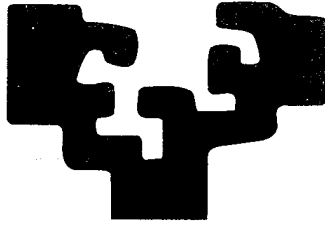


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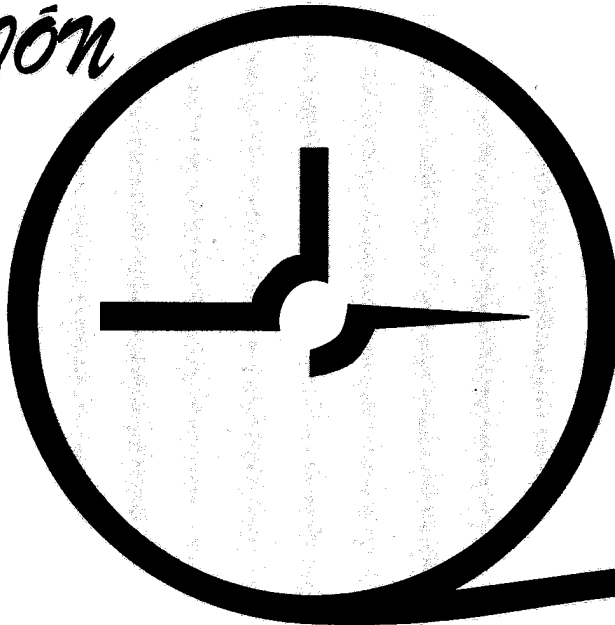
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YVES BONNEFOY AND TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH: WHEN POETS, LINGUISTS AND TRANSLATORS THINK ALIKE

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For the German Philosopher, Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945) the essence of the singularity of the human being was that we create symbolic systems to deal with the world around us. The most important of them is language. Language is an activity, not a product – it is in constant ordered flux as we come to terms with new realities, new situations and new needs. According to Roman Jakobson individual languages “differ essentially in what they *must* convey and not in what they *may* convey” (Jakobson 1966: 236). My focus here is on individual languages as different ways of coming to terms with the world around us and on the different ways in which languages see and express reality. It is always thought-provoking when a single group of ideas turns up in different guises in disparate disciplines and among people who did not know each other. Here I shall be taking a set of ideas on language behaviour developed in their own fashion by Yves Bonnefoy, the French poet and translator, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, the pioneers of *stylistique comparée*, and Allan Paivio, psychologist, and will be examining the repercussions for translation.

With the guilty fascination of Eve plucking the fruit from the Tree of Good and Evil, French translators have translated Shakespeare, and many have written about the experience. Among twentieth-century analyses of the problems, one of the most perceptive is the pair of *Postfaces* the poet, Yves Bonnefoy, annexed to his 1962 version of *Hamlet*. He notes that French has no Shakespeare translation of the stature of the Schlegel-Tieck version in Germany (1825). He implies that this is not really a bad thing – French Romanticism was as incapable as French Classicism of understanding Shakespeare. It is the philosophical rationalisation of French wrought by Malherbe and his contemporaries that makes it so difficult for somebody like Shakespeare to find a congenial translator in the French-speaking world. In his view, however, sixteenth-century French writers would have understood Shakespeare if only they could have read him. One wonders what Rabelais would have made of Falstaff.

Bonnefoy came to literary translation from a training in philosophy and mathematics. During the 1940s he was a member of the Surrealists and, although he broke with them in 1947, his attitudes to translation show the effect of long acquaintance with Symbolist and Surrealist thinking. In discussing his approach to *Hamlet*, he opens his case with a careful analysis of Voltaire and his expectations – Voltaire translated a number of passages from *Hamlet* and recons-

tracted *Julius Caesar*, making of it a three-act tragedy terminating with Caesar's death. Bonnefoy's first line of attack is one of literary conception. The word, *tragédie*, acts as a block between Shakespeare and the educated French sensibility because of its resonances from Racine. While Shakespeare's tragedies are on a human scale, French tragedy works in an ideal world of the interplay of forces, of a balance of motives, of the intellectually satisfying and predictable – with consequent effects on the delineation of character. Romantic translators, for example Guizot and Francisque Michel, did avoid this fault to some extent, but in spite of deeper honesty the Romantics give us Shakespeare's characters as *lointains, atténués, assourdis, comme au travers d'un vitre* (Bonnefoy 1962: 233). In his view Falstaff as presented by François Victor-Hugo is *un personnage littéraire*, not the real person of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*:

Je ne vois pas d'opposition dans son théâtre entre l'universel et le singulier.

And such an opposition is a feature of the real world. The thread running through this part of Bonnefoy's discussion is his emphasis on the immediate and the real in Shakespeare. Whether deliberately or not this whole phase of his argument takes attitudes that are typically French, only to rule them out as irrelevant. Is Macbeth an archetype like Antigone or Harpagon? Is Othello the *jaloux en soi*? Or are they both victims of a blind destiny? Such questions are beside the point as Shakespeare does not really care:

...l'essentielle ambiguïté du théâtre de Shakespeare signifie qu'il est une observation empirique de l'existence de l'homme, sans préjugé littéraire ou philosophique (Bonnefoy 1962: 236).

The explanation for the problems faced by French translators is clear enough:

L'essence de ce malheur des traductions de Shakespeare repose dans les métaphysiques contradictoires qui rongent et même tyrannisent et le français et l'anglais (Bonnefoy 1962: 235).

Bonnefoy makes three points about Shakespeare's use of English:

a. "Il se voue un objet situé hors de lui, comme d'ailleurs l'anglais le permet."

b. An English utterance normally presents its content unanalysed by intellectual considerations. His example is the invariable English adjective to which he ascribes a photographic quality. To this quality the metaphysical problems posed by the relationship of qualifier to substance posed by French agreement, and even the French reluctance to use adjectives in certain circumstances, are irrelevant.

c. English goes for the tangible, if possible on the level of both signifier and signified (Bonnefoy 1962: 236).

This leads into a discussion of the nature and role of the word in French and English. In designating what it has to designate the French word excludes from its *poésie plus prudente* all that is not specifically expressed and intended (Bonnefoy 1962: 277) — it simplifies reality to make it intellectually self-consistent. Indeed the French word for Bonnefoy evokes the Platonist “idea” with the result that our world is replaced by a separate place in which one forgets the diversity of existence. Thus human interaction becomes a number of ideal relationships — the intelligible centre from which one looks at reality. The English word, on the other hand, is quite capable of including things unsaid and even unintended. Bonnefoy’s final formula is

...le mots anglais est ouverture ou (surface) et le mot français fermeture (ou profondeur). D’une part un mot appelant la précision ou l’enrichissement d’autres mots et de l’autre un lexique aussi réduit que possible pour protéger une unique et essentielle expérience (Bonnefoy 1962: 239).

The little that Bonnefoy has to say about grammar is significant: he claims that the slightest word in a work of literature contains in germ all the structures of a language (Bonnefoy 1962: 241). The major issue for Bonnefoy is clearly the contrast between the ways in which English and French construct their symbolic systems and the habits of use that this act of construction engenders. In consequence, the translator’s problem is not at the level of the individual word — it is at the systemic level of language behaviour. For this reason he admits he too is defeated by Shakespeare, but his translation of *Hamlet* illustrates the major point of his analysis, that there is complete concordance between the way in which a language and the way in which it shapes the reality it represents.

Where Bonnefoy begins from a theory and practice of literature, the *Stylistique comparée* of Vinay and Darbelnet starts in the sign-theory of the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. At the time of writing their *Stylistique comparée*, Vinay was teaching translation at the Université de Montréal and Darbelnet was in the Linguistics Department at l’Université Laval, Québec. They begin with Saussure’s model of the linguistic sign. For them the signs are not merely words, but also features of grammar, intonation, and indeed of any level of language. They deal with Saussure’s combination of *signifiant* and *signifié* not only through Saussure’s systemic approach, but also through metalinguistic questions of context and pragmatics: for it is only in context that one actualises the *signification* and *valeur* of words. The system is Saussure’s *langue*, but one has access to it only through *parole*, the use made of it. Thus their theory of sign-systems treats both the formal, in that it discusses the nature of word-meaning in French and English, and the functional, in that it contrasts how French and English actualise meaning through expression. My feeling is that they agree with the eighteenth

century rhetorician, Charles Batteux, that the basic universals of language rest in the rhetorical plane of expression, rather than in the formal of grammar. The Vinay-Darbelnet schema progresses from lexicon through grammar to discourse, recognising three interrelated language systems, *exique*, *agencement*, and *message*, in more familiar terms, vocabulary, grammar and discourse.

To begin with lexicon. The basis of their theory is the distinction between two types of representation, *le plan de l'entendement*; and *le plan du réel*. The first, defined as *mode de représentation qui tend vers le général et l'abstrait* (Vinay & Darbelnet 1958: 8), is more congenial to French, and the second, which *reste plus proche des images sensibles, et par conséquent serre de plus près les aspects concrets et particuliers*, is more characteristic of English. The word, *entendement*, I suspect, was suggested to Vinay and Darbelnet by the 1607 French grammar of Charles Maupas:

Nostre langue suit l'ordre naturel, c'est à dire, l'ordre de l'entendement.

The two *plans de représentation* differ essentially in their degree of logical explicitness: the *plan de l'entendement* is explicit in that there are few, if any, layers of meaning subsidiary to the main one. In the *plan du réel* implicit layers of meaning are frequent. Being a more intellectual construct, the *plan de l'entendement* tends towards stasis, which the *plan du réel* tends towards kinesis. This applies on all three levels of analysis, lexicon, grammar and discourse. In addition the *plan de représentation* congenial to each of our languages governs the freedom with which it uses its resources. The *mot-signe* is the instrument of the *plan de l'entendement*, and the *mot-image* of *le plan du réel*.

In French the basic element of representation is the *mot-signe*, in English the *mot-image*. Of the first they say:

Nous appelons "mot-signe" tout ce qui tend au signe abstrait, c'est à dire à ce qu'est le chiffre dans le langage mathématique et qui per conséquent parte plus à l'esprit qu'aux sens.

Vinay and Darbelnet do not bother to define the *mot-image*: the sense is clear enough. They begin from the general principle that words in English tend to be more imaged than those in French, citing terms like "dress rehearsal" for *répétition générale*, "way station" for *arrêt intermédiaire* (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958: 58). French tends towards the general, a minimalist principle deriving from the logical priorities of French. One says only what is necessary. For example, where the French will use the general word, *bruit*, English has a large number of words for noise, and their use is often demanded by the collocation: for example, "the howl of the wind" (*le bruit du vent*). Many of these words are almost onomatopoeic, and certainly in a large number of cases, affective. For this reason I have never been comfortable with the term, *plan du réel*, preferring

plan du sensoriel. Lexical meaning is more punctilious in French than in English: “bitterness” is *goût amer* or *it amertume* depending on whether the idea is concrete or abstract. The extension of French vocabulary tends to be narrower than that of English. Perhaps the most difficult difference to handle by one who ventures into the other language is the French insistence on *la clarté* as against the easy English assignment of overtones to words in context. For centuries *la clarté française* has been defined negatively on a model from Leibnitz: an idea is clear when we know what it does not cover.

In the matter of *agencement*, the second level postulated by Vinay and Darbelnet, we examine two things, morphology (what Vinay and Darbelnet call *catégories* and *espèces*), and the ways in which they are used to create sense units. Though translated “Structures” by Sager and Hamel, *agencement* assumes morphology. That certain parts of speech (*espèces*) are common to a number of languages does not mean that the languages use them in the same way, or even that the languages in question are as comfortable in forming them. Nor does it mean that morphological categories common to several languages correspond in all particulars. Thus English forms adjectives and adverbs much more easily than French and uses them freely. Unlike French it tends to construct its utterances around verbal phrases rather than around nominal, to go for colour rather than statement. Morphological categorisation and the use of morphological categories is much stricter in French than in English. The most notorious and difficult case is the verb, where even verb-tense does not completely correspond from one language to the other. From the time of the medieval grammarians it had been a commonplace that any idea could be expressed by any part of speech. When the seventeenth-century author, Fontenelle, wrote: “la lune tait leve il y avait peut-tre une heure”, the seventeenth-century translator, Aphra Behn, translated: “the moon was about an hour high”. English prefers to construct its sentences around the kinetic and pictorial parts of speech, hence the adjective, “high” for the verb, *levée*. Second, English loads the verb “to be” and its prepositions very heavily. Here we see the verb, “to be”, where French has a full verb. Third, words change their part of speech in English very easily. Here the English noun, “an hour”, acts as an adverb modifying “high”, while the French uses an adverbial phrase. To sum up, functional considerations play a larger part in English *agencement*, than in French: in English the boundaries between parts of speech are notably fluid, and actualisation depends on context.

Grammar is at the service of discourse, Vinay-Darbelnet’s *message*. They distinguish three senses for the *message* of a text. *Le sens structural* is that derived from the linguistic units of an utterance and their combination. *Le sens global* is the structural sense interpreted through the linguistic context. Finally there is *la situation*, the global sense measured against the situation of the utterance. A text or discourse has a necessary progression which depends on two things:

word-order and linkage between the sense-units. There is a strong distinction to be made between word-order, which is usually from the grammatical structure, and *démarche*, literally the way of proceeding with a task. Vinay-Darbelnet define it as the exploitation of certain preferences proper to the individual language and the individual speaker in the presentation of the facts in the sentence. Languages differ in both word-order and *démarche*, but it is the second which concerns the translator and which is probably most relevant to the task of translation. French tends to prefer *démarches* which can be characterised philosophically: from circumstances to event, for instance, or from cause to effect. English is not as particular:

Vu la nécessité de respirer, les bois ne peuvent point excuser des tenues trop longues.

Woodwind players can not manage extremely long sustained passages, as they are compelled to take breath.

The important statement in both languages is the problems faced by wind-players. But the French sentence rises from cause to effect and the English falls from effect to cause. In addition French prefers to signal the progression of an utterance by linkwords, which normally impose a certain interpretation. English does not find this necessary except in certain types of technical prose:

...je crois que c'est vous qui a eu la victoire. *Car* vous teniez Dundas tranquille.

...I think you won the war. You kept Dundas quiet.

Where the original French has the explicit linkword, *car*, English takes the sequence of ideas as sufficient implicit linkage. On the strength of examples like this Vinay-Darbelnet assign *un développement raisonné* to French and *un développement intuitif* to English. In discourse French grammatical and discourse progressions usually coincide, while they frequently do not in English.

Such distinctions between image-meaning and abstract meaning are at least as old as Aristotle. For him the primary source of word-meaning was mental imagery. In the first place, a word represented an image in the mind (*De anima* III.vii). One arrived at an intellectual and scientific vocabulary by seeking the universal properties proper to a class, by stripping off the concrete features of things represented. The words annexed to universal concepts were necessarily abstract. Thus the word, "man", is the sign of a mental image, and "manhood" is a universal quality ascribed to all men by analysing the qualities common to particular men and finding the common feature. The work of Allan Paivio, then professor of Psychology at the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, is an updated version of this simple Aristotelian view of concrete and abstract meaning, but with a theoretical depth that casts light on Bonnefoy and Vinay-Darbelnet. Paivio's "dual-coding hypothesis", a psychological rather than a phi-

Philosophical framework, formalised these two types of meaning into two complementary cognitive systems. In his view language designed to deal with “non-verbal objects and events” is mediated through mental images and that designed for “linguistic information” through verbal association systems. The mechanism he proposes for the derivation of the “verbal system” from the “image system” is very closely based on the Aristotelian model. Though primarily visual, the non-verbal “image system” relates meaning to all five senses whether singly or in combination, while the “verbal system” relates meaning to abstract information systems. Words belonging to both image and verbal systems fall into sociative networks not unlike the Saussure’s paradigmatic systems. As one might expect, in Paivio’s examples the greatest number of concrete words are nouns. But it is the characteristics of this sort of meaning that is most interesting here. Images include an affective component, they easily include movement, and they are multi-levelled in meaning. The “verbal system” on the other hand is reductionist like Aristotle’s universals. The words belonging to it eschew affectivity, are static, and have only one level of meaning. Because of the multiple meanings of the words involved in it Paivio speculates that the image system requires parallel mental processing for both production and reception and that the verbal system requires sequential. One tends to grasp something presented visually and audially through its most obvious features: one’s own reactions then become the affective aspects of the appropriate word-meaning. But human reaction is largely excluded from words denoting abstractions. Like Aristotle Paivio takes it for granted that any language functions through both types of mediation, i.e. through the image system and the verbal system.

Bonnefoy, Vinay-Darbelnet and Paivio all look at language as behaviour, or in the phrase fashionable in the 1980s and 1990s, language as communication. Paivio’s views on the generation and interpretation of the linguistic sign, are another fruitful contribution to the on-going controversies over the associationist view of word-meaning which take their rise in Aristotle and are further developed by Hobbes and Locke. The theories of representation and expression developed by Bonnefoy and Vinay-Darbelnet come from the French tradition of functionalist thought on language which goes back into the eighteenth century, taking particular shape in the rhetoric of Charles Batteux (1713–1780). Like Batteux Bonnefoy is concerned with the relationship between linguistic symbol and literary creation. But his own view of the affair is heavily shaped by the Symbolists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He develops contrastively their principle that the symbolic systems of language are more than the Aristotelian symbol: they are also creative entities in their own right. The Batteux tradition took on a peculiarly Romantic form in the early work of Charles Bally. He picks up the principle that languages are creatively different in the way they class and represent reality. Bally’s work on French and German states quite bluntly that French and German approach the representation of reality in

two opposite ways: French is intellectual and clear, while German is pictorial and precise. His work was applied to translation between French and German by Albert Malblanc in the 1940s and then more fully worked out for French and English by Vinay and Darbelnet in the 1950s. Paivio's image system is clearly Bonnefoy's *ouverture*, and his verbal system Bonnefoy's *it fermeture*. Paivio's distinction of the two types of meaning through different types of mediation has a definite resonance in the Vinay-Darbelnet *plans du réel et de l'entendement*. The role of implicitness, both intellectual and affective, in the *plan du réel* definitely implies parallel processing in the mind, while the intellectual explicitness of the *plan de l'entendement*, essentially a reductionist technique of creating meaning, implies sequential processing. Kinesis is amenable to sensorial mediation only.

The major point of contact of our three theorists is that language is creative, but, as our earlier quote from Jakobson implies, the direction of creativity in individual languages is controlled by the inherent imperatives of the language system. And whether you follow Bonnefoy by appealing to *métaphysique*, or Vinay-Darbelnet by examining the *plans de représentation*, or put it all down to Paivio's mediation, you are postulating that language behaviour is not merely external but also internal, and that it is to a certain extent predictable. What is clear in this comparison of three approaches to the same problem, is the danger of taking up extreme positions: For his purposes Bonnefoy's absolute contrast between the English word and the French word is telling; but in the normal world it is clearly not absolute. Vinay and Darbelnet cover themselves by talking about characteristic preferences of French and English for one type of representation over another. Paivio makes it quite clear that both types of mediation are accessible to all languages. And yet each language is *sui generis*.

There is also the strong implication that languages can be grouped according to their preference for types of mediation. There have been various attempts to apply the Vinay-Darbelnet techniques to German and Spanish. I shall bring this discussion down to earth with two short extracts in English and Spanish. The first is a paragraph from Graham Greene, *Travels with my Aunt*, Spanish version by Enrique Pezzoni (1986).

The Crown and Anchor was built like a bank in Georgian style. Through the windows I could see men with exaggerated moustaches in tweed coats, which were split horsily behind, gathered round a girl in jodhpurs. They were not the type to whom I would have extended much credit, and I doubted whether any of them, except the girl, had ever ridden a horse. They were all drinking bitter, and I had the impression that any spare cash they might have put aside went on tailors and hairdressers rather than equitation. A long experience with clients has made me prefer a shabby whisky-drinker to a well-dressed beer-drinker.

El Crown and Anchor estaba construido como un banco de estilo georgiano. Por las ventanas vi a unos hombres de bigotes exagerados y chaquetas de tweed abiertas por detrás, como las de los jinetes, reunidos en torno a una muchacha con pantalones de montar. No pertenecín al tipo de individuo a quien yo habría concedido mucho crédito y dudo que alguno de ellos, salvo la muchacha, hubiese montado alguna vez a caballo. Todos ellos bebían cerveza y tuve la impresión de que gastaban todo el dinero que ahorraban en sastres y peluqueros, más que en la equitación. Una larga experiencia con mis clientes me ha hecho preferir un andrajoso bebedor de whisky a un elegante aficionado a la cerveza.

The other is from one of Isabel Allende's "Un discreto milagro", *Cuentos de Eva Luna*; the English is by Margaret Sayers Peden.

Miguel Boulton era sacerdote. A diferencia de sus hermanos, él resultó moreno, de baja estatura, casi enteramente cubierto por un vello negro que le habría dado un aspecto bestial si su rostro no hubiera sido tan bondadoso. Abandonó la ventajas de la residencia familiar a los diecisiete años y sólo regresaba a ella para participar en los almuerzos dominicales con sus parientes, o para que Filomena la cuidara en las raras ocasiones en que se enfermaba de gravedad. No sentía ni la menor nostalgia por las comodidades de su juventud y a pesar de sus arrebatos de mal humor, se consideraba un hombre afortunado y estaba contento con su existencia. Vivía junto al Basurero Municipal, en una población miserable de los extramuros de la capital, donde las calles no tenían pavimento, aceras, ni árboles.

Miguel Boulton was a priest. Unlike his brother and sister, he was dark-skinned, short, with hair so thick over all his body that he would have seemed bear-like had he not had such a gentle face. He had abandoned the advantages of the family hearth at sixteen and returned only to eat Sunday dinners with his parents or to be cared for by Filomena on the rare occasions he was seriously ill. He was not all nostalgic for the comforts of his youth, and though he had fits of ill humour, he considered himself a fortunate man and was content with his life. He lived near the city dump, in a miserable district on the outskirts of the capital where the streets were unpaved and there were no sidewalks or trees.

We can set aside the socially peculiar and obviously untranslatable like "bitter" and "georgian" translated as *cerveza* and *georgiano* respectively. The peculiarities of it *basurero* are only mildly covered by "city dump", and besides, zoning authorities in the English-speaking countries I am familiar with would not countenance anybody living near one. What is more interesting is vocabulary that changes its point of view in the translation: differences in linguistic mediation proper to source and target language demand what

Vinay and Darbelnet called *modulation*. In music — Vinay was a fine oboist — the word means an audible change of key in the course of a piece of music with a definite change of audial flavour. In the Greene, for example, is there a reason why the girl is *muchacha* rather than *chica*? Is it because she is the centre of a male circle? “Spare cash” is not simply money saved, as we have in Spanish, but money surplus to the requirements of daily living. Likewise “well-dressed” is a more visually focussed word than *elegante*. When we turn to the Allende we find similar slippages between the languages. Miguel Boulton is *moreno, de baja estatura* in Spanish, but the more pictorial “dark-skinned, short” in English. In Spanish he had left the formal *residencia familiar*, in English the more affective “family hearth”. *Participar* for “participate” would be far too formal; not that I like “eat Sunday dinners” as a translation. “Have Sunday dinner” seems better to me. English often has a kinetic image corresponding to a static word: *ahorran* and *gastaban* are translated by kinetic metaphors, “set aside” and “went on”. Spanish has its images, but at times they are intellectually mediated, as *los extramuros* for which English has the dead metaphor, “the outskirts”. Spanish and English differ in the connotations of words: thus *bestial* can not be translated by “bestial” in English: it is far too derogatory. But it is typical that English gets out of the problem with an image, “bear-like”.

While we accept Bonnefoy’s principle that everything on the level of syntax is in germ in lexicon, the imitation of one level by another is not as simple as Bonnefoy seems to assume. That a certain part of speech is common to a number of languages does not mean that the languages use them in the same way, or even that the languages in question are as comfortable in forming them: both English passages have nouns functioning as adjectives, and in the corresponding places in Spanish there is either an adjective, as “family hearth” for *la residencia familiar*, a relational construction as *un bebedor de whisky* for “a whisky-drinker”, or a syntactic construction: “the streets were unpaved” stands for *las calles no tenían pavimento*. Second, Spanish like French seems to use the adjective less than in English. Where Allende uses the past participle, *casi enteramente cubierto*, the English translator has the adjective, “so thick”. Third, English freely creates adverbs. Greene’s “horsily”, transposed to *como las de los jinetes*, is a clear illustration: *caballosamente* does not strike me as even possible. Like a large number of these unusual adverbs it carries an explosive charge. First, “horsey” implies money, sometimes a place of residence, and perhaps a definite accent, usually upper-class but never lower class. A horsey person rides for pleasure, not to earn a living — I would not describe a jockey or a farmer as “horsey”. If such adjectives are made into adverbs, they become affectively charged. Here the word is an index of Greene’s disapproval of the characters he is creating. The question is, can this be got into Spanish? Similarly the preposed adjective in Spanish has at times a very powerful affectivity: “shabby” and “well-

dressed”, both fairly affective in Greene’s context, gain by being translated by the preposed *andrajoso* and *elegante*.

One important aspect of English pictorialism is the weight English places on the verb, “to be”. *él resultó moreno* for “he was dark-skinned”; “They were not the type” translated by *No pertenecían al tipo de individuo*; or “He was not all nostalgic” for *No sentía ni la menor nostalgia*. In many cases, modulations are also transpositions, for example “short” for *de baja estatura*, an English adjective corresponding to a Spanish relational construction. It would seem that the English fondness for semantically weighted prepositions is not shared by Spanish: *casi enteramente cubierto por un vello negro* becomes “with hair so thick over all his body” by a modulated transposition of the past participle, *it cubierto*, which throws the semantic weight on the preposition. On the evidence of these passages, English does seem to be more comfortable with adverbs and adjectives than Spanish, or to put it another way, Spanish seems to tend more towards the intellectual mediation of the *plan de l’entendement*.

Neither of our passages gives evidence for notable systemic differences between Spanish and English in discourse order or discourse connection. In both languages the styles are fairly relaxed, so that functional rather than formal discourse markers are more to the point. I regard grammar as the instrument of discourse. It will be obvious that formal differences in grammar do not necessarily mean differences in discourse, and indeed it can so happen that discourse priorities can require that the grammar of target be different from that of source, if the discourse orders are to remain the same. Witness

“and though he had fits of ill humour, he considered himself a fortunate man and was content with his life”

for

y a pesar de sus arrebatos de mal humor, se consideraba un hombre afortunado y estaba contento con su existencia. The English replaces a non-finite phrase by a concessive clause. I would also suspect that the adjective, “not at all nostalgic”, for the verb phrase it translates is a transposition necessary for the discourse order of Spanish.

What we are faced with in English is a constant preference for sharper images than in Spanish. And Spanish is more meticulous in the use of grammatical categories. But Spanish is certainly not as highly intellectualised as French. But Spanish is not afraid of the frozen metaphor, take *arrebatos de mal humor* in the last quote from Allende. Even so there is a certain physicality about English, compared with Spanish. On the lexical and grammatical levels it is clear that English seeks the *plan du réel* more persistently than does Spanish. Given the examples of differences in vocabulary systems cited above, I understand Valry Larbaud’s demand that publishers should always mark dictionaries “Poison”; yet I would prefer “To Be Taken With Care”. It is clear, however, that Spanish *agencement* does share many of the French sensitivities to the difference bet-

ween epithet and relation, and that it is as cautious as French is of unprotected copulas and demonstratives. One wonders whether these features are characteristic of Romance languages, just as a large number of the English *plans du réel* are shared with German. But, like English, it never fell victim to the sort of intellectual polishing French was subjected to at the hands of the *philosophes*.

I would think that if the same set of ideas on language come up in a literary theorist, a psychologist and two linguists it has a scientific validity requiring respect. These ideas on the nature of linguistic coding have two sets of repercussions for us: they give us a way of seeing language systems, and an approach to problems of translation and language-teaching. A language is clearly a set of skills guided by habits, it is not just a body of knowledge. Under most circumstances it will radically shape the information it conveys. Therefore when teaching the contrastive linguistics of French and English I begin from the principle that a mistake in grammar is usually not merely linguistic, but also a mistake in visualisation and thinking. A "grammar mistake" becomes therefore data for the course, to be examined systemically to see why it is a mistake. And correcting that mistake depends on learning to think like a native speaker. Similarly a translator has to constantly move between two habits of thought, between two sets of language attitudes as his communicative role oscillates between receiving and sending.

The first major consequence is that translations are necessarily a compromise between source and target languages. Bonnefoy discusses this issue in terms of the "platonist" nature of French as against *l'aristotlisme passionnel* of English. His major question is the function of literary translation itself. For different languages depend on different experiences of the world. Therefore in the face of the new reality that a foreign text faces the target language with, *traduire devient la lutte d'une langue avec elle-même*. The problem of this confrontation between the thought of the original and the thought patterns of the target language is the old question of fidelity; but it is not a fidelity of reproduction but a fidelity resulting from lengthy reflection on the original (Bonnefoy 1962: 242). Such reflection allows one to escape from the explicit and tangible to the implicit and intangible. For it is only by such a reflection that a language can rise above its *croyances instinctives*. He does not pose the question of the nature, or even existence of common ground between English and French as source and target languages. As a good Symbolist he cites Baudelaire as one who moved French poetic language towards a more realist set of functions and in so doing opened up fresh possibilities of translation from English. His second issue is how one moves the *métaphysique* of the source into the target. Translation is a confrontation between source and target languages, a testing of one language by another (Bonnefoy 1962: 244).

Following the principle that form and content are inseparable in a work of art, he recommends following the literary form of an original as closely as possi-

ble. Indeed he has a long discussion of the necessity of Shakespeare's blank verse to his literary art. He contrasts its freedom with the strict and closed form of the French *alexandrin* (Bonnefoy 1962: 250 – 252). Literary form for him is a necessary entry into the implicit and explicit senses of a work. The metric and rhythmic shape of an idea and the space available to express it contribute to some extent to its meaning and relevance. On the matter of linguistic form he rejects both the headstrong freedom of *les belles infidèles* and the slavishness of literal translation. But once again the mental and affective representations proper to the target text shape the ideas taken from the source text. His final conclusion is that all translations, including his own, are in some sense failures, but that in the doing the target language is stretched by partaking in another experience of the real (Bonnefoy 1962: 252).

The central element in Vinay-Darbelnet's view of translation is the absolute priority of functional matching over formal. By means of the two *plans de représentation* they approach Bonnefoy's distinction between French "platonism" and English Aristotelianism. Where English goes for the tangible and for immediacy of representation, French goes for intellectual representation and the filtering of reality. Thus Bonnefoy's "Platonist" becomes the *plan de l'entendement* of Vinay-Darbelnet, and his "Aristotelian" becomes *le plan du réel*. Hence their emphasis on the logical explicitness preferred by French and the implicitness of English (Bonnefoy's *fermeture and it ouverture*). It is against this background that Vinay and Darbelnet develop their ideas on *modulation* and *transposition*, which are essentially techniques designed to deal systematically with different ways of seeing and experiencing proper to various languages. The recursive nature of *stylistique comparée* is worth noting. The reductionist explicitness of vocabulary finds its equivalent in the exact limits of morphology and syntax, and in preferred discourse shapes. In their own way they exemplify Bonnefoy's principle that lexicon contains the germ of all structural features of a given language. Like Bonnefoy, Vinay and Darbelnet recommend the middle ground between literality and freedom. When functional priorities of equivalence can be fulfilled by literality, it is to be followed; but when one has to depart from literality, it must be done in a principled fashion. Finally Bonnefoy's view that all translations fail or partially succeed is implied in the constant presence of the ideas of profit and loss (*gains et pertes*) in the discussion of equivalence. Paivio says nothing notable about translation: he was not interested in language differences, but in different ways of linguistic representation within the same language. It is a shame he did not experiment more with structures: ironically his analysis of the features of image meaning seem to be borne out in the *stylistique comparée* discussion of morphology and syntax.

It would seem that Vinay and Darbelnet take an instrumental view of Bonnefoy's ideas and provide the tools by which his translation norms are to be met. Paivio is rather the backroom theoretician who shows the two major ways in

which languages generate lexicon and its meaning. The medieval scientists had a principle that an object studied scientifically was the same in all sciences: only the reason for studying it differed from one science to another. Their principle, *res scientiae est eadem apud omnes* (a scientific object is the same for all scientists), is amply demonstrated in the similarities between Bonnefoy, Vinay-Darbelnet and Paivio.

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