



# Invisible terminology, visible translations: the new penguin freud translations and the case against standardized terminology

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ARTICLE



# Invisible terminology, visible translations: the new penguin freud translations and the case against standardized terminology

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## ABSTRACT

Abstract: Consistency has become an industry expectation for the translation of terminology within scholarship and scientific writing, but such consistency may not do justice to texts where technical terms rely on polysemy for heuristic effects. This article considers the historical factors that explain why context-sensitive differential translation strategies prevailed in several recent retranslations of Sigmund Freud's works. Freud's twenty-first-century translators were freed from constraints of consistency due partly to the series editor Adam Phillips's decision to rebrand Freud's genre as literature. When Benjamin Moser reframed Brazilian author Clarice Lispector's work as wisdom literature, some retranslations that he edited for *New Directions* also worked interestingly through dilemmas between context-sensitivity and consistency when translating repeated vocabulary. By claiming that these texts work on multiple genre-levels, these translations' series editors reduced the expectation that language should function univocally as terminology in the translations.

## KEYWORDS

Retranslation;  
psychoanalysis; Adam  
Phillips; terminology; genre

## Repetition

Translators are usually obligated to provide consistent translations of all terminology they encounter in the source text. Contemporary lexicography has complicated this norm on the grounds that all words, including terms, take on meaning only in syntactic contexts (Varantola 2006, 218–20). This intuitive point poses a dilemma for translators: when must we translate terms and keywords consistently, and when does translating a term inconsistently offer the reader better insights into the source text – perhaps even granting the reader access to oversights in the source texts that would be concealed if terms were translated consistently?

Terminology translation receives special attention among translation problems because of its relevance to those translation genres in highest economic demand (legal, medical, and technical), and because translation memory software neatly facilitates accurate translation of terminology (Bowker 2006). Questions of interpretation, not of accuracy, come to the fore when translating lexical repetition as a literary effect – and

sometimes even in philosophical terminology. A target text's genre determines the value of retaining lexical repetition in translation: repetition creates both concept indexing and sonic effects in fiction while terminology conveys conceptual unity in nonfiction. Repeated words feature in poetic and expository writing for different reasons, but lexical repetition poses a related problem to translators in literature, philosophy, and closely related genres.

New approaches to terminology partly justified twenty-first-century retranslations of work by several major twentieth-century thinkers, including Theodor Adorno, Simone de Beauvoir, and Sigmund Freud. My primary case study here is the New Penguin Freud series because its unusual editorial conditions lend themselves to the project's visibility as a translation. The series editor, non-German-speaking British psychoanalyst and essayist Adam Phillips, explicitly urged the series' translators not to arrive at consistent terminology between – or even within – their translations. By disregarding the terms emblazoned by Freud's early translators, the New Penguin translations promote a more literary attitude towards psychoanalysis itself, so that readers might find 'ways of using it that are not ways of being utterly convinced of it,' and indeed Phillips sought literary translators who were not invested in the truth of psychoanalysis (Phillips 2007).

Freud identified with his formal training as a neurologist, a fact that disinclines readers to read Freud as a literary writer. Literary translation allows for a more fluid approach to repeated words, whereas in genres aimed at conveying descriptive truth, consistent terms are expected to show the argument's thread. Translation thus becomes a key site of judgment regarding genre: in literary translation, syntax overrides lexical specificity, whereas in genres aimed at conveying truth, consistent lexica should convey the golden thread of logic.

Phillips' move to shift genre expectations around Freud has a sister trope in Lusophone literature scholar Benjamin Moser's justification for the retranslation of Clarice Lispector's work for New Directions. On the basis of Lispector's reputation among Brazilians as a kind of mystical Jewish sage, Moser shifts her work's genre to become not just fiction, but wisdom literature – with the possible implication that repeated vocabulary has a terminological, perhaps religious, significance. In both retranslation projects, the series editors wrote biographies, front matter, or other promotional materials to reframe the very genre of the respective authors' work. Not only in non-fiction prose can revisiting the author's rhetorical purpose lead translators to a new reckoning with the authors' repeated vocabulary.

Let us first consider the literary phenomenon most similar to terminology: lexical repetition for rhetorical effect. As her afterword explains, Idra Novey treats lexical repetitions with the care of terms in her translation of Clarice Lispector's lyric novel *The Passion according to G.H.*

I knew one of my priorities as the translator of this novel had to be recreating the fugue-like repetitions of words like *preso* throughout the novel, but in several instances using 'imprisoned' made the sentence sound odd in English in a way it didn't in the original, as when she uses *preso* to describe the sensation of being pinned under a rock. I ultimately used 'pinned' instead of 'imprisoned' for that instance, but wish I could have asked her: was I right to go with 'pinned' here, or should I have used 'imprisoned' instead, as the lyrical use of repetition is so essential to what makes this novel such a hypnotizing book? (Novey 192)

Novey's dilemma involves recreating the incantatory effect of repeated words without disregarding sentence context. Repetitions structure Lispector's novel even beyond the lexical level. Not only are repeated words threaded throughout, but each new chapter repeats the final sentence of the previous, as if to make the chapter break into moments of rhapsodic stitching. Finally, the narrator's thought process unfolds through the repetition of phrases like 'ask for help' and use of the verb 'articulate.' Those particular repetitions express the narrator's state of mind in the following passage where the narrator – a wealthy Brazilian artist – begins to identify with a crushed, dying cockroach. As she watches its guts ooze from its abdomen, she feels dread about her own eventual death:

I wanted to ask for help against my first dehumanization. [...] I was opening and closing my mouth to ask for help but I couldn't and didn't know how to articulate it.

Because I had nothing more to articulate. My agony was wanting to speak before dying. I knew I was forever bidding farewell to something, something was going to die, and I wanted to articulate the word that at least summed up whatever was dying.

I finally managed to at least articulate a thought: 'I'm asking for help.' (Lispector 2012, 71)

Her 'dehumanization' takes the form of loss of voice – and the reader is invited to understand why. After some time passes the narrator can still articulate a thought after all. Articulating her need for help rescues her from dehumanised muteness. This one thought, 'I'm asking for help,' breaks the silence after her earlier, 'I had nothing more to articulate.' Her request is not addressed to any other person (as earlier in the novel, she takes comfort in imagining herself holding a disembodied hand). The word 'articulate' functions terminologically here, somewhat like the (difficult to translate) *cogito*, which affirms René Descartes' trust that he exists as a source of propositions even as he does not trust the content of any proposition. In the quoted passage, not only the hypnotic sound effects that Novey mentions in her translator's introduction, but logic as well begs for consistent translation. As the narrator seeks a predicate for the verb 'articulate,' she gradually revises her concepts of 'articulate' and 'ask for help.'

Besides preserving conceptual logic or associative links, an additional concern determines the translation of terminology in works of expository nonfiction. According to a common assumption, terminology systematically accomplishes what the word 'articulate' does through association above. In a pioneering twentieth-century theory of terminology, Viennese philosopher Eugen Wüster argued that more refined and consistent scientific terminology had the potential to eliminate ambiguity and to streamline scientific research. Twenty-first-century terminology theorists dispute such claims and argue for translating terms according to their text-specific function: 'terms have distinctive syntactic projections and can behave differently in texts, depending on their conceptual focus. This [...] is a problem that translators and technical writers inevitably have to deal with' (Faber 2012, 13). Specialised terminology prompts the same translation problem as poetic repetition despite researchers' ambitions to create a more mathematical prose for science at least since Descartes' claims in *Discourse on Method* that achieving unambiguous knowledge was a matter of restricting rational discourses to clear and distinct judgments. Philosopher Hans Blumenberg disputes Descartes' vision of the 'terminal state' of philosophical language where terminology

reaches its *terminus* ('endpoint,' the Latin etymology of 'term'), and thus purges rational discourse of figurative associations (Blumenberg 2010, 1–2). Like Faber and Rodriguez, Blumenberg's philosophical studies argue that a set of traditional metaphors remain indispensable to theoretical work no matter how asymptotically close natural sciences and analytic philosophy may approach mathematical logic.

Terminological consistency is efficient, but it comes with costs. Nietzsche states the phenomenological objection poignantly: 'To understand one another, it is not enough that one uses the same words; one also has to have the same words for the same species of inner experiences; in the end one has to have one's experiences in *common*' (Nietzsche 2010, 216). Uniform experiences would be required to establish unambiguous language, but such uniformity could only be achieved by suppressing individual curiosity and by ignoring how differences, like class, inevitably divide societies. The linguistic objection is also crucial for this paper: some terms rely on polysemy, and these call for special translation measures, like Reginald Lily's, who employs five different translations for one term in Heidegger's 1953 lecture *The Principle of Reason* (Heidegger 1996). Lily's flexibility with the word *Grund* challenges the norm of consistent translation through a technique I call differential translation.

### What is differential translation?

Differential translation of philosophical terminology is a translation strategy rooted in a desire for more visible, autonomous translations. As Lawrence Venuti notes, most translation theories advocate strategies according to some combination of three values: equivalence to the source text, the target text's anticipated function, or its autonomy as interpretive work (Venuti 2016, 45). Autonomy means revealing that the translator makes sovereign choices. Such visibility need not always disturb the reader to have its effect, but it is not always compatible with traditional binaries, like Eugene Nida's, between linguistic equivalence and target text function (Venuti 2016, 57).

In recent decades, few published translations defy norms of consistency to translate polysemous terms differentially by context throughout a text. While this strategy makes lexical repetition less visible, it sometimes avoids excessive term-hunting by translators who mimic lexical repetition in the name of discovering terminology. Translation theorist Barbara Folkart argues that Alan Sheridan's translation of Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* missed an opportunity for greater accuracy through differential translation of '*écriture (administrative ou judiciaire)*.' 'Had *écriture* been translated correctly, and multiply – records/registers/administrative documents/paperwork/record-keeping, depending on the context – the tendency to epistemological inflation would have been nipped in the bud' (Folkart 2015, 7). While beholden to an equivalence-based concept like 'correct' translation here, Folkart also makes a functional argument for translating a polysemous word 'multiply:' differential translation overcomes this problem of 'epistemological inflation' that she identifies (Folkart 2015, 2). She criticizes consistent translation for making a malleable, English-language 'pseudo-term' by overlooking contextual variance in Foucault's French.

Even when lexical repetition explicitly indicates a term, a translator is in the strongest position to discover and express the plurality at the heart of a seemingly univocal concept. A classic example is Robert Adams' differential treatment of the Italian word

*virtù* in Machiavelli's *The Prince* (Machiavelli 1977). That Italian word appears throughout the target text alongside equivalents ranging from the primarily evaluative 'virtue' to the pragmatic 'strength' to the technical 'skill.' In a more recent translation, Tim Parks translates Machiavelli's *virtù* as 'positive qualities' – although he varies this 'unattractive' choice with 'strength of character' (Machiavelli 2009, xxxiii).

Such differentiation would only distract for repeated words that exhibit low polysemy. But the strategy can show the same merits in literary works that use words with associative networks as it does for expository works using terms with significant, but undefined connotations. For instance, Lispector's repetition of 'articulate' in the above quoted passage may not have exhibited polysemy markedly enough to merit differential translation, but if the word *preso* did, then a differential translation with the source text in brackets could invite the reader to see where Lispector's repetition is refracted by differing meaning.

### Who translates differentially?

At best differential translation draws the reader into the intrigue of linguistic difference. However, the English-language publication market still disdains the very idea of translation and thus demands invisible translations – an effect best achieved through visible terminology. The translators in the New Penguin Freud Series had permission to make radically choices, occasionally giving source words in brackets. Series editor Adam Phillips encouraged translators to come up with their own choices for terminology, not to consult one another, and to justify these in their translator's introductions. Nicola Luckhurst, the translator for the new Penguin edition of Freud's *Studies in Hysteria*, presents all of the polysemy of 'cathexis' in one sentence exemplary of her translatorly consciousness: '[A]n idea is cathected – that is, charged, invested, and occupied – with unresolved affect... it will always bring with it... incompatibility with new cathexes.' Her disjunctive translation, this onslaught of meanings, amplifies the intensity of the clash between new and old cathexes – the list of words suggest that it occurs on several levels. Her list of possible equivalents suggest that what Freud designates *Besetzung* occurs on several levels. After this page, Luckhurst avoids committing to single equivalents throughout her translation. While not as context-focused as differential translation, Luckhurst's choice is more experimental than many lexical choices in twenty-first century translations, which commit to single equivalents for 'terms' or 'poetic repetitions.' Under what conditions do translation editors offer translators the freedom not to translate, or at least to expose some signs of a foreign word's polysemy (sometimes grounds for calling it untranslatable)?

At least two discrete reasons promote the choice of consistent target language equivalents in translation: 1) the incantatory effect of repetition in literature and poetry and 2) the stable linking of terms to concepts in non-fiction prose. But in both cases, differential translation better expresses *foreign* semantics, especially if source words appear in brackets. The permission to engage in such techniques might perhaps have to do with the reputation of the series editor's original thinking, with the author's supposed non-rationalistic wisdom, or with ethnic, national, or gender identity (cf. the superlative, yet highly qualified blurb quoting *New York Times* on the front of the *Passion according to G.H.*: 'The premier Latin American woman prose writer of this century'). If the author is supposed to embody a kind of foreign or otherwise identity-linked wisdom, then an emphasis on linguistic particularity should only add to that effect.

## The 'Freud Wars' and the New Penguin Freud

Phillips' anti-terminological translation protocol followed decades of mixed reception of the previous translations' obscure terminology, most famously berated in Bettelheim's (1983) polemic, *Freud and Man's Soul*. The twenty-four-volume translation of Freud's complete works by James and Alix Strachey, known as the Standard Edition, has shaped Anglophone perceptions of Freud. Its philological and historical critical apparatus makes it obligatory even for German readers (Holroyd 2005, xiii). Ernest Jones, a British neurologist, psychoanalyst, and close acquaintance of Freud's, began translating Freud well before the Stracheys. Along with James Putnam and A. A. Brill, Jones coined much of the scientific English that went into the Standard Edition: coining connotation-poor Grecian and Latinate neologisms that sacrificed Freud's implicit metaphors, regulating idiosyncratic syntax, and replacing Freud's narrative present tense to describe dreams and case histories with a more accurate-sounding, less dramatic past tense. Since many psychoanalysts see their work as a quasi-literary rehearsal of personal narratives, they lament the Standard Edition's scientism.

In the twenty-first century, non-German-speaking British psychoanalyst and essayist Adam Phillips was asked to commission the New Penguin Freud translations. His stated rule was that translators come to 'no consensus about technical terms, each of the translators writing a preface in which they might say something about choices made...' (Phillips 2007). Andrew Pollock praises the new Penguin translations for achieving a more literary style. Pollock claims that Freud's narratives portray the 'real drama' of the development of the treatment and the cure,' and he rates their literary merit alongside *Heart of Darkness* (Pollock 2003, 117–18). Phillips' controversial way of preserving Freud's complexity in translation is to commission a team of different translators who followed their intuitions as readers as to whether a word deserved consistent translation or not. Highlighting the text's aesthetic, humanistic value thus hinges on abandoning some old terminology, but with 'no consensus' the translators are in fact free to uphold Strachey's terminology – and some did.

The fact that 'id' still appears in the new translations reveals a lack of consensus about Strachey's now ubiquitous neologisms. While some of Strachey's jargon (parapraxis, anacletic, cathexis, etc.) still lacks concrete connotations, Lawrence Venuti notes that the combination of scientific-medical sounding language with Freud's deeply personal storytelling makes Strachey's translation more exciting since it reads as science *and* literature: 'it discloses interpretive choices determined by a wide range of social institutions and movements' (Venuti 2017, 25). Kristy Hall, a British psychoanalytic theorist, disagrees with the New Penguin translation series' editor that the old translations suffered from unreadability (Hall 2005, 358). She unsympathetically asks whether it is 'a fashionable postmodern idea' or just laziness (and not knowing German) that motivates Adam Phillips not to coordinate terminological choices between the series' translators (Hall 2005, 350).

Hall's objection exemplifies the difficulty of deciding when a translation is 'literary.' When Freud is explaining the 'Wolfman's' superstition that he is unlucky because he was born with an embryonic caul covering his face, Freud interprets his complaint as a wish to return to the state before birth: *Sie ist zu übersetzen: Ich bin so unglücklich im Leben, ich muß wieder in den Mutterschoß zurück*. Strachey translates the line thus:



'It can be translated as follows: "Life makes me so unhappy! I must get back into the womb!"' (Freud 2003b, 100). In Louise Adey Huish's translation for the New Penguin Freud series, it reads: 'We might translate it thus: my life is so unhappy that I must go back to my mother's womb' (Freud 2003b, 298). The translations differ in modality (can/might), subordination (so unhappy [exclamation point]/so unhappy *that*), and in the introduction of the first-person plural to replace the impersonal construction in the older translation (it can be/we might translate). The overall effect is of a more contemporary English-sounding sentence, but not necessarily a more 'literary' one. This kind of 'localizing' translation is typical of translations aiming to reduce the authoritarian tone of German academic language – which creates obscurity and authority through impersonal constructions that sound like the voice of revealed truth – rather than representatives of a discourse. But both translations have 'literary' value; the new one is more readable here, more of a 'page turner,' but the Standard Edition sounds more like Gothic literature.

John Reddick's introductory comments to his translation containing *Beyond the Pleasure Principle, The Ego and the Id*, and 'On Narcissism' addresses the anxiety about the Standard Edition's influence head on. His comments are emblematic of the new series' ethos and its shortcomings: he describes himself as 'liberating' the text in a translation that revives the 'struggle' to understand human motivations in Freud's work and dispelling the 'dogma' about Freud encouraged by the Standard Edition.<sup>1</sup> Yet his very title preserves one of the Standard Edition's most reviled choices, *The Ego and the Id*, instead of the more suggestive English equivalent *The I and the It*. The Latinate 'ego' and 'id,' deplete these words of their English-language pronominal connotations, which suggest (by explicit reference to Georg Groddeck's imagery) that the unconscious is a foreign intruder in our conscious lives, as unlike the conscious self as an inanimate *thing* is unlike a person. James Strachey only consented to translate *das Es* as 'the id' under heavy pressure from Ernest Jones; he objected that 'the id' sounds too similar to 'the Yidd' to designate a central concept from a thinker who was already a target of anti-Semitism (Strachey, Meisel, and Kendrick 1985; 221–22; Hall 2005; 352). Yet 'the it' might cause confusion since Freud also uses 'it' as a pronoun referring to the *ego*. Even New Penguin translator Nicola Luckhurst – who daringly translates *das Ich* as 'the self' to differentiate Freud's early use of the term before his tripartite topography of the psyche – even she kept *das Es* as 'id' (Freud, Breuer, and Luckhurst, *Studies in Hysteria*, xxiv–xxv).

Although Reddick bows to the weight of tradition in his title and his renderings of the words as 'ego' and 'id' throughout the text, his corrective annotations put a twist on it; Reddick argues with Strachey in footnotes about particular passages. For instance, 'The Standard Edition argues that this "its" means "the ego's" – but both logic and the grammar of Freud's German suggest that he means "the id's"' (Freud 2003a, 257). Reddick departs sharply from the Standard Edition with a whimsical phrase: 'The philosophers would then suggest that we describe the Pcs and the Ucs as two forms or levels of the psychoid – and hey presto, harmony would reign between us' (Freud 2003a, 106). Such whimsy constitutes a swerve from the Jones-Strachey Freudian translation orthodoxy (a *clinamen* as Harold Bloom once had it). But Reddick's footnotes indicate that his ambition is install not a 'literary' monument, but a more accurate translation, as when he replaces Strachey's 'word-presentation' with 'word-notion' better approximating the German *Vorstellung* for this context (Freud 2003a, 111).



While ‘improvements’ emerged, Hall concludes that Adam Phillips’ decision not to have his translators coordinate a systematic approach to terminology resulted in a missed opportunity. Hall seems to think that a new translation should use consistent vocabulary, but it is enough to ‘flag the foreignness of the original’ (Hall 2005, 357–59). For this case, I would instead advocate differential translation as a middle path, where a translator can accommodate sentence context, but some consistent morpheme (such as the foreign word in brackets) marks the continuity. Anthea Bell engages in such a fruitful differential translation when she replaces the Standard Edition’s translation of *Fehlleistung*, as ‘parapraxis,’ with *slip* and then adds different words by context: slip of the mind, of the pen, of the tongue, etc. In Bell’s translation, slip is the consistent term that does the work of the foreign word in brackets. With some such marker of terminology in place, the translator can wager creative, helpful interpretations.

Reddick’s preference for connotation neutrality (the semantic specificity of ‘ego’ and ‘id’ rather than ‘I’ and ‘it’) matches that of Jean Laplanche, who prefers to avoid misleading connotations of *Nachträglichkeit*, even at the cost of sacrificing the source word’s connotations. Research on terminology shows that terms’ connotations do gradually infect scientific discourses as people use words morphologically related to the selected term: for instance, if you are writing about the ‘ego,’ you may be tempted to use ‘egotistical’ or ‘egomaniac.’ If you use ‘the I,’ you may slip occasionally into the first person (Gómez-Moreno and Faber 2014). To pre-empt this kind of slip, many translators let the foreign word function as the term – a technique that is enriched by offering a steady stream of varied translations, each dictated by the context.

In the post-war period, German exile psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim marks the height of the discontentment with Strachey’s translations of Freud; Bettelheim claims that Freud’s work can be read as ‘spiritual’ or as ‘pragmatic’ (Venuti parses the dichotomy as ‘therapeutic’ or ‘analytical’), but Bettelheim accuses English language translators of always representing the pragmatic side of Freud because it fits more easily into the British mind, which is most at home with ‘positivism,’ the type of philosophy (which started in Austria but enjoyed the longest influence in Britain and the US) and which celebrated the pragmatic approach of the natural sciences (Bettelheim 1983, 44). The Strachey translation has had defenders: British psychoanalyst Emmett Wilson warned in 1987 that a flood of corrective translations would appear after 1989 (when the copyright on Freud’s German works expired); the desire to outdo Strachey showed people’s obsession with an ‘English’ version – they ignore that every translation will repress some of the original (Wilson 1987). Rather than decry a translation’s misleading tone, the philologically oriented reader would do best to read the source text. Writing after 1989, Venuti weighed in against Bettelheim by claiming that the ‘fundamental discontinuity’ between technical science and the therapeutic humanism in Freud’s writing is actually emphasized, even if accidentally, in the Strachey’s scientizing translation – which invites the reader to discover the tension in the original (Venuti 2017, 28). Geoffrey Hartman is sceptical of the New Penguin series only insofar as he refuses to evaluate Freud’s oeuvre according to a scientific/literary binary (Hartman 2005). Retranslation exemplifies the Freudian concept of belated recognition (one sense of *Nachträglichkeit*). Experimental retranslations do not make predecessors obsolete; rather, they exhibit an accumulation of perspectives while disturbing norms like genre classification.

## Rebranding Freud and Lispector

A half dozen points of analogy can be traced between the New Penguin Freud retranslations and the New Directions retranslations of Clarice Lispector's oeuvre. The resemblance tells a great deal about today's publishing zeitgeist and sheds some light on recent translation history. Sharon Deane-Cox argues, in line Pierre Bourdieu's theories of distinction, that retranslation projects often attempt to liquidate a work's cultural capital into economic capital (Deane-Cox 2014, 34). Spelling out the resemblance between these two projects instructs on how the cultural capital of the 'literary' sells in retranslation no matter whether the text's genre is read as literary or theoretical. The similarity between the projects begins with the authors. They were both highly successful secular Jewish writers whose immediate families were affected by anti-Semitic violence, from which they themselves were in flight during their lifetimes. As international successes with cult-like followings in their spheres, both were translated into English during their lifetimes, but both have had their work taken up in twenty-first-century retranslation projects led by Anglophone Jewish scholars, who wrote biographies emphasizing these figures' neglected Jewishness, and commissioned a group of translators as a way of preventing individual bias of one *auteur* translator. Finally, both editors further promoted the figures' cultural capital by writing biographies published through leading university presses across the pond from the biographer himself (Phillips with Yale University Press, Moser with Oxford), while also cashing in their chosen authors previous cultural capital through the popularizing rhetoric surrounding the retranslation projects.

The two biographies have found divergent reception. Phillips' biography *Becoming Freud* was criticized for weak research (Fuchsman 2015, 344). Phillips' biography fits the series title: *Jewish Lives*; Phillips fittingly pursues the hypothesis that Jewish oppression stimulated Freud's insights into unconscious repression. But rather than labour at that ambitious claim, Phillips mounts evidence of Freud's attachment to a Jewish milieu. For instance, he calls Freud's choice of spouse 'emblematic': 'Emblematically he gets engaged to a solid, respectable, and cultured Jewish girl from a (mostly) reputable Orthodox family' (Phillips 2016, 67). But what makes this choice emblematic? Much is conveyed through hints, like the qualifier '(mostly)', which raises doubts about his wife's family's reputation and creates an air of suspicion without indulging in the kind of explanatory frenzy Freud himself was famous for (and which Phillips does stunningly in his earlier essays).

Another reviewer criticizes Phillips' biography specifically for not engaging in the debate around Freud's reasons for abandoning the so-called seduction hypothesis. In 1897, Freud begins shifting the blame for adult pathology from parental abuse to child perversity (a shift that occurred shortly after Freud's own father died). This shift is crucial to Freud's modelling of the unconscious.<sup>2</sup> Phillips' arguments do not venture into such an analysis of Freud's semiotics. With admirable focus on narrating Freud's early years, it brackets debates around Freud's legacy. Such bracketing of Freud's influence as a scientist leads to a biography that functions primarily as an advertisement for the new translations Phillips reimagines Freud as he could have been: a harmless man of letters.

Ernst Jones' biography by contrast polemically defends the scientific value of Freud's work; he wrote it in order to vindicate Freud and his family from accusations of

manipulating data and browbeating other psychoanalysts, accusations which persist to this day (the latest being Crews 2017). Yet Jones openly questions Freud's conclusions; defies, for instance, Freud's conclusion that children only reject new siblings if they are over 15 months old at their birth, a claim defied by Freud's own confessions to Fliess that he hated his near-aged sibling (Jones 1972, 7–8). Jones presents Freud's life as evidence towards his theories, but not as perfect evidence. If Freud were not an imperfect example of his theory of infantile sexuality, then it might seem that his work drew too closely on introspection. He differentiates his theory from his university philosophy teacher Franz Brentano's theory of mind as consciousness by claiming that intentionality often fails to designate correctly and in its failure reveals the unconscious portion of the mind (Tauber 2010 Ch. 2, Section 'Did Freud Meet Brentano's Challenge?').

Investigative work also permeates Moser's long, acclaimed biography of Lispector. More like Ernest Jones' Freud biography, Moser extensively cites Lispector's personal letters, her friends' published testimonies, and her own published work. He is at least as invested as Phillips is in finding 'undeniably' Jewish features of Lispector's work, but he goes about the question circumspectly: 'Reworked, disguised, but undeniably present, the Jewish motifs in Clarice Lispector's writings beg the question of the extent to which their inclusion was deliberate. She was not traditionally observant. Her presence in the synagogue ceased with her father's death, when she was twenty...' (Moser 2012, 227). Moser's biography lets evidence complicate his claim that Jewishness provides the texture of Lispector's literary worlds.

Moser's claims about Lispector's Jewishness often hinge on speculative comparisons between her work and Spinoza's.<sup>3</sup> But Moser acknowledges the limitations of these interpretations, given Lispector's disdain for knowledge based on 'advanced reading or philosophy' (Moser 2012, 228). In another daring interpretation, he decodes images as Jewish motifs in *The Apple in the Dark*: allegorical connections to 'creation through the word,' the presence of a Ford car (reference to Henry Ford's reputation in Brazil as an anti-Semite), the protagonist's German persecutor, the protagonist's mystical search for the right word (God's name), and the protagonist's rise from non-humanity to meagre status to power and finally to destruction, which mirrors the fable of the Golem (Moser 2012, 225–29). A wide range of examples makes a persuasive case that Lispector's was a 'Jewish life,' and that those who care about her work should understand her religiously inspired mystical insights, not just her literary craft. Tolerance or lack of tolerance for differential translation involves many factors, such as the effective marketing of a retranslation as offering a new kind of reading experience.

## Must retranslation be Oedipal?

If we think of differential translation as both a genre marketing challenge and a boon to the visibility of translation, we can forego an Oedipal model of translation history as competition for supremacy since Phillips' aim was never to replace the old translations. To justify the new Freud translations, Phillips compares the very claim that any given translation is 'the Standard Edition' to monotheism's 'excess of intolerance of rivalry' – a downside of early Judaism bitterly derided by Freud in *Moses and Monotheism* (Phillips 2007). Phillips argues instead that 'it should be the psychoanalytic way to prefer co-existence to consensus.' We could take Phillips's analogy further by comparing

terminological uniformity to monotheism's claim to singular truths. In the extended analogy, differential translation commits the opposite excess, that Phillips, following Freud, sees in polytheism: 'excessive confusion and multiple loyalties.' The analogy is apt since different religious orientations seem to prevail at different historical moments, and differential translation is only a historically specific solution to the contemporary overreaching demand for uniform terminology within contemporary technocracy.

Translation history generally has little use for models of Oedipal rivalry. Scholars have remarked on episodes in the translation history of Nietzsche and Hegel where earlier translations were much more context sensitive than later ones (Scarpitti 1998; Charlston 2014). By the mid-twentieth century, the rise of positivist philosophy and the academic concern with philological precision began producing more terminologically consistent English translations. Then, by the late twentieth century, French poststructuralist influences reconciled Anglophone publishers to translation approaches that liberate the translator as a potentially deconstructive, close reader.

Yet Anglophone poststructuralist discourse often terminologises words that appear frequently in a source text, like *le regard* in French, which can function as 'eye,' 'look,' or 'gaze' in English, but has been fixed in 'gaze' in translations of Jacques Lacan (Folkart 2015). Retranslation projects are still often the ideal opportunities for translators to expose polysemy. If we take translation as a movement from one discourse to another, retranslation brings visibility to translation choices since translators often justify their new versions, and readers often compare versions. Retranslation thus contributes more than first translation to metadiscourse on translation.

Retranslating theoretical texts need not produce an Oedipal narrative of rival rhetorical purposes, where new translators are fighting to oust the old in order to achieve the most intimate position of knowing the source text. As Şebnem Susam-Sarajeva points out, retranslations of theoretical texts often show little regard for predecessors. Unless improved accuracy is the goal, the drama of retranslation is primarily mediated by the desired effect for the target text (Susam-Sarajeva 2006, 139). In the case of Turkish retranslations of Roland Barthes, the goal was to utilize translations of Barthes as a catalyst to invent a more authentically Turkish theoretical lexicon. English-language retranslations of Hélène Cixous did not acknowledge predecessors, but were symptoms of the perceived impossibility of an adequate translation of Cixous, which added to the mystifying obscurity around her theory, and ultimately to widespread rejection of foreign feminist theory in favour of autochthonous theory in English-speaking lands (Susam-Sarajeva 2006, 164).

The recent history of Freud translation runs the reverse of the progress narrative where truth is translated from *mythos* to *logos*; the new translation series claims to replace science with storytelling. Yet the new series ultimately contributes to the *logos* of metadiscourse on the translation of Freudian terminology. Freud's retranslators reflect critically on the stakes of retranslation with acute awareness of cultural-linguistic history. While linguistic nationalism can exaggerate differences, awareness of historical shifts marks an opportunity for translation theory. The twenty-first-century is already showing backlash against the twentieth-century obsession of philological rigor in philosophical translation; future anti-terminological translation will likely continue to take the form of historically rigorous questioning of traditional claims about the borders around related genres like philosophy, psychology, wisdom

texts, and literature. Whether inconsistently translated terms delight or disturb the reader of theory, differential translation most effectively demonstrates the *foreignness* at the heart of theoretical thought itself.

### Visibility through invisibility

This paper's title recollects Lawrence Venuti's recently reissued classic, *The Translator's Invisibility*. The book famously outlines extant strategies for making English-language translation more visible to the reading public. The problem of readers not noticing that a book is translated recalls the Heideggerian critique of *Zuhandenheit* wherein Heidegger describes how habitual activities – like hammering a nail if you are a carpenter – conceal the thought of the tools' existence separate from their users (Heidegger 2008, §15). The hammer is invisible as an independent object until it goes missing, breaks, or gets in the way. According to Venuti's history of translation, translations that enable too smooth a reading experience encourage habits of reading that ignore the fact of translation as such.

Venuti's is not primarily a Heideggerian complaint that *works of translation* are lost in plain sight; rather, his more Marxist argument is that Anglo-American culture under-values *translators' interpretive work*: when critics ignore the *fact* of translation, then, by implication, they also ignore the *act* of translation. Translations can resist invisibility through foreignizing strategies that can expose the work of translation; visibility-oriented strategies include: 'regional and social dialects, slang and obscenity, archaism and jargon, loanwords and neologisms' (Venuti 2017, xv). But performing these strategies need not align with a socialist agenda. Hence, Iginio Ugo Tarchetti, a translator with socialist leanings ends up producing relatively invisible translations of Mary Shelley because he passes them off as adaptations while Friedrich Schleiermacher, a committed German nationalist, advocates visible translations in the belief that these will enhance German literary culture so that its literate elite can more justly claim global cultural superiority (145, 92).

Not only can visible translations serve various social, cultural, or political ends, but producing a visible effect through translation is a delicate operation requiring the cooperation of many forces and parties. In the 2018 introduction to *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti addresses previous misreadings of his work by noting that *all* translation 'is an interpretation that fundamentally domesticates the source text,' even translations that resist this inevitable effect (xxii). Resistant strategies are numerous and depend on both the 'choice of source text as well as the development of innovative strategies' (xv). Although disavowing consistent translation of technical terms is not as relevant to most of Venuti's literary examples, it fulfils the criterion of 'non-standard' language that produces foreignizing effects. What these examples have in common is that they all disrupt norms of genre and of formal writing generally. Venuti specifically finds consciousness-raising value in the disruptive 'inconsistencies' between scientific and casual language in the Standard Edition of Freud's work (24). By this rationale, the foreignizing effect could potentially become even more pronounced if these inconsistencies are reflected on the level of the polysemy of the terms themselves.

There may be little to find subversive in the choice to retranslate an author as canonical as Sigmund Freud, but Phillips finds ways of making the project sound subversive. By making Freud's anticipated terms invisible, Phillips makes translation acts more visible.

While admitting that the new translations cannot replace their ‘official’ predecessors, Phillips is still advertising these texts as translations, and is not calling these works ‘versions’ or ‘adaptations’ (as Tarchetti does). As translation scholar Geraldine Brodie notes, when you call a translation of a dramatic work by those other names, it can actually make the translator’s painstaking precision pass as free play (Brodie 2018). Often, the queerest-sounding parts of a translation, the ones that make us question their accuracy, are the ones that prioritize conventional notions of mediation. Phillips’ editorial interpretation of Freud as literature precedes Huish’s decision to translate *nachträglich* differentially by context. Another translation scholar, A.E.B. Coldiron, builds on Venuti’s ethics of visibility to talk about the compatibility with postmodern literary experimentation like Charles Bernstein’s homophonic translations (Coldiron 2012, 196–97). Phillips’ project falls into the postmodern form of visible indifference to traditional rigor; Phillips’ not even knowing German has earned the project the stigma of absurdity for some critics.

The editorial project could overshadow the work of the translators. Phillips’ protocol requires the translators to state rationales for their choices in their introductions, which certainly makes their way of thinking visible. As sociologist Fung-Ming Christy Liu finds in her empirical study of translators’ self-reported ‘visibility’ and ‘capital’ (in Bourdieu’s and Peter Warr’s senses), translators who communicate frequently with authors or editors do report better working conditions overall (Liu 2013, 70). Venuti’s title, *The Translator’s Invisibility*, ultimately focuses on the concealment of an intentional act that a reader might otherwise attribute to a translator, but translation scholar Min-Hsiu Liao’s general criticism still holds for this case: the translation of scientific texts generally confers little creative status on the translator (little *auctoritas*, as the medievals would put it) in comparison with literary translation – even when the texts constitute popular science and are translated with an elegant sense of style (Liao 2011, 352).

By attempting to shift the genre of Freud’s work from science to literature, Phillips has set the conditions for readers to understand the new translators as careful readers of Freud. Consider Nicola Luckhurst’s translators’ introduction to Freud and Breuer’s *Studies in Hysteria*; Luckhurst reads metaphors like *Entbindung* ‘indicate an unconscious feminine identification’ by Freud and Breuer since they have selected the term for delivering a child to describe their patients’ release of emotions during talk therapy (Freud and Breuer 2004, xxxix). By deprioritizing terminological consistency, the series editor has encouraged literary translators like Luckhurst to expose the metaphoric substructure in Freud’s thought. The Penguin series thus makes a bold departure from norms of scientific translation by letting translators justify their handling of terms on aesthetic grounds in translators’ introductions, much like Idra Novey’s afterword does when she deliberates on the most evocative translation of *preso* in *Lispector*. Through its genre-shift, terminology-defiance, and its creative translators’ introductions, the series reads as a coup for the visibility of English-language literary translation.

## Notes

1. Reddick echoes Phillips’s complaint about the language of the Standard Edition: ‘Freud’s writing is to be presented not as a hot and sweaty struggle with intractable and often crazily daring ideas, but as a cut-and-dried corpus of unchallengeable dogma’ (Freud 2003a, xxxiii).

2. 'In developing his notion that it was the child's unconscious rather than the perversity of fathers, including his own, that caused neurosis, Freud found the path that led to dream interpretation and to the notion of psychoanalysis as the study of the unconscious' (Kirsner 2007, 346).
3. For instance, Moser compares one of Lispector's characters' moral certainty with Spinoza's formulation of an antinomy of taste: 'For Clarice Lispector, who did not possess the professor's moral clarity, crime could never be denounced out of hand. Spinoza wrote that "one and the same thing can be at the same time good, bad, and indifferent. For instance, music is good to the melancholy, bad to those who mourn, and neither good nor bad to the deaf"' (Moser 2012, 220).

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