

SUMMARY

Peripheries (re)write (back): Mexican, Polish and Chicano contexts of translation

The subject of the present monograph are selected characteristics of complex cultural situations in which the analysed textual corpora were produced and rewritten (Lefevere 1992), i.e. transcribed, edited, translated, published as selections as well as subjected to literary criticism and scientific analysis. The aim was to examine all those operations from the perspective of basic theoretical assumptions and methods of the School of Manipulation, Polysystem Theory and Postcolonial Studies. The analysis involved linguistic and generic hybridity of the corpora, their ideological and border-space production context, along with the content and the form – both expressing specific ideologies.

The first part of the analysed text was *General History of the Things of New Spain* – an encyclopaedia of the Nahua culture composed in the 16th century in New Spain (now Mexico) by a Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún, with the help of trilingual students of the Colegio Imperial de Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco. Traditionally, the encyclopaedia is considered a result of ethnographic field work, based on data collected by means of questionnaires and answers received from the Nahua (or Aztec) informants and through transcription of their utterances in the Nahuatl language. Nevertheless, in recent years, Sahagún's work has been presented as a Spanish (Christian, white and European) and Mestizos' interpretation of the Nahua culture rather than direct Nahua testimony. Sahagún has become an editor of an anonymous collective work, written down mainly in the Nahuatl language and then translated into Spanish. Finally, the ideological and controversial character of the text itself has been addressed: it was not supposed to preserve the Nahua culture but to be an efficient tool of evangelisation, i.e. eradication of the Aztec religion. Additionally, the 20th-century nationalist vision of an "ethnographic mission of rescue" proved to be a project of systemic annihilation of a culture.

Polish editions of *General History* turned out to be four different selections of fragments, distinct configurations of the source languages and quite dissimilar forms of the target texts, i.e. a translation of the Book XII with a large paratext about Aztec culture (1959 edition), translations of two anthologies emphasising the Conquest of the Aztec empire (1967 edition) and the New World's cultures descriptions (1988 edition), along with a scientific publication including a translation of the first three

Books, highlighting the Aztec religion (2007 edition). Arrays of various paratexts have also been added. As a result, we deal now with four editorial projects, carried out between 1959-2007, exploring predominantly ideological issues, i.e. the Conquest of the Aztec empire from the perspective of the Nahua people (1959 and 1967), Mexican nationalism (1967 edition) and the Aztec religion doomed to be acculturated in the process of colonisation (2007).

The second part of the textual corpora includes multiple letters of the Polish Emigration writer, Andrzej Bobkowski. From 1948 to 1962, the author was living in Guatemala, maintaining vivid correspondence with several Polish intellectuals, such as Jerzy Giedroyc and Jerzy Turowicz, with some family members, e.g. his mother Stanisława and his uncle Aleksander, as well as with some friends. In a vast number of these cross-thematic and heterogeneous letters, Bobkowski had been (re)writing Guatemalan reality. A critical reading of the letters, based on the criteria of the author's discourse, his attitude to Guatemalan people, and the way he had been shaping the recipients' views, revealed a number of cultural subjective filters such as European, ethnocentric, racial and literary ones. Among them, the ethnocentric and the racial filters proved to be especially prominent. At the same time, the analysis of the included paratexts (literary and scientific essays) revealed that their authors had assimilated and are still assimilating Bobkowski's judgments, beliefs and his way thinking, due to his status of an "expert" on Guatemalan issues. What is more significant, the content and the form of those letters acquire more and more weight in the context of increasing interest in Bobkowski's epistolary work.

The third part of the textual corpora embraces bilingual Spanish and English prose written by Gloria Anzaldúa and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas, representing contemporary Chicano/a literature created by descendants of Mexican immigrants in the USA. Linguistic and cultural hybrid identity of those authors made them create literature which reflected a peculiar "border-space state" of being suspended between two cultures. The question if they acted as cultural translators of their own identity was a starting point for the analysis of discursive and linguistic procedures used in Anzaldúa's collection of essays and *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (intended to be written predominantly in English) and in Cota-Cárdenas' *novella Puppet* (intended to be written predominantly in Spanish). Additionally, an English translation of the latter text was subjected to analysis. The use of discursive and linguistic strategies by both writers was confirmed. They turned out to be translating subjects, permanently forced to explain themselves through a wide range of procedures, e.g. codeswitching, literal and free juxtaposed translations and the transfer of untranslatable items.

The analysis of the above mentioned peripheral contexts situated the discussion about culture and translation in the so-called "third space" (Bhabha 2010), where languages and genres intersect, creating new hybrid forms. The complexity of the process of (re)writing in those spaces revealed the difficulty in using traditional translation terminology and enhanced the dynamics of reading and interpreting hybrid texts.