Milly Armour Collection of Interviews with Literary Translators

(audio cassettes)

Alan BROWN
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John WEIGHTMAN
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Alan BROWN

Alan Brown was born in Peterborough in 1920.
He went to High school in Peterborough and in Melbrooke.
He studied English at University of Toronto, graduating in 1948.

He worked for Defense Department Toronto between 1949 and 1952 and for CBC between 1953 and 1970. He joined the Canadian Forces Radio Station in Europe between 1958 to 1967.

During the nine years he spent in Europe, in addition to working for CBC he translated books, business letters and did some subtitling. He also wrote a couple of radio plays. He retired in July 1979.

He translated poems by Anne Hébert and several works by Gabrielle Roy, including *Bonheur d'Occasion*. While he translated her work she would sort of look over his shoulder to see whether he would make any mistakes. He also translated cartoons and several plays.

Milly Armour discusses several translation problems with him, such as regionalism and dialect, puns, revisions of his translations, and so on.

She also asks him why he became a translator. "I was idle. I was in Europe where I joined the Canadian Forces Radio Station, but there was not much work to do", Alan Brown replies. He had asked Mannheim, a well-known French-to-English translator, who had translated Marie Claire Blais if he could translate a few pages of his work. Mannheim agreed, and said later that the translation was outstanding. This prompted Brown to become a translator.

Alan BROWN was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1981. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 65 min.

Ray CHAMBERLAIN

Ray Chamberlain is an American who studied philosophy. He arrived in Montreal in 1968 and learned French from scratch. He started translating in 1972 after running into Marie Claire Blais' literary agent at a party.

He does not believe in specific translation standards for literary translation. He believes it essential to know not only the other language but also the country, the environment where the language is spoken. He finds that one can only produce a good translation when one knows the country, region and situation the writer describes. Far more important than theoretical, formal and linguistic theories about translation with all their diagrams and arrows, is to feel some sympathy for the author. Translating is not a question of looking at the words, but of understanding what the author is trying to say in his book.

He thinks that probably the best essay on translation he ever read is Frances Stigmuller's introduction to his modern library translation of *Madame Bovary*. It is the least theoretical in a formal, linguistic sense. But is lays all the problems bare.

Even if a person is bilingual or has read a lot it does not necessarily guarantee he can translate perfectly. A translator needs to have some sort of talent and motivation. This applies to writers as well. Often they do not have enough time to read other people's literature. Chamberlain, also a translator, states that an international French does not exist. Parisian French (and its expressions) is not like the French spoken in Marseille, or in Geneva or in Quebec. He claims that as for technical translation the parameters may be different, but literature is not as objective as technical writing.

He is a great defender of Quebécois; he states several times that it has as much value as the French from France. He agrees with the academics when they say that you should look up words that you don’t know in a dictionary of the original language and not in a bilingual dictionary. In this way you learn new words.

Should a translation should read as a contemporary of the original?
–It makes a translation too complicated to comprehend because sentence structures and so on have changed over the centuries, then a translation should not be a contemporary of the Source Text. However, but the translation of an older book may seem a bit queer every now and then in order to capture the style of the original.

He also discusses the rights of the translators as far as remuneration, their names appearing on the cover of the book, etc.

Milly Armour then has him react to a few of the statements on translations as they appear in *The Art of Translation* by T.H. Savory (in the Documentation Room of the School, no. 1.1.5.S)

Finally, he remarks that he definitely considers himself a literary creator in his status as a translator.

Ray CHAMBERLAIN was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 80 min.

Fred COGSWELL

Fred Cogswell was born in 1917 in East Centreville, N.B..
He is a critic, editor, publisher, poet, teacher and translator.

Milly Armour presents Fred Cogswell with statements on translation from *The Art of Translation.*
A translation must give the words of the original.

Cogswell: a translator must attempt to give an exact rendering of the original words and context of the Source Text. Consequently one of the most difficult features of translation is to transfer the ideas, context, feeling and sound of the original without losing the magic quality of the original.
A translation should read like an original work.

A translation should reflect the style of the original.
Cogswell: This is very difficult. It depends on how closely the particular style of the original affected the author's choice of language, the way he put words together, etc. In other words, it may be that a poetic type in French is not a very poetic type in English.

A translation should read as a contemporary of the original, or should it read as a contemporary of the translator.
Cogswell: As a translator one cannot do much more than write according to your own temporal limitations, as long as you do not take the 20th century as the only thing that matters.

A translation may add to or omit from the original.
Cogswell: No, adding should not be done. One cannot add some of ones own ideas about the poem and still call it a translation. If one does, one should call it an adaptation. Nor may a translator omit elements from the original. Something will be lost.

A translation of prose/verse should be in prose/verse.
Cogswell: Yes.

How did you learn your TL?
Cogswell: At the beginning of grade 7 through High School.

Did you have formal translation training?
Cogswell: No, but I did translation when I had Latin at school.

Why did you turn to translation?
Cogswell: Basically because I am half Canadian. This was an attempt to discover part of my lost cultural heritage. Also because I had to translate Quebec poetry which I felt might be useful for English speaking people to read. So I spent time (1976-1978) in Montreal.

Fred Cogswell never met the authors he translated, but that was quite deliberate. He feels that the author on the page is one thing and the author as a person another. By not meeting the author, you tend to appreciate and do more justice to his poetry while translating it.

Do you work quickly?
Cogswell: Yes, I work very steadily once I get started. I revise some poems several times, other poems do not need that.

Fred Cogswell does not discuss his translations with other translators because there are not any around, but he does read other people's translations. And he consults a native speaker after he has finished his translation to point out any inaccuracies in meaning or obtain suggestions as to where things can be improved.

Do you consider yourself a literary creator when you translate?
Cogswell: Yes, definitely.

Are your translations edited by the publisher?

Fred COGSWELL was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 45 min.

Margaret CROSSLAND

Margaret Crossland is a translator and writer.

Milly Armour presents Margaret Crossland with the list of statements about translating from *The Art of Translating* and then asks several other questions.

1. A translation should represent the words and the ideas of the original.
Crossland: It depends on the text.
2. A translation should read like an translation.
Crossland: No.
3. A translation should reflect the style of the original.
Crossland: Yes, although it will inevitably possess the style of the translator, but this should not be the primary consideration.
4. A translation should read like a contemporary of the translator.
Crossland: Yes.
5. A translator may add to or omit from the original.
Crossland: No, one should never do either.
6. Do you consciously vary your style with the style of the author you translate?
Crossland: I have to, it is inevitable
7. What do you think about translator's notes?
Crossland: If there are obscurities I use them.
8. And what about prefaces?
Crossland: These are often quite useful.
9. Did you have a formal translator training?
Crossland: Only in an academic way. I wish I had had more, but a lot was "ad hoc".
10. Did you have any writing experience before you started translating?
Crossland: Yes, I did some poetry and criticism.
11. Why did you turn to translation?
Crossland: It just happened.
12. How did you come into contact with the authors you translated?
Crossland: For those I met, I just wrote them I would like to meet them.
13.Do you discuss your translations with the author?
Crossland: No.
14. Do you work quickly?
Crossland: It depends on the text.
15. Do you revise several times?

Crossland: Yes, and it sometimes seems endless.
16. Do you discuss your translations with other translators?
Crossland: No, but I do discuss the original volume.
17. Do you consider yourself to be a literary creator?
Crossland: One is sometimes tempted, but I think that one should be very careful about it. Because one simply should not get in the way of the original.
18. Which comes first to you, writing or translating?
Crossland: It depend on which publisher is pressing hardest. Translating on the whole is much easier.
19. Do you plan to continue translating as a major activity?
Crossland: Yes.
20. Are your translations edited by the publishers?
Crossland: Yes, and I welcome it very much after having worked on it for months, but sometimes it is hard to accept when, for instance, the publisher wants me to change something I do not approve of.
21. Have your translation skills improved?
Crossland: I hope so.
22. Do you work more quickly now?
Crossland: It depends again on the text.

See also cassette number 11.

Margaret CROSSLAND was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1979. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 25 min.

Michael Valentine GLENNY

Michael Valentine Glenny was born on 26 September 1927 in London. Both his parents were Anglophone, but his mother was bilingual (English and French) and she also spoke Italian. His father spoke also German and Russian. When Michael Glenny was only four years old, his parents divorced.

From the age of five on he was looked after by French and Swiss au pair girls who spoke both French and German to him.

When he went to his first school at the age of 7 he was confronted with Latin and Greek as well, both of which he picked up easily. He even got a scholarship to his second school, Radley School, near Oxford. Here too, he picked up languages very fast and had good results, although he was not very good at anything else. By the time he left school, he had acquired a good working knowledge (apart from Latin and Greek) of French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian.

At almost 18 years of age he was conscripted into the Army. His first overseas posting was to Germany, where he spent six years on the general staff. He was the only officer in the regiment who spoke German, so he practiced his German a lot. He learned a lot of everyday German as opposed to the bookish German he had learned in school. He did a lot of interpreting.

He went to Oxford on an Army scheme for two years. He choose to study French (main subject) and Russian (subsidiary subject). He says he should have changed these two around, as Russian proved to be very important later in his life.

On one of the long Oxford holidays (during which he had to return to the Army), he was sent to Potsdam in East Germany. Their job was to maintain contact with Russian headquarters. He graduated from Oxford in 1952. He got married and was sent back to Germany, where he was to keep an eye on the Russian Army, based in East Germany at the time.

In 1955 he quit the army and started a civilian life in London, where until 1956 he was a clerk in an office. He then had two children. After one year he got another job, better paid and more interesting, as the assistant export manger for Europe Wedgewood. He got training in Stafford, where he learned everything about the pottery trade and manufacturing business from bottom-up. Here he really had to make use of his knowledge of languages in a totally different way than he had done until then. First he had learned an academic vocabulary studying languages, then a totally different vocabulary in the Army and now a commerce vocabulary. From 1955 until 1964 he did a lot of traveling in Scandinavia, Belgium and West Germany. After 1964, when he quit his job at Wedgewood, he got a job at the Observer, a Sunday Newspaper. He did a lot on the coverage of Soviet Affairs.

Glenny started translating from German when he was still working for Wedgewood, during

the weekends when he was abroad. He did this from 1961 until he quit in 1964. During the years he worked for the Observer, he translated less and actually only took it up again towards the end of his career there. This time he translated from Russian. He was encouraged to do this by the then editor for Soviet Affairs at the Observer, who is himself a translator from Russian and German.

He then decided to quit his job at the Observer and earn a living translating books. But he could not make ends meet, so he decided to become a historical writer (Soviet Foreign Policy in the early twenties; his doctoral thesis) for which he got a grant from Oxford University, where he stayed three years. In the end he went back to translating from Russian.

Around that time he divorced his wife. He had to move out of their London house and got a job as lecturer at the University of Birmingham from 1971 until 1975, in the Department of Russian Language and Literature at the Faculty of Arts and later also at the Faculty of Social Sciences. He also did a lot of translating in the evenings. In 1976 he moved to South Illinois University in America, where he worked on various translations. He moved to the US with his new wife and two stepchildren. He stayed there for three years. Towards the end of his stay,, he received a grant form the US Government to translate the work of Eisenstein (the Soviet film director), which so far had never before been translated.

Michael GLENNY was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1979. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 45 min.

Ray ELLENWOOD and David HOMEL

While studying comparative literature), Ray Ellenwood became interested in translation. He did a PhD in French Literature. One of the exercises they did was comparing translations, looking at issues such as how translations converge into the literature of different cultures. And so, after his studies in the USA, he returned to Canada and became a translator. He translated two novellas by Jacques Ferron. Later he also translated work by Marie Clair Blais and other authors.

David Homel was born in Chicago in 1952. He started learning French in school at the age of 10. He also lived in France for a few years. He got a BA in French and in Comparative Literature in 1975 and an MA in Comparative Literature. His practical experience as a translator started while he did translations for technical and commercial matters, such as labels for food products. Later he started translating literature and he became editor as well. He says that despite the poor payment he gets as a literary translator he enjoys doing it out of cultural interest. For a living a translator has to translate other documents or do other things as well.

Ray Ellenwood agrees in that most translators need to do something else in order to earn enough for a living.

Ray ELLENWOOD and David HOMEL were interviewed by Milly Armour in 1980. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 45 min.

George JOHNSTON

George Johnston is a translator of Scandinavian languages, Faroes and Icelandic. Before reacting on the statements on translations he talks about the Faroe Islands and about the books he has translated.

George Johnston's reaction on the statements on translations:

- A translation must give the ideas of the original.
As to whether a translation must give the words of the original, he states that this is only possible for two very identical languages.
A translation should read like an original work and should maintain the style of the original
- A translation should not read as a contemporary of the translator. If the novel is situated 2 centuries ago, the translation may have certain old expressions to show that.
- a translator may never add to or omit from the original.
- A translation of prose should never be in verse. A translation of verse can be in verse but also in prose. He himself, however, prefers to translate verse into verse.
He also tries to keep as close to the tone and quality of the original as possible.
- He does not *consciously* vary the style of his translation with the style of the original, but he does vary the style.
- Regarding dialects, he tries to find a dialect in the TL which would fit in the story. For instance, a seaman's story asks for sailor man's expressions.
- He does not insert translator's notes in the texts. He puts them in the end. He does write prefaces.
- He does not have formal translating training.
- If possible, he discusses his translation with the author while working on it. If this is not possible, he waits for comments after having finished the translation.
- He does not work quickly. He revises several times. He does not discuss a lot with other translators, because there are not many translators of the same TL.
- He considers himself to be a literary creator when he translates
- He also writes. Sometimes writing takes over the translation, but at other times he translates more. He does not think he will continue translating as a main activity.
- His translations are not edited by the publisher.
- He translates a bit more quickly now than when he first started. He does not know whether it has improved or not.

George JOHNSTON was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 50 min.

Michael MEYER

Michael Meyer didn’t learn Swedish until was in his late twenties, and Norwegian when he was in his mid thirties. When he was 26 he became an English lecturer at a university in Sweden He did not have to be able to speak any Swedish. He stayed there until he was 29, and of course picked up some Swedish.
He wrote a novel in 1950, *The End of the Corridor*, and in 1951 wrote a play. Both had some success. After these, he did not know what to write next. Collins, who had already published his work, had a Swedish novel they wanted to have translated into English but could not find any translator willing to do it. They asked Michael Meyer. He accepted, and it was successful.
Then someone from BBC radio asked him if he did any translations from Norwegian. He had never done any Norwegian into English, he did not even speak Norwegian, but he accepted the job, a play by Ibsen, telling himself that Swedish and Norwegian were really quite similar. Well, he soon found out that Swedish and Norwegian are not very similar at all, and the translation was panned.
Three years later he translated his next play. The director went through every line and said Meyer did not know anything about translating drama. The director taught him everything he needed to know and he then got the offer to translate all of Ibsen's work.
He also translated some of Strindberg's work and then translated Ibsen's biography. Afterwards he translated Strindberg's biography as well.

Michael Meyer's reactions to statements about translation:

- A translation should never sound like a translation.
- A translation should reflect the style of the original.
- A translation should read like a contemporary of the original, but at the same time like the contemporary of the translator. However he thinks that for a work that is 100 years old, one cannot use very modern expressions.
- For older drama one can sometimes omit things, because nowadays drama is a lot quicker.
- A translation of verse can be in either prose or verse. This applies also for the translation of prose. It sometimes works very well the one way, sometimes it works better the other way.
-He consciously varies his style with that of the author he is translating.
- Regionalisms/dialects: He states that the dialect/regionalism the translator chooses should not be too easy to recognize, because a Cockney accent does not work in a Norwegian setting.

- He both writes translator's notes and prefaces with his translations. Puns are absolutely untranslatable; so are certain customs practiced in various countries.
- As a schoolboy he had formal translation training in Latin and Greek, both verse and prose.
- He had previous writing experience; a novel and a play. He also edited people's poetry.
- Of course he couldn’t consult Ibsen or Strindberg while he was translating their work, but for other translations it was possible to consult the original authors.
- He works quickly.
- He revises many times, three, four or more times.
- He does not discuss his work with other translators.
- He only reads other translations when he is stuck on something in his translation, or when he cannot find the right contemporary word for an article of clothing, or when he is not quite sure of himself.
- When he has certain difficulties in finding the right words, he also refers to native informants.
- He thinks of himself as a literary creator when he translates, but is very careful not to put his own ideas in a translation. A translator should not upgrade the original.
- Writing comes first to him.
- He does not plan to translate as a major activity.

- Some critics have a really good understanding of his work as a translator and he does appreciate their criticisms.
- His translations are not edited by the publisher.
- His translation has improved over the years.
- He works more quickly now.

Michael MEYER was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 40 min.

Isabel QUIQLY

Isabel Quiqly was born in Spain. She always spoke Spanish at home with her nannies, and spoke French at school. She left Spain when she was 7. She learned Italian in Italy, where she went when as an adult. Because she knew Latin, which she had learned at school, she picked up Italian quite easily. She wrote a novel, published by Collins, who then they asked her to translate a novel: this was the start of a career as a translator. She translates from Spanish, French and Italian into English. In a way she feels that translating is the enemy of her own creative writing. She finds translating easier, and thus feels it is harder to say 'no' to a translation than to an offer to write a new book.

Isabel Quiqly's reactions on the statements of translating:

- She is very much in favor of keeping the style of the original in her translations.
- The translation should not read like the contemporary of the original, because sometimes certain passages of the original just won't do in modern English.
- It depends whether a translation of verse should be in prose and a translation of prose in verse.
- She consciously varies her style with the author she translates.
- There is no real solution as to the problem of translating dialect.
- Very occasionally she inserts translator's notes.
- She did not have formal translation training.
- She has some previous writing experience; she wrote one novel and has done some reviewing.
- She turned to translating because she was asked to do a translation.
- She came into contact with the authors she translated through the publishers, but on the whole she does not discuss her work with them.
- It depends on the novel and how much time she has whether she works quickly or not
- She revises several times. She tends to make a very literal first translation.
- She never discusses her work with other translators.
- She reads other translations.
- She sometimes consults a native speaker. And she writes to her sister, who lives in Italy.
- In her role as translator she thinks she is to some extent a literary creator.
- She continues to write apart from translating. Writing comes first.
- She would like to translate drama, not poetry.
- She does not like critics who do not mention the name of the translator. Positive remarks

can be quite encouraging.
- Generally speaking, her translations are not edited by the publishers. She has a feeling that American publishers do more editing than the English publishers.
- She cannot really tell whether her translations have improved over the years.

Elizageth QUIQLY was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 55 min.

Haakon M. CHEVALIER

Chevalier is not mainly a translator, but a writer and interpreter as well.
His first translation was *La Condition Humaine*, which he did in 1933. It took him five weeks, which surprises himself now too, especially because he was teaching full-time as well.
He was born in US. His father is French, his mother Norwegian. When he was five years old, they moved to France and after two years they moved to Norway, where they stayed five years. When he was twelve they came back to the US. However, Chevalier did all his advanced schooling in Europe.

He worked very closely together with Dali when he worked on the translation of *The Hidden Faces* (1956). This was very helpful because Dali's French was full of Catalan language and expressions.
He says that he finds it very important for a translator not to insert his own vision into the translation, but to remain as faithful as possible to the original.

Chevalier is an all-around translator; he translates books on Chinese art but also on political issues.

-Somehow the translator has to catch the author's style in the words of the TL.
A translator should always vary his style with the author he is translating.
-With regard to literary translations, one should add to or omit from as little as possible. Footnotes can be used occasionally. But when it concerns translations of historic events, he feels it might sometimes be useful to add certain thing like names, dates, etc. Such is the case when translating Stendhal.
-He feels that verse is almost untranslatable.
-Dialect: he would not say that it is easy. A Southern French accent cannot be translated into a Scottish accent because that would seem really strange with regard to the French background of the story.
-He has turned down books because he did not sympathise with the ideas of the author.
-At the time of the interview he was writing his autobiography.
-For a long time translations have been ignored. Criticism of his work were has not been exclusively favorable, although they usually were.

CHEVALIER was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with

LITERARY TRANSLATORS

Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 30 min.

Eric MOSBACHER

-He revises several times.
-He does not discuss his work with other translators.
-He does not read other translations.
-He does use native informants.
-He does not consider himself a literary creator when he translates, but rather a craftsman.
-He does not write.
-He does not translate poetry, neither drama, but would like to try drama, because of the dialogues.
-The English publishers do not edit his translations. They do sometimes have suggestions. The American publishers do edit.
-He thinks his translation skills have improved over the years, although he probably works less quickly now because he is older.
-He says that a translation should not read like a translation.

MOSBACHER was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes).

N.B. This cassette is in bad condition.

Douglas JONES and Francis R. SCOTT

Douglas Jones is a teacher at the University of Sherbrooke. He is bilingual and interested in translations.

Jones' first poems were written when he was un undergraduate at McGill University. His first book of poems, *Frost on the Sun*, was published in 1957. His second book of poems, *The Sun is Axeman*, was published in 1961. The sun is the central image in Jones' mythology: "To apprehend and understand fragments of experience, to capture and suggest the sense that the universe is a vast pool, globe or continuum of energy; mysterious and potent, in which the individual thing or creature participates, changes or dies." The fragments of experience include features of his own land, human beings, flowers, birds, stars and much else.
Two other books of poetry appeared: *Phrases from Orpheus* in 1967 and *Under the Thunder the Flowers light up the Earth* in 1977.

Douglas Jones published *Butterfly on Rock* (circa 1971), a very important work of scholarship and criticism. The title was taken from a poem by Irving Layton.
Jones describes his book as a study of themes and images in Canadian literature.

George Woodcock has found Douglas Jones to be one of the least placeable of contemporary Canadian poets, and also one of the best.

Francis Reginald SCOTT

F.R. Scott's poetry is on the boundary between traditional and modern poetry in Canada. Scott's life in politics, law, and poetry has focussed on the question of whether the cities are to be the result of a marriage or a rape between man and the land, and whether they are to be primarily centres of community or centres of power.

Douglas Jones first provides an overview of Canadian poetry from the 19th century to present in order to put F.R. Scott in that perspective.

The optimism of 19th century poets is grounded in the character of the central protagonist: the pioneer, whose beginning and end focusses on a domestic space. Significantly, the pioneer hero is both axeman and husband-man, both technologist and lover. At the centre of his world we find his cabin and garden, and more centrally, a feminine

presence. The log cabin is the microcosm of the whole enterprise, an articulate form that integrates nature and culture, masculine and feminine, private space and public space.

Even before the end of the 19th century, it became evident that the pioneer axeman had become obsolete. With the rapidly changing technology, expanding commerce and industry, the pioneer hero is, in effect, split in two. The technologist is separated from the lover, and the feminine presence is no longer central but peripheral. The public space is separated from the private space, the rising village becoming in landsmen's vision the city of the end of things.

In reaction, the Confederation Poets abandon the collective project - the cities - and they go out to cultivate an intimate and particular relationship to the natural world. Like their woodcutters, however, they do so at the price of increasing isolation from the human community. The city becomes more and more clearly an empire: priests or politicians, engineers or financiers, its heros are the servants of power who extend or maintain the networks of transportation and communication. Working on the frontier, they too tend to become isolated and celibate men. We proceed from pastoral celebration to pastoral elegy, and we move full circle back to Oliver Goldsmith's "the deserted village".

At the ambiguous centre of this argument F.R. Scott’s poetry develops both a pastoral vision of community and the epic of power. The argument is implicit in two lines from a little series called *Impressions*:

"In the former garden the looming skyscrapers crush in their shade the trees laden with apples".

Temporarily dismayed by the advance of skyscrapers into orchards, he tends to remain optimistic.

Like MacLaughlin, but more vigorously, he opposes the forces of capitalism with those of democratic socialism. More broadly, he tends to believe that reason and imagination, science and sensibility and discipline by will organized into political action can reverse the trend to empire and in the end realise the essentially pastoral vision of an organic society. This is the end anticipated in the conclusion to *Eden*.

Scott's evolutionary optimism is not constant, nor is his own stand free from ambiguity. The bias of the public man, his emphasis on the collective project is so great it hardly leaves room for the private man, or for the artist.

[Douglas Jones discusses the title poem of Scott's first book *Overture*]

Afterwards he states that to him it seems that much of Scott's best poetry develops out

of the tension between two voices and two movements: that of the public man caught up in the centrifugal movement of the collective enterprise, and that of the private man who insists on a centripetal movement back to the intimate domestic space of Eros and Death.

By and large, Scott maintains a balance by means of his ironic lucidity.

[At this point Douglas Jones discusses in depth three poems by Scott: *Laurentian Shield, A Grain of Rice, Trans Canada*]

[He then discusses some other poetry by Scott, but in less detail]

[Jones' last remark is: "See for Scott's contributions as a translator 'The Written Record'"]

F.R. Scott was interviewed by Douglas Jones in 1981. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 30 min.

Michael SCAMMELL

interviewed by Marilyn Poll

Michael Scammell wrote a biography on Alexander Solzhenitsyn

See also cassette number 14, on which Milly Armour has an interview with Michael Scammell herself.

Jean STEWART

Jean Stewart is a translator of French. Her father was impassioned by the French language. She was brought up bilingually. She studied French and English at university. She visited France many times.

- She thinks that a translator should reproduce all the ideas of the original – no more, no less. As far as syntax is concerned, the translator is free. But he should keep as possible to the style and the rhythm of the original work as long as he respects the nature of the English language. Thus a translator must give the ideas, rather than the words of the original. It should read like an original work and not like a translation. It should reflect the style of the original.
- A translator should never add to the original work. If the editor agrees and the author does not mind, a translator can omit.
- She constantly changes her style with the authors she translates.
- She has never come across regionalisms or dialect, but with regard to slang she states that she finds it very tricky, especially because it changes so rapidly.
- She sometimes inserts notes, in which she explains puns, etc.
- Usually she does not write prefaces. It depends on the publisher. - She thinks that literary translators must have a very good knowledge of their own literature in order to provide a literary work with a translation.
- She received some formal translation training at college, where she had to do translations.
- She has some previous writing experience; in 1932 she wrote a book on poetry in France and in England. But she is not particularly proud of it.
- She started translating when John Layman, a friend of hers who ran London Magazine, sent her contemporary French stories to translate. She enjoyed that a lot. He also put her in touch with publishers.

She never worked through a literary agent: she has always been approached by the publishers. Occasionally she met the authors she translated, and one of her authors is a good friend of hers.

- Sometimes she discussed problems with the authors, but usually she was too proud to ask.
- It depends on the book whether she works quickly or not.
- She does not often read other translations; she finds it irritating. She discusses translations with her students only.
- She considers translating as a form of creativity, but it is easier than writing.
- She is pleased if she gets positive criticism, but is annoyed if she gets negative criticism.
- Her translations are only edited with her approval. They usually send her work back with suggestions, which she always finds helpful, unless it shows that the publisher has not

understood what she was aiming at with her translation. If this is the case, she turns the suggestions down.

She does not think her translations improved. Maybe rather the contrary, because she feels that the mind is not as quick as it used to be.

Jean STEWART was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1979. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 25 min.

Terence KILMARTIN

- Terence Kilmartin feels that a translation should read like a contemporary of the original as long as the original does not date from long ago. If there are any colloquialisms of that specific time they should stay that way. The translation should not be updated. Anachronisms should be avoided. He therefore does not believe it necessary for translations to be retranslated every 50 or 100 years.
- He does not see any reason for a translator to add something to the original. And a translator should try to never omit anything. He prefers to put in a note explaining what the original in fact says.
- Verse can be translated into prose.
- One does vary one's style with the authors one translates. He always tries to be as faithful as possible to the style and tone of the original, as long as the rendering is in good English.
- He prefers to translate works by authors he sympathises with.
- With regard to regionalisms and dialects, one should try to translate it into a neutral language. One should not really adopt a specific accent or dialect known in the TL, but one should rather make a difference in social level by using different accents and words every now and then.
- He learned French in France where he spent one year as a tutor for French boys. He taught them English, Latin and German. During the Second World War he worked with the French resistance in London and in France. After the war he went to the Middle East where he was a correspondent/journalist. He never had any formal translation training. Although he did not have any literary inspiration, he accepted to do a translation of a book: *The Purchase of Freedom*. He cut out a lot of it, because it was too long; it was more an editing job.
- He works quickly on the first draft, but revises a lot, so in the end he proceeds slowly.
- If possible, he consults the author he is translating. If this is not possible, he consults native speakers.
- It should not be the translator's aim to consider himself a literary creator, but he sometimes finds that he has improved the original work with his translation.

Terence KILMARTIN was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1979. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 30 min.

Margaret CROSSLAND

Margaret Crossland began school at the age of six and immediately began to learn French. In her school only the boys who got to learn Latin. Because the boys and the girls shared one classroom, Margaret listened in when the boys were taught Latin.
Her father was a teacher of mathematics. Her godfather was a teacher of French, as well as an art collector, and spent a lot of time in France. Both her parents painted, played the piano, sang and read. They did not read foreign languages, but they read translations.
At secondary school, she dropped chemistry and mathematics as soon as possible and she concentrated on French and Latin. She had always had music lessons. She began teaching herself two more languages, Spanish and Italian. She was going to go to the university in London, but needed an intermediate level of one more language. So in her last year of secondary school, she had to learn German.
At university she studied old English and French. When she graduated she worked at the Home Office in London for several years. She was not confronted much with foreign languages here, and changed jobs. She found herself a job at the Head Office of Marks & Spencer in London in the Library Department, where she sometimes did some interpreting and translated several documents.
Through her godfather she had met a French family living in England. She lived with them for a while and spoke French all the time. She also met her husband here. He was a technical translator (English into French), and she checked his grammar. She became a translator herself of semi-technical texts. She continued to learn Italian. In the end her marriage broke up. She then started translating for publishers who asked her to translate books.

See also cassette number 4.

Margaret CROSSLAND was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1979. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 25 min.

Philip STRATFORD

Philip Stratford is a Canadian translator of Quebecois French into English.
According to Stratford the best translator is the one who is writing himself out on the page. A word for word rendering does not make any sense at all. So you are left with a continual choice. The choices come from your penetration of the work, from your judgement of what is right. You act as the original author, you begin to hear the voices of the protagonists and you begin to build up a certain style until it really becomes your own thing. The best thing is when the original writer understands the TL and when rereading his own work rediscovers himself in it with a slight difference. It happens to Felix Leclerc when he read one of his works that had been translated by Stratford.

What are the aptitudes and skills that equip a translator for his work?
First of all, he probably wants to be a writer himself. He has a second language which he feels at home in. And he is sensitive to literary values. He probably also feels it as his mission to share his knowledge of the other literature and the discoveries he made in that other literature. Stratford does not think of translators as failed writers. Most of them write and translate. There is a difference between the two activities: while translating you do not have to think about the plot. It has been laid down for you.

As far as dialects are concerned, he does not think that Acadian finds its equivalent in a Cape Breton accent, which could be the rough equivalent. The translator would have to try and establish some personal dialectal experience. He should use this as a basis and invent from there. Even the "joual" of Tremblay is not like the "joual" of the bus conductor. So Tremblay already created a dialect of his own.

You probably never know enough of your Source Culture. It is not enough to know French. You have to know Quebec itself, and the original author's cultural background, and perhaps even his personal background. Translation is an act of understanding. And it is based on the most refined and subtle appreciation of the text, the person and the culture. This is what has to go into translation. Plus of course the same kind of knowledge in the translator's own language and culture.

Philip STRATFORD was interviewed by CBC (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 30 min.

Richard HOWARD

Richard Howard published 6 volumes of poetry. He is a critic and a teacher. He is the translator of many French authors: Gide, Camus, Claude Simon, etc. He has translated over 150 books.

At first he would start a translation of a book by opening the ST at his typewriter and he would sit down and start. Now he feels that he first needs to read secondary literature so as to fully grasp the meaning of the ST before he starts the actual translation.

A translation should be done in such a way that readers of the ST can discuss the ideas and so on of the book with the readers of the TT without having puzzled looks, etc. Both readers should read the same meaning behind different words.

Richard Howard does not translate poetry. He does not enjoy it, not even when he tried to translate his own poems into French with help of a French native. It does not sound right.

As far as other texts are concerned, he does not believe in the untranslatability of any text. It only takes the right translator at the right time. He himself feels that he is sometimes writing, whereas he is in fact translating. This feeling sometimes goes on for just one paragraph, sometimes for a whole chapter.

Richard HOWARD was interviewed by CBC (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 25 min.

William WEAVER

(translator of Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*)

William Weaver was born in 1923 into a family of Virginians. He went to school in Washington, and attended university in Preston, where he graduated in 1946. During his years at university he also spent time in Africa and Italy as an ambulance driver. He had joined the American Field Service, a voluntary ambulance driving organization, when he was 19 years old. In Italy, he met several young inspired Italian writers. The first book he translated was a novel by one of them, *A Day of Impatience*. In spring 1944, he went back to the States and finished his university degree. He taught English for one year at the University of Virginia. He then went back to Italy for a year and from then he sort of went back and forth between the States and Italy.
During the Second World War, he had started to learn Italian by translating poetry. Some of these were then actually published. Later he started translating more seriously to make money so as to be able to stay in Italy. He was also a music critic for Italian magazines. And he combined this with translating and writing short stories as well as non-fiction biographies.

He likes to isolate himself; he lives in the country, and does not have a car.
He usually consults the writers he translates. Only once did he translate a writer no longer living.
As for translating Umberto Eco, he said that it is not the big words that are difficult to translate, they can simply be found in dictionaries. It is rather the everyday words that are hard to translate. He states the example of people going to a bar for a “cup of coffee”. This just does not work in English. Whenever he does not know the meaning of certain Italian words, he first asks an Italian for an explanation. Then he consults an Anglophone, after which he comes up with the right translation.
He hates putting footnotes and not translating certain words. He prefers using translating in a descriptive way in order to give an understandable rendering of the ST.
He finds that a translation should be contemporary with the original. Translations do not have to be retranslated after one generation.

William WEAVER was interviewed by Milly Armour in 1985. Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 35 min.

John WEIGHTMAN

John Weightman studied French at school and at university. As many English students do, he went off to France for one year. He could not get a job as a teacher, but worked as a translator (English into French) in the newly established French service of the BBC. He stayed there for eleven years. He was also asked to do some translations for a magazine. After eleven years he became a teacher after all, but was still asked to do many translations. He also did many translations together with his wife, who always provides the first draft. He then reads through the draft and marks things he would like to change. He would say that translation can be done very well in collaboration; the result may even be better.

- Word-by word translation is not possible.
- A translation must obviously give the ideas of the original. He adds that a translator should start with the assumption that he can never get it right, because even the simplest terms have different connotations in different cultures, e.g. "pain" in French culture has a complete different meaning from "bread" in English culture.
- A translation should read like the original; it should follow the style well, etc. A translation should not carry the style of the translator.
- A translation should read as a contemporary of the original.
- A translation should follow the original as much as possible and should therefore not add to or omit from the original.
- A translation of verse should be in prose; there is no real verse translation of verse. A poem cannot be translated because it has language constraints. Translated verse is more accurately called "adaptation", which sometimes can be very good, but they never carry the same emotional, literary and stylistic values of the original. John Weightman prefers to see the original poem, with a prose translation next to it explaining the poem.
- He always tries to follow the style of the original author.
- There is no real good solution to the translation problem of dialects and regionalisms.
- When puns and so forth are untranslatable, yet still important to the rest of the story, he inserts a note.
- He had translation training at both school and university. He has always had good teachers.
- He did not have much writing experience before embarking on translation. He wrote some articles for student magazines.
- He quite frequently discussed problems with the authors he translated.
- If he needs the money he does not refuse to translate books written by authors he does not respect.
- He does not work quickly: he revises several times. Then the original author (if he masters

the English language) reads it through, after which the publisher/editor reads it through. Both make suggestions.
- He discusses problems with other translators.
- He rarely reads translations of French books. He usually reads the original. He does read translations of other languages.
- He sometimes consults native speakers.
- He slightly considers himself to be a literary creator when he translates. As a translator you have to like language and be sensitive to the beauty of the original language and of your own language.
- He continues writing, along with translating. In fact, writing comes first.
- He does not think highly of critics, although the work he and his wife do has always received good reviews.
- Sometimes editors made really good remarks about their work. Once a translation was altered by an American editor, who crossed out all the English terminology and altered them into American words. They sent it back with all the American words translated back into English again; it is no good asking an English translator to do a translation into American English.
- He hopes his translations have improved over the years.
- He thinks he translates more quickly now.

N.B. The last part of the cassette is in a rather bad condition.

John WEIGHTMAN was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 35 min.

Michael SCAMMELL

- A translation should read like an original work
- A translator should only add things when he feels it is necessary to provide a fully understandable text for the Target Audience.
- Verse should always be in verse, but he agrees that in some cases a translation in prose is better than no translation at all.
- In general he thinks that a translation should reproduce the voice, tone, mannerism and style of the original.
- His ideal has always been not to translate anything from authors he does not like, or for whom he feels contempt.
- He feels that a translator should not impose his style on the translations, but the translation should represent the style of the author.
- Regionalisms and dialects should always be tackled.
- He is against translator's notes, which explain the translation, as in notes explaining weights and lengths etc. He does not mind putting a note if the subject matter is exhaustive.
- He does not like translator's prefaces either, because these discuss stylistic questions etc. He finds them too pseudo-academic. A translator should be self effacing. A preface should only be about the original author or about the book; it should never be about the problems the translator saw himself faced with.
- He learned his SL in the army, unwillingly. He was very upset at having to learn Russian, only weeks later he started enjoying it.
- He did not have any formal translation education. He had the common translation experiences at school where he learned French, Latin and German. This he really liked.
- He had had little writing experience but nothing has been published.
- He turned to translation because that was his ultimate ambition. It gave him the opportunity to be in touch with literature, even though he could not produce it himself.
- Of all the authors he has translated, he only had contact with Nabokov. Some other authors he translated were no longer living; others were difficult to reach, as they were in the Soviet Union, although he did correspond with one or two.
- He does not discuss his translations with the authors (if reachable) while translating. Only when the translation is finished does he consult them.
- He dislikes translating work by authors he does not sympathise with. He could never translate work by a fascist writer or an extreme communist. If for economic reasons he has to accept any translation he can get, he sometimes has his translations published under a pseudonym.
- He works rather quickly, although it depends on the author he is translating.

- He does revise several times; he quickly provides a first draft, then starts revising it. He started his career as a translator who tried providing a perfect translation at once.
- Occasionally he discusses his translations with other translators.
- He reads other translations from languages he does not read, as well as translations from Russian.
- He does discuss problems with native speakers.
- He now writes a lot himself too, and it comes first
- He translated some poetry, never drama. However he feels he is strong on dialogue, but weak on poetry.
- He finds most criticisms on translation superficial and unprofessional. Usually the critics are not all aware of certain strategies the translator consciously followed.
- He does work more quickly now, although his active vocabulary of Russian was larger when he was younger.
- He thinks that translators are not held in high esteem and are not paid enough.

Michael SCAMMELL was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 45 min.

Paul WILSON

Paul Wilson went to England in 1964 to do postgraduate work in English Literature. He focussed on George Orwell because at the time he was very interested in leftist politics. While he was doing research on Orwell, he discovered that one of Orwell's first articles existed only in French. Paul Wilson wanted to know what the article was about and so he set down to translate it into English. This became his first translation and he deliberately tried to create a style in English that he thought equivalent to Orwell's. He thought this was a very intriguing aspect about translating: trying to make the translation sound like the original work.

In 1967 he went to Czechoslovakia to teach English to translation students. Here he was forced to learn Czech. Through teaching he learned a lot about the Czech language. He taught the same students through their 4 years of university.

Most novels were not allowed to be read in Czechoslovakia, because a lot of the colloquialisms carried a double meaning. This is why it is so hard to translate Czech novels; English does not have words for most of these colloquialisms.

During these first years he taught himself Czech by talking a lot, teaching and trying to read the newspapers. After a while, he started to translate novels. In 1973, he stopped teaching altogether and became a freelance translator. He translated children's books as well as books for adults. Of course he did not have a lot of reference material in English, and now that he is back in Canada realizes his translation into English has improved a lot. Another thing that has changed for him is the fact that he now has an editor who checks and double checks the final draft of his translations before publishing it. The editor decides what the audience can handle.

He is essentially against footnotes in the text. He prefers to explain within the text, without the reader noticing it.

Often, if the author is around, he consults him whenever problems pop up. He always consults native speakers.

He feels that although translating is a creative literary activity, translators should keep a tight reign on their own personal creativity while they are translating.

Translating comes first to him. He does not earn enough money to live on as a writer.

Paul WILSON was interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 90 min.

The FITZLYONS

Mrs. Fitzlyon learned French at school. She learned Russian from scratch as an adult. Before turning to literary translation she did a lot of technical translation. Later she started writing herself too and was not interested in translation anymore, except for poetry.

Mr. Fitzlyon learned English as a second language. He is Russian, but lives in Canada, and therefore has to speak English. He learned French because of the government. Like his wife, he started his career as a translator of technical texts. Later he was asked to translate Russian literature into English and he once did a translation from French into English. He wrote a book in English and is now translating it into Russian.

Their reaction to the statements on translation are as follows:
- A translation should stick as close as possible to the original; there should not be too much cultural adaptation, it should give the idea of the original.
- A translation should reflect the style of the original. The translator should not try to improve it.
- A translation should read as a contemporary of the original: ideally yes, but it is not possible.
- A translation should read as a contemporary of the translator: if the ST is very old.
- A translation should reflect the style of the translator: no.
- One should not add to or omit from the original.
- Ideally poetry should be translated into poetry, but this is in fact impossible.
- There is not one solution to the problem of regionalism and dialect.
- Do you consciously vary your style with the author you are translating? Yes
- They sometimes write prefaces to their translations.
- They did not have any formal translation training.
- They do not have any previous writing experience (literary or technical).
- He turned to translation to make a living. She turned to translation because she liked a book by Tolstoy very much and she wanted to provide a translation of it.
- They do not work quickly.
- They revise several times.
- They discuss their work with other translators, especially with each other.
- They only read other translations if they do not read the original language.
- They do not consider themselves literary creators when they translate.
- They continue to write as well.
- Writing comes first to them.

LITERARY TRANSLATORS

- She used to like to translate poetry but now she does not have enough time anymore.
- Usually they receive positive remarks from critics, but as Mrs Fitzlyon remarks, the critic is often not really an expert in the field of literary translation. To her it does not mean anything.
- Only once were his translations edited. Hers were edited by her husband and she thinks it is very useful.

The FITZLYONS were interviewed by Milly Armour (n.d.). Collection of interviews with Literary Translators (audio cassettes) 45 min.