

Multiple Centres: Thinking About Translation Relations Between the First and Third Worlds

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Abstract

In his landmark essay, "Translation and Cultural Hegemony," Richard Jacquemond has asserted that "the global translation flux is predominantly North-North, while South-South translation is almost non-existent and North-South translation is unequal: cultural hegemony confirms, to a great extent, economic hegemony" ("Translation and Cultural Hegemony" 139). Jacquemond's conclusions in his essay have been simplified by Douglas Robinson in his *Translation and Empire* (31-32) as follows:

1. A dominated culture will invariably translate far more of the hegemonic culture than the latter will of the former.
2. When the hegemonic culture does translate works produced by the dominated culture, those works will be perceived and presented as difficult, mysterious, inscrutable, esoteric and in need of a small cadre of intellectuals to interpret them, while a dominated culture will translate a hegemonic culture's works accessibly for the masses.
3. A hegemonic culture will only translate those works by authors in a dominated culture that fit the former's preconceived notions of the latter.
4. Authors in a dominated culture who dream of reaching a large audience will tend to write for translation into a hegemonic language, and this will require some degree of compliance with stereotypes.

The paper will use the figures provided in the UNESCO *Index Translationum* for translation in and from South and Southeast Asia to test these various hypotheses.

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Keywords

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Introduction

Literary systems seldom exist in isolation. In most cases, there are contacts with other literary systems, sometimes through direct access to the original language of the foreign literature, sometimes through translation into the language of the receiving culture (Even-Zohar 56-57). The process of contacts always concerns more than the intrinsic literary values of the source texts. As Itamar Even-Zohar has argued, the receiving system almost always sets the terms for what it will take and how it will understand those works, and the factors of prestige and dominance play important roles in those choices (46, 59). Receiving cultures, it is crucial to note, are active and creative in the process of receiving other literary systems.

Prestige and dominance are not only literary factors; they belong most properly to society and politics. The beginning of Richard Jacquemond's landmark essay, "Translation and Cultural Hegemony: The Case of French-Arabic Translation" (1992), agrees that translation is always about more than language; "it takes place in a specific social and historical context that informs and structures it" (139). Jacquemond sees this relationship as one bearing significant consequences:

A political economy of translation is consequently bound to be set within the general framework of the political economy of intercultural exchange, whose tendencies follow the global trends of international trade. Thus it is no surprise that the global translation flux is predominantly North-North, while South-South translation is almost non-existent and North-South translation is unequal: cultural hegemony confirms, to a great extent, economic hegemony. (139)

Jacquemond has little to say about North-North trade. Instead his remarks are extensively directed towards North-South trade. Firstly, translations from the languages of the South [or the "Third World"; 140] represent a minimal part of the translated book market in the North [or the West; 140] – "1 or 2 per cent," while in the South, "98 or 99 percent of this market is made up of books translated from Northern languages" (139). Secondly, Southern intellectual works reach only "very closed circles of specialists and 'concerned' readers," although Northern works are received on a much wider basis in the South, "whether it be through the mediation of translation or in its original form" (139-40). Thus, thirdly, "While the global influence of Southern intellectual production in the North is almost nil, the development of Southern languages

and cultures has been and still is deeply affected by the hegemonic Northern languages and cultures that pervade all social activities” (140).

Subsequently, Jacquemond’s article reaches a second set of more substantial conclusions about hegemonic and dominated language-cultures (155-56), based on a discussion of literary relations between France and the Arabic culture of Egypt. Let me quote these at some length first (modifying their original setting out) and then survey the evidence on which these conclusions are based. The conclusions derive from a firm historical distinction between “the colonial moment” and “the postcolonial moment.”

In the colonial moment, there are two opposing paradigms of translation, based on concepts of hegemony and domination. Jacquemond suggests:

- (1) In translation from a hegemonic language-culture into a dominated one, the translator appears as the servile mediator through whom foreign-made linguistic-cultural objects are integrated without question into his own dominated language-culture, thus aggravating its schizophrenia.
- (2) In translation from a dominated language-culture into a hegemonic one, the translator appears as the authoritative mediator through whom the dominated language-culture is maintained outside the limits of the self and at the same time adapted to this self in order for it to be able to consume the dominated linguistic-cultural object. (155)

In the “postcolonial moment, this double paradigm is put into question” as follows:

- (1) The resistance of the dominated language-culture to neo-colonial linguistic-cultural hegemony leads it eventually to situate translation within the framework of “Occidentalism,” i.e., an apparatus of knowledge within the hegemonic language-culture elaborated from its own point of view, which works: (a) before translation, as a filter by which it determines, according to its specific needs and priorities, the conditions of validity of the importation of Western intellectual production, and (b) within the process of translation itself, as an act of appropriating the hegemonic linguistic-cultural object by the translator in order to naturalize it in the dominated language-culture.
- (2) Within the hegemonic language-culture, the growing weight of the cultural minority’s intellectual production eventually precipitates the emergence of: (a) a critique of the ideological and institutional apparatus which frames our representation on non-Western cultures, especially within translation processes, in the alienating dialectics of exoticization-naturalization of the other, and (b) a critique of the “exportability of Western sciences and humanities – including translation theory – to non-Western cultures.” (155-56)

Jacquemond's arguments in support of these propositions are based on data relating to French and Arabic texts, particularly as they derive from Egypt. Egypt was a French protectorate before becoming a British colony in 1886 (until 1956), and French is still a major elite language. The arguments are of various strengths and some, it seems to me, do not support his conclusions at all.

In the article, Jacquemond firstly considers the development of the Arabic translation of French literary and non-literary texts. The earliest translations from French to Arabic, which began "in the years 1830-40" (140), dealt with practical subjects such as history and geography, as well as in the pure and applied sciences. These "did not spring from a genuine interest in European culture per se, but rather aimed at satisfying the needs of the young Egyptian state" (141). Nevertheless, the translation of literary works soon followed. Narrative translations were subject to "very free transposition," in which the French original was "completely transformed into something familiar to the Arab readership in its style, form and content" (141). Even the names of the original authors were often omitted in favour of the absolute prominence of the translator, "a clear sign of a cultural independence from the West" (142).

Towards the Second World War, "more exhaustive and 'accurate' translations" of such works as Racine's *Andromaque* (1935), Sophocles' *Antigone* (1938) and Voltaire's *Zadig* (1947) were undertaken by "intellectuals who were first of all creative writers" (142). But far more popular were the abridged translations of authors such as Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo and Balzac, and the adventure stories of Jules Verne, Ponson du Terrail (*Rocamboles*) and especially Maurice Leblanc (*Arsene Lupin*). Much of this literature was "moralizing" and "melodramatic," and it conformed to "the dominant religious and moral values of the Egyptian readership" (143). Translations rose from 30 to 40 titles a year published during the 1940s, to 85 between 1952 and 1957 (9.2% of published books), close to 300 between 1958 and 1967 (11.4%) before declining to 180 translations a year between 1968 and 1972 (8.3%), and an even lower average of 100 from 1973 to 1982 (5.6%). Although Jacquemond lacks figures for subsequent years, he suggests that "almost all the paperback collections that popularized French literature during the 1950s and 1960s have now disappeared," being replaced by books which in a "self-centered" way focus on Islam, Egyptology, Orientalism, and Arab, Islamic and Third World affairs (146).

This evidence presented is fairly full and does indeed divide into a colonial and postcolonial "moment." However, the apparent freedom with which Arabic translators treated French literary texts throughout both of these periods does not support the idea of their servility. The translators freely chose what they wanted to translate and how to translate in a way that would most appeal to Arabic writers. The alleged self-centeredness of the 1980s indeed confirms a

countervailing possibility that Arabic translators knew exactly what they were doing: making the French serve them. The term “cultural schizophrenia” is a strange one; it relates to the fact that there was a “strong Arabic book market throughout the colonial period,” and that translations of French literary works were integrated into Egyptian intellectual activity “through and by the national language” (142). Arabic translations appear to have been fitted into Egyptian intellectual culture in a comfortable and appropriate way; they do not seem to have added to any psychopathology being experienced either by the intellectual elite or the wider public.

Jacquemond next suggests that if translation from French is “affected by cultural dependency,” then, secondly, the situation of Egyptian literature translated into French is almost exactly the opposite, being a situation of “cultural domination” (147). The quantity of evidence presented here is much more limited. Although Arab-Francophone writing produced between 200 and 300 titles a year during the 1980s, Arabic translations were marginal in the translated book market, with only 10 to 20 titles for the same period (147). Despite these minimal figures, French works by Arabic-speaking writers were not inconsiderable: “during the 1980s, Arab-Francophone production represented something between 200 and 300 titles a year in both fiction and non-fiction” (147). Jacquemond concedes that Tahar Ben Jalloun’s novel *La Nuit Sacrée* sold more than 1.5 million copies after winning the 1987 Prix Goncourt (147, a figure revised to “close to two million copies” on page 152), and that Amin Maalouf’s two historical novels have sold nearly half a million copies since 1987. (As Jacquemond’s article was published in 1992, his figures necessarily stop somewhere in 1991.) As if to deny the agency of these writers, Jacquemond concludes that, because Arab writers choose to represent themselves in French, “This hegemony of Western discourse over the Arab world’s endogenous discourse ensures the prevalence of dominant Western representations of Arab culture” (148). The claim is open to doubt: as Shakespeare’s Caliban knows, one may curse the master in his own language, as well as flatter him.

In the second part of this proclaimed “Statistical View” of Arabic translations into French, Jacquemond refers to two, but only two, French best-sellers: Betty Mahmoody’s *Jamais plus sans ma fille* (Not Without My Daughter), which sold 1,910,000 copies in 1990, and Gilles Perrault’s *Notre ami le roi*, “a violent attack on King Hassan II of Morocco,” which sold about 300,000 copies in six months. Although he does not claim either of these books as translations, the witness which both books bear to what Jacquemond describes as the “barbarian and despotic’ Orient” is “of crucial importance in understanding the real stakes in the translation process.” This is that “there is a continuous interaction between Western and specifically French representations of Arabic culture and the linguistic, cultural, and political economy of translation from

Arabic into French” (148). These books fit the argument but the argument assumes more than it proves.

Perhaps aware of the statistical weakness of his argument, at this point Jacquemond makes a distinction between “Orientalist academic production, whose diffusion usually does not go beyond the limited audience of the academic field” and “the more ‘popular’ output, destined to reach a wider output” (149), and criticises both on the same grounds. Himself trained in Arabic language both in France (Aix-en-Provence), and at the time of writing an associate professor of modern Arabic language and literature at the University of Provence and a researcher at IREMAM (Aix-en-Provence). Jacquemond has little positive to say about classical philology, though most of what he does say reads like pure Edward Said. He insists, for example, that scholarly translations “address only the very small and closed milieu of the discipline, using its explicit and implicit codes and jargon, etc”; “[u]nder the tyranny of scientific accuracy, the Arabic text is often rendered too literally, and the reading experience is interrupted by the translator’s notes and explanations”; non-professional readers of such a text are “soon rebuked by its harshness, its radical strangeness, and its lack of appeal”; and so on (150). These would seem to be rather obvious and unsurprising conclusions, not in themselves inappropriate. In support of his criticism, however, he cites just two examples. The 77 pages of the French translation of Naguib Mahfouz’s novel *The Day the Leader was Assassinated* contained 54 footnotes; these assumed “a totally ignorant reader, confronted with a totally new world, unable to come to grips with it unless he is guided step by step by the steady and authoritative hand of the omniscient Orientalist-translator, trained to decipher the otherwise unfathomable mysteries of the Orient” (150). The nature of the audience for the translation and how much they might actually be expected to know of Arabic culture is not otherwise considered. (In the next paragraph, the same translator is severely chastised for a single error: mistaking Iqbal in the title of Badr Chaker Al-Sayyeb’s poem “Iqbal et la nuit,” for the great philosopher-mystic instead of Sayyab’s wife (150) – although “it is a tradition... to treat the beloved woman as a male in elegiac poetry” (157). In the case of this single mistake: “the translator seems to have imposed on the text an implicit meaning of his own, thus disclosing not its mystery but rather his own need to reassert both the other’s alterity and the Orientalist’s inevitable mediation” (150). Lacking more specific facts and figures, this section of the article is largely a rhetorical exercise.

The next section of the article, “Between Exoticization and Naturalization,” nevertheless, expands further on these ideas. Here Jacquemond distinguishes between “(1) dominant French representations of Arabic culture and society and (2) dominant French ideological, moral and aesthetic values,” which he insists are “complementary” (150). The first of these is dealt with quite summarily: there have been “numerous” translations of *The Arabian Nights*

since the first in the nineteenth century, these have created both a negative (“barbarian”) and a positive (“magical”) view of the Orient (150-51). No other evidence is presented in support of this claim.

The second point takes much longer and is discussed with reference to the first two Egyptian works translated into French, Taha Husayn’s *Al-Ayyam* (1929, trans in 1947 as *Le Livre des jours*) and Tawfiq Al-Hakim’s *Yawmiyyat Na’ib fi Aryaf* (1937, trans. 1938 as *Un substitut de campagne en Egypte*) (151), and later, the works of Naguib Mahfouz (153). Jacquemond condemns these men as being “bourgeois acculturated writers” (153), “who, in their lifestyles and moral and aesthetic values, were closer to their foreign readership than to traditional Egyptian society” (151). Despite their greatness, such modernist writers serve only to confirm the radical otherness of Egyptian society, and its “backwardness” and to gratify French readers’ sense of their own superiority (151).

Doubling back on his earlier discussion of French translations of Arabic works, Jacquemond now indicates that there are about a hundred of these – half, significantly, done in Egypt itself and, equally important, mainly marketed in the *Maghrib* countries, not in France, where there is little interest among general readers (152). Rather than confirm a strong and independent South-South interest in Arabic writing in French, the books condemn the hegemony of a non-existent, but prejudiced, French readership. There are also writers who have not been translated; they “deliberately turn away from Western narrative forms and rediscover, recycle and even subvert traditional Arabic forms, inventing for the first time a fully modern Arabic narrative (154). Rather than being evidence of schizophrenia,” as before, these untranslated new writers are now seen as the “first expression of a new cultural context” which might be characterised as “cultural decolonization” (154). This is, of course, inconsistent.

My survey of Jacquemond’s chapter suggests that it contains two sets of overlapping hypotheses relating to translation relations between the First World (the North) and the Third World (the South). The first set of hypotheses is presented in a fairly brief way at the beginning of his article. The second set occurs at the end of his article and draws on a range of evidence, not all of it of equal strength, and some of it, in fact, either inconsistent or simply wrong. Both sets of hypotheses are shaped by some strong ideological convictions, largely derived from Said’s *Orientalism*. The arguments are concerned with major literary works and their ideological dimensions. Jacquemond attributes great power to colonising languages and cultures, and almost none to the colonised, although his evidence does not confirm either of these two power dimensions. Nations and cultures, as his discussion shows, choose what they want to translate, and translate those texts in ways that fit in with their own needs, prejudices and literary models. In some ways, we might suggest, these are a brave but naïve series of arguments, such as one might expect from a passionate academic

expert, wanting non-Arabs to read and understand Arabic literature in the same way that Arabs do (and he does).

Robinson and Venuti on North-South Trade

Despite its many weaknesses, Jacquemond's chapter has been highly influential because, I would suggest, it fits in with certain Western conceptions about the dominance of the First World over the Third World and, among some scholars, the associated sense of guilt that this produces. (These conceptions are, of course, also attractive to many Third World scholars who want to criticise the First World for its assumed power over their unthinking patriots.)

Jacquemond's conclusions in his essay, for example, have been simplified, and to some degree distorted, by Douglas Robinson in his book *Translation and Empire* (31-32), which is also interested in the power dimensions of translation. Robinson summarises Jacquemond's two sets of arguments as follows:

1. A dominated culture will invariably translate far more of the hegemonic culture than the latter will of the former.
2. When the hegemonic culture does translate works produced by the dominated culture, those works will be perceived and presented as difficult, mysterious, inscrutable, esoteric and in need of a small cadre of intellectuals to interpret them, while a dominated culture will translate a hegemonic culture's works accessibly for the masses.
3. A hegemonic culture will only translate those works by authors in a dominated culture that fit the former's preconceived notions of the latter.
4. Authors in a dominated culture who dream of reaching a large audience will tend to write for translation into a hegemonic language, and this will require some degree of compliance with stereotypes.

(This last point relates to a series of questions Jacquemond raises about translations French publishers make of Arabic works (154-55), but are not otherwise part of his final conclusions.)

Typical of his preference for wide generalisations, Robinson dispenses with Jacquemond's time framework and refers only to hegemonic and dominated cultures; this sounds as though it should refer to colonialism but is sufficiently open to take in contemporary forms of economic and other domination as well. These terms go round in circles: How do we know if a culture is dominated? Because it translates a lot from another culture. Why does it translate a lot from another culture? Because it is dominated by that culture. We need to ask how economic hegemony actually "invariably" determines cultural superiority. In what way are those nations who export many works and import few "hegemonic," and how and in what way are those nations who import many

ideas and books “dominated”? Perhaps intellectually and creatively, it can be argued, the exporters are the losers in these deals because of the closed nature of their cultures, and the importers are not at all dominated but freely exercise their right to develop their languages and cultures in directions appropriate to themselves; if this means borrowing of cultural items, then so be it.

Lawrence Venuti, in his Introduction to the volume *Rethinking Translation* in which “Translation and Cultural Hegemony” first appeared, uses Jacquemond’s arguments to support two of his own intellectual concerns. He frames the hypotheses with both reference to the “invisibility” of the translator (later, of course, the subject of his famous *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*, 1995), and the presumed global hegemony of English – or, more precisely, of America. Foreign publishers routinely translate “large numbers of the most varied English-language books, exploiting the global drift toward American political and economic hegemony, actively supporting the international expansion of American culture by circulating it in their national cultures” (Venuti 5). On the other hand, the practices of British and American publishers over the same period “have run in the opposite direction” (5). There has been an increasing reluctance to publish translations at all – “between 1984 and 1990, translations accounted for 3.5 per cent of the books published annually in the United States, 2.5 percent in the United Kingdom” (6). Most of these English-language translations, further: “implement fluency strategies, evoking the illusion of authorial presence, maintaining the cultural dominance of Anglo-American individualism, representing foreign cultures with ideological discourses specific to English-language cultures – but concealing these determinations and effects under the veil of transparency” (6).

In a passionate plea in *The Translator’s Invisibility*, Venuti writes:

The translator’s invisibility can now be seen as a mystification of troubling proportions, an amazingly successful concealment of the multiple determinants and effects of English-language translation the multiple hierarchies and exclusions in which it is implicated. An illusion fostered by fluent translating, the translator’s invisibility at once enacts and masks an insidious domestication of foreign texts, rewriting them in the transparent discourse that prevails in English and that selects precisely those foreign texts amenable to fluent translating. Insofar as the effect of transparency effaces the work of translation, it contributes to the cultural marginality and economic exploitation that English-language translators have long suffered, their status as seldom recognised, poorly paid writers whose work nevertheless remains indispensable because of the global domination of British and American cultures, of English. Behind the translator’s invisibility is a trade balance that underwrites this domination, but also decreases the cultural capital of foreign values in English by limiting the number of foreign texts translated and submitting them to domesticating revision. The translator’s invisibility is symptomatic of a complacency in British and

American relations with cultural others, a complacency that can be described – without too much exaggeration – as imperialistic abroad and xenophobic at home. (12-13)

Venuti's argument too is itself an uncritical acceptance of Anglo-American power and the passivity of those subjected to it. As we shall next see, what is translated from English (and a lot is translated from English) serves as light popular entertainment for the rest of the world and has little to do with intellectual conquest. There is little to support theories of sinister intellectual dominance of fragile third world minds once we turn to wider sets of data.

Translation Flows 1: In the First World

I would now like to test these assumptions about the power and prestige of First World/Northern literatures and their assumed dominance over Third World/Southern literatures by drawing on the rich data provided by the UNESCO *Index Translationum*, an online database of book length translations reported annually by participating nations to the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris since 1979. The data is understandably incomplete. Authors with many books, each with a few translations, can take prominence over authors with a few books, each with many translations, for example. Nevertheless, it is all that we have to work with.

Let us begin with the most general figures: the “top fifties,” which tell us a great deal about North-North trade, something Jacquemond alludes to but does not discuss.² The most striking figures, of course, are those for the top 50 source languages translated. Here English offers an astounding 1,000,758 titles, followed by other European languages, including French (186,036), German (169,387) and Russian (93,779). We may understand this when we analyse the top 50 authors translated. A little over half of all these authors write in English: Walt Disney Productions and Agatha Christie, the list begins, followed soon after by Shakespeare, but also Enid Blyton, Barbara Cartland and Danielle Steele. The other authors, present in much smaller numbers, write in German, French, Russian, Danish, the Biblical languages and Ancient Greek (Plato). The genres represented are overwhelmingly clear and predominantly “popular.” For the English authors in our list they include popular romances (Barbara Cartland, Danielle Steele, Nora Roberts, Victoria Holt), adventure and detective stories (Jack London, Ernest Hemingway, Alistair MacLean, Robert Ludlum, James Hadley Chase), science fiction and fantasy (Asimov, Tolkien, Roald Dahl), with only an occasional canonical work of literature (Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde). If this is cultural imperialism, it is conquest by entertainment. The

² The country and language figures given in the following paragraphs were current on 9 March 2009. Naturally they will have changed slightly since then but the changes are unlikely to affect the arguments proposed in this paper.

French too offer entertainment: firstly adventure (Jules Verne, Georges Simenon, Dumas), with a rare highbrow author (Honore de Balzac) and an internationally recognised series of comic books (Rene Goscinny is the author of the Asterix and Obelix series). The German authors offer fairytales (the Brothers Grimm would move to a position in the top five if we added their numbers together), esoteric religion (Rudolf Steiner and Hermann Hesse), and politics (Karl Marx). While the Russians too are appreciated for their canonical nineteenth century writers (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Chekov), with one political writer who actually outranks Marx: Vladimir Il'ic Lenin. Virtually the only outsiders are the Danish fairytale author, Hans Christian Anderson, the books of the Bible (which, when added together rank third in the list), Pope John Paul II, and, as already mentioned, "the Philosopher." The world's imagination, it would seem, is decidedly (almost without exception) non-ideological, except in the most uncomplicated of ways. The top fifty authors, with a few major exceptions, promote sentimental patriarchy more than they do democracy or socialism, Christianity or esoteric interpretations of universal philosophies.

If the European languages are the most popular contemporary source languages, then the European countries are, again, the most listed nations undertaking translation. Not England (which is twenty-eight in the list of fifty), or the United States of America (which is fourteenth), but Germany (239,784), Spain (209,644) and France (163,480), followed perhaps unexpectedly by Japan (117,712 – itself an advanced capitalist giant).

There are few differences between the lists of top 10 languages translated into different given target languages in the North, apart from a few local variations that depend on who the neighbours are. For German, the list reads: English (169,768), French (30,315), Russian (10,682), Italian (8,797), Spanish (5,877), Dutch (5,780), Swedish (4,307), Latin (3,409), Polish (2,777) and Hungarian (2,768). For Spain: English (114,522), French (33,586), German (19,149), Italian (11,565), Russian (5,706), Catalan (4,503), Latin (2,634), Portuguese (2,389), Ancient Greek (2,356) and Danish (1,120). France is similar, with two important exceptions: English (129,535), German (20,222), Italian (9,760), Spanish (7,090), Russian (5,799), Japanese (5,049), Dutch (3,007), Latin (2,455), Ancient Greek (1,887), and, contrary to Jacquemond's claims, Arabic (1,727). Even Japan follows this well worn path: English (91,036), French (8,955), German (8,014), Russian (1,814), Chinese (1,599), Italian (1,357), Korean (961), Spanish (908), Swedish (501) and Dutch (344).

There is even less to distinguish between the lists of top 10 authors translated in particular countries; the list of "top 50 authors" holds remarkably firm. In Germany: Enid Blyton (821), Agatha Christie (725), Walt Disney Productions (576), Shakespeare (482), Victoria Holt (446), Stephen King (436), Bible (413), Barbara Catland (394), Alistair MacLean (372) and Edgar Wallace (368). In Spain: Jules Verne (1,679), Agatha Christie (1,217), Walt Disney

(1,130), Enid Blyton (885), Rene Goscinny (879), Isaac Asimov (778), Shakespeare (662), Jakob Grimm (598), Wilhelm Grimm (598), and R.L. Stevenson (585). In France: Barbara Cartland (773), Agatha Christie (577), Walt Disney (537), Enid Blyton (417), Matthew Tanner (305, small illustrated children's books), Karl-Herbert Scheer (278, science fiction), Jakob Grimm (269), Danielle Steele (267), Wilhelm Grimm (266), and Omraam Mikhael Awanhov (264, esoteric philosophy). Even the more technologically minded Japanese do not disappoint: Nora Roberts (226), Penny Jordan (224), Agatha Christie (251), Charles Schulz (213, Peanuts), Wilbert Awdrey (192, Thomas the tank engine), Anne Mather (189, *The Medici Lover*, *Jake Howard's Wife*, *Dark Enemy*, etc), Barbara Cartland (176), Microsoft Corporation (170), OECD (165), and Charlotte Lamb (144, not the tales from Shakespeare but *Desert Barbarian*, *Love is a Frenzy*, *Pagan Encounter*, etc.)

Everyone reads the English. In Great Britain they translate from the usual list of languages: French (3,504), German (3,405), Russian (985), Italian (927), English (691), Spanish (484), Swedish (419), Dutch (384), Japanese (356) and Latin (309). But they read, apparently, very little of anyone else: Rene Goscinny (67), H.C. Andersen (50), Georges Simenon (47), Peter Heaship (47, 16 page photobooks on *Me*, *My Mum*, *My Dad*, *The Supermarket*, etc.), Jakob Grimm (45), Wilhelm Grimm (43), Heinz Gunter Konsalik (42, *The desert doctor*, *I confess*, *Natasha*, etc.), Rudolf Steiner (41), Astrid Lindgren (33, *Emil and his clever pig*, *Pippi in the South Seas*, etc.), and Albert Uderzo (31, Goscinny's colleague).

The figures confirm Venuti's concerns about the dominance of English in the Northern translation market. They firmly emphasise, however, that this trade has more to do with works of light literary entertainment than with great masterpieces being shipped back and forth between intellectual elites. Perhaps, like Jacquemond, we elites take our texts and their ideas too seriously – and expect others to do so as well.

On the other hand, the lists tell us nothing about the reception of non-Western literatures in Europe – apart from the very important reception of Arabic works in France, contrary to Jacquemond's views. This no doubt confirms the view that such works are not much noticed, although I suspect that this also applies to the great majority of literatures in all languages. (For example, peripheral literatures in English, from Australian, Canada and New Zealand authors, arguably derive from First World, advanced capitalist, nations, but are nowhere to be seen in any of the UNESCO lists.) Further, because of the smallness of the niche academic book market, in all languages, the figures also tell us nothing of "orientalism" and its effects. We may guess its existence from some of the possible titles about popular orientalism (*Dark Enemy*, *Desert Barbarian*, *Pagan Encounter*, *Pippi in the South Seas*, etc.), but at this stage, our guesses must remain unconfirmed.

Let us now attempt to understand matters from the perspective of the South, particularly from South and Southeast Asia.

Translation Flows 2: South Asia

Non-European nations and languages are certainly not absent from the “top 50” lists. The top 50 countries undertaking translations include: 23, Korea (21,493); 31, India (13,206); 32, Turkey (11, 872); 34, Iran (10,795); 45, Egypt (4,020); and, 46, Indonesia (4,005). Among the top 50 target languages are: 19, Korean (21,641); 26, Turkish (12,336); 23, Western Farsi (10,993); 29, Arabic (10,327); 31, Hebrew (9,441); 37, Indonesian (4050); 38, Hindi (3635); 46, Bengali (2116); 49, Chinese (1,922); and, 50, Tamil (1,763). Among the top 50 source languages are: 13, Japanese (13,347); 16, Arabic (9,952); 19, Hebrew (8,161); 21, Chinese (7,411); 26, Sanskrit (3,990); 34, Western Farsi (2,344); 36, Korean (2,050); 37, Bengali (2,030); 38, Turkish (1935); 44, Hindi (1,387); and even, 48, central Tibetan (1,157).

There is endless material for study. Here I will concentrate on the figures for India and the national language, Hindi, which do not at all confirm what our western theoreticians might lead us to believe. They almost completely relate to internal South-South relations within one nation.

It is true that English again leads the list of source languages translated in India (3,996). English was the former coloniser’s language. It is widely spoken among the very small national elite and bridges the linguistic gap between the north and the south of the subcontinent in a way that Hindi, unfortunately, does not.

But, apart from Russian (532) and French (328, also a coloniser of parts of India), all of the major languages from which translations are done in India are Indian languages – Sanskrit (2,213), Bengali (1.395), Hindi (859), Urdu (396), Tamil (349), Marathi (336) and Kannada (292).

All of the source languages for translations are made into Hindi too, apart from English (964) and Russian (555), are Indian languages: Sanskrit (542), Bengali (488), Punjabi (132), Marathi (123), Gujarati (118), Urdu (108), Oriya (81) and Kannada (67).

Only India (3048) and the USSR, to 1991 (571), undertake translations into Hindi in any significant way, although a range of mainly western countries undertake translations out of Hindi: Germany (81), USSR (76), France (60), USA (55), Japan (26), Spain (23), Netherlands (19), Hungary (18) and UK (17). Here the South is dominant over the North.

Naturally the authors translated from Hindi are Indians: Premchand (86), Kabir (50), Osho (42), Tulsidas (29), Rahula Sankrtyayan (19), Swami Muktananda (16), Bhisma Sahani (16), Yaspal (14), Vishnuprabakar (14) and Nirmal Varma (14). But, again, apart from Hadley Chase (104) and Shakespeare (74), in that order, all of the top list of authors translated in India are also

Indian: Tagore (163), *Bhagavad Gita* (157), Vivekananda (123), Saratchandra Chatterji (104), Aurobindo (98), Kalidasa (96), Sankaracarya (74), and Bimal Mitra (67). Almost all of the members of these two lists can be classified as either religious teachers or texts – Kabir, Osho, Tulsidas, Swami Muktananda, *Bhagavad Gita*, Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Sankaracarya – or major literary authors – especially Premchand, Yaspal, Vishnuprabakar, Nirmal Varma, Tagore, Saratchandra Chatterji, and Kalidasa.

Overall these figures may suggest that translation in India, and translation relating to the Hindi language, does not support any forms of political or economic domination, but may reinforce indigenous cultural hierarchies in religion and literature. We can use Robinson's terms of "hegemony" and "dominance" to describe this impact but the meaning of the terms has changed. Seeing India as a self-contained region for translation activities between many languages, we may also be led to conceptualise Europe internally, as one translation region with its own internal dynamics (as is North Africa for the French translation of Arabic texts) rather than only as "the North," defined only by its opposition to "the South."

Translation Flows 3: Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia is a diverse area between India and China, and consists of at least eight different nations, all of which (apart from Thailand) have experienced colonial rule. The region may be divided between those nations on the "mainland," who are predominantly Theravada Buddhist in their cultural orientation (apart from Vietnam which has been strongly influenced by Chinese culture for more than a millennium) and the island states, beginning with the Peninsula of Malaya (West Malaysia), which have been strongly Islamicised (again excluding the Philippines, which is predominantly Catholic). It is not entirely possible to take postcolonial Southeast Asia as one translation region (or even two), but I would like to make some generalisations here, in the last section of my paper.

Firstly, we would again note the importance of English as a source language for translations done in these various countries: Burma (225), Indonesia (2663), Malaysia (1007), Philippines (80), Singapore (159), and Thailand (1,102). Some of this may be the consequence of colonial relations, as in India (Burma, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore); some of it must clearly be explained in terms of other factors (Indonesia and Thailand). Russian is the top source language for both Laos (212) and Vietnam (537), which have, of course, socialist governments.

Of the other source languages for translations in the various countries, European languages assume various degrees of importance. For Burma, 4 of the 10 source languages are European; Indonesia, 6 of 10 (plus an undefined "Multiple languages"); Laos, 10 of 10 – although 8 of these are East European

languages; Malaysia, 3 of 10 (plus, perhaps, “Not supplied”); Philippines, 4 of 10, but including the Biblical languages of Ancient Greek and Hebrew (plus “Not supplied”); Singapore, 4 of 10; Thailand, 8 of 10 (plus “Not supplied”); and Vietnam, 8 of 10. Each of these countries is the major site of translation into its vernacular; except again for Laos and Vietnam, where an overwhelming majority are done (were done) in Russian. Indonesia also stands out as an exception in this regard: the top country translating from Indonesian is Japan.

The other languages from which translations are done are Chinese (Burma, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam); Japanese (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand – where Japanese is second to English, and Vietnam); and, in a few cases, the languages of various ethnic minorities. These minority languages are internal to the country itself: Burma – Shan, Karen, Mon; Philippines – Ilocano, Hiligaynon. Chinese is also, in a way, a minority language, and any tendency towards its political influence would be heavily proscribed. Japanese is a trade language. The minority languages relate to processes on internal colonisation. South-South relations also involve hegemony and domination of various kinds; they are not always equal and democratic.

One other source language stands out: Arabic, the language of Islam. It is the second language out of which translations are made in Indonesia (673), Malaysia (128), and Singapore (39). Indonesia translates the philosophers and political theoreticians: Al-Ghazzali, Al-Qaradawi and Maududi; Malaysia, Maududi; and Singapore, Al-Ghazzali and Abd ibn Alawi Attas. If we examine the UNESCO figures for major languages translated into Arabic, we find our old friends – English (5,101), French (1,639), Russian (1502), German (449), Spanish (286), Italian (122), Ancient Greek (79) – with a middle ranking “Not supplied,” and only two Middle Eastern languages – Western Farsi (135) and Turkish (82). We do not find Indonesia, Malaysia or Singapore. There is apparently as little intellectual trade between the centre and the periphery in the Muslim world as there is between Jacquemond’s South and North.

Finally, we should ask what gets translated into Southeast Asian languages, and what is translated from them. There are no figures for translations in Burma or Laos; Vietnam has only one entry, *The Tale of Kieu*, and that is already in Vietnamese, so this translation must be into another language. Indonesia takes the standard Disney, Blyton and Agatha Christie; adds Al-Ghazzali, Al-Qadawari, Maududi and Mutahhari; and concludes with books on agricultural science – and the cowboy books (from German) of Karl May. Malaysia deals exclusively in British children’s books, including the adventures of Biggles. The Philippines has three separate entries for the Bible, but tends towards children’s books, as does Singapore. Like Indonesia, Thailand is attracted to Agatha Christie, Enid Blyton, Harold Robbins, Isaac Asimov, Herman Hesse, Judy Blume, Frederick Forsyth, and, unexpectedly, Tolstoy.

There are three categories for works translated from Southeast Asian languages into other languages. (Many works from Burmese are taken into Japanese, but it is not possible to know what sort of works these are.) The first category is modern high literature (no room here for academic orientalism). The Philippines not only takes a lot of children's books, it also offers its own to the world. Malaysia offers its great writers, as does Thailand. Indonesian works are almost exclusively literary, with an overwhelming proportion by the late Pramoedya Ananta Toer (93 of 128 records), an internationally recognised political dissident. Some of the Vietnamese writers widely translated also tend to be considered dissidents – Duong Thu Huong and Bao Ninh. Toer, Duong and Bao are almost certainly comforting to overseas readers for the way in which they reinforce impressions of despotic Asian states. This supports Robinson's simplification of Jacquemond. Secondly, there are some great religious teachers – U Pandita Bivamsa (Burma) and Thich Nhat Hanh (from Vietnam). Thirdly, there are political writers, but only from avowedly socialist states: Ho Chi Minh and Nguyen Giap Vo, from Vietnam; and from Laos, the Reports of the Lao People's Party Congress, in French, Spanish and Russian. Apart possibly from the religious texts, none of these works could be considered "difficult, mysterious, inscrutable, esoteric [or] in need of a small cadres of intellectuals to interpret them" (Robinson 139).

Conclusion

The results of our discussion may be tentatively summarised in the following series of hypotheses:

1. There is a constant flow of translations between different language-cultures.
2. These translations take place on a large scale in Europe, between the various major and minor European languages.
3. Translations of European works, particularly works written in English, are widely undertaken for commercial purposes throughout the rest of the world. Works in English are written in Britain, America, the nations of the former British Commonwealth, and internationally. Authors from Britain and America have greatest access to international markets.
4. Language-cultures, in Europe and throughout the rest of the world, translate from neighbouring language-cultures, and from language-cultures that are relevant to them.
5. This relevance may be educational, cultural, religious or political.
6. Translations may serve to build solidarity between particular geographical regions.

7. The majority of works translated from “The First World” are works of light entertainment – romances, detective and adventure stories, and children’s stories.
8. Academic translations form a separate system within literary systems of translation and are governed by their own rules for the selection and presentation of textual materials.
9. Publishers select, and readers buy, books that will be of commercial and personal interest to them respectively. Both are relatively free agents in this regard.
10. The “South” is, therefore, not coerced by the “North” in what it will translate.
11. Books meet various psychological needs for their readers. Most books that are translated carry strong messages about gender relations but these are read within already existing discourse patterns about gender within the various receiving language-cultures. Political messages, other than those relating to personal freedom of action and its consequences, are not a prominent feature of translated texts, except those promoted by governments of socialist nations.
12. Translated texts may present positive, neutral or negative images of the source culture, and may be sometimes chosen for this purpose. The image of the source culture must be sufficiently understandable by readers in the target culture for them to want to use the text. This may involve the reinforcement of already existing ideas, as well as the strengthening of stereotypes and prejudices about one’s own and other societies and cultures.

These propositions are based on a reading of the statistics provided by the UNESCO *Index Translationum*. The statistics are far from complete and provide only a preliminary basis for further research.

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