

Sergia Adamo

## Review

Susan Bassnett, Rosa Maria Bollettieri Bosinelli and Margherita Ulrych, eds. *Vt curvatur 'Umf'gu' Tevisited*. In *Textus: English studies in Italy* XII:2 (1999). 213–506.

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to the attention of Italian academic bodies involved in a recent reform of curricula and disciplines that has dissociated the study of languages from literature and emphasised the role of specific translation training and research.

Indeed, a preoccupation with the definition of Translation Studies as a (possible) discipline appears to underlie the volume with various solutions. For instance, Bassnett's positive opening points to the growing awareness of translation as a hybrid, in-between space which needs to be observed in broad contextual frameworks of power relations and cultural intersections and from this perspective the set of various contributions the volume brings together is described as a harmonious whole which serves to promote genuine interdisciplinarity in the study of translation. Adopting a slightly different stand, the other two editors, Margherita Ulrych and Rosa Maria Bollettieri Bosinelli — who contribute to the issue with an overview of "the State of the Art in Translation Studies" going from Holmes to the descriptive paradigm up to the relation to linguistics and cultural studies — prefer to talk about the "multifaceted nature" of a single discipline, which they even propose to define as a "multi-discipline" or a "meta-discipline" (p.237). The same question also shapes Malmkjaer's and Nergaard's contributions, the former being based on the proposal of a mutual exchange between Linguistics and Translation Studies, the latter considering the relationship between Semiotics and Translation Studies as that between two established disciplines sharing the interest in translation as a semiotic activity by definition. And yet, there is also Edwin Gentzler's point of view, according to which the relation between Translation Studies and Comparative Literature is that of a "challenge from within".

Another issue which is present throughout the volume is a pedagogical and practical concern about how to teach translation and how to teach translators to manage themselves in the work market, together with the awareness of the need for a better understanding of the role of the translator as a social mediator. As regards the first aspect, it is worth noting that the increasing importance of the use of corpora in the last few years is taken into account by Guy Aston, who believes that "where available and accessible, appropriate corpora appear able to provide better and faster solutions to many of the translator's problems in a unified environment, with positive effects on learning" (p. 310), and Federica Scarpa, who considers corpora a fundamental tool to "provide trainee translators with objective descriptions of how translators have overcome some genre-specific translation difficulties in practice" (p. 328). As to the other aspects, the volume offers some instances of yet untouched or little considered topics of research. For instance, Delia Chiaro and Giuseppe Nocella's survey of the

translation market in the region Emilia-Romagna provides an innovative insight into language policies and management in a booming economic reality of small and medium enterprises and proposes some tips to deal with this situation from the perspective of an academic training deeply concerned with the context where it operates; or, referring to an anthropological framework, David Katan convincingly points out and analyses “what is it that’s going on” when the intercultural mediation of translation is actually aimed at promoting “communication and understanding across cultures” (p.423).

Yet the volume also offers some instances of already developed topics and perspectives of investigation which nevertheless seem to have been neglected with reference to Italian culture. This is the case, for example, of the translation of film dialogue, an issue which is here addressed by Christopher Taylor and which probably deserves wider attention in a culture where dubbing is largely, almost systematically, adopted. But this is also the case of historical research on translation, here represented by Christopher Rundle’s stimulating study on the activity of the major publisher Arnoldo Mondadori during Fascism; a kind of research which seems to be unanimously recognised as central to defining Italian nation-building processes and historical-cultural dynamics and which still awaits for specific archives and documents to be newly reconsidered or even discovered.

It is Mirella Agorni who, in the closing contribution of this collection, points out the role of language barriers and editorial policies in the formation of the canon of theoretical main references in Translation Studies: indeed, the domination of the English language appears to be particularly paradoxical for a field of study where diversity and intercultural exchange is constitutively central.

Also in this light, one cannot but agree with what Agorni writes in the conclusion of the introductory note to her bibliographical survey: “there is a lot of work still to be done” (p.484). Words that can be read in an interesting parallel with the ones quoted at the beginning...

