



Luc van Doorslaer and Peter Flynn, eds. *Eurocentrism in Translation Studies*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins, “Benjamins Current Topics, Book 54,” 2013, 133 p.

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Un délectable festin... avec un léger arrière-goût

Réflexions sur la traduction, enjeux politiques, poésie et prose, témoignages, entrevues, remerciements et même une recette de gâteau sont autant d'ingrédients qui ont été jugés nécessaires pour honorer comme il se doit la carrière et la personne de Sheila Fischman. Compte tenu du caractère hétéroclite de l'ouvrage, le lecteur aurait facilement pu avoir l'impression de passer du coq à l'âne si les sections n'étaient pas liées par autant de fils conducteurs. En effet, la présence de métaphores, de lieux, de personnages, d'anecdotes et de thèmes récurrents, traités sous différents angles, assure la cohérence de ce livre-hommage, qui se révèle tout aussi riche et pertinent que facile d'accès.

Il faut cependant noter la présence de coquilles dans les appellations françaises («Département» d'études françaises de l'Université de Sherbrooke ou «Association des traducteurs littéraire canadiennes») et un certain manque de cohésion dans la graphie de prénoms (Gaëtan/Gaétan, Elise/Élise). Ces coquilles, qui agaceront peut-être le lecteur francophone ou francophile, mériteraient d'être corrigées en vue d'une éventuelle réédition de cet ouvrage d'une importance indéniable pour la scène littéraire canadienne.

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Luc van Doorslaer and Peter Flynn, eds. *Eurocentrism in Translation Studies*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins, "Benjamins Current Topics, Book 54," 2013, 133 p.

The essays collected in this book, apart from a final interview-based chapter, are reworked papers from "The Construction of Translation Studies through Translation: Contrasting Various 'Continental' Perspectives" conference held in Antwerp in 2009. The volume has been published before as a special issue of *Translation and Interpreting Studies* (6, 2, 2011).

All of the essays presented interact in some way with Edwin Gentzler's *Translation and Identity in the Americas: New Directions in Translation Theory* (2008), which was, according to the editors, one of the "pretexts" of the conference (p. 1). The volume reads, as such, as a form of companion to Gentzler's own book and someone approaching it with no knowledge of Gentzler's argument or

scholarship might find it difficult to follow. The centrality of Gentzler's book, with its focus on translation in the Americas, as well as the "continental perspectives" of the title of the conference, lead to some of the limitations of *Eurocentrism in Translation Studies*, which often focuses on the contrast between Europe and America, and the sorts of thinking this produces.

There are six essays in the book and one interview-based chapter. The essays bring together scholars working in America (Gentzler), Europe (Delabastita, Flynn, Boyden, Valdeón) and Africa (Marais), while the interviewees are Sherry Simon, Judy Wakabayashi and Maria Tymoczko (all attached to North American universities). It seems odd to me that there is such an obvious gender split here: all the essays are by men and the interviewees are all women. This may be just chance, but it gives an odd shape to the book and feels like an area where changes could have been made in the transition from special issue to collected volume (for example, it would have been possible to commission essays by the interviewees). While the inclusion of an African scholar lends a bit more balance to the continents involved, there is a glaring omission of Asian scholars (as Translation Studies is a reasonably strong discipline in Hong Kong and South Korea and a growing discipline in mainland China, Taiwan and Japan) as well as Australasian scholars (though Wakabayashi is Australian by birth and works with Japanese) and scholars from South America. While this may be a consequence of the volume resulting from a conference, I feel that it limits its effectiveness as a volume on Eurocentrism in Translation Studies, as the additional, non-European perspectives would have offered a broader approach to the topic.

Gentzler's own contribution deals with changes taking place in the discipline, from the search for non-European perspectives on translation to changing spaces of analysis (i.e. the shift from nations to subnational units like cities and diasporic communities). The essay is an excellent corrective to many entrenched ideas about translation, exploring how translation is understood in multiple cultures. While this sort of work has been going on for a while, Gentzler succinctly brings it together and shows the relevance of thinking beyond European viewpoints. I found his analysis of multilingualism in the USA fascinating and an extremely useful way of approaching the complexity of language usage there.

Delabastita's essay is a nuanced and detailed discussion of the problems of "continentalism" in Translation Studies, which explores how using European models to discuss the rest of the world can lead to misunderstandings and oversimplifications, as well as the problem of opposing Europe to America or elsewhere. Delabastita also points out the prevalence of French post-structuralism in Gentzler's work, leading him to ask "doesn't his overall dependence on French post-structuralism place him a similar position of self-imposed intellectual compliance with the old European center?" (p. 39). Yet, he notes that many of the thinkers cited by Gentzler may not be "typical Europeans" (p. 39n4), as they have heritage from ethnic or religious groups with histories of persecution in Europe, complicating the notion of "European." Delabastita here highlights the problem of thinking in continental terms, as Europe itself is a complex mix of different cultures. Ask someone from England about Europe and you will receive a very different response to someone from Holland or Greece or Poland, let alone the USA or Taiwan. The differences within a continent are obscured by continental thinking.

Flynn's contribution argues that what translators think of translation should be an important component of its conceptualization. He draws from interviews with Dutch-language translators of poetry that give insights into how and what they think about translation. This sort of grassroots analysis is useful in order to understand how translators conceptualize their practice, but I found it difficult to connect it to the larger discussion of Eurocentrism, other than as a possible method to find more nuanced approaches, which would involve interviewing a much larger group of translators from around the world.

Boyden offers one of the more nuanced discussions of Eurocentrism, arguing that it is an "asymmetrical counterconcept" (p. 62), or, in other words, part of a binary opposition. His analysis of the discourse around Eurocentrism in Translation Studies concludes that it is often coming from a reparative position (p. 64), in order to highlight non-European perspectives. Boyden also criticizes the use of the terms "Western" and "European" as synonymous (p. 67), as it covers up the complexity of the concepts and reduces the world to the West and the Rest. These are not new criticisms (they have been around in postcolonial theory for some time), but it is sometimes useful to be reminded of them. Boyden

concludes by considering how linguistic justice theory and its focus on the instrumental uses of languages (for getting a driving license or talking to a doctor, for instance) may run counter to the use of languages for the creating (national) identity.

Marais challenges notions of agency that have come from European sources in his essay. He analyses how Donald Strachan, a Scot who migrated to South Africa in 1850, used languages and translation in the creation of his business empire. This use of a case study really makes concrete his point that multiple voices are needed and that agency is complex. Marais also convincingly argues that different types of case studies are needed in an African context (p. 87). Marais himself has responded to this call in his more recent work (e.g. Marais, 2014) by showing how translation functions in an informal economy. This sort of positive contribution is particularly useful as it shows ways of thinking about translation that are adapted to the location under study.

The final essay, by Valdeón, focuses on how historical figures such as Doña Marina, also known as La Malinche, have become fictionalized when writing the history of South America. Her story has been appropriated and used in order to put forward various arguments. This is one of the problems of historiography and is not, of course, limited to Translation Studies.

The interview chapter features responses to questions by Simon and Wakabayashi and a position piece, inspired by the same questions, penned by Tymoczko. I feel that the book opens out again here. Amongst other things, the interviewees consider the complexity of Europe (Simon discusses Central Europe as a phenomenon [p. 114]). Again, in this chapter we see the problem of thinking in continental terms, as Wakabayashi does not comment on the American context for translation. Tymoczko's contribution is critical and offers a well thought-out response as well as ways forward for the discipline.

Eurocentrism in Translation Studies is a worthwhile book and one that belongs in any university library. The essays are generally interesting and offer new perspectives. However, as a book it adds nothing to the special issue that preceded it. I feel this is a missed opportunity: the articles here form a good base, but I would have liked to see more and from a wider range of scholars. Equally, questions of gender seem totally overlooked in this volume, whereas

I think they could offer a very relevant way of studying contrasts in translators' conditions around the world. I also feel that more case studies, rather than meta-theoretical discussion, would have strengthened the volume; I found Marais's essay most useful in this sense. One of the problems with the book was brought up by many of the contributors, who pointed out the binary opposition inherent in Eurocentrism, i.e. the West/the Rest, as well as the levelling that takes place when thinking of Europe and countries where European languages are spoken as homogenous. Further studies and further thinking are needed. This volume is a good place to start, but it is far from the whole story.

References

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Kathy Mezei, Sherry Simon et Luise von Flotow, dir.
Translation Effects: The Shaping of Modern Canadian Culture.
Montréal et Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014,
478 p.

Le collectif *Translation Effects*, dirigé par Kathy Mezei, Sherry Simon et Luise von Flotow, est paru en 2014 aux éditions McGill-Queen's University Press. À travers 32 études de cas, l'ouvrage aborde le rôle qu'a joué la traduction dans les diverses sphères de la culture canadienne depuis le début du XX^e siècle. Mentionnons, toutefois, que toutes les contributions, à deux exceptions près, couvrent une période allant des années 1970 jusqu'à nos jours.

Translation Effects se donne pour mission de mettre en évidence la diversité des contextes dans lesquels la traduction a lieu au Canada ainsi que leurs effets sur la culture canadienne. Les différentes contributions montrent également que les luttes de pouvoir se dégagent de ces moments de traduction, en particulier lorsqu'il est question des Amérindiens, des immigrants et de l'affirmation identitaire québécoise. Ainsi, l'ouvrage est subdivisé