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Authorial and Editorial Voices in Translation

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Editorial and Publishing Practices

Edited by

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Head or Legs? Shifts in Texts and Paratexts brought about by Agents of the Publishing Industry

NATHALIE MÄLZER

In this paper, I study the impact that the different agents of the editorial world can have on the translation of a novel and its paratext. In order to illustrate the sort of shifts that occur in this process, I provide some examples from my own experience as a literary translator from French into German.

Key words: novel, paratext, translation, agents, voices

Cet article étudie l'impact que peuvent avoir les différents agents du monde éditorial sur la traduction d'un roman et de son paratexte. Pour illustrer ces glissements, je donne des exemples tirés de ma propre expérience comme traductrice littéraire du français vers l'allemand.

Mots clés : roman, paratexte, traduction, agents, voix

This paper addresses the shifts which can be observed between the text and paratext¹ of an original book and its translated counterpart that are brought about by agents other than the translator. Translators are by no means the only ones to have an impact on the final state of a translated text. In the words of Umberto Eco, translators are rather negotiators between different parties:

[...] on the one side, there is the original text, with its own rights, sometimes an author who claims rights over the whole process, along with the cultural framework in which the original text is born; on the other side, there is the destination text, the cultural milieu in which it is expected to be read, and even the publishing industry, which can recommend different translation criteria, according to whether the translated text is to be put in an academic context or in a popular one. [...] A translator is the negotiator between those parties, whose explicit assent is not mandatory.²

Aside from this remark, Eco tends to concentrate on the philological and cultural problems relating to translating canonical texts, whereas I would like to emphasise that literary translations – if not created for didactic or philological purposes only – are commissioned by a publisher and are produced for a specific market with its own specific set of cultural and economic factors and guidelines. Literary books have a dual status as commercial products and cultural commodities³ (which of these roles dominates varies from title to title) and this affects how a translation is produced. As such, a translation is not just the result of a translator negotiating between two languages or two cultures while translating, but is also affected by negotiations with the other agents (in Bourdieu's sense of the term) involved in the production process of a translation.⁴

My aim here is to examine the impact that these other agents of the 'publishing industry' have on the literary translation itself and the final product, that is, the book containing the text of – in this case – a novel and the various additional paratextual elements created for it.

To this end I will examine the typical production process for translated books in Germany in order to identify 1) the main agents involved in this process,⁵ 2) the ways these agents influence the translation, and 3) what constraints the market imposes on them. Following this overview of the book production process and the possible consequences for translation, I will give some examples from translations of contemporary French novels into German. These examples will allow me to illustrate the significant extent to which editors can interfere in translations and to explore their motivations for doing so. Since unedited translations are not normally accessible, I have drawn on excerpts from my own translations along with the edited versions for this analysis.

THE TYPICAL PRODUCTION PROCESS OF A TRANSLATION

The production process of a translation, at least in Germany, typically starts with the acquisition of new titles, which entails editors searching for suitable foreign fiction or non-fiction books to be translated and published.⁶ Editors do not necessarily look for titles in line with their own personal preferences,⁷ but rather for works matching particular gaps in their publisher's programmes or edited series. Typical programme

categories include 'young foreign authors and their first novel,' 'rediscovered classics,' 'bestsellers,' 'historical fiction,' and 'women's novels.'

In order to find appropriate titles, editors read numerous books and rely on recommendations and opinions given by writers, translators, literary agents and other experts, particularly when a book is written in a language unfamiliar to them. When they eventually find a title suitable to fill a gap in the publisher's programme, they present it at a sales conference and try to convince the publisher to buy the rights. At this stage of the production process, the editors have already had to make pricing calculations, decide on which programme category or imprint would be most suitable for the title, when it should be published and whether it will appear as a hardcover or paperback.

Once the rights have been obtained and all the above decisions have been finalized, the second phase begins: finding the right translator. The editors contact one or several translators, a process that requires yet more promotion of the book in order to arouse potential translators' interest. Payment and the deadline for delivering the translation are negotiated, although in reality there is usually little scope for negotiation on the part of the translator(s) on these two points. The editors then sign a contract with the translator(s) and sometimes give them guidelines as to the style required. The latter occurs in particular when the editors have the impression that the chosen title is not directly in line with their expectations or that the text does not correspond to the ideal book they were looking for. In such cases, editors may take advantage of the fact that the translation process usually gives them the opportunity to redesign the product to a far greater extent than would be possible for an original title.⁸ To this end, the strategies they have at their disposal include redesigning not only the paratext or, more precisely, the peritexts⁹ – the cover including the title of the book, the blurbs and the back cover – but also the main text, that is the translation itself. The editorial instructions given to the translators may be explicit, such as recommending that they "make it funnier / less sentimental" or "shorten it a little,"¹⁰ or implicit in the form of information about the particular series in which the title will be appearing and the editors' expectations associated with the title. These

may be expressed as hope that the translation will become a best seller or at least sell well, or that it will receive critical acclaim and bestow a certain prestige on the publisher; that is, to use Bourdieu's terminology, allow the publisher to accumulate economic or symbolic capital.¹¹

At this point the actual process of translation begins: the translators read the text and start to translate. Their working conditions are influenced by the deadline and the fact that the editors generally ask them to deliver part of the translation at a very early stage – for their own reference but above all for the sales representatives who will present the translation at the sales conference.

Once the translation is considered to be “finished”, or simply once the delivery deadline has been reached, the translation is sent to the editors, who go over the text, make changes or annotations, and send these back to the translators, who then decide on the final version of the text. That, in any case, is the standard procedure.

The final version of the text is then passed on to the layout artist, who arranges the text as it will appear in the book. The formatted text is then returned to the translators for further checking. Finally, it is given to a professional proof-reader before being given back to the translators to go over one last time. Due to time constraints, however, the text is not always sent back to the translators at each of these stages and the translators do not always have the opportunity to go over the whole text every time and compare versions. As translators have the legal status of authors (even if many of them question whether this is true in practice),¹² it falls to them to give their final approval before the text is sent to the printers.

Thus at least three different types of agents (in addition to the translators) are involved in the production of a translation, all of whom may exert a certain influence on the final version of the main text and paratext of the book: 1) the sales representatives, 2) the editors, and 3) the layout artists. I will now turn to a consideration of how these three types of agents affect the translation process.

THE DIFFERENT AGENTS IN THE PRODUCTION PROCESS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE TRANSLATION

Sales representatives are capable of influencing the translation at a very early stage. This is because, as noted above, translators are often asked to deliver a reading sample to the sales representatives before the sales conference takes place in order to provide them with as much information as possible about the new titles being presented. In contrast to what Schönstedt states,¹³ however, the purpose of a sales conference is not only to brief sales representatives but, as Vaininger points out,¹⁴ to also give them the opportunity to express their preferences for certain titles and to voice their opinion about different cover designs if an editor is hesitating between several options. In Germany, the opinion of the sales representatives has a certain authority when it comes to the design of the book, including both the illustration and the title (this is less true in France, where illustrated covers are rare). By contrast, even when translators are able to make suggestions, they are rarely involved in decisions on the title of the book and what sort of illustration should be used, even if these have been significantly changed from the original (one reason that the titles of German translations from French frequently diverge from the original has to do with different conventions regarding book design in the two countries. I will return to this point below). The influence of the sales representatives can even extend to the main body of the text, as their feedback on the translation sample is communicated to the translators and may well influence further stylistic decisions during the translation process.

The second type of agent capable of influencing the translation process is, of course, the editor. Before the translation starts, editors sometimes give advice to the translators concerning the style, or what is often called the ‘tone’ of a book, and are able to make corrections even in the final stages of the production process. Under German copyright law, translators are considered to be the authors of their translation; however, if there is a difference of opinion between translators and editors, the latter are still permitted to publish the text in any way they see fit (the only recourse translators have is to withdraw their name from the published work).

The production process is relatively long – one or two years on average and up to several years for major projects – and the lengthy gap between the first time the editors read the original book and the final copy-editing of the translation can lead to problems. Editors sometimes form an idealised picture of the original text over this period, for various reasons. They do not always read the original particularly intensively during the acquisition phase, or, in the case of books in a language unfamiliar to them, do not read them at all. They are not always conscious of the fact that a title chosen will not exactly match their expectations. The first close reading generally occurs only when reviewing the translated text. Editors promote the book several times, championing it to the publisher, other editors, translators and sales representatives, which can lead to an inflated sense of its qualities in the minds of the editors. All of these factors have consequences for the final copy-editing of the translation.

Sometimes the translation is completed just a few months after the editors first read the book, but in other cases not until years later. The timeframe depends on the production rhythm of the publishing house and on the type of book in question: a bestseller is more likely to be published within a few months, while a book with a less prominent position within the publishing slate will be given more time. Nonetheless, by the time the translation has finally been completed, the book often appears less interesting than before to editors who in the meantime have become busy with other titles and forthcoming programmes. They are likely to have forgotten about the content and style of the book and may often have only a vague notion of its nature. It is at this moment, however, that they generally proceed to the first close reading of the text – in its translated form. There is thus a relatively high risk of the translated text disappointing the editor because the translation no longer corresponds to the idealised image the editors had of the book. The fact that editors are generally much more capable of assessing the translation than the original text can also be a reason for their disappointment. In extreme cases, this can lead to the translation being extensively rewritten or its publication postponed or even cancelled altogether. Any of these outcomes can lead to conflicts with the translators and the publishers of the original work.

The third agent capable of influencing the production process is the book manufacturer. The layout artists have a certain impact on the translation, as they generally ask translators to add or delete a line in the layout text so as to avoid so-called ‘orphans’ and ‘widows,’ i.e. paragraph-opening or paragraph-ending lines at the bottom or top of a page. This means that translators or editors can be forced to delete or add a few words or even a whole sentence for purely technical reasons. This generally happens several times in every book without anyone taking note of the rather odd fact that small changes in the meaning of the original text seem to be more acceptable than a single line remaining at the top of a new page.

These three types of agents in turn work under the constraints of the book market itself.

The first such constraint is the time pressure resulting from the fact that a hardcover title only remains in bookshops for an average of four months.¹⁵ With such a small window of time to attract the attention of potential readers, editors are always seeking to capitalise on the success of a foreign book – if it has won a prize for instance – and publish the translation as quickly as possible. For this reason, some bestsellers are translated by a team of two or more translators.

The second constraint is also an economic one: the low pay received by literary translators forces them to carry out translations with undue haste.¹⁶ Obviously, such haste has an impact on the quality of a translation.¹⁷

Following this brief overview of how literary translations are produced and what consequences this process has on the quality of the translation, I will now give some examples from my own experience as a translator to illustrate how agents other than the translator can radically influence both the main text and the paratext of translations.

REDESIGNING A PRODUCT

In 2008, Gaëlle Guermalec-Levy, a French journalist and occasional fiction author, published an erotic novel just a few years after her compatriot Catherine Millet's novel *La vie sexuelle de Catherine M.*

[*The Sexual Life of Catherine M.*] had become an international bestseller.

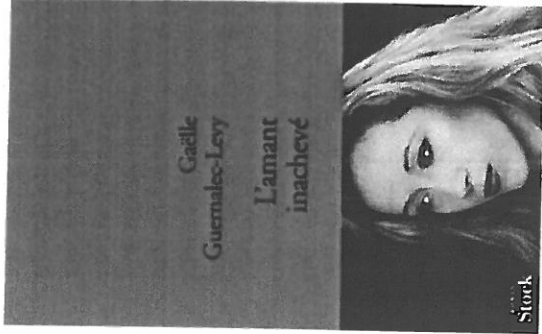
The German publisher Aufbau wanted to benefit from the success of Millet's book and hoped that Guernalec-Levy's novel would also become a bestseller, or at least show strong sales, as the editor informed me when asking if I would like to translate the title.

When the editor read my translation, however, she was no longer entirely satisfied with the book. It was not as explicit in its erotic descriptions as she had expected; furthermore, it contained several reflective passages. In order to make the final product more closely match the editor's somewhat idealised image of the book at the beginning of the production process, the translated text was subjected to extensive rewrites and the book design was adjusted accordingly. In concrete terms, this involved the translation being partially rewritten to comply with a particular stereotype of erotic literature: certain scenes were even extended or added by the editor with the permission of the author, passages of a more reflective nature were deleted, a new paratextual element was added at the end of the book in the form of an interview with the author conducted by the German editor, and the cover was inevitably redesigned to encompass a new title and a new illustration in stark contrast to those used for the original book.

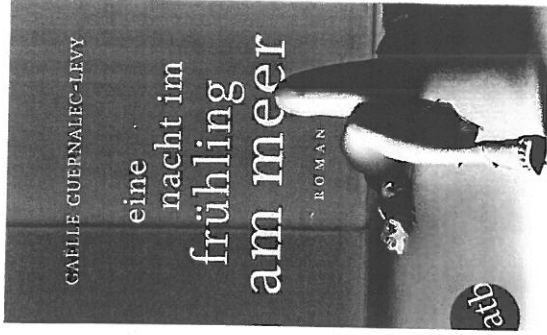
By adopting these measures, the editor was able to create a product in line with her idealised image of the original. By adding new peritexts, she employed both scandal and authenticity as strategies, converting the book in the process into a more stereotypical version of French erotic literature – as well as extending its length, a marketing ploy important for reasons discussed below.

While the original cover (pictured below left) was red, contained no illustration and only included a banner on the lower section with a photograph of the author's face and the title: *L'amant inachevé*¹⁸ [The Unfinished Lover], the German version (below right) shows the legs of a woman lying on a floor; potential readers are to assume this is the heroine of the novel. The editor also chose a new, more lyrical title for the novel, *Eine Nacht im Frühling am Meer* [A Night in Spring by the Sea], which alludes to what can be considered to be the most 'important'

moment in any erotic novel.



Original cover



German cover

It is standard practice in Germany to give a book a new title if it is not a canonical text, as well as to add an illustration to the cover and to include new paratextual elements. In this case, a photo of the author can be found on the back cover of the German edition, as well as a quote from the translation of a four-page interview with the author that was added as an epilogue to the main text of the novel. The interview includes the sentence: "Der Erzählstrang über die Jugendzeit in *Eine Nacht im Frühling am Meer* ist zu neunzig Prozent autobiographisch"¹⁹ [The story about my adolescence in *A Night in Spring by the Sea* is ninety percent autobiographical]. This can be seen as an attempt both to authenticate the story and to imitate Millet's novel, which caused a scandal because it was written by someone renowned in the French modern art scene and was purported to be autobiographical.

The other strategy employed by the editor is somewhat less common in the production of translations in Germany: the extensive rewriting of certain scenes in the main text.

The following extract is taken from the original French version. The

sentences in bold are those that were deleted in the German translation:

Il a fouillé sa poche, a déchiré l'emballage d'un préservatif et l'a déroulé sur son sexe. Je ne lui avais même pas laissé le temps de se déshabiller, je n'avais moi-même pas ôté ma robe qui couvrait toujours ma poitrine. Je me suis allongée, le cul au bord de la banquette, il est venu se mettre debout devant moi et m'a pénétrée lentement et profondément. J'avais l'impression de l'aspirer et il me dirait **d'ailleurs plus tard qu'il avait éprouvé la même chose**, à tel point qu'il avait pensé ne plus pouvoir ressortir de mon ventre. Les bras passés derrière mes cuisses, il m'a donc enfin fait l'amour, **complètement**. Alors qu'il était ainsi prisonnier de moi, je me suis mise à pleurer. **Ce n'était pas des sanglots, ce n'était ni violent ni bruyant. Non, juste des larmes silencieuses qui coulaient en abondance et sans discontinuer sur mes joues**. Je me suis positionnée pour lui permettre de venir le plus loin possible en moi. J'ai enserré sa taille de mes jambes. Tous mes muscles se sont contractés en même temps. J'ai joué très vite, le dos de ma main droite posée sur mes lèvres. En un dernier coup de rein il n'a pas tardé à me suivre. Il est resté un peu en moi **puis il s'est retiré pour venir s'étendre à mes côtés**.²⁰

The second extract shows the 'same' passage in the German version. This time, the passages in bold are those that were freely invented and added by the editor:

Vage nahm ich wahr, dass er die Verpackung eines Präservativs aufriß. Ich hatte ihm nicht einmal Zeit gelassen, sich auszuziehen, und auch ich lag noch in meinem Kleid da, das mir die Brust bedeckte. **Unwillkürlich hatte ich die Beine weit gespreizt und fuhr mit den Fingern erst sachte, dann immer fieberhafter über meine schlüpfrige Spalte**. D. stellte sich direkt vor mich und drängte sich wie mit einem **zusätzlichen Finger sanft, aber beharrlich dazwischen, tiefer in meine allmählich überlaufende Grotte, als ich mich selbst hätte streicheln können**. Mir war, als saugte ich ihn ganz tief in mich ein, wie um ihm jegliche Möglichkeit zu nehmen, meinen Bauch jemals wieder zu verlassen. Seine starken Hände packten meinen Hintern, **hoben mich an, und mit immer heftiger werdenden Stößen vollzog er endlich, was ich in meinen Träumen nie hatte abschließen können**: Er liebte mich mit der Inbrunst eines unersättlichen Jungen.

Ich bog mich ihm entgegen, damit er auch in die verborgensten Winkel

meines Inneren vordringen konnte. Mit meinen Beinen umschlang ich D., und während er so gefangen in meinem Verlangen war, ließ ich mich von einer Woge unerhörter Empfindungen überfluten. Nichts um uns herum existierte mehr, ich empfand eine maßlose Erfüllung, mein Körper war endlich wieder ganz. Alle meine Muskeln schienen sich zur selben Zeit zusammenzuziehen, viel zu schnell kam ich zum Höhepunkt. **Kurz verlangsamt D. seinen Rhythmus, presste mich dann noch fester an sich und stieß immer heftiger zu und rieb dabei auf fast schmerzhaft Weise meine pulsierende, überempfindliche Liebesperle**. Obwohl ich für einen Augenblick das unerträgliche Gefühl hatte, von ihm wie ein Apfel gespalten zu werden, konnte und wollte ich nicht entkommen. Als ich gerade glaubte, auf der Stelle sterben zu müssen, verwandelte sich der Schmerz in eine Flutwelle nie gekannter Lust, die mir den letzten Rest meiner Beherrschung nahm und mich in Gefilde fortrug, in die ich mich bislang niemals vorgewagt hatte. Ich begann lautlos zu weinen, Tränen rannen mir unaufhörlich über die Wangen. Plötzlich bäumte sich D. auf, stöhnte laut, und ich spürte, wie sein Schwanz wild in mir zuckte. Es erschreckte mich, dass mir sein Körper ein solches Maß an Lust zu schenken vermochte, so dass die Welle in mir kein Ende nehmen wollte. Ohne aus mir hinauszugleiten, legte er sich schließlich schweißnass auf mich, und meine Nüstern sogen gierig den Geruch ein, den ich an D. nie hatte kennenlernen dürfen: den archaischen Duft eines Mannes, mit dem ich gerade Sex gehabt hatte.²¹

This example shows the extent of the rewriting process in certain passages of the book in terms of quantity. One does not have to read the English translation (provided in the endnotes to the quotations) of the two scenes describing the first sexual encounter between the heroine and her dream lover in order to see that, even with the omissions, the German text is approximately twice as long as the original.

The scene has been extended to include a whole series of sexual details not given in the French. What is also remarkable is that the more reflective passages in the original – remarks such as “il me dirait d’ailleurs plus tard qu’il avait éprouvé la même chose” [he told me later that he had the same sensation] – or those describing non-sexual details such as “Ce n’était pas des sanglots, ce n’était ni violent ni bruyant” [I was not sobbing; it was not violent or loud] have been omitted in the German version, probably in order to keep the focus on the matter at

hand. The last seven lines of the text added to the translation cited above are almost entirely dedicated to the description of sexual details and the sensations felt by the heroine and do not correspond directly to any passage from the original, including lines such as “ich spürte, wie sein Schwanz wild in mir zuckte” [I felt his cock jerking wildly inside me] or “meine Nüstern sogen gierig den Geruch ein” [my nostrils greedily drew in the smell].

In sum, the strategy adopted by the editor of this book was to rework both the text and the paratext to create a product that would match the presumed expectations of the German readership of the series and to make it less cerebral than the original. Despite these efforts, however, the book did not become a bestseller.

A ‘NEW LITERARY VOICE’: STRUGGLING WITH STYLISTIC NORMS

I will now turn to my second example: a more stylistically ambitious novel for which the editors adopted quite similar strategies even though the problems it represented were very different. The title in question is a novel by Emmanuelle Pagano, a new literary voice from France with a very particular style that breaks freely with grammatical rules and standard idiomatic language. It took the German publisher Wagenbach a certain amount of time to decide whether or not to obtain the rights to one of her novels, as they were unsure if the book would be successful in Germany. Finally, in 2007, Wagenbach took the bold step of taking on the author and contacted me to carry out the translation, although certain reservations because of the author’s style and the themes of the novel (such as the transsexuality of the narrator) remained.

The editors’ struggle with the novel’s disdain for stylistic norms began with the title: *Les Adolescents troglodytes* [The Troglodyte Teenagers] which seemed very odd to them. The need to illustrate the cover in accordance with German conventions resulted in a title that quotes a somewhat banal line from the main text (*Der Tag war blau* [The Day was Blue]) coupled with a trivial illustration:

Emmanuelle
Pagano

**Les Adolescents
troglodytes**



ISBN
978-3-7089-2111-1

Original cover

German cover

When the second novel by Emmanuelle Pagano was published in German, the original title (*Le Tiroir à cheveux* [The Hair in the Drawer] was retained (*Die Haarschublade*). Yet while the French cover makes use of the same style as Pagano’s first book, shown above, the friendly colours used on the German cover seem like an attempt to divert the reader’s attention from the somewhat tragic topic of the main text: a young woman living with her two children, the first of whom is severely disabled, both mentally and physically.



What is also interesting in this case is the new design used for the back cover of the German translations. Here Pagano's German editor chose exactly the opposite strategy to the one adopted by the editor of the translation of Guernalec-Levy's erotic novel: an autobiographical reading of Pagano's text was intentionally foreclosed. The simplest explanation for such differences is that translations are by their nature 'derived products' normally published after the original. This observation may seem trivial, but it has consequences for the peritexts – especially as far as the back cover is concerned.

On the back cover of an original book, we generally find an editorial presentation of the author or sometimes an authorial peritext,²² a quotation or an illustration that comments on the main text in some way. However, on the back cover of a translation it is more common to find blurbs – i.e. translated quotes from literary critics who reviewed the original – in addition to an editorial presentation of the novel.

Emmanuelle Pagano adds an authorial comment to the main text of all of her novels to allow an autobiographical reading of their content; in the case of *Le tiroir à cheveux*, this authorial text was placed on the back cover:

Il ne fallait pas parler de ma voisine, même dans son dos. Il ne fallait pas lui parler non plus. Elle n'avait pas demandé la permission d'être enceinte. D'ailleurs, elle faisait plein de choses sans autorisation. Je crois qu'elle sautait par-dessus le portail, quand elle n'avait pas encore le droit d'avoir une clé. Moi non, mais je me cachais pour écrire, parce que je n'étais pas bien sûre que ce soit permis.

Je regardais le fils de ma voisine, tout de travers dans sa poussette, les orbites pleines de soleil, en me demandant quel interdit l'empêchait de bouger, de voir, d'entendre, de parler, de lever une main pour s'essuyer la bouche. Je regardais sa mère et je l'admirais en cachette. Je l'admirais d'avoir fait ça, un gosse défendu qui bavait et coingait tout le ciel dans ses yeux. J'avais honte aussi, parce que le pauvre.

J'ai écrit cette histoire sans aucune autorisation, même pas la sienne, même pas celle de sa mère, juste pour dire en retard il est beau ton fils, en traversant la cour avant d'ouvrir le portail.²³

In the German version of the novel, the original back cover text was incorporated into the book and became an epilogue, making it more likely to be perceived as the voice of one of the characters of the novel and thus adding a further perspective on the main text.

This editorial decision was advantageous in relation to German publishing conventions. In Germany, literary books are often produced as paperbacks with better quality paper than in France. Short novels of only 100-150 pages are not as easily accepted by the German readers, who often complain about having to spend a lot of money on short books (examples of such complaints can be found on Amazon), while, in France, novels of only 100 pages are not uncommon. In such cases, German editors try to put together 'extras' (comparable to extras on DVDs) to pad out the text of the original book. This was certainly one of the motivations for adding passages, as noted above, to Guernalec-Levy's erotic novel, which was of approximately the same length as Emmanuelle Pagano's, that is about 130 pages.

For Pagano's third book to be translated into German: *Les mains gamines* [Childish Hands] – *Bübische Hände* – the editor decided to do the opposite. This time, the back cover text of the original book, once again an authorial epitext, was completely excised from the German version. The obvious reason for this was that the editor did not want the reader to think the novel could be autobiographical in any way, as it relates the story of sexual abuse occurring among children:

Les mains gamines étaient très jeunes et malhabiles, inexpérimentées, presque analphabètes, d'autant plus brutales.

Crier ne servait à rien.

Pour supporter, je me disais crier ne sert à rien. Je tenais en me disant plus tard, j'écrirai, et ce sera plus violent encore, plus adroit. Je rentrerais en classe, et j'essayais d'apprendre très vite, de tout comprendre, pour aller plus loin, bien plus loin que leurs gestes limités de petits garçons.

J'ai des mains de petite fille, gants taille 5-6, 12 ans. N'empêche, je sais écrire. J'ai des mains qui ont l'air d'être des mains de petite fille, mais ne vous y trompez pas, ce sont des mains d'adulte. Avec elles, j'écris. Je suis allée beaucoup plus loin en moi que cet endroit dont leurs doigts n'ont aucun souvenir.²⁴

It can thus be concluded that an autobiographical reading of a novel is not always desired by the editor of a translation – in some cases, it may be in keeping with the publisher's marketing strategies, while in other cases, such as this one, the editor may prefer to protect the reader and/or the author.

Before moving on to the conclusion, I would like to mention just one more curious fact to illustrate the impact of time pressure on the final text of a translation. The two German editions of Emmanuelle Pagano's novel *Le Tirotir à cheveux* have two different endings – and unfortunately neither of them corresponds to the meaning of the original text.

In the original, the novel ends with the sentence: "Je le soulève en me demandant si ce sont les gendarmes du village qui viendront me le prendre."²⁵ I translated this as: "Ich hebe ihn hoch und frage mich, ob wohl die Gendarmen vom Dorf ihn mir wegnehmen werden" [I pick him up and wonder if it will be the gendarmes from the village who will take him away from me]. The formulation of this sentence probably seemed too complicated to the proof-reader, who decided to rearrange it a little without seeing the need to inform the translator. This resulted in: "Ich hebe ihn hoch und frage mich, ob die Gendarmen des Dorfes ihn mir wohl wegnehmen werden"²⁶ [I pick him up and wonder if the village gendarmes will take him away from me]. In the French original and my German translation, which was not published in its original form, the narrator (the young woman with her disabled child) wonders at the end of the novel whether it will be the gendarmes, and more precisely the police from the village, who will take her small son away from her. There is no doubt that he *will* be taken away, while in the first German edition it remains unclear whether this will happen or not.

Discovering this error after reading the last page of the first German edition, I asked the publisher to correct the sentence in the next edition,

with the following result: "Ich hebe ihn hoch und frage mich, ob es wohl die Gendarmen sein werden, die ihn mir wegnehmen"²⁷ [I pick him up and wonder if it will be the gendarmes who will take him away from me]. This time, the narrator seems to be wondering whether it is the gendarmes or some other group that will eventually take away her son. At least this version is preferable, as it retains the pessimistic ending. In the original, however, the narrator knows that gendarmes will come and take away her son. She just wonders if they will be the gendarmes of her *village* – an important detail given that she is the daughter of a gendarme. This shows just how much time constraints can affect a text if translators do not have or take the opportunity to check the final version of their proofread text, and how important even small editorial changes can be, as sometimes the omission of a single word can change the entire meaning.

CONCLUSION

These few examples illustrate that translators are far from the only ones to have an impact on the main text of a translated book. Other important agents in this process include both editors and proof-readers, as they have a direct influence on the main text, but also those responsible for the layout, who may ask translators or editors to delete or to add words in the main text for technical or 'aesthetic' reasons. In a more indirect way, sales representatives, who give their opinion about forthcoming titles and their assessment of their potential commercial success, also belong to this group of agents. The overview of the various steps involved in the relatively long production process for a translation also revealed the psychological reasons as to why editors tend to idealise the books they take on and are thus disappointed when faced with the final result. Their disappointment is often linked to the long period between the acquisition of a title and the copy-editing of the final translated text, as well as to an internal production rhythm which favours such idealisations of the original. Editors are under pressure to fill a gap in the publisher's programme at the beginning of the process and have to promote the title several times, but once the translation is delivered, they are already busy with other forthcoming titles and their interest has

waned.

Not all of these agents necessarily have an influence on the translated text and its paratext, and the extent to which a text is adapted for purely commercial reasons or in order to respect certain bookmaking conventions varies greatly from title to title and publisher to publisher. Still, such transformations are, to some degree, part and parcel of every published translation, and it may well be that the possibility of redesigning a book explains the on-going popularity of translations with editors in spite of their complaints about the high costs involved. It would thus seem worth shifting the focus from the study of cultural adaption in literary translations carried out by translators to the adaptations made by the various agents of the publishing industry to bring these books to the market. A broader study of how these other voices make their presence felt in the translated text to commercial ends would be an interesting topic for further research.

Notes

- 1 See Gérard Genette, *Paratexte. Das Buch vom Beiwerk des Buches*, trans. Dieter Hornig (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 1992).
- 2 Umberto Eco, *Mouse or Rat? Translation as Negotiation* (London: Phoenix, 2004), p. 6.
- 3 See Stefan Neuhaus, *Literaturvermittlung* (Konstanz: UVK, 2009), pp. 140–41.
- 4 Bourdieu developed his theory of the literary field in: Randal Johnson, ed., *The Field of Cultural Production* (Cambridge: Polity Press 1993) and *The Rules of Art* (Cambridge: Polity Press 1996). In these works he not only analyses the positions of writers within the field, but also those of literary groups, editors, critics etc., all of whom are agents in the field and play an important role as they contribute to the symbolic value of any literary production.
- 5 For more information about the principal agents involved, see Erhard Schütz, ed., *Das BuchMarktBuch. Der Literaturbetrieb in Grundbegriffen* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2005); Stefan Neuhaus, *Literaturvermittlung* (Konstanz: UVK, 2009); Bodo Plachta, *Der Literaturbetrieb* (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2008); Steffen Richter, *Buchgesellschaft, Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011).
- 6 For more detailed information about the tasks of an editor, see Eduard Schönstedt and Thomas Breyer-Mayländer, *Der Buchverlag*, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2010), pp. 116–122, here p. 117; and Wolfram Göbel, “Produktmanager, Ghostwriter oder Macher. Die Funktionsveränderungen im Verlagslektorat,” in *Das Lektorat. Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, ed. Ute Schneider (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), pp. 9–26.
- 7 Richter, *Der Literaturbetrieb, Eine Einführung*, p. 79.
- 8 See Göbel, “Produktmanager, Ghostwriter oder Macher. Die Funktionsveränderungen im Verlagslektorat,” p. 21. Editors (*Lektor* in German) work for publishers and interact with authors and translators. They oversee the production of the book in terms of contents and language. The publisher (*Verleger*) runs the publishing house and decides on its overall direction. In the case of small presses, the publisher sometimes also takes on the role of editor.
- 9 Genette, *Paratexte. Das Buch vom Beiwerk des Buches*, pp. 29–36.
- 10 All these examples were reported to me by literary translators who work from English and Italian into German.