are conveyed by. Importantly for my research, the system classifies literature and biographies under two separate categories (820 and 920, respectively).

All things considered, only the matching of information provided in both peritext and epitext, allied with the occasional resort to the UDC system, appeared to be most constructive and led to the following working definition: if both peritext and epitext

consider a text as literature, for the purposes of the present research the text is indeed regarded as such and, consequently, it is included in the corpus. Nonetheless, in cases where the peritext tells us that the text is literature but the epitext claims otherwise, the work is excluded from the corpus. In the reverse situations, where the epitext suggests the literary status of a piece of writing but the peritext contests it, the text is considered literature. In cases of a greater ambiguity, where neither peritext nor epitext are explicit about the text's status, the decision regarding its exclusion or inclusion is taken on the basis of classification provided within the UDC system.

Significantly, on a number of occasions resorting to the UDC system implied excluding biographies (such as *Maximiliano Kolbe, construtor da Polónia cristã* (Winowska 1982)) from the initial catalogue. By the same token, the corpus had no room for reference books, tourist guides, manuals, dictionaries and the like, none of which is accommodated in the UDC under the category named literature. It is worth mentioning that, owing to their categorization within the UDC, such subgenres as literary criticism and essays were included in the corpus. Conversely, if a text, say the book entitled *O Pânico vem do ar* (Kuczyński 1940), advertised its status as *romance* [a novel], then it was incorporated into the research corpus. However, texts considered literature by the peritexts but regarded as non-literature by the epitexts, such as *O Gueto de Varsóvia* (Assor 2003), did not become part of the corpus.

4.4. *Polish Literature*

When it comes to delimiting the boundaries of Polish literature, things get even more complicated. The first thing that comes to mind is what one may call, for want of a better word, a national literature model (cf. Lambert 1991). The model is predicated upon the assumption of monolingualism in cultures, as well as upon the retention of axiomatic national borders. In other words, the model associates language with nationalism (the norm one language for one nation) and with a given coherent territory (a given language corresponds to a given territory). Such an approach towards national literatures has been broadly criticised by scholars in the field of translation studies. José Lambert, for example, considers the national literature paradigm exceedingly reductionist and suggests that we rather speak of "literature *in* France, *in* Germany, *in* Italy" (Lambert 1991: 141, italics in

original) instead of French, German or Italian literatures. In the very same way, one should speak of literature in Poland, rather than of Polish literature. Maria Tymoczko (2007: 173) supports a similar view, maintaining that "in constructing historical models of translation, scholars sometimes downplay or forget linguistic complexity and multiplicity". Importantly enough, she acknowledges that "oversimplified models of this type are misleading in many historical investigations" (loc. cit.). Tymoczko also addresses the phenomenon of population migrations, thus drawing our attention to the changes in language spatial distribution and correspondent diasporas. In order to avoid national distinctions, one should also bear in mind that, roughly speaking, many writers pertain to various socio-linguistic communities.

Ideally, in order to do justice to the linguistic and spatial heterogeneity of Polish literature, particularly ample criteria ought to be employed. Therefore, one could conceivably regard as Polish literature texts written by authors considered Polish (on no matter what grounds), regardless of the place of the publication and irrespective of the language of the composition. Although this solution appears to reflect the complexity and heterogeneity of what Polish literature really is, I found it very problematic to adopt as a working definition for the current research. Mainly because of its arbitrariness: had this definition been adopted, the research corpus would soon become so large that it couldn't possibly do much importance. I am aware that at this point it may be objected that basing conclusions about translations of Polish literature on a national literature model seems utterly oversimplified, short-sighted or even implies a return to naive nationalist reductionism. However, the application of such a model seems reasonable, nay only natural, for the sake of research feasibility. Hence, in order to limit the scope of the research, I decided to use the linguistic factor as an exclusive criterion. The reason behind such a rationale is that this appears to be the approach adopted by the Polish mainstream literary criticism. A good example of such an approach is provided by Halina Filipowicz (1989: 160), who usefully stresses that

writers as well as critics (...) postulated the congenital unity of Polish literature: a national literature is formed by a people's language and cultural heritage, regardless of the territory where a writer lives.

In line with the aforementioned quotation, the territorial criteria were approached in an inclusive manner, thus accounting for the issues of population migrations, and border complexities. Note that over centuries Polish territory had been constantly reshaped and between 1795 and 1918 even completely partitioned. These circumstances lead to many

paradoxical cases where even texts perceived as Polish classics (such as, for instance, *Quo Vadis*, by Henryk Sienkiewicz, issued in 1896 in what used to be the Austro-Hungarian Empire) could indeed be argued to be published outside Polish territory. However, once the inclusive approach is adopted, i.e., once we take as Polish literature any piece of writing composed in the Polish language, irrespective of the place of publishing, these paradoxes melt before our eyes. As a footnote it should be added that by accepting such criteria we can safely count as Polish literature all the texts composed by Polish writers and published in exile.

The above considerations bring us to the following working definition of Polish literature: in the current research Polish literature is taken to be any piece of literature composed in Polish language, irrespective of the place of original publication. This, in turn, implies excluding literary works written by authors considered Polish (on whatever grounds) but composed in languages other than Polish. In practice, this signifies that the corpus does not accommodate such works as Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Der kuntsnmakher fun Lublin* (1971), Nicolaus Copernicus' *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (1543), Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900), Jerzy Kosiński's *The Devil Tree* (1973), Jan Potocki's *Manuscrit trouvé à Saragosse* (1958 [1805, 1813]), Anna Langfus' *Les Bagages de Sable* (1962), Witold Gombrowicz's *Cours de philosophie en six heures un quart* (1995), etc., all of which were at some point rendered into European Portuguese. By contrast, territorial (geographical) factors concerning the place of the original publication of the Polish text serve as an inclusive criterion. Therefore, in practice, the corpus encompasses translations of Polish *émigré* or diaspora literature, i.e., literature composed in Polish language and published originally outside Polish borders. This means that Portuguese translations of such works as Jan Czyński's *Cesarzewicz Konstanty i Joanna Grudzińska czyli Jakubini Polscy* (published in 1833, Paris), Zbigniew Stypułkowski's *Zaproszenie do Moskwy* (1951, London), Andrzej Szczypiorski's *Początek* (1986, Paris), Czesław Miłosz' *Zdobycie Władzy* (1955, Paris), or Witold Gombrowicz's *Kosmos* (1965, Paris) and *Pornografia* (1960, Paris) are incorporated in the corpus.

4.5. *Book form*

As already mentioned, the research corpus accommodates Portuguese translations of Polish literature published in book form. As a consequence, the matter of defining a book becomes crucial and must be handled with a great deal of care. The definitions listed below served as attempts to define what the Portuguese receiving culture regards as a book.

Defining a book by contrasting it with something else is at least tempting, and many scholars have indeed done so. An international group of researchers working under the supervision of Gisèle Sapiro (2008: 46), for example, considers books to be "les imprimés publiés qui ne sont pas périodiques, à l'exclusion des brochures". Very similarly, Teresa Seruya (2009) excludes periodicals from the *Critical Bibliography of Translation of Literature in the Portuguese "Estado Novo"*. Periodical publications are also excluded from the *Bibliographie des Traductions Françaises (1810-1840)* by Katrin Van Bragt, Lieven D'hulst and José Lambert (1995), although the editors do not define explicitly what they consider a book. Common and efficient though this exclusive definition may appear to be, it is by no means the only possible option.

Another potentially useful and frequently used technique consists in establishing a minimum number of pages a publication should contain in order to be regarded as a book *stricto sensu*. In spite of the frequent use of this quantitative approach, it seems that thus far a standard minimum number of pages has not been agreed upon. For instance, in the *Revised Recommendation Concerning the International Standardization of Statistics on the Production and Distribution of Books, Newspapers and Periodicals* proposed by UNESCO in 1985, a book is defined as "a non-periodical publication of at least 49 pages exclusive of the cover pages, published in the country and made available to the public."⁸ The International Standards Organization, however, takes a book to be an independent bibliographical unit containing 48 or more pages, not counting the covers (cf. Portuguese Norm NP 712). Curiously enough, according to the regulations of the Portuguese International Standard Book Numbering Agency (functioning under the auspices of *Associação Portuguesa de Editores e Livreiros* [Portuguese Association of Publishers and Booksellers]) quoted in Furtado (1995: 26), a book is defined to be any non-periodical

⁸ Available at: http://www.portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13146&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (accessed October 2009)

publication containing at least 5 pages (covers not included in the counting) and subject to legal deposit requirements.

From a legal point of view, the Portuguese jurisdiction (and more specifically Article 1, Chapter 1 of *Decreto-Lei* No. 176/9 from 21 September 1996) defines a book as

any work printed in a number of copies with at least 49 pages containing visible letters, texts and/or illustrations, consisting of pages forming a single, independent, bound volume to be placed at the disposal of the public and sold, not to be confused with a periodical publication.⁹

Significantly, the above-indicated definition is used in statistic calculations by the Instituto Nacional de Estatística [Portuguese National Institute of Statistics]. Contrary to what might be expected, when it comes to commercial definition, Direcção-Geral das Alfândegas e dos Impostos Especiais sobre o Consumo [the Portuguese Customs Office] fails to offer coherent, explicit criteria that define a book.

From a scholarly angle, a book tends to be defined according to its materiality and function. The *Dicionário do Livro* (Faria and Pericão, 2008: 763), for example, considers a book to be “a set of written or printed sheets fastened together to form a block; a scientific or literary work which forms or is able to form a separate volume.” The very same source (loc.cit.) informs that a book is “intended for a reader and serves an aim: reflection, teaching, evasion, diffusion of thoughts and culture.”¹⁰ As Faria and Pericão (2008: 778) have rightly stressed, apart from its conventional printed version, a book may also appear in digital format. However, although the advent of electronic techniques for information storage has induced some to declare the end of the age of the book as we know it, the so called e-book (short for electronic book) still remains an alternative rather than a substitute for the classic paper version. For this reason, and due to the fact that in the period under consideration (19th and 20th century) there appear to be no Portuguese translations of Polish literature issued in

⁹ The original reads: “toda a obra impressa em vários exemplares, destinada a ser comercializada, contendo letras, textos ou ilustrações visíveis, constituída por páginas, formando um volume unitário, autónomo e devidamente encapado, destinada a ser efectivamente posta à disposição do público e comercializada e que não se confunda com uma revista”. Available at [http://www.dgcc.pt/anexos/decreto-lei%20176-96%20\(536%20KB\).pdf](http://www.dgcc.pt/anexos/decreto-lei%20176-96%20(536%20KB).pdf) (accessed October 2009).

¹⁰ The original reads: Conjunto de cadernos, manuscritos ou impressos, cosidos ordenadamente e formando um bloco; obra científica ou literária que forma ou pode formar um volume (...). Dirige-se a um leitor, possui uma finalidade: a reflexão, o ensino, o conhecimento, a evasão, a difusão do pensamento e a cultura.

digital format, the present research will only account for books in the conventional print form.

Since arriving at a clear-cut definition does not appear to be possible, the matching of the definitions mentioned above proves to be most constructive. Accordingly, for purposes of this exploratory research, a book is taken to be any non-periodical printed publication made available to the general public and subject to the legal deposit requirements, regardless of the number of pages. For the sake of precision it should be added that this research considers publication to be non-periodical if it is published at one time, or, at intervals, by volumes, the number of which is generally determined in advance. Additionally, a publication is considered as being made available to the public when it is obtainable either by purchase or by distribution free of charge. Accordingly, publications intended for a restricted public, such as certain government publications, those of learned societies, political or professional organizations, etc., are not regarded as being available to the public at large. Furthermore, the term "printed" includes reproduction by method of mechanical impression by means of paper and ink. Thus, the research corpus does not comprise periodicals, e-books, Braille books, brochures, publications issued exclusively for commercial, industrial, tourist or other advertising purposes, musical works (scores or music books), film and theatre scripts (with the exception of scripts that were issued by publishing houses and made available to the general public), maps, charts, timetables and prospectuses, all of which were encountered during the investigation.

5. Initial findings and a note on further research

Of course, setting up a series of working definitions is but a tiny initial step in the vast research sketched out in the above paragraphs. Accordingly, it is too early to venture any plausible hypotheses, let alone any well-founded conclusions. However, once the working definitions have been established and the initial corpus defined, the latter can be almost immediately turned into frequency curves. The resulting graphs may then confirm or counter various expectations, suspicions and hunches that guided this exploratory research.

The first step in plotting the distribution of Portuguese translations of Polish literature published in book form over time consisted in establishing the methods of enumeration. The

method applied in this research was inspired on Toury's (1995: 26) claim of translation novelty:

Being an instance of performance, every individual text is of course unique; it may be more or less in tune with prevailing models but in itself it is a novelty. As such, its introduction into target culture always entails change, however slight, of the latter. To be sure, the novelty claim still holds for the n^{th} translation of a text into a language: it is the resulting entity (...) which is decisive here; and this entity will always have never existed before.

Thus, whenever there was a difference in the publication date, the translator's identification, the publisher, the series/collection, etc., a book was counted as a new (i.e., separate) unit. For example, a text composed by the same author, rendered by the same translator, published in the same year but by two different publishing companies counts as two separate items. The outcome of such an enumerating method is presented in the following chart (see Fig. 1).

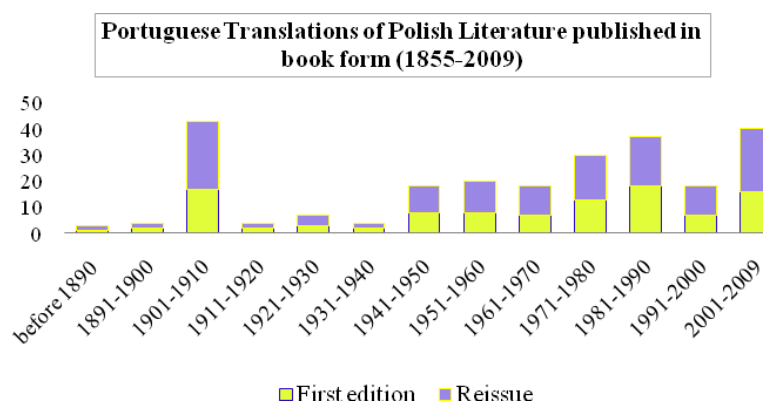


Fig. 1 – Translation flow in 1855-2009

The above diagram, representing the quantitative dimension of the corpus of Portuguese translations of Polish literature published in book form (145 target texts, including 107 first editions and 38 reissues), shows that, although the first peak of apparent demand can be placed in the first decade of the 20th century, immediately after this period, i.e., from 1910s onwards, the translation flow came to a virtual standstill. Furthermore, it can be observed that the volume of translations began to increase in the 1940s and reached relative stability in the 1950s and 1960s. From the 1970s onwards one can observe a growing tendency in the

number of translations, but it was only in the early 1980s that the translation volume reached its second peak. Interestingly enough, the initial data has shown that the last decade of the 20th century saw a sudden decrease in the volume of translations of Polish literature.

Of course, a far more detailed study is required in order to gain insights into the factors influencing the translational flow from Polish into European Portuguese.¹¹ To elaborate upon this point, it will be worthwhile to examine the correlation which occurs between (a) the micro-level of target texts (how do translations reflect social norms?), (b) the *mezzo*-level of agents in the literary field (what has been censored, what is considered as compelling?) and (c) the macro-level of social context (for which authors is there a demand in the Portuguese receptor culture?). A closer look at these three levels should help us grasp the nature and complexities of this literary exchange. As already mentioned in the introduction, it is hoped that this, in turn, might contribute to a better understanding of the way in which the cultural relations between the two peripheral polysystems concerned are shaped and take place.

6. Concluding remarks

In this paper I have made every effort to present a rationale for establishing a series of inclusive and exclusive working definitions used in the present exploratory research. The greatest merit of such an eclectic approach is that it enables us to retain the desire of completeness and, at the very same time, allows us to maintain the research feasibility and the homogeneity of the corpus. Although this is not the only possible option, it seemed useful for establishing the empirical foundation for the research project in question. The main contribution of this paper therefore does not lie in presenting new data or knowledge. Rather, the article has aimed at providing a number of considerations which may, at the very least, serve scholars-in-the-making at the departing point of their research as a first pointer as to how a series of working definitions can be formulated with regard to translation flow from one culture to another.

¹¹ For an extensive analysis of recent data on Polish-Portuguese translations, see Pieta 2010b.

References

Primary Literature

Argumento 'Quo Vadis?'. O mais brilhante sucesso cinematografico da actualidade. 1913. Lisbon: Tipografia de Francisco Luís Gonçalves/ Empreza [sic] da Biblioteca d'Educação Nacional.

Assor, Miriam, ed. 2003. *O gueto de Varsóvia.* Trans. Miguel Beckerman. Lisboa: Âncora.

Chodźko, Olimpia. 1836. *Jadwiga. La Pologne Historique, Littéraire, Monumentale et Pittoresque.* n.d.

Conrad, Joseph. 1900. *Lord Jim.* S.l.: Blackwood.

Copernicus, Nicolaus. 1543. *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* Libri VI. Nuremberg.

Czyński, Jan. 1933. *Cesarzewicz Konstanty i Joanna Grudzińska czyli Jakubini Polscy.* Paris: Baudouin.

Gombrowicz, Witold. 1960. *Pornografia.* Paris: Instytut Literacki.

Gombrowicz, Witold. 1965. *Kosmos.* Paris: Instytut Literacki.

Gombrowicz, Witold. 1995. *Cours de philosophie en six heures un quart.* Paris: Editions Payot-Rivages.

"Hedwiges, Rainha da Polónia [Hedwiges, The Quinn of Poland]". 1855. *Universo Pittoresco,* n.d.

Kosiński, Jerzy. 1973. *The Devil Tree.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Kuczyński, Bogusław. 1940. *O pânico vem do ar.* Trans. José Francisco dos Santos. Porto: Livraria Civilização Editora.

Langfuss, Anna. 1962. *Les Bagages de Sable.* Paris: N.R.F.

Miłosz, Czesław. 1955. *Zdobycie Władzy.* Paris: Instytut Literacki.

- Potocki, Jan Nepomucen. 1958. *Manuscrit trouvé à Saragosse*. Compiled by Roger Caillois. Paris: Gallimard (originally published in St Petersburg: F. Drechsler, 1805).
- Reymont, Władysław. 1963. *A lei do Cnute e outros contos*. Trans. Valdemar Cavalcanti. Rio de Janeiro: Delta.
- Sienkiewicz, Henryk. 1896. *Quo Vadis: powieść z czasów Nerona*. Warsaw/Krakow: Gebethner i Wolff/W. L. Anczyc.
- Sienkiewicz, Henryk. 1994. *Quo Vadis*. Translated: n.d. Madrid: SAEPA.
- Sienkiewicz, Henryk. 2004. *Quo Vadis*. Translated by Lemos de Nápoles. Barcelona: Mediasat Group S.A.
- Sienkiewicz, Henryk. 1962. *O Faroleiro e outros contos*. Trad, Lúcia Bendetti. Rio de Janeiro: Delta.
- Singer, Isaac Bashevis. 1971. *Der kuntsnmakher fun Lublin*. Tel Aviv: Hamenorah.
- Stypułkowski, Zbigniew. 1951. *Zaproszenie do Moskwy* London: Odnowa.
- Szczypiorski, Andrzej. 1986. *Początek*. Paris: Instytut Literacki.
- Szopiński, Stefan, trans. 1979. *Eis a Polónia*. Warsaw: Interpress.
- Winowska, Maria. 1982. *Maximiliano Kolbe, construtor da Polónia cristã*. Trans. Miguel Mário Pupo Correia. Braga: Lux.

Other References

- Almeida, Luís Ferrand de. 1967. "Portugal e Polónia". In *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, Joel Serrão. 3rd v. Lisbon/Oporto: Iniciativas Editoriais/Livraria Figueirinhas. 410-415.
- Bragt, Katrin van, Lieven D'hulst and José Lambert. 1995. *Bibliographie des traductions françaises (1810-1840). Répertoires par disciplines*. Leuven: Presses Universitaires de Louvain.

- Decreto-Lei No. 176/9. 1996. *Diário da República* 220, 21 September. Available at [http://www.dgcc.pt/anexos/decreto-lei%20176-96%20\(536%20KB\).pdf](http://www.dgcc.pt/anexos/decreto-lei%20176-96%20(536%20KB).pdf) Visited October 2009.
- Delabastita, Dirk. 2008. "Status, Origin, Features: Translation and Beyond". In *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies*, Anthony Pym, Miriam Shlesinger and Daniel Simeoni (eds). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 233-246.
- Even-Zohar, Itamar. 1990. *Polysystem Studies*. Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics. Durham: Duke University Press [=Poetics Today 11:1].
- Faria, Maria Isabel and Maria da Graça Pericão. 2008. *Dicionário do Livro: da Escrita ao livro electrónico*. Coimbra: Almedina.
- Filipowicz, Halina. 1989. "Fission and Fusion. Polish Émigré Literature". *The Slavic and East European Journal* 33/2: 157-172, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/309341>. Visited October 2009.
- Furtado, José Afonso. 1995. *O que é o livro*. Lisbon: Difusão Cultural.
- Genette, Gérard. 1991. "Introduction to the Paratext". *New Literary History*, 22/2: 261-272.
- Gile, Daniel. 1998. "Observational Studies and Experimental Studies in the Investigation of Conference Interpreting". *Target*, 10/1: 69-89.
- Gile, Daniel. 2008. "Hypotheses and research questions in empirical TS research". *Research Issues in TS*, <http://www.est-translationstudies.org/>, article posted 9 February 2008. Visited October 2009.
- Heilbron, Johan. 1999. "A Sociology of Translation." *European Journal of Social Theory* 2/4: 429-444.
- Halverson, Sandra. 2004. "Assumed Translation. Reconciling Komissarov and Toury and Moving a Step Forward". *Target*, 16/2: 341-354.
- International Standards Organization. 1968. *Norma Portuguesa NP 712: Estatísticas da edição de publicações*. Caparica: Instituto Português da Qualidade.

- Krieger, Maria da Graça. 2003. "On Brazilian Portuguese in Latin American Integration". In *Languages in a Globalising World*, Jacques Maurais and Michael Morris (eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 313-318.
- Lambert, José. 1991. "In Quest of Literary World Maps". In *Interculturality and the Historical Study of Literary Translations*, Harald Kittel and Armin Paul Frank (eds). Berlin: Erich Schmidt. 133-143.
- Lambert, José. 1995. "Translation, System and Research: the Contribution of Polysystem Studies to Translation Studies." *TTR* 8/1: 105-152.
- Lima, Henrique Campos de Ferreira (org.). 1938. *Catálogo da exposição bibliográfica e iconográfica luso-polaca*. Lisbon: Tipografia da Liga dos Combatentes da Grande Guerra.
- Milewska, Elżbieta. 1984. *A Polónia e Portugal, relações ao longo dos séculos*. Warsaw: Interpress.
- Milewska, Elżbieta. 1991. *Relações culturais e literárias luso-polacas no séc. XVI-XIX*. Warsaw: CESLA.
- Patterson, Lee. [1990] 1995. "Literary History". In *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (eds). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. 250-262.
- Pięta, Hanna. 2010a (forthcoming). "Fontes bibliográficas utilizadas no estudo da história da tradução da literatura polaca em Portugal: apresentação e discussão". *Itinerários* 11.
- Pięta, Hanna. 2010b. "Traduções do polaco publicadas em Portugal (1855-2009): alguns traços mais salientes". *Acta Philologica*, 8: 271-277.
- Pym, Anthony. 1998. *Method in Translation History*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Rosa, Alexandra Assis. 2003. *Tradução, poder e ideologia: retórica interpessoal no diálogo narrativa dickensiano em português (1950-1999)*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Letters, Lisbon University, Portugal.

- Sapiro, Gisèle, ed. 2008. *Translatio. Le marche de la traduction en France à l'heure de la mondialisation*. Paris: CNRS Éditions.
- Seruya, Teresa. 2009. "Introdução a uma bibliografia crítica da tradução de literatura em Portugal durante o Estado Novo". In *Traduzir em Portugal durante o Estado Novo*, Teresa Seruya, Maria Lin Moniz and Alexandra Assis Rosa (eds.). Lisbon: Universidade Católica Editora. 69-86.
- Toury, Gideon. 1995. *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Tymoczko, Maria. 2007. *Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators*. Manchester: St Jerome Publishing.
- UNESCO. 1985. *Revised recommendation concerning the International Standardization of Statistics on the Production and Distribution of Books, Newspapers and Periodicals*. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13146&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html. Visited October 2009.
- Williams, Jenny and Andrew Chesterman. 2002. *The Map. A Beginner's Guide to Doing Research in Translation Studies*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Zurbach, Christine. 1997. *Traduction et pratique théâtrales au Portugal entre 1975 et 1988: une étude de cas*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Letters, Évora University, Portugal.

About the author:

Hanna PIĘTA holds a Master of Arts in Portuguese Philology from the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, and a post-graduate diploma in Translation Studies from the University of Lisbon. She is an affiliated member of the University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies and an external researcher of the Centre for Communication and Cultural Studies at the Catholic University of Portugal. At present she is working on her doctoral dissertation on cultural relations between Poland and Portugal, in which she pays special attention to the place and function of translation. The dissertation is to be submitted to the University of Lisbon and is supervised by Prof. Teresa Seruya and Prof. João de Almeida Flor. Her current research interests concern translation history and the theory, methodology and historiography of intercultural relationships.

Email: hankapieta@hotmail.com