

**Plays in  
Translation on the  
London Stage:  
Visibility,  
Celebrity, Agency  
and Collaboration**

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PhD Thesis in Translation Studies

**DECLARATION**

I, Geraldine Susan Brodie, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

## ABSTRACT

The theatrical practice of prominently attaching a well-known theatre practitioner's name to a staged playtext, which may have been composed using an expert's literal translation, raises issues of visibility and agency in translation theory. How does the 'celebrity' translator contribute to the eventual performance and the collaborative process of production? This thesis conducts an empirical study on a time-based sample of eight translated plays performed on the mainstream London stage during a three-month period in 2005. The sample comprises direct, indirect and literal translators from a variety of professional backgrounds, and the plays range from Ancient Greek to contemporary Danish. Methodologies include archival investigations and oral histories.

Firstly, I scrutinise the physical and economic contexts of the productions, analysing the sites of commission and performance, including a review of funding and management practices. Secondly, I examine the translation procedures of the eight plays, the collaboration of the translation and theatre practitioners and the relation of the translated playtext to the source-language play and earlier translations, where relevant. I consider the terminology presented to the prospective audience as translation, version or adaptation, and review reception. Thirdly, based on my interview research, I discuss the approaches adopted by the practitioners involved in the translation project, from inception to public performance, including producers, directors, literary managers, translators and writers. Finally, I interrogate issues of celebrity and collaboration in two case studies: Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* in an indirect translation by David Hare, and Euripides' *Hecuba* in a direct translation by Tony Harrison.

I conclude that investigation of the wider aspects of theatre translation results in a re-evaluation of visibility issues. Studying the power-lines of theatrical networks reveals the multiplicity of voices among the agents collaborating in performance, where celebrity is only one of the contextual factors contributing to a staged translation.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In a thesis which examines team collaboration, it is appropriate that I should begin by conveying my thanks to my supervisors, Professor Theo Hermans and Professor Maria Delgado, who provided seamless advice and support, in spite of being based in different departments and different institutions. It has been my pleasure to work with them, not only to my intellectual benefit but also for the opportunity it has afforded me to observe and learn from their professional academic activities. I am inexpressibly grateful to them both.

I would also like to thank the members of the departments in which I have been based during my doctoral investigation: the Centre for Intercultural Studies and the School of European Languages, Cultures and Society at UCL, and the Department of Drama at Queen Mary, University of London. Students and staff in both institutions made me very welcome and contributed in many different ways to my learning experience. I would particularly like to thank the Graduate School, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and SELCS at UCL, and the Department of Drama at Queen Mary, University of London for financial support to present my research at conferences; also the AHRC and the Graduate School, Department of Drama and the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film at Queen Mary, University of London for funding the student-led conference, 'Theatre Translation as Collaboration: Re-routing Text through Performance', which was held at Queen Mary, University of London in March 2010, and of which I was a co-organiser.

My thesis acknowledges the theatre practitioners who agreed to be interviewed, but they deserve to be thanked more fully for their time and patience and also, in many cases, for their introductions to further practitioners. I also list the Archives visited, but not their professional and knowledgeable staff, who were unfailingly helpful. I am particularly grateful to Gavin Clarke at the National Theatre and Louie Fleck at BAM for their interest in my project.

I am indebted to the conference organisers, peer reviewers and editors who gave me the opportunity to develop my research through conference papers, articles and chapters, especially Ahmed Saleh Elimam, Vicki Flippance, Brigid Maher, Rita Wilson, Aoife Monks and Cecilia Alvstad for their improving advice and encouragement. I would also like to thank Joseph Mcloughlin and Patrick Stiles for sharing their expertise in relation to the Arts Council and Norwegian, and Claire Thomson for allowing me to see an advance proof of her book on the film *Festen*. My PhD colleagues in both universities have been most generous with academic support and friendship from start to finish, notably Phrae Chittiphalangsi, Daniela Almansi, Dorothea Martens, Gloria Lee, Sherlon Ip, Elaine Ng, Erik Skuggevik,



Dorota Gołuch, Lissy Prinzi and Margherita Laera. I am particularly grateful to my friend and colleague Kate Eaton for allowing me to participate in the development of her own research, providing me with an insider's view of the processes of theatre translation, and sharing so much of her enthusiasm for theatre along the way.

I have been particularly fortunate in the support I have received to finish this thesis. Thanks must again go to Lissy Prinzi and to my sister Amanda Jones in assisting with the final edits. I am also grateful to my friends outside the university, who have allowed me to impose my interests on their free time, especially Dana Kinder and my mother-in-law Julia Brodie. Most of all, I have been able to rely on the encouragement of my immediate family, principally that of my husband Chris Brodie, who has sustained me in every conceivable way, and was determined that we would see this project through to the end.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Role of the Translator

In theatre, where is the translator? Identity and position feature largely in the projection of performance. The title of a play, the author, the actor, the director, perhaps others, will be squeezed into the publicity for a new production. This implicit recognition of the significance of agency and collaboration often extends in translated theatre to the name of the translator. But who and what does that name represent? The prominent acknowledgement of an individual intervening between the source playwright and the target audience differentiates theatrical practice from other sites of translation. In a published literary text, for example, the name of the translator may appear on the book jacket, but is more frequently to be found somewhere in the opening pages, often tucked away in the small print. The conspicuousness of the translating agent in theatre, however, comes at the expense of the visibility of translation as a practice and a process: the proffered production is often labelled a 'version' or an 'adaptation', terminology which disguises translational activity. Furthermore, the named 'adaptor', contributing theatrical reputation, or celebrity, to the production's credentials, may not command the source language. In these cases, a further agent is called upon to provide a 'literal translation', an expansion of the translation procedure which is habitually overlooked by practitioners and public alike. How, then, should the translator be identified?

This thesis investigates the agency of the translator in theatre, with specific reference to plays in performance on the mainstream London stage. By 'mainstream', I refer to a body of theatres situated around the West End of London which stages a broad range of productions from different periods and genres, aiming to attract a wide audience made up of both regular and occasional theatre-goers. Although this is frequently assumed to be the preserve of commercially-owned theatre, there is a number of high-profile theatres, among which the National Theatre is prominent, subsidised by a combination of public funding and private donations. These organisations produce work which competes in the mainstream sphere, and may go on to appear in commercial venues, if successful critically and at the box office. Thus, even when such theatres are not commercially-owned, they are

commercially-run, and therefore motivated to find audiences, and sell tickets, for their productions. The translators of the plays shown in these theatres are the subjects of my enquiry, because their names signal to the audience that an act of translation has taken place. That sign may, nevertheless, be indecipherable, in spite of the named agent, due to terminology, the collaborative nature of theatre production and the general context in which the play is presented. I analyse the complexities behind these issues and ask, what do they reveal about the relationship between theatre and translation? Can examination of this affiliation shed light on the processes and perceptions of translation in more general terms?

## 1.2 Theatrical Visibility and Celebrity

Theatre is a constant projection of image, not only of what is seen on stage but also in metatheatrical exposition, for example the photographs of performers in programmes or what Michael Caines summarises as ‘the metaphorical costume that is called celebrity’ (Caines 2010)<sup>1</sup>. Actors have their place in the theatrical constellation but so too do their co-practitioners, especially writers and directors. It is common practice in mainstream London theatres to commission a well-known name from this cohort to be attached to the translation of a play. Frequently a writer, playwright or director with a track-record in commercially and critically successful productions, this person’s predominant contribution is theatrical expertise. Knowledge of the source language is advantageous, but its absence may not preclude appointment. If this writer does not command the source language, and the production budget is sufficiently accommodating, a theatre’s literary department will commission a new literal translation in preference to using an extant theatrical or academic translation. This is because the literal translator, in providing substantial notes on linguistic, cultural and theatrical features in the text, to some extent performs the function of dramaturg, as noted by Manuela Perteghella (2004: 119). There are issues of status and recognition attached to the holders of these different occupations - their celebrity and visibility - to which I will return during this introduction, and in the course of the thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> In his *Times Literary Supplement* review of Aiofe Monks’s *The Actor in Costume*, ‘All Dressed Up’.

*Literal* is a label regularly applied by theatres to denote the type of translation I describe, but distinctions are rarely made between writers who command a play's source language and those who do not. I therefore employ the terms *direct* translation to describe those created without an intermediary linguist and *indirect* to denote those which have been prepared using a literal translation. Although not in regular usage, I apply these terms throughout this thesis for the sake of clarity, and because theatrical vocabulary contains a variety of terms to describe the translation process, none of which are used with any consistency or precision.

The terms *version* and *adaptation*, and their variations, are most commonly relied upon by theatres to describe an English-language refraction of an original text from another language, whichever translation process is operated, with a few notable exceptions. There is, however, no consensus on the definition or application of these terms. Academically, there is a body of research around Adaptation Theory, although this tends to encompass a broader area of intersemiotic movement, for example, from book to cinema or television, without necessarily involving an interlingual codeshift<sup>2</sup>. Perteghella has given consideration to the definition of *adaptation* in its relation to theatre translation, but concludes that a comprehensive definition is an 'impossibility', offering her own solution whereby adaptation 'critically supplements the source with subjective and cultural interpretations' (2008: 63). This approach does not appear to me to solve the difficulty that arises in any attempt to draw a line between translation and adaptation, and when the *version* is thrown into the mix, complications multiply. Lorna Hardwick identified a major trend in the treatment of Classics in the second half of the twentieth century as the 'creative blurring of the distinction between different kinds of translations, versions and adaptations and more distinct relatives' (2000: 12). She later reached a firmer academic conclusion in relation to Classical plays:

It is not always helpful to try to distinguish too rigidly between theoretical models for analysing 'translations' and 'versions'. The processes of arriving at an acting

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<sup>2</sup> Such as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, which is regularly adapted for television, film and stage. Recent examples are Andrew Davies's BBC television version in 1995, Deborah Moggach's screenplay for the director Joe Wright in 2005, and Joseph Hanreddy and J. R. Sullivan's adaptation for the Round House Theatre, Washington in 2011.

script and then realising this in performance show how porous the boundaries are.  
(2010: 195)

Mark O'Thomas applies a similar reasoning in relation to modern texts: 'We need to move away from divisive categorisations and focus on the form of the medium we are working in - i.e. theatre'<sup>3</sup>. Academics have at least agreed to disagree on the appropriate usage of this terminology. Theatre practitioners I interviewed varied considerably in their definitions. I found some agreement that a version might be closer to the original than an adaptation, but with little precision or consensus applied. At times, opposing definitions were advanced. Chris Campbell, the current Literary Manager of the Royal Court Theatre, gave expression to what is probably a general sentiment when he said, 'although it might be difficult to write a description of the difference, I think you know it when you see it'<sup>4</sup>. Several of the translated plays addressed in this thesis were given differing labels, often varying between published playtext, printed programme and promotional publicity. On investigation, it appeared that this variance was a product of negotiation between interested parties rather than oversight. It would seem then that the use of translation/version/adaptation terminology serves more as a reminder that translation is a site of contention than providing a precise description of the creative processes involved. I therefore consider all these terms to apply to the translational act, and engage with them on that basis in this thesis.

### **1.3 Agency and Collaboration**

The theatrical practices I have just described, and which my investigation illuminates, mark a departure from literary translation practices recognized by standard Western theory. In basic terms, the translator who addresses the poles of 'word for word' or 'sense for sense', a conflict debated since at least the time of Cicero, is an identifiable if sometimes nameless individual. Such individuals are often seen as mediators, pushing their own creativity to one

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<sup>3</sup> In his unpublished paper, 'What is a translation? What is an adaptation? What is a version?' at the London University School of Advanced Study, Kings College Theatre Translation Conference (2007).

<sup>4</sup> Personal interview, 10 January 2011.

side in the service of a rapprochement between the original source text and its target-language readers. More recently, the power relations inherent in the translation process have been questioned, not least by Lawrence Venuti, who points out in *The Translator's Invisibility* that the very transparency of the translator paradoxically masks the cultural dominance of the English language. In producing a translation which reads comfortably for the Anglophone, an invisible translator may perpetuate the culturally violent negation of the source text and its heritage (1995: 1-20). In London theatre translations, however, a translator can share equal billing with the original author, making the act of translation visible, although the visibility of such translators is in contrast to other translating agents. Literal translators in particular may remain entirely invisible, and others receive only limited recognition. The motivations for this two-stage indirect translation procedure are often assumed to be driven by market-force economics, as forcibly articulated by Susan Bassnett: 'the key factor is the size of the audience and the price they are willing to pay for tickets, certainly not the ethics of translation' (1991: 102). Bassnett is not alone in seeing this system as an 'extreme' example of power distortion. However, examples of a range of calibrations along the visibility scale are highlighted in the course of this thesis, which suggest a variety of reasons for the adoption of specific translation methods beyond the purely financial. Furthermore, a translated performance is produced in collaboration, not only with the literal translator, but also with other practitioners involved in the production, including the director, actors, musicians and the designers. Whilst this can result in different visibility issues, it nevertheless shifts the emphasis onto collaborative translation practices. The identification and mapping of these processes in action is the focus of this thesis, along with the sites and managerial cultures in which they function.

Commissioning theatres operate different policies for translations, requiring changing degrees of collaboration. Often, such policies are unformulated or passively applied, but in some cases expression is given to the process by which a translation will take shape. Colin Chambers, a former Literary Manager of the Royal Shakespeare Company, describes the commissioning practice at the National Theatre as 'to hire somebody who speaks [the source] language but who isn't a playwright to put it into a version known as a "literal", and then to bring in a playwright to work on it in order to make it performable' (Bolt et al. 1992: np). This procedure is most commonly found in mainstream theatre. The Royal Court Theatre, on the other hand, is distinguished by its preference for appointing translators

who are experts in the source language, signalled by its regular use of the term *translation* to describe the relevant production. However, the distinction between these two approaches and theatrical cultures is revealed on investigation to be blurred and even transgressed, so that the associated collaborative practices may not necessarily align with a specific translation method. This thesis considers the operation of collaboration within specified translation instances, providing a more detailed exposition of the participating agents in relation to two case studies (one indirect and one direct translation).

How do the translators themselves see their role in the process? David Johnston has written:

translators of drama are impelled by a passion that is partly unconditional love for a work distant through time and place, but – crucially – whose vision connects most intimately with their own experience of the world, and partly a sense of grandeur [...] of their role as mediators [...] between [the original authors] and their public today. (1996: 8)

Passion and love are notoriously resistant to theory, supporting Johnston's view that 'there can be no hard and fast rules concerning translation for the stage' (ibid: 7). However, Johnston's words not only reflect on his personal practice (his assumption that 'passion' is shared by all translators overlooks the monetary value of translation), but also theorise the non-theory of theatre translation. The following section on methodology and my literature review analyse the theories that inform this investigation of theatre translation practices. My principal approach, however, is to interrogate the agency of the translator within the collaborative field of theatre translation. Johnston's description of theatre translators as mediators is reminiscent of Mona Baker's summary of the popular view that translators are a 'well-trained group of professionals who can mediate between different cultures in a non-biased and responsible manner' (2005: 4). Baker's ironic critique provides a recognisable description of what theatre practitioners and their public appear to expect from a translated play. But Baker rejects this view of translators, writing from the perspective of both translator and academic, 'we do not build bridges nor bridge gaps. We participate in very decisive ways in promoting and circulating narratives and discourses of various types [...]. None of us is immune to this process' (ibid: 12). No matter how theatre translators see themselves, their degree of visibility in the collaboration and their responsibility to the

author and to the audience, their presence in the performance process is more than a neutral mediation: translators make their distinctive mark on the performed play. This thesis unpicks the processes whereby that agency operates, investigating the 'positioning' of the translator(s) in their translations (Hermans 2007: 81), and considering its implications for theatre and for translation.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

What is it about theatre that presents an appropriate site for research into translation? My initial notion was that translation into English for performance ran counter to current theoretical thinking concerning the invisibility and transparency of translators. It seemed to me that theatre might therefore be a productive area in which to make enquiries into the translator's role. How does the persona of the translator contribute to the entirety of the translation process? Are there parallels which might usefully be drawn between translation in theatre and elsewhere? It became clear early on in my research, however, that visibility issues were complicated by the two-stage translation procedure introduced above. On the other hand, the communication of a translated text is supported by holistic theatrical representation, which thus entails the participation of a troupe of collaborators, many of whom are not primarily concerned with translation even though they contribute to its ultimate transmission. My overarching research question then expanded to interrogate the position of the translator within the theatrical translation field. Why are they commissioned? What is the significance of their (in)visibility? Does celebrity perform a function beyond the marketing imperative? How do translators collaborate with other agents to produce a translated play? To what extent are translation practices influenced by external factors such as geographical positioning and organisational cultures? How relevant are the existence and reception of earlier translations? Can the study of theatrical translation activity suggest areas for consideration in other translational sites? Finally, is there a point in theatre translation at which theory and practice can meet? My thesis performs an empirical study of translation practices in the theatre, with the intention of testing the abstractions of translation theory.



## 1.5 Methodology

Although this project is not practice-led, it is practice-driven, inasmuch as it aims to investigate the processes of theatre translation in actual occurrence, charting the findings for analysis. In basic terms, this aim apparently resembles Gideon Toury's Descriptive Translation Studies, summarised by Jeremy Munday:

to distinguish trends of translation behaviour, to make generalizations regarding the decision-making processes of the translator and then to 'reconstruct' the norms that have been in operation and make hypotheses that can be tested by future descriptive studies. (2001: 113).

Perteghella's *Descriptive Framework for Collaboration in Theatre Translation* adheres to this model, identifying 'nine different types of theatre translation agency'<sup>5</sup> and three different types of collaborative practice<sup>6</sup>, encapsulated in a graphic framework which she proceeds to illustrate, drawing on her own experience as a linguist and translator (2004: 114, 197, 246-309). This analysis consists of valuable and intricate contextual detail, prompting me to reconsider two issues: firstly, translation agents frequently fall into more than one of Perteghella's nine categories<sup>7</sup>, suggesting the complexity of the process; secondly, her illustrations of collaborative practice, carried out over a geographically and historically broad field of genres, languages and sites, provide informative examples of the wide possibilities of collaborative translation, but less of an indication of the distribution of the types of translation taking place on a regular basis.

In considering my own approach, I was mindful of Bruno Latour's analogy of a cartographer 'trying to record the shape of a foreign coast':

She might exert herself to fit the various reports sent by explorers into some existing geometrical format - bays have to be circles, capes triangles, continents

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<sup>5</sup> Playwright-translator, specialised translator, privileged translator, scholar-translator, literal translator, dramaturg, adaptor, monolingual playwright-adaptor, monolingual adaptor, director-translator.

<sup>6</sup> Literal draft rewritten by playwright-adaptor, co-operative translation, playwrights' partnerships.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Eyre, for example, might be described as a privileged-monolingual- director- adaptor -translator.

squares. But after noticing the hopeless mess created by these records, none of which exactly fall into pre-determined shapes, she will eagerly accept any proposition to displace the quest for geometrical rigor with a totally abstract Cartesian grid. Then she will use this empty grid to patiently record the coastline itself, allowing it to be drawn in as tortuous a way as geological history made it to be. (2005: 23-24)

Wishing to map the processes of translation in the specific arena of the London mainstream stage, I have followed Latour's Actor-Network-Theory example, '*recording* not filtering out, *describing* not disciplining' (ibid: 55). Rather than pick out what I considered to be a representative collection of translations, thus imposing ready-formed assumptions on my data, I adopted an approach learned in my practice as an auditor and identified a time-based corpus which would yield a random sample. I looked back to 2005, as a year which was recent enough to be current and fresh in the memory but far enough away for publications and archival material to be available, and identified the months of April, May and June as appropriate for study, on the basis that they were least likely to be distorted by Christmas or Summer special programming. I then analysed *The Official Guide of the Society of London Theatre*, published in the *Sunday Times Culture* section (and other national and London newspapers) every week, and extracted any translated plays, discounting opera and musicals as the translation processes in these two genres are subject to additional translational and operative constraints. This review produced a list of eight translated plays performed in major London theatres (and therefore available to and likely to be attended by large and varied audiences)<sup>8</sup>. The plays under consideration are shown in Figure I, with further information in Appendix A1, and have yielded a variety of translation/language/genre combinations, which I examine in Chapter Three.

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<sup>8</sup> There was a ninth play with potential for inclusion in the sample: the Kneehigh Company production of *Tristan and Yseult* at the National Theatre Cottesloe, directed and adapted by Emma Rice, written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy. The multilayers of translation and adaptation, based on an undefined source text - 'Cornwall's oldest love story' (Royal National Theatre 2005a) - from the Celtic legend of oral tradition, present a worthy research topic, but beyond the scope of this current investigation.

<u>Source Language</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Translator</u>	<u>Translation type</u>	<u>Literal Translator</u>	<u>Theatre</u>	<u>Director</u>
Ancient Greek	<i>Hecuba</i>	Euripides	Tony Harrison	Direct	n/a	Albery (from RSC)	Laurence Boswell
Danish	<i>Festen</i>	Thomas Vinterberg, Mogens Rukov and Bo hr. Hansen	David Eldridge	Indirect	Bo hr. Hansen <sup>9</sup>	Lyric (from Almeida)	Rufus Norris
German	<i>Don Carlos</i>	Friedrich Schiller	Mike Poulton	Indirect	Christine Madden	Gielgud (from Crucible)	Michael Grandage
German	<i>The Woman Before</i>	Roland Schimmelpfennig	David Tushingham	Direct	n/a	Royal Court Downstairs	Richard Wilson
Norwegian	<i>Hedda Gabler</i>	Henrik Ibsen	Richard Eyre	Indirect	Karin and Ann Bamborough	Duke of York's (from Almeida)	Richard Eyre
Russian	<i>The UN Inspector</i>	Nikolai Gogol	David Farr	Indirect	Charlotte Pyke	National Olivier	David Farr
Spanish	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i>	Federico Garcia Lorca	David Hare	Indirect	Simon Scardifield	National Lyttleton	Howard Davies
Spanish	<i>Way to Heaven</i>	Juan Mayorga	David Johnston	Direct	n/a	Royal Court Upstairs	Ramin Gray

Figure I: Translated plays advertised by the Society of London Theatre, 7 April to 26 June 2005.

Having established the sample to be investigated, I conducted my research along three broadly-based principles: the detailed examination and comparative analysis of the

<sup>9</sup> Eldridge was provided with an English playscript which I believe was created by Hansen when constructing the Dogme version of the play based on the film. This script was not therefore intended as a literal translation. Chapter Three, section 3.5, explains the genesis of Eldridge's version in further detail.

performed translation and the published playtext; a historical and contextual review of the play, its translation and the theatre(s) in which it was performed and commissioned; and an investigation of the agency of the participants in the translation process for each play, conducting personal interviews wherever possible. The starting point was obtaining the published playtexts of the translations in the sample, from which I was able to establish the facts or omissions which would enable me to identify where I should conduct my research and who I might approach for interview. Appendix A1 provides further contextual details for the translated plays, from which I gathered initial information. Much of my research information was gathered in theatre archives or informal theatre collections; Appendix A2 lists the eight archives consulted in London, Oxford, Sheffield, Stratford-upon-Avon, and New York. The number of archives visited does not directly correspond with the number of plays in the sample: it became evident during my research that one of the productions had a somewhat troubled history, which necessitated investigation further afield. Other performances retained only a very limited public record. The archives are themselves sites of theoretical interest with regard to the cataloguing of the collection, the data retained and discarded or uncollected, and the access available to the researcher. Official archives attached to a theatre tend to be well-organised, but with visible curation, in which case a missing recording or an envelope marked 'not for archives' takes on significance. Restriction of the availability of evidence retention by photocopy or photograph can also imply an editing of information, apart from the fragility of the material and copyright implications. On the other hand, the presentation of a handful of loose-leaf manila files at the Stage Door indicates a degree of haphazardness in the material retained, which must be interpreted differently from the professional catalogue. Another archival mode is that restricted by funding: material may be collected but awaiting catalogue, and therefore inaccessible, or a recording project has been discontinued so that video archives are not available. Finally, there are the cultural/political overtones to the ethics of the archive: in British archives, I was monitored and restricted; in a US archive, the collection was more freely available, marked not only by the gathering of internal managerial emails, but also by unlimited access to the photocopier. This reflects the comparative strength of Freedom of Information legislation in both jurisdictions, not to mention the stronger protection of the privacy of public individuals via libel laws in the UK. These restrictions, or lack thereof, ripple through to the results of my research.

Since this project concerns itself with performance, part of my methodology has been to read the selected playtexts critically and comparatively, with reference to the source text<sup>10</sup>, the literal translation, and, with particular emphasis on the performance, the backstage prompt book and production recordings. I was unable to achieve this goal in all cases, for a variety of reasons. Of the six source languages in my sample (Ancient Greek, Danish, German, Norwegian, Russian and Spanish) I command two: Spanish and German. Fortunately, this makes up half of the sample, but for the remainder I had to rely on extant translations or, in the case of *Festen*, the original subtitled film. Of the five literal translations, I was only able to access two, *The Government Inspector* from Russian and *The House of Bernarda Alba* from Spanish. I was able to compare this latter to the source text in addition to the playtext, and the results are discussed in Chapter Five. Prompt books were available in archives for four of the productions<sup>11</sup>, enabling comparison with the published text in addition to providing non-verbal production details such as sound, lighting and set properties. Recordings of seven of the productions were available in archives, in varying degrees of quality. The National Theatre operates a policy of recording all its productions, but in 2005 this took the form of a static camera at the rear of the auditorium, providing a distant view of proceedings, although assisted by audio description (for the blind and partially-sighted). The same quality applied to the Brooklyn Academy of Music ('BAM') recording of *Hecuba*, my sole opportunity to view the production as it had not been recorded in accordance with standard Royal Shakespeare Company policy in Stratford, owing to cancellation. The Royal Court Theatre productions of the time were not subject to regular recording, but both representations in my sample were available as audio recordings in the British Sound Archives, although with no audio description, forcing the listener to interpret extraneous noises and imagine the movement of the actors. *Don Carlos* and *Hedda Gabler* were available in professionally-captured recordings, using a selection of cameras and angles, in the V&A Archive. I myself had been in the audience for three of the eight productions: *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *Festen* and *Don Carlos*, but even where that

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<sup>10</sup> The source text itself may not be a stable site for comparison, as I discuss further in Chapter Three, particularly in relation to *Hedda Gabler*, section 3.4.

<sup>11</sup> At the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Archive (*Hecuba*), the Brooklyn Academy of Music Archive (*Hecuba*), the National Theatre Archive (*The UN Inspector*, but not *The House of Bernarda Alba*) and in the files of the Royal Court Theatre (*Way to Heaven* and *The Woman Before*).

was not the case, it is possible to obtain an impression of the performances from still photographs, in the archives and on the internet; other archival details such as costume and scenery information; and ephemera such as programmes, theatre websites, information flyers, and education packs produced by theatre outreach departments. However, reconstruction of a performance is by its nature incomplete and subjective. These elements apply in some measure to the reception of any performance, but, again, the results of my survey can only be interpreted as my view, albeit a view supported by extensive research and investigation.

Contextually, I have already named many of the sources and materials discovered through the research process. In studying reception, I rely principally on newspaper reviews, the theoretical validity of which I discuss further in Chapter Three, section 3.1. Some theatres maintain their own archival collections, in hard copy or as pages on their website, which may be extensive, including public relations advance notices and interviews, or selective, displaying only those that are complimentary. There is also a large “blogosphere” of amateur theatre reviewers, some of which, like “West End Whingers” have a large following and the advantage of quasi-non-professional reception, whereas others are unverifiable and unreliable as evidence. In view of the almost unlimited availability of review material, I restrict reception to the collections of the journal *Theatre Record*, which is subscribed to by university libraries, edited by the respected theatre critic Ian Shuttleworth of the *Financial Times*, and therefore presents the merit of similarity of source when assessing the reception of these productions. The exception to this rule is my review of the New York reception of *Hecuba*, for which I mainly interpret archival material collected by BAM, as there is no US equivalent to *Theatre Record*.

Further contextual research took place with respect to annual financial statements, which provided evidence of the mission and motivation of theatre management in the form of Directors’ or Trustees’ Reports; the physical, managerial and financial structure of a theatre company; and a monetary valuation of reception by setting out theatre receipts from tickets and funding. Subsidised theatres are generally recognised charities and, as such, are required to file annual accounts and returns containing prescribed information to the Charities Commission. As public documents, these are easily accessible, and informative for trained readers, such as myself. Similar information for commercially-owned theatres is

significantly more difficult to locate, as the filing requirements at Companies House depend on the size and activities of the company and its position within a larger corporate grouping. I have not therefore been able to obtain sufficiently comparable figures to carry out a detailed analysis of the financial aspects of the theatres under review, but I have incorporated such data where it provides relevant additional information about theatre company practices or its public perception.

Finally, my analysis depends on interviews conducted by myself with nineteen theatre professionals, listed in Appendix B1. I requested interviews from thirty-seven individuals connected with the productions, ranging throughout the translation process from commissioning artistic directors and commercial producers, via the source language writers or their representatives, to the literary managers and translators. Five declined, and the remaining thirteen did not respond. In some cases, the non-responders had been recorded elsewhere, generally in newspaper interviews, discussing the production under review or their approach to translation, and I was able to include that material in my analysis. Thus, the selection, as Maria Delgado and Paul Heritage found in their collection of directors at the Manchester City of Drama celebrations, is 'neither entirely random nor wholly prescribed' (1996: 12). It does, however, cover a comprehensive range of agents' activities. The interviews were conducted following the guidelines and approval of the Ethics Committees of University College London and Queen Mary, University of London, using a pro-forma list of questions (Appendix B2), tailored for each interview subject. An attempt was therefore made to create a research environment in which the results of each interview, while not quantifiably measurable, would lend themselves to systematic analysis. Inevitably, however, each subject approached the interview questions and the overall topic of the conversation according to their role and interests. Furthermore, in many of the interviews, some comments were provided 'off the record' and are therefore not reproduced or alluded to in my summary of interview findings in Chapter Four, although they may have informed my overall impression of that agent or the particular element of the process under review. Ultimately, then, no two interviews are alike or immediately comparable, but they were conducted in sufficient number to permit an embryonic insight into the processes obtaining in the practice of theatre translation. They also provided a practical demonstration of the multiple voices in translation.

My research methods for this project, then, encompass a variety of undertakings, many of which are based on the reconstruction of the ephemeral through visual and audio recording, transient print and hand-written phenomena and oral history. However, formal text-based research activity also has its place, as demonstrated in the following literature survey.

### **1.6 Literature Review**

In a project analysing primary material spread over a range of language, period and genre, any attempt to read, or even identify, all the relevant literature would prevent timely completion, especially given the inclusion of five canonic international texts: *Don Carlos*, *The Government Inspector*, *Hecuba*, *Hedda Gabler* and *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Each of these subjects commands shelves of books in university libraries, reams of academic journal articles and many examples and discussions of performances. I therefore limit their inclusion to discussions of the specific translations under investigation, or works of particular relevance to these translations, either by reference to their process or in relation to their translator(s). Ultimately, my research takes the theory and practice of translation as its principal target, rather than the texts to which this process is applied.

Although Venuti's depiction of the English-speaking market's approach to translated works and its requirement for transparent translations is a core inspiration for this project, the catalyst for its relevance to theatre translation is André Lefevere's essay analysing a succession of translations of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and her Children* in New York. Lefevere concludes that the latest of the translations depended for the success of its reception on its predecessors: they 'established a bridge-head for Brecht in another system; to do so, they had to compromise with the demands of the poetics and the patronage dominant in that system' (2004: 249). This emphasis on contextual and diachronic influences on theatre translation supplemented Venuti's analysis, while foregrounding theatre and the significance of retranslation. However, both these works form part of and refer to a large body of translation theory literature, much of which informs my approach directly or indirectly. Of particular relevance are the theories of Itamar Even-Zohar, who investigates the inclusion of translated works in the construction of the literary canon by



identifying literary polysystems (2004), and the work of Hans J. Vermeer (2004), Katharina Reiss (2004) and Christiane Nord (1997), on the skopos theory, a focus on the purpose of a translation and the basis for commissioning, and its implications for functional translation and decision-making. These provide a theoretical basis for my review of contextual influences on the translation process, and commissioning in particular.

In relation to the role and voice of the translator, Theo Hermans stresses the role of translation, which 'actively contributes to the shaping of cultural and other discourses because, whatever its actual complexion, it possesses a momentum of its own' (1999b: 143), later focusing on the positioning of the translator such that a translation 'has an evaluative attitude built into it, this attitude is inscribed in and comments on the actual translation' (2007: 85). Mona Baker goes on to reject the neutrality of the translator (2006), while Jeremy Munday investigates the extent of their intervention in the text (2007). These assertions assist in identifying and interrogating the role of the individual translators in my sample. Maria Tymoczko's insistence on the opening out of translation theory to include practices both outside Western translation practices (for example, Chinese team translation) and from other disciplines (medicine or psychology) informs my view of collaboration in translation (2007), especially when analysing the role of the literal translator. Further theories outside the immediate translation studies area which are germane to my research include Pierre Bourdieu's identification of the cultural field (1993), especially in its application by Sameh Hanna to his study of the agents and practices in Shakespearean translations for Egyptian theatre (2005). Gérard Genette's investigation of the paratext around printed books (1997) provided inspiration for theorising contextual information around the theatrical site. Related to Translation Studies is the school of Adaptation Theory, to which John Milton provides a comparative introduction (2009) and Michael Cronin an example of how it applies to the performing art of film (2009). The comparative methodology of both disciplines informs my engagement with the differently labelled texts of my research.

Although the translation of dramatic texts tends to be studied within language groupings or as an adjunct to theatre and performance considerations, there is a small but significant group of theatre translation theorists whose work provides an influential background for my research. Issues surrounding the relationship of translated and originary texts, the

relevance of performance to translation, the collaborative nature of theatre, and linguistic and cultural hierarchies pertaining to theatre translation are all the focus of debate within this circle. Sirku Aaltonen characterises the ephemerality of translation as time-sharing: 'Theatre practitioners occupy texts as tenants for a brief moment. In translation, cultural, social, theatrical and linguistic systems work through the translators and in this way determine the terms of occupancy of the texts to be translated' (2000: 29). She also uses Derrida's term of supplement to describe the standing of a translated text. Eva Espasa grapples with the issue of performability, identified by Susan Bassnett in a series of essays as an obstacle to theorising theatre translation (1985; 1991; 1998), and concludes that 'the distance between the dramatic and theatrical text, the mediation of a complex chain of participants [...] need not be an obstacle'. Rather, 'theatre ideology and power negotiation [should be put] at the heart of performability, [with] such textual and theatrical factors as speakability and playability relative to it' (2000: 58). On the other hand, David Johnston, himself a translator in my sample of plays, rejects 'hard and fast' rules and theories of translation (1996: 7). However, there is an increasing trend towards the consideration of translation in practice. Gunilla Anderman's investigation of the translation into English of canonic European playwrights provides an example of theorising practical translation (2006), as does Phyllis Zatlin's study (2005). Two recent edited volumes survey the theory and practice of translating for theatre, including conversations with practitioners: Catherine Boyle and David Johnston centre their collection around the Royal Shakespeare Company's Golden Age Season (2007) while Roger Baines, Cristina Marinetti and Manuela Perteghella review the theatre making process more generally (2011). Lastly, there are theatre practitioners who write about their experiences of translating, such as Ranjit Bolt (2010) and Helen Rappaport (2001; 2007).

Reception theory is described by Robert Holub as a 'cohesive, conscious, and collective undertaking' (1984: xiii), which owes its existence in current form to Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser (Iser 2006). Hans-Georg Gadamer's dialogue with these theorists and hermeneutics, in particular his identification of 'the concretion of historically effected consciousness' in understanding meaning (2003: 389), has informed my analysis of systems of retranslation. In this, I have been assisted by a body of literature in Classical reception, especially that provided by Charles Martindale (1993) and Edith Hall (Hall and Harrop 2010).

Classical scholars have also come to my aid with regard to translating for the stage (Walton 2006) and the translation/adaptation/version distinctions (Hardwick 2010).

In relation to the interaction of translated text with theatre and performance, my production analysis takes note of Marvin Carlson's identification of the 'wide variety of the other "languages of the stage" [...] particular theatrical conventions, acting styles, and the potential meanings of each aspect of production, from the theatre building itself to the smallest particular gesture' (2006: 3). Patrice Pavis's emphasis on a political and historical approach to performance criticism, and in particular his critique of the arguments of interculturalism within the theatre (Pavis 1992), inform the contextual study of the plays within my sample, aided by the reviews of the contemporary British political theatrical environment provided by Nicholas Ridout, who considers ethics in the theatre (2009); Dan Rebellato on the issue of globalisation (2009); and Nadine Holdsworth's interrogation of the link between theatre and national identity (2010).

My eight primary texts are well-supported by a large corpus of critical literature. With regard to cultural and linguistic transposition, however, *Global Ibsen*, edited by Erika Fischer-Lichte, Barbara Gronau and Christel Weiler, provided a targeted study of texts in multiple translation of which I would have liked more examples (2011). Finally, with regard to my case studies, there is inevitably a large body of knowledge in the relevant language areas for both Lorca and Euripides, but certain authors proved particularly relevant to my research. With regard to Lorca, Maria Delgado has examined the afterlives of Lorca's work and myth and the ownership circulating around translation (2008), while Gwynne Edwards provides detailed investigations of Lorca in translation on stage (2003). For Euripides' *Hecuba* in translation, Edith Hall (2002) and Lorna Hardwick (1999) furnished studies of Tony Harrison as poet, translator and dramatist providing insight into his literary motivation, while Michael Walton's knowledge of Euripides through critical study and translation enabled a non-Greek specialist to approach the originary text (2009).

## 1.7 Mapping the Thesis

The main subject matter of my thesis is the interrogation of the processes of translation which took place in the productions of eight plays. This analysis is set out in two principal chapters, forming half of the overall content of this thesis. However, these findings are framed, in order to provide context and to permit a more detailed investigation of specific areas of historical interest and translation practice. Chapter Two, therefore, by way of introduction to the translation site, scrutinises the physical and economic conditions within which the plays were produced, analysing the theatres where the plays were commissioned and performed, including a review of their funding and management practices. My third chapter, theorising the major outcomes of my research, provides a detailed examination of the translation procedures of the eight productions, the collaboration of the translation and theatre practitioners in creating the performance and the relation of the translated playtext to the source-language play and earlier translations, where relevant. I consider the terminology of the presentation of these plays to the prospective audience as translation, version or adaptation, and review their reception. Chapter Four also relates to all eight productions. Based on my interview research, I discuss the approaches adopted by the practitioners involved in various stages of development of the translation project, from inception to public performance, including producers, directors, literary managers, translators and writers. Finally, in Chapters Five and Six, I present two of the plays in further detail as case studies. Firstly, Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* in an indirect translation by David Hare, in which I compare Hare's indirect translation with the original, the literal translation and a contemporary direct translation for performance, by David Johnston, along with a consideration of 'the Hare effect' on the play, in this and subsequent translations. Secondly, I investigate the reception of Euripides' *Hecuba* in a direct translation by Tony Harrison, comparing it to earlier translations, and to its own permutation within the different culture of New York. My final chapter discusses the implications of my findings.

## 1.8 Mapping Theatre Translation

Theatre translation is a research field in its own right, with conferences and publications dedicated to the topic. But the contributors to this research operate from a variety of academic departments: Drama, Modern Languages, Classics, English and Comparative Literature, and Translation Studies. Research output therefore frequently reflects the environment in which it was conducted, focusing on the language(s) or discipline of the researcher, while aiming for an interdisciplinary reception. My approach is no different. But my research context, operating from the disciplines of Translation Studies and Theatre Studies, is itself translated through the procedures of operational audit. As a Chartered Accountant, I learned to examine the overall presentation of a set of financial accounts: establishing and mapping the processes whereby the results were obtained, reviewing the context, analysing the functions, questioning the agents, testing selected elements, and ultimately “taking a view” of the accuracy of their representation. This thesis is my view of the translation practices pertaining to mainstream London theatre in 2005. It looks behind genres, periods and languages at the individuals who engage in the translation project and the theatres where they are situated. It deconstructs the methods whereby these agents of differing visibility and celebrity collaborate to produce performable translations. And, within the limitations of the inevitable subjectivity both of myself and the theatre practitioners under review, it endeavours to assess the actual and potential contribution of theatre to raising awareness of translation among its audience.

## CHAPTER TWO: LONDON THEATRE - CONTEXTUALIZING THE SITE OF PERFORMANCE

### 2.1 Introduction

Although the central focus of this study is eight published playtexts, each of these translations represents a staged production. The text itself provides a snapshot of the translation process in performance at a given moment, often the point shortly before the production is due to open to the public, and while changes and amendments may still be taking place. The published text only provides a very limited impression, through stage directions, of the performance elements on stage. And yet the physical performance itself, alongside the verbal content, is the vehicle through which translation is conceived and expressed. This holistic approach is theorised by Catherine Boyle in her account of participating in the Royal Shakespeare Company Spanish Golden Age season, for example, as the 'embodiment' of a translation (2007: 62). In measuring the concretisation of translation through performance, site becomes relevant, as is shown by the emergence of site-specificity in theatre practices and Performance Theory<sup>12</sup>. And not only site: the organisation which inhabits that site has its own culture, which impinges on the development of a translated play. These productions are informed by the buildings in which they are performed. Marvin Carlson notes that 'the framing of the theatre experience has become a calculated part of that experience' (1989: 207). Theatrical site influences a production not only through the building itself, but also through the culture it houses: the tone of the translation is affected by the commissioning and performance policies of the prevailing theatre company. In this chapter, I contextualise the theatres which commissioned the translations in my sample and which staged the performances, considering their production and theatrical histories, the points where they meet within the theatre field, and the ways in which they differentiate their performance offering.

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<sup>12</sup> Defined as 'performances devised to exploit the particular qualities and associations of a specific, invariably non-theatrical, place' (Pickering and Woolgar 2009: 198), site-specific performance has influenced the devising practices of experimental and, increasingly, mainstream theatre (for example, the director Rupert Goold's 2011 production *Decade*, produced in association with Chichester Festival Theatre). Among a selection of theoretical analyses of these concepts, Nick Kaye discusses site-specific performance (2000) and Richard Schechner (1988) promotes performance studies in practice and theory. An early example was the production *Dionysus in 69* (1968), a theatrically radical interpretation of Euripides' *Bacchae* and the inspiration for an edited volume investigating Greek tragedy at the dawn of the third millennium (Hall, Macintosh, and Wrigley 2004).

In order to provide the theatrical context for the plays in my sample, I have considered elements of the financial, management and organisational structures of each of the relevant theatres. The length and scope of this thesis restricts me from an extended analysis of each theatre, but there is sufficient initial information available on websites and databases to form an overview of the mission and cultures of each entity, and to identify the features which separate and link the physical structures and their personnel within this sample.

## **2.2 The Society of London Theatre ('SOLT')**

The organisation which binds together the eight plays in my sample, and which indeed was the source of that sample, is SOLT. This body was founded in 1908 by the actor-manager Sir Charles Wyndham, and 'is the trade association that represents the producers, theatre owners and managers of the major commercial and grant-aided theatres in central London' (Society of London Theatre 2011). SOLT sponsors the newspaper theatre listings from which my sample was drawn. These advertisements, however, represent a visible but small component of the Society's activities. The official website lists the Society's services as including:

- advice on legal, general and industrial relations matters
- managing the process of collective bargaining with the entertainments trade unions
- providing commercial services of benefit to the membership as a whole [I assume that this refers to the sale of theatre tokens, operation of discounted theatre ticket shops and access for members to the 'Angels List' of prospective investors.]
- promoting theatre-going to the widest possible audience
- representing to the wider public, and to public and other relevant authorities, the interests  
of the theatre industry as a whole
- research on behalf of the industry as a whole (ibid)

These operations demonstrate the extent of SOLT's presence in the London theatre environment, particularly with regard to the mainstream houses aiming to attract larger audiences. However, SOLT's impact extends beyond these boundaries, making it an influential representative of the theatre industry in general. For example, its Theatre Tokens scheme is subscribed to by 'over 240 theatres across the UK' (ibid). Thus SOLT is a unifying body for its members and any other theatres availing themselves of its ticket sales operations, Industrial Relations or Legal Issues guidance.

SOLT produces an annual *Box Office Data Report* and a periodic *West End Theatre Audiences Report* (most recent publication 2010), in addition to making representations on behalf of the theatre industry in the public sphere, for example in its joint submission of evidence with the Theatrical Management Association ('TMA') to the Select Committee of the governmental Department for Culture, Media and Sport. This report, accompanied by witnesses from SOLT and the TMA, was 'a contribution to the Committee's inquiry into the nature and adequacy of public support for theatre in Britain' (Society of London Theatre and Theatrical Management Association 2005). Indeed, SOLT's prominence is further demonstrated by a report commissioned by Arts Council England ('ACE') in 2004 into the economic impact of UK theatre. ACE is a quasi-governmental body whose function is to distribute government and National Lottery funds to the arts in England. This particular report, by Dominic Shellard of the University of Sheffield, presented an analysis of data under the two headings of 'SOLT venues' and 'UK-based venues (excluding SOLT venues)', finding that SOLT contributed £1.5 billion of the total £2.6 billion economic impact of theatres in the UK (2004: 16). A detailed analysis of SOLT and the financial structures of commercial and subsidised theatre is beyond the scope of this research. My initial survey of the most accessible data<sup>13</sup> suggests that commercial and subsidised theatre interests are frequently intertwined, both financially and creatively. Although public and academic perception generally distinguishes, albeit imprecisely, between commercial and subsidised theatrical practices, denoting the first as privileging profit over art, or popular over high culture, and the second conversely, the industry has many similarities across its range of activities, and many points of convergence between commercial and subsidised entities. For example, well-sold productions from subsidised theatres move to commercially-owned

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<sup>13</sup> These data consist principally of financial statements available on the Charity Commission of England and Wales website <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/>. I also reviewed summary financial data collected by the company and financial database FAME, accessed in the British Library, 30 March 2011.



theatres for extended runs, while commercial theatre companies contribute to the registered theatre charities Stage One and the Theatre Development Trust, which invest in commercial productions and management. SOLT is therefore an appropriate site to perform an initial overview of the London theatre structures pertaining to my sample.

The 2009 Annual Report gives an idea of the breadth of SOLT's membership:

The Society's membership embraces almost all the major theatre interests in Central London. Most Members represent commercial theatre but membership also includes representatives of subsidised dramatic and lyric theatre organisations operating in Central London, including the four great 'National Companies'. The Society also welcomes Affiliate Members drawn from subsidised companies based elsewhere in London. (2009: np)

These members are individual members, rather than organisations. The 2009 Annual Report gives the examples of Sir Cameron Mackintosh and Lord Lloyd Webber, members since 1973 and 1983 respectively, whose organisations are also represented by other senior personnel (ibid: 11) and between them control a significant number of commercial theatres in the West End. I assume, as no definition can be found in the report, that the 'National Companies' referred to are the National Theatre, the Royal Opera House, the English National Ballet and the English National Opera, the latter two based at the London Coliseum. Moreover, a further five theatres represented among the SOLT membership also received public subsidies. These organisations between them were awarded ACE grants in the period to 31 March 2004 of over 20% of all grants awarded nationally, as set out in Figure II below.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Annual ACE Grant Awarded</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
National Theatre	£14,810,852	5%
Royal Opera House	£21,754,450	8%
English National Ballet (London Coliseum)	£5,325,338	2%
English National Opera (London Coliseum)	£15,000,000	5%
<i>Total 'National Companies'</i>	<i>£56,890,640</i>	<i>20%</i>
Barbican Theatre	£92,848	>1%
Donmar Warehouse	£302,247	>1%
English Stage Company (Royal Court)	£1,816,398	>1%
Sadler's Wells	£1,530,320	>1%
<i>Total other subsidised theatre</i>	<i>£3,741,813</i>	<i>1%</i>
<b><i>Total grant-in-aid grants awarded</i></b>	<b><i>£277,038,818</i></b>	<b><i>100%</i></b>

Figure II: Annual ACE Grant Awarded by Organisation, 2004.<sup>14</sup>

Thus of the forty-nine theatres represented by SOLT in 2005, seven named in Figure II were of major importance in the subsidised arena, as demonstrated by their receipt of a significant proportion by value (21%) of all grants to nationally subsidised theatres. This would suggest that SOLT's services are required by commercial and subsidised theatres, and that distinctions between the two may not be as easily drawn as might at first sight appear to be the case. I have not been able to locate broken-down figures of income across the SOLT box offices, but the ACE grants and corresponding strength of the subsidised

<sup>14</sup> I have compiled Figure II using data extracted from the 2004 Annual review Grant-in-Aid Accounts (Arts Council England 2004: 74-86), a published list of grants awarded to named organisations receiving over £25,000. The exercise has apparently not been repeated in subsequent years and therefore no later comparable figures are available.

companies can be contextualised by comparing them to Gross Box Office Revenue for 2004, as set out in the SOLT Box Office Data Report (2008: Section III, p. 99), of £343,674,090. Figure III below sets out the comparable box office receipts of the subsidised organisations which are also members of SOLT for the period in question, using information taken from published accounts. These data can only be used as a guide as the financial periods under consideration differ, and the content of box office receipts may vary between institution (for example, the National Theatre includes touring income in box office receipts whereas the Royal Opera House shows it separately).

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Relevant period</b>	<b>Box Office Receipts</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
National Theatre	Year ended 3 April 2005	£13, 528,000	4%
Royal Opera House	Year ended 27 March 2005	£27,200,000	8%
English National Ballet (London Coliseum)	Year ended 31 March 2005	£3,072,426	1%
English National Opera (London Coliseum)	Year ended 31 March 2005	£7,102,000	2%
Barbican Theatre	Year ended 31 March 2005	£2,135,000	1%
Donmar Warehouse	Year ended 31 March 2005	£1,520,583	>1%
English Stage Company (Royal Court)	Year ended 31 March 2005	£920,059	>1%
Sadler's Wells	Year ended 31 August 2005	£10,762,000	3%
<i>TOTAL</i>		<i>£66,240,068</i>	<i>19%</i>
<b>Gross Box Office Revenue</b>	<b>Year ended 31 March 2004</b>	<b>£343,674,090</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure III: Box Office Receipts by Organisation, 2004<sup>15</sup>.

While Figure II demonstrates the importance of the SOLT subsidised companies among subsidised theatre nationally, Figure III explains the significance of the subsidised theatre grouping within SOLT itself. Around 2005, these eight companies accounted for 14% of the theatres represented in the membership and 19% of the box office receipts. When ACE grants and additional sponsorship are taken into account - for example, the Royal Opera House raised £15.8 million of 'Donations, legacies and similar incoming resources' in the

<sup>15</sup> My compilation, using data extracted from published financial accounts and the SOLT Box Office Data Report 2008, Figure 84, Section III, p. 99: *1986 to 2008 Table of Comparative Figures*.

year ended 27 March 2005 (Royal Opera House 2006:116) - calculations suggest that these theatres are in possession of significant financial resources. Further investigation of the membership of SOLT in 2005 indicates that the commercial theatres also form sizeable interest-groups, with ownership of twenty-eight of the theatres distributed among four organisations in 2005: the Ambassador Theatre Group (9), Delfont Mackintosh (7), Really Useful Group (7) and Nimax (5). Thus my brief statistical analysis demonstrates the integration of commercial and subsidised theatre at the macro level of London industry grouping. My research into translated plays produced among this grouping, while principally intended to investigate the agency of theatre practitioners engaging in translation, also reveals the commerce between the two sectors at a micro level and sheds light on those commissioning practices of translation criticised by Susan Bassnett as 'inextricably bound up with economics' in ways which she implies are both unethical and unrespectable in their inferior positioning of translators (1991: 102). My initial review of the commercial and subsidised theatres which have voluntarily entered into the SOLT industrial grouping (along with one theatre which has chosen not to participate, the Almeida Theatre, and two which are ineligible, being based outside London, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Sheffield Theatres) provides a background from which to consider the translated plays in my sample and their commissioning procedures.

### **2.3 The Royal National Theatre ('the National')**

*The House of Bernarda Alba* and *The UN Inspector* were both performed at the Royal National Theatre complex on the South Bank of the Thames in central London. The mission statement of the National, as expressed on its website, places the theatre complex, geographically and ideologically, at the centre of British theatrical culture<sup>16</sup>:

The National Theatre is central to the creative life of the country. [...] It aims constantly to re-energise the great traditions of the British stage and to expand the horizons of audiences and artists alike. It aspires to reflect in its repertoire the diversity of the nation's culture. [...] Through an extensive programme [...] it

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<sup>16</sup> The National uses the word 'British', but it is funded by ACE. National Theatres of Scotland and Wales were created in 2006 and 2009 respectively, and there has also been a campaign by the actors' union, Equity, to create a National Theatre of Northern Ireland. It is not clear, therefore, to which 'nation' 'National' refers. I discuss issues of London-centricity and funding later in this chapter.

recognises that the theatre doesn't begin and end with the rise and fall of the curtain. And by touring, the National shares its work with audiences in the UK and abroad. (Royal National Theatre 2009)

In short, the National aspires to live up to its name and provide a holistic theatrical service to the nation, although the degree to which it is successful in its aspiration is a matter of debate<sup>17</sup>. Its public responsibility is to some extent a pre-requisite of its funding: the financial accounts for the 52 weeks ended 2 April 2006 (during which period *The House of Bernarda Alba* was performed) show that 44% of the National's income came from ACE grants, compared with 30% from box office receipts and touring income. A quick calculation shows that ACE subsidised each paying member of the audience during this period by £26 per head<sup>18</sup>. That the National is the recipient of such substantial public funding inevitably provokes debate as to its duties with regard to the public it serves and the official bodies which provide sponsorship. The ambitious tone of its mission statement and the attempt to include a coherent mix of new and classical texts in its repertoire, while addressing issues of diversity and tradition, reveal the conflicting criteria which a commissioning director must try to satisfy. The inclusion of translated plays within these boundaries raises additional questions.

The National's translation policy, as expressed by Jack Bradley, its Literary Manager from 1994 to 2006, is to commission playwrights to prepare translations using a literal translation<sup>19</sup>. This was the procedure for both these translations, with indirect translators whose names would have resonated with the theatre-going public, for differing reasons, as I discuss in Chapter Three, sections 3.2 and 3.3. The inclusion of two canonic plays by Lorca and Gogol in the National repertory is presumably intended to conform to the aims of the mission statement: 'to re-energise great traditions' by commissioning new translations, and to 'expand the horizons' by approaching works from outside the English language. In both cases, these two plays have previously been extensively translated and performed for

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<sup>17</sup> Nadine Holdsworth sets out this debate in *Theatre and Nation*, summarising the 'primary challenge' as 'the question of whether a single theatre, normally in a national capital, can legitimately claim to serve as a theatre of and for the nation as a whole' (2010: 34).

<sup>18</sup> Calculation based on ACE grants of £17,261,000 divided by total paid attendances of 663,000 (Royal National Theatre 2006: 41-42). For comparison purposes, tickets for the David Hare play *The Power of Yes* on Saturday 12 December 2009 at 7:30 pm were selling for between £10 and £35.

<sup>19</sup> My own notes taken from Jack Bradley's session, 'Not...Lost in Translation' at the conference *Staging Translated Plays: Adaptation, Translation and Multimediality*, University of East Anglia, 30 June 2007.

English-speaking theatre. The key marketing descriptions of these productions are ‘new’ (*The House of Bernarda Alba*) and ‘freely adapted’ (*The UN Inspector*), which give an indication of the National’s claim to possession of these productions and explain their inclusion in the season’s programme. The Artistic Director of the National, Nicholas Hytner, in his report for the year ended 2 April 2006, claimed an ‘inherent worth’ for all the work carried out by the National, placing *The House of Bernarda Alba* within a group which ‘involved the re-investigation of great plays that will always be staged for the universal truths that they embody’ (Royal National Theatre 2006: 5). This gives some indication of what might have been expected in arranging a marriage between a well-known establishment playwright and an international classic.

If the National sets itself at the heart of British theatre, it is hardly surprising that its translations may reflect that environment. Over-domestication is a criticism frequently levelled at translations aimed at a large audience, and I address instances of this in my detailed discussions of the translations in Chapter Three. However, the National’s influence extends beyond its own boundaries. Many of the theatre practitioners included in this study, and there is at least one for each of the eight plays encompassed, will have been associated with the National in some way during their career. Each translation therefore bears a trace of the National’s power, even if this manifests itself in the adoption of an opposing, or at least differentiated, stance. I discuss these manifestations as the thesis progresses.

A further consideration for translations at the National arises in the physical theatre setting. The theatre building complex comprises three theatres, with a fourth Studio for developmental projects under one mile away. The translations in this study were staged in the two highest-capacity theatres. *The UN Inspector* was shown in the largest, the Olivier, a theatre seating ‘well over 1000 people in a semi-circular sweep inspired by ancient Greek amphitheatres’ (Royal National Theatre 2011b). The Lyttleton Theatre’s proscenium arch accommodated *The House of Bernarda Alba*, with an 890-person capacity. The size and design of stage, be it traditional or open-style, affects the choice of play and translator, but the number of seats is also significant to the translation: unlike West End theatres, the National does not cancel a play if critical reviews are poor and ticket sales suffer, therefore the aim should be to fill seats every night of a pre-assigned time-scale. This, along with the formal setting, may be seen as an incentive to produce a certain type of translation; to make it accessible to a wide audience, to acknowledge the heritage and tradition of a play,

while also re-energising it and making it new. Such decisions forced on the National's commissioning teams may be evidenced in its own productions, but they can also influence other theatres, as I introduced in section 2.1. I move now to another influential London theatre with a very different approach to translated plays, which serves as a useful comparison.

## 2.4 The Royal Court Theatre ('the Royal Court')

There were also two translated plays in production during the period at the Royal Court in Chelsea, an affluent residential and commercial inner suburb of West London, about three miles from the National. *The Woman Before* was staged in the main Jerwood Theatre Downstairs, a more conventional space intended for plays which attract larger audiences, and the main reason for the Royal Court's participation in SOLT. *Way to Heaven* was presented in the 90-seat Jerwood Theatre Upstairs, a smaller but more flexible space designed to accommodate different staging and seating configurations<sup>20</sup>. The Royal Court's website outlines the theatre's principal purpose as follows:

The Royal Court Theatre is Britain's leading national company dedicated to new work by innovative writers from the UK and around the world. The theatre's pivotal role in promoting new voices is undisputed – the New York Times described it as 'the most important theatre in Europe'.

[...] The Royal Court's success has inspired confidence in theatres across the world and, whereas new plays were once viewed as a risk, they are now at the heart of a revival of interest among artists and audiences alike. (Royal Court Theatre 2009a)

This outlook is not dissimilar from that of the National in as much as it promotes a central, national role for the theatre and aims to expand its influence beyond the UK. Where it differs is in its focus on new writing: the Royal Court is quite clear in its attention to the voice of the playwright and its emphasis on its standing among artists and theatres, including its international status. As its governing Council reports, 'It is an artistically led theatre that creates the conditions for writers, nationally and internationally, to flourish'

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<sup>20</sup> The name Jerwood was added to the title of these two spaces in 2000 in recognition of a capital grant by the charitable Jerwood Foundation towards their redevelopment.



(Royal Court Theatre 2006: 6). The focus on the writer creates a degree of risk with regard to audience numbers, as can be surmised from an examination of the accounts. Financial information is not posted on the Royal Court's website, but from the annual report for the year ended 31 March 2006 (during which *Way to Heaven* was staged), it is possible to calculate that ACE grants represented 54% of its total incoming resources and a mere 19% of those resources came from box office and associated income<sup>21</sup>. More in line with the National, however, is the ACE subsidy per head of audience: approximately £27<sup>22</sup>. Clearly, both institutions are dependent on the public funding allotted to them by ACE and as such need to be aware that they will be monitored for 'artistic quality, management, finance and public engagement' (Arts Council England 2009a). The National, a major recipient of funding, amounting to £18,715,431 in 2008/2009 (Arts Council England 2009c), undertakes a full range of theatrical activities in line with its public image. In contrast, the Royal Court, granted £2,189,627 in 2008/2009 (Arts Council England 2009b), receives funding because it is 'an exemplary centre for the development and production of new writing for theatre. It has strong Young Writers and International programmes [both of which encourage playwriting outside the regular constituency of the theatre] and a commitment to developing theatre practice with writers at the centre' (ibid). Its public offerings are thus differentiated from those of the National by the prominence specifically given to new writing.

Where writers are at the centre of theatrical strategy and there is a clear emphasis on the development of new, unknown work, the audience may be less easily identifiable. The Royal Court recognises this problem, the Council's report in 2006 explicitly stating in a section headed 'Factors affecting performance':

The work produced by the Royal Court is often risky, challenging and experimental, which can, by its very nature, make it difficult to market [...] Whilst this diversity and originality is part of the Royal Court's reputation for producing pioneering drama, it also presents a challenge to the Press, Marketing and Development departments, even more so this year when a significant amount of the repertoire

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<sup>21</sup> Calculations obtained by comparing ACE revenue grant: £2,000,000 (Note 3, p. 24) and Box office and associated income: £681,998 (Note 5, p. 25) to Total incoming resources (Consolidated Statement of financial activities, p. 19) (Royal Court Theatre 2006).

<sup>22</sup> Calculation based on ACE grants of £2,000,000 (see above) divided by the total attendance for the year of 74,185. Top price tickets during the period were reduced to £25 (ibid: 7, 10).

would not necessarily attract mainstream audiences. (Royal Court Theatre 2006: 12)

These challenges can affect translation strategies, as I discuss below. The above statement may also explain *Way to Heaven's* appearance in the Jerwood Theatre Upstairs, a space employed for plays more suited to an intimate audience (whether for reasons of theme, experimentation or financial risk), which gives an indication of the Royal Court's expectations for the play.

In view of the prominence given to international writing, it is not surprising to learn that, in contrast to the National Theatre, the Royal Court has an International Department with its own dedicated Associate Director, Elyse Dodgson, whose stated aim is 'to bring international plays into the core programme and present these alongside home-grown plays' (Little and McLaughlin 2007: 331). The International Department sets out its translation policy on the Royal Court website: 'The department has pioneered the use of theatre practitioners as translators and the integral involvement of the translator in the play development and rehearsal process' (Royal Court Theatre 2009b). Nevertheless, the Royal Court is generally acknowledged among the translating community for commissioning source-language experts to create a direct translation for performance. As suggested, these translators tend to be drawn from a group who regularly translate for the theatre and may also be the creators of original plays in English.

*Way to Heaven* was described in the published text, which also functions as a programme, as 'part of the Royal Court's International Playwrights series' (Mayorga 2005: np). *The Woman Before* was presented without an international label, simply stating 'by Roland Schimmelpfennig' in the promotional headline. In both cases, the translator's name was prominently displayed, and the words, 'translated by', offered the firm assurance that these were indeed direct translations, as would be expected from the Royal Court. These two productions were in fact the only examples in my sample in which the word 'translation' was unambiguously and overtly used to describe the transfer process which had taken place. This is a distinguishing feature of the Royal Court, and an area in which it stands out not only from the other theatres in my sample, but from other more marginal theatres presenting translated work<sup>23</sup>. Since the formal inception of the International Department in

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<sup>23</sup> The Arcola Theatre in East London, is an example of a highly respected low-budget fringe theatre which frequently presents plays in translation, offering a range of translation possibilities. These include indirect translation, such as Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* 'in a version by Rebecca Lenkiewicz from a literal

1996, this has been the approach adopted by the Royal Court towards plays in translation. A striking exception, however, is the last play directed by the outgoing Artistic Director, Ian Rickson, in early 2007, *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov in a new version by Christopher Hampton (literal translation by Vera Liber). Not only was this prize-winning production widely praised, but it also 'generated the Court's highest ever box office advance' (Little and McLaughlin 2007: 447) and later transferred to the Walter Kerr Theater, New York. This production seems at odds with the usual emphasis on translation and 'new' voices, Chekhov being a staple of English-speaking theatre and Christopher Hampton a long-established playwright and translator (from French and German). The popular nature of its appeal was enhanced by a cast of actors known from film and television, for example, Kristin Scott Thomas and Art Malik. It was an unusual legacy and in its devising and reception served as an in-house illustration of the traditional treatment of a classic international play which the Royal Court usually leaves to other theatres. This production established the breadth of Ian Rickson's capabilities in directing, which he was subsequently to put to use in commercial West End productions, such as Harold Pinter's *Betrayal* and Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*, both at the Comedy Theatre in 2011. Additionally, this *Seagull* strengthened Rickson's credentials for staging canonic texts, demonstrated by the sell-out production of *Hamlet* at the Young Vic in 2011, with another leading film and television actor in the title role, Michael Sheen<sup>24</sup>. The commercial, high-profile career which Rickson went on to pursue following the production of this translation of *The Seagull* perhaps explains the motives for adopting a default style of translation, one which the Royal Court tends to eschew, but which transfers more easily into commercial production in the West End, as I now go on to discuss.

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translation by Charlotte Barslund' (2008); direct translation, for example Roland Schimmelpfennig's *The Golden Dragon* 'translated by David Tushingham' (2011); and co-translation, as in Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* 'in a new version by Helena Kaut-Howson and Jon Strickland' (2011). In the latter case, Kaut-Howson, the director, is a Russian-speaker and collaborated with Strickland, the actor playing the title role.

<sup>24</sup> Sheen also took a main role in *The UN Inspector*, included in my research sample, in 2005. Between that production and his appearance at the Young Vic in 2011 he consolidated his reputation as a film, theatre and television actor, in particular with his film roles in the Oscar-winning *The Queen* (2006) and Oscar-nominated *Frost/Nixon* (2008).

## 2.5 West End Theatres

The four West End theatres in my sample are typical of the commercial theatre groupings within SOLT. The Duke of York's, transfer home of *Hedda Gabler*, is part of the Ambassador Theatre Group, one of the largest theatre-holding and -operating groups in the United Kingdom. A second play originating from the Almeida Theatre, *Festen*, moved on to the Lyric Theatre, a member of the Nimax organisation. The Albery (since renamed 'Noël Coward') and the Gielgud, hosting *Hecuba* and *Don Carlos* respectively, belong to the Delfont Mackintosh empire.

A cursory investigation into the details of these theatre-owning businesses reveals both a complexity of group structures and an interaction of personnel and assets which prevents a clear analysis of the administrative and organisational procedures operating within these companies. The Ambassador Theatre Group Limited, for example, owns twenty-six subsidiary companies, mainly theatre-holding corporations in London and other regions of the United Kingdom. It substantially shares its directors with another company, Ambassador Theatre Group (Venues) Limited. These two companies, however, are owned by completely separate sets of shareholders: Live Nation Entertainment, Inc, based in the United States of America and employing 6,500, is the ultimate controller of the Venues company, whereas the theatre-holding group is owned by a private equity limited partnership. It is not within the scope of this study to speculate on the reasons for this divergence, or its consequences. My simple assertion for the purpose of this exploration is that these facts make it difficult to identify a clear trail of decision-making<sup>25</sup>.

Another of the theatres in my sample, the Gielgud, provides a case study of the interaction of principals and assets within the SOLT grouping. According to a note in the *Don Carlos* programme, written by the Manager of the Gielgud, Louise Guedalla, the theatre's 'classical facade has dominated Shaftesbury Avenue since 1906' (Gieldgud Theatre 2005: np). The building's freehold had been owned by Christ's Hospital, a charitable foundation which principally supports a charitable boarding and day school, for children aged 11-18 from all backgrounds, near Horsham, West Sussex (Christ's Hospital 2011). This freehold was sold to Delfont Mackintosh in Spring 2002 (Delfont Mackintosh Theatres 2011). Prior to this sale,

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<sup>25</sup> Summary financial information obtained from the FAME database via the British Library Business Centre, accessed 30 March 2011.

however, it appears that a long leasehold had been granted to Cameron Mackintosh Limited, the parent of Delfont Mackintosh Theatres, in 1999 (Gielgud Theatre 2005: np). A short leasehold must have at some stage been created from the long leasehold, as this lease was purchased by Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Theatres (subsequently renamed and reorganised as the Really Useful Group) from Stoll Moss, another theatrical group, in 2000, when the leases were shortly due to come to an end. The short lease reverted to Delfont Mackintosh in March 2006, at which point Delfont Mackintosh became the owner and operator of the building and the theatrical business it housed. Thus the Really Useful Group and Delfont Mackintosh both had an interest in the Gielgud Theatre in 2005. Furthermore, the third commercial theatre-holding organisation in my sample, Nimax, can also be connected to this case-study: Nica Burns is listed in the *Don Carlos* programme as the Production Director for Really Useful Theatres. She formed Nimax Theatres in September 2005 with Max Weitzenhoffer, a theatre producer in New York and London, when they purchased four theatres from Really Useful Theatres (Nimax Theatres 2011), among them the Lyric Theatre, which also forms part of my sample. The Gielgud Theatre thus provides an example of the multiplicity of agents involved in the investment and management of the physical site of any production. My later analysis of the production housed in this site, *Don Carlos*, will demonstrate how this variety extends to the translation itself.

These four theatres, the Duke of York's, Lyric, Albery and Gielgud, all housed productions from my sample which originated in subsidised theatre: two from the Almeida, within London, but outside SOLT, and two from outside London. I now move on to consider these theatres in order of their distance from the West End, both geographical and cultural.

## **2.6 The Almeida Theatre ('the Almeida')**

The Almeida in Islington, North London, provided the base for two of the plays in my sample: *Festen* and *Hedda Gabler*. However, they were both in production on the commercial West End stage during April to June 2005, having transferred from successful runs at the Almeida. The Almeida was in fact showing a translated play during my base period, Lorca's *Blood Wedding* in a version by Tanya Ronder from a literal translation by Simon Scardifield (the literal translator of Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* at the

National, which is included in my sample) and directed by Rufus Norris, the director of *Festen*. It can be seen from these few details that the Almeida operates in artistic circles which are closely linked to the London theatres in my corpus. However, *Blood Wedding* was not picked up by my sample because the Almeida does not advertise through SOLT, and is not in full membership of the Society. The theatre appears on the [officiallondontheatre.co.uk](http://officiallondontheatre.co.uk) website (sponsored by SOLT), with full details given concerning the venue, and its plays are listed in the London Shows menu and in the Latest News section, when appropriate, but it is not possible to buy tickets through the website. When I questioned this arrangement, I was told that choosing not to advertise through SOLT was simply a matter of cost. Controlling expenditure is, of course, vital for a theatre's sustainability, and particularly so for the Almeida since its 39% cut in ACE funding beyond 2012 (Stage 2011b: 5). In 2010 when I queried the Almeida's membership of SOLT, however, funding cuts were still in the future. Furthermore, the Sadler's Wells Theatre, admittedly a larger venue but predominantly showing dance, is a full member of SOLT, although less than a mile from the Almeida. Both these theatres are outside the boundary of what might be identified as the West End theatre district, as is the Royal Court Theatre, another full member of SOLT. Since publicity is vital for ticket sales, non-participation in the principal umbrella organisation requires a decision beyond the usual default position. Perhaps this is an indication of an image the Almeida might wish to project, and which can be explored further by examining the theatre's own material.

In an online video on the About Us page on the theatre's website, Michael Attenborough, the Artistic Director, describes the theatre as a 'one-room space' which is appropriate for Shakespeare or musicals or 'a play with only two people in it' (Almeida Theatre Company 2010a). The website sets out the theatre's artistic vision as 'the presentation of bold and adventurous play choices staged to the highest possible standards, in productions which reveal them in a new light' (Almeida Theatre Company 2010b). These statements suggest a desire to differentiate the Almeida from its competitors, which might explain the absence from SOLT. Of these competitors, my own view is that the theatre most similar to the Almeida in size, audience and output is the Donmar Warehouse. This theatre is located in Soho and therefore at the heart of London's theatre district, is a full member of SOLT, and claims for itself 'a diverse artistic policy that includes new writing, contemporary reappraisals of European classics, British and American drama and small scale musical theatre' (Donmar Warehouse 2010). Michael Grandage, its Artistic Director from 2002 to

2011, was also the director of *Don Carlos* in my sample, and one of the many strands linking these two theatres into the mainstream London web. The Donmar's mission under his leadership can be compared with two of the Almeida's stated aims in its Summary Information Return 2009 Of Aims, Activities and Achievements posted on the Charity Commission website (Almeida Theatre Company 2009):

- To use our unique theatre to stage the best British and international drama, presented to the highest possible standards in productions which reveal the plays in a new light
- To present a varied and challenging programme, including new plays and contemporary opera<sup>26</sup>

The prominent themes of *new, contemporary, British, European/international, opera/musical theatre, reappraisals/reveal...in a new light*, and, most significantly, *diverse/varied* suggest that these two theatres have similar aims. The Almeida needs to differentiate itself and its geographical position is one way of doing that. Hence, perhaps, the implicit statement that in its non-membership of SOLT, the Almeida remains outside the West End.

Even so, the similarities between the Almeida and the Donmar, mentioned above, are noted in theatrical comment, drawing the Almeida back into the inner-London circle. This can be seen informally, for example, in an advertisement aimed at an international theatre audience: 'If you enjoy London's Almeida and Donmar theatres you'll love 59E59 Theaters in New York'<sup>27</sup>. It is also stated in formal, academic analyses, such as Aleks Sierz's 2011 review of British theatre, *Rewriting the Nation*. When discussing the development of new writing in the commercial West End, he writes: 'Other London theatres that occasionally contribute to new writing include classy Off-West End boutique theatres, such as the Donmar and the Almeida, although they rarely stage cutting-edge work' (2011: 33-34). In his assertion, Sierz not only groups the two theatres together, but implies that their reality may be less challenging than their aspiration, another West End phenomenon.

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<sup>26</sup> Although this statement was made in 2009, the Almeida discontinued its annual opera festival in 2007.

<sup>27</sup> *Financial Times, Life & Arts*, 6/7 November 2010, p. 9.

Further London theatres can be used to evaluate the Almeida's presence in a London grouping. An additional objective stated by the Almeida's trustees, 'to be brave, risk-taking and cutting edge, be it through choice of play, author, director or cast' (Almeida Theatre Company 2005:1), resembles the Royal Court's desire for risk, but extends the scope of the risk to include director and cast (without restriction to writing). The projection of risk onto wider theatrical areas beyond text is demonstrated by both the plays from the Almeida which appear in my sample: *Festen* was developed from a Danish film of the same name, and *Hedda Gabler*, although ostensibly a classic and often-staged text in British theatre, albeit of Norwegian origin, was cast with an uncharacteristically young actor, Eve Best, in the title role. I shall return to these features when discussing the translations in Chapter Three, sections 3.4 and 3.5. For now, I merely flag the point that the Almeida's translations reflect the theatre's wider objectives.

A final aim stated on the Summary Information Return 2009, and developed in words and figures in its accounts, is 'to demonstrate sound financial planning and control'. The 2005 year-end financial statements proclaim with pride that 'the artistic programme and management of the company was delivered to the highest standard and, as importantly, on budget' (ibid: 2). At the Almeida in 2005, the ACE grant amounted to 23% (£889,942, ibid: 23) of its total income, the remainder coming from ticket sales and other audience income (29%), private fundraising and sponsorship (32%) and further income earned through commercial activities (ibid: 3). The Almeida therefore has to satisfy a range of supporters that it provides good guardianship of their funds, and it aims to achieve that by careful financial performance<sup>28</sup>. I witnessed one marker of this competence when walking through its administrative offices (something which in itself is unusual for a visitor to any enterprise) and noting the order of the filing system on the shelves. The Literary Manager was able to put her hands quickly on documents she needed to respond to my queries about theatre programming from five years earlier. My years spent auditing a variety of organisations led me to deduce from this evidence that financial order is important in the running of the Almeida. It does indeed appear that financial considerations had some bearing on the commissioning and production procedures for the Almeida translations in my sample. In both cases, the theatre was approached with detailed proposals for production, which would allow more accurate budgeting. Furthermore, the moves to West End commercial

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<sup>28</sup> Careful budgeting has become particularly relevant to the Almeida since its 39% cut in ACE funding beyond 2012. The Donmar funding cut was restricted to 11%.



theatres were financed by independent production companies, relieving the Almeida of increased financial risk. These, and the other factors I have discussed, demonstrate the relevance of the theatre's aims and objectives to the detail of the translation process.

## 2.7 The Royal Shakespeare Company ('the RSC')

*Hecuba* was shown in London at the Albery Theatre, part of the commercial Delfont Mackintosh group of theatres, discussed above. However, the new translation and production was commissioned and performed by the RSC. This theatre company is based in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, some hundred miles from London's West End and an international tourist attraction as the birthplace of William Shakespeare. The status of the RSC in the UK cultural hierarchy can be seen both in its name, alluding to the dramatist traditionally held in highest esteem in the English-language canon, and also in the level of funding received from ACE. The ACE Annual Review 2004 shows that only five organisations in that year received grants of eight-figure sums, making up 29% (£81.4 million) of the total value of grants awarded (£277,038,818), as shown in Figure IV below.

Organisation	Amount	Percentage
Royal Opera House (Covent Garden)	£21,754,450	8%
South Bank Board	£16,606,012	6%
English National Opera	£15,000,000	5%
National Theatre	£14,810,852	5%
Royal Shakespeare Company	£13,270,937	5%
TOTAL	£81,442,251	29%
<i>Total grant-in-aid awarded</i>	<i>£277,038,818</i>	<i>100%</i>

Figure IV: Top Five ACE Grants Awarded by Organisation, 2004<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> My compilation, using data extracted from the Annual Review Grant-in-aid Accounts 2004 (Arts Council England 2004: 74-86).

The RSC is notable in this group not only for receiving the least funding but also for being the only organisation based outside the centre of London, although it also occupies a suite of offices in Covent Garden (London's West End) for which it paid rent in the year ended 31 March 2006 of £94,218 (Royal Shakespeare Company 2006: 44)<sup>30</sup>. This rent alone is more than three times the ACE grant awarded in 2004 to the Arcola Theatre (£30,750), a disproportionately visible theatre in Hackney, East London, which operates three theatre spaces and also commissions new plays and translations. That the RSC receives public funding of this size, and spends it in this manner, provides some indication of its cultural capital. It also demonstrates the RSC's established London connections.

The existence of the London offices suggests why it is necessary to consider the background to the ethos of the RSC as commissioner when setting this *Hecuba* translation in its context. The Literary Department, which supervises the commissioning of new plays and translations, is based in London. The creative teams and actors are generally drawn from the London talent pool. The RSC always has a London season, although during the period under review it had ceased to maintain a permanent performance space in the capital, having withdrawn from its purpose-built London base at the Barbican Centre in 2001<sup>31</sup>. As can be seen from the level of ACE funding, the RSC could be considered an honorary London company. The accounts and website do not provide a breakdown of the tickets sold in the RSC's various venues, but the Key Facts and Figures page on the RSC website proclaims that in 2008/9 'We attracted audiences from 70 different countries to see us in Stratford - but drew 47% of our audience from the Midlands' (Royal Shakespeare Company 2010a). This gives an indication of the constituency of the theatre's audience: more than half comes from outside the geographical base of the theatre premises. In the event of *Hecuba*, the Stratford opening and subsequent run was cancelled as a result of the illness of the actor in the title role, Vanessa Redgrave. It is most unusual for the indisposition of an actor to result in cancellation (usually an understudy would replace the individual concerned) and I discuss the implications of this action in Chapter Six, section 6.3. Nevertheless, the production opened in London and went on to its pre-arranged visits to the USA and Greece, never to appear in Stratford. Therefore, although ostensibly originating away from London, and with an overtly non-London translator (Tony Harrison is

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<sup>30</sup> Information extracted from Note 20: *Transactions with connected persons*.

<sup>31</sup> Since 2008, the RSC has appeared regularly at the Roundhouse in North London, and in 2010 began a five-year seasonal residency.

based in the North of England both in the subject matter of much of his poetry and in his residence), *Hecuba* ended as a London play, opening to London audiences.

That a company named after Shakespeare should be performing a classical Greek play is in keeping with the Company's principal objectives, laid down in its Royal Charter, according to its 2009 Annual Return to the Charity Commission:

to conserve, advance and disseminate the dramatic heritage of Shakespeare and to advance and improve the dramatic art, both in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. [...]These objectives are achieved by the production of plays by Shakespeare and by other classic playwrights and by the commissioning and production of new plays. (Royal Shakespeare Company 2010b: 1)

The Annual Return goes on to stress the importance of ensemble work, not only among its artists but also 'to engage with the world and connect people with Shakespeare through producing bold, progressive work [...]and making the Company itself reflect the world we live in'. Furthermore, 'we have a strong commitment to developing new work and bringing writers back into the rehearsal room to work with actors in the way Shakespeare did' (ibid: 2). Tony Harrison's translation of *Hecuba* is in accordance with these objectives. His translation was noted for its deviance from the norms expected in a classic translation: it referred strongly to recent current events, both textually and visually. Tony Harrison was also involved at a later stage as the touring director, and the prompt book bears evidence of the rehearsal room changes made to the text. These features are discussed more fully in Chapter Six.

In spite of its provenance in the Midlands, I would argue that *Hecuba* bears the hallmarks of a London-based translation. This is not simply because, for operational reasons, it appeared first in London, but more due to the critical and funding treatment of the RSC as a 'national' company, which consequently commissions work fitting comfortably into a London and international artistic milieu. My eighth play originated even further from London but, as I discuss in the next section, bears some similarities with *Hecuba* in the factors which resulted in its inclusion in my sample.

## 2.8 The Crucible Theatre, Sheffield Theatres ('the Crucible')

*Don Carlos* received its world premiere at the Crucible on 22 September 2004, before transferring to the Gielgud Theatre, London, on 28 January 2005. It is the only production in my sample to have been performed outside the capital city prior to opening in London, although it should have been joined in this by *Hecuba*, as detailed above. Even had *Hecuba's* Stratford season taken place, *Don Carlos* would still be distinguished among my sample in its genesis from an organisation without a London base. Nevertheless, it bears the hallmarks of a "Londonised" translation, as I shall explain.

Organised culture in England, particularly with reference to theatre, tends to be London-centric. One indication of this is the destination of ACE funding. As shown in Figure IV above, the top four awards in 2004 were made to London-based organisations, representing almost one quarter (24%) of the ACE total funding for the year. Given that other London-based organisations are also well-represented among the lower-value awards, it is clear that funding levels serve to reinforce and perpetuate London's cultural power. In contrast to these sums, Sheffield Theatres received £1,268,700 from ACE in the same period, which amounts to less than half of one per cent. London's theatrical dominance can be detected beyond financial indications. *The Oxford Companion to Theatre and Performance*, for example, contains entries for the 'National Theatre of Great Britain' (pp. 417-18), the 'Royal Shakespeare Company' (pp. 523-24) and the 'Shakespeare Memorial Theatre' (pp. 551-52), and even the 'Royal Court Theatre' (pp. 522-23), but to be informed about the Sheffield Theatres it is necessary to look under 'regional repertory theatres, UK' (pp. 498-500), which discusses the development of the repertory movement, and mentions Sheffield in the context of between-the-war repertory and the thrust stage of the Crucible Theatre (Kennedy 2010). *The Cambridge Illustrated History of British Theatre's* index displays many mentions of the National Theatre, the RSC and the Royal Court, and even lists the Almeida, but, under 'regional theatre' redirects the reader to 'provincial theatre' (p. 403), a term which, even when this volume was first published in 1994, contains dismissive undertones. None of the given links under this heading provide a reference to Sheffield (Trussler 2000).

The national invisibility of the Sheffield Theatres is fairly extraordinary given that these three theatres grouped on Tudor Square in Sheffield's city centre form the most

concentrated theatre area outside London, providing 2,448 seats in total<sup>32</sup>, a number very similar to the total of the three theatres at the National. Furthermore, the Crucible has international recognition as the long-term home of the annual World Snooker Championships, although perhaps this fact might cause some blurring of its theatrical recognition. Accordingly, the Sheffield Theatres, of which the Crucible is a component, proclaim on their website that they are ‘one of the country’s leading producing theatre venues’, commissioning their own productions under the control of an Artistic Director (Sheffield Theatres 2011). The search for excellence is recognised by Michael Billington in his review of British theatre since 1945, *State of the Nation*:

Under New Labour, regional theatre was released from years of captivity. New money by itself, however, wasn’t enough. There needed to be someone imaginative at the helm. And Sheffield Theatres [...] showed just what could be done. (2007: 377)

Billington specifies the *Don Carlos* production as a symbol of what could be achieved in regional theatre:

an extraordinary venture: a rare revival of a German classic [...]. Following rave notices, it packed out the Crucible in 2004 and transferred to the Gielgud in London for a sold-out twelve-week run that could easily have been extended but for the actors’ other commitments. The real point, though, was that an austere masterpiece like *Don Carlos*, demanding a cast of fourteen actors, would have been unthinkable in a regional theatre during the previous ten years when retrenchment became a way of life – or even a form of slow death. (ibid: 378)

For Billington, then, Sheffield’s *Don Carlos* demonstrated what was possible, but extraordinary, outside London: an atypical product from a regional theatre. The Associate Director of the Sheffield Theatres at the time, and director responsible for *Don Carlos*, was Michael Grandage. *Don Carlos* opened his final season at the Sheffield Theatres and was his last production in that venue. Grandage had taken up the position of Artistic Director of the Donmar Warehouse in London in 2002 (Grandage 2011), and had been filling both roles simultaneously, facilitating Sheffield’s concurrence with London’s artistic sensibilities.

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<sup>32</sup> Lyric Theatre: 1,068 seats; Crucible Theatre: 980 seats; Studio Theatre: 40 seats.

According to Billington, Grandage 'enticed Derek Jacobi to Sheffield' in order to appear in two productions (2007: 378). My analysis suggests that the origins of this production of *Don Carlos* are therefore more closely associated with London than might seem at first sight. The repercussions of this production's success, a proliferation of Schiller translations, took place away from Sheffield and were probably initiated as a result of the successful London run. I review both the production and Grandage's role as Artistic Director/Director later in this study. The background I have just outlined, however, suggests that *Don Carlos* can be measured as a London production even though it originated in 'provincial theatre'.

## 2.9 Conclusion

The foregoing analysis reveals several marked trends in the contextual background of the translations in my sample. Firstly, all eight plays come from theatres which received substantial amounts of funding from ACE, ranging from £889,942 (the Almeida) to £14,810,852 (the National) in the same period. Secondly, all plays began in theatres which prioritise commissioning and new writing. Thirdly, all plays were developed in theatres which employ specific personnel to fill the Literary Management function (this feature is explored more fully in Chapter Four). The second and third points are closely related to the first. Fourthly, the commissioning theatres were either members of SOLT, or had strong personnel or geographical links with that organisation. Therefore, it could be argued that the West End theatres, who are well-represented in that organisation, and where four of the plays were ultimately staged, while not directly responsible for the commissioning of those plays, have a substantial influence on their progress and outcome. As I pointed out earlier in this chapter, the dividing line between subsidised and commercial theatre is more than blurred. This is significant because these two sectors are frequently considered to be oppositional. There is a view that only state-subsidised theatre can be truly creative, untainted by the impediments, described by Caridad Svich, of 'the emphasis on box-office receipts, entertainment "value", and "marketable content"'. Svich's considers that 'the inordinate pressure to bow down to an economic god' limits the imagination of the artist (2002: 17). The former director of the Leicester Haymarket, Peter Lichtenfels, and academic Lynette Hunter complain that 'there is still resolute sticking to the idea of producer and consumer, with no interaction between the two, which typifies the commercial theatre' (2002: 50-51). They do, however, acknowledge the 'unique hybridity of commercialism and

state support that shapes British theatre' (ibid: 41). My study demonstrates this interface in progress, as it relates to the creation of translated performance.

A rigorous analysis of the theatrical construct which is known as 'the West End' requires an extensive study, which I am unable to include in this survey of translation practices for performance. This chapter must serve, however, as notice that the environment in which such translation takes place cannot be assumed to be a site of transparency or stability, and this should be taken into account when assessing the narratives inherent in the translation process. I proceed to consider the detailed procedures of translation for each play in my sample, bearing in mind the theatrical context outlined here.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THE PLAYS AND THEIR TRANSLATION TEAMS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I review the translated plays in my sample and the role of the theatre translator as part of a collaborative team engaged in the performance of a translated playtext. Based on the resources made available by the theatres themselves on their websites and in archives, but also drawing on background research into each production, I have attempted to identify the inception of the translation project. For what purpose were the respective translation agents brought together and how do they combine to transmit a specified narrative reflecting the translation in its current form, any antecedents, and the source text itself? Although it is not possible to identify accurately the motivations of the protagonists of any project, contextual and paratextual sources provide evidence of the evolution of decision-making and further translation processes which ultimately result in a public product: the performance. And how does that performance communicate the multiple nature of its pre-translational origins to its audience?

Whilst words are predominantly the domain of the translator, the holistic nature of performance dictates that movement, sound and image also contribute to the impression received by the spectator. I therefore consider audience reception, where accessible. For these purposes, I have been largely dependent on newspaper reviews, but, as Paul Prescott points out, this response is composed by 'a community of professional interpreters'. Prescott suggests that such reviews not only present a professional response to a production, but also knowingly influence other theatre-goers, so that 'the review-text stands in and substitutes for the experience of performance, thus blurring the boundaries between performance and criticism, production and reception' (2005: 359). Nevertheless, the very influence of such reviews may dictate to some extent the audience reaction, while simultaneously reflecting the personal response of the author. Bettina Göbels, however, raises a further issue with respect to this combination of personal and public reaction: the reviewers 'tend to reflect the general politics and opinions of their respective newspaper' resulting in a 'double reflection of public opinion' from the perspectives of both the writer and the publisher (2008: 13). Nevertheless, the variety, or homogeneity, of reactions from



different reviewers makes it possible to form an impression of the audience response. I have also viewed or listened to each of the plays either in person or via archive recordings of the productions, which additionally convey audience response such as laughter or applause. In one case, *The Woman Before*, a post-show audience discussion had been recorded. However, any such impressions can only be subjective, both in my own reading and in the audience's willingness to display their reaction. The volume of newspaper reviews, systematically collected in the journal *Theatre Record*, at least supplies a mass of observations which can be analysed to form an impression of the range and distribution of opinions.

My main aim is to map the processes of translation operating in Anglo-Saxon theatrical practices, as exemplified by these eight productions, presented in the Society of London Theatre venues which I discussed in Chapter Two. For each of the productions in my sample, I attempt to uncover the processes which brought them onto the stage, focusing on translation practices; the 'intent' behind the selection of each play; and the extent of the reception and recognition of that intent by the audience. These analyses present an opportunity to attempt an identification of common features among the sample, a review of translation dynamics which may be applicable on a wider basis.

### **3.2 *The House of Bernarda Alba***

Federico García Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* was presented as a 'new English version by David Hare' on the proscenium stage of the 890-seat Lyttelton auditorium at the National Theatre. This is Lorca's last play, written in 1936 shortly before his assassination at the hands of Nationalist elements at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Lorca, identified by Gunilla Anderman as approaching Ibsen and Chekhov in the group of 'honorary British dramatists' (2006: 8), merits a place in the British classic repertoire. Hare, 'one of the great post-war British playwrights' according to the *Independent on Sunday* (Faber and Faber 2009), and a regular contributor at the National, can be expected to fill seats. This production was also supported by accompanying Platform performances of lesser-known Lorca works and screenings of Carlos Saura's 1981 film adaptation of Lorca's

play, *Blood Wedding*, so that enthusiastic followers would have the opportunity to “immerse” themselves in Lorca’s general oeuvre. The most recent Lorca production at the National prior to this run was *Blood Wedding* in a translation by Gwenda Pandolfi at the smaller Cottesloe theatre thirteen years earlier in 1991. David Hare, on the other hand, had been represented at the National as writer or adapter six times in the same period (including twice in 2004, the previous year)<sup>33</sup>. Even so, the programming of supplementary Lorca offerings make clear the respect accorded to the original author alongside the presence of one of the most high-profile of contemporary British playwrights. There was no danger of the reviewers failing to mention the fact that this piece was an English version from a Spanish original, or naming the agents responsible. All clearly distinguish between Hare and Lorca, although they remain largely silent as to the third agent in the translation process, the literal translator. Simon Scardifield, an actor and experienced theatre translator from French, German and Spanish, composed the detailed annotated literal translation from which Hare created the final version for performance.

Scardifield is credited in the programme, albeit between the Design Associate and the Research Assistant in the smaller print of the second page, and acknowledged by Hare in his *Adapter’s Note* to the published text. In theory, any queries Hare might have in relation to the original text when working on his own drafts could be addressed initially to Scardifield as the language expert. However, it is apparent from the annotations in the (unpublished) literal translation held in the National’s archives that the literal translator was at pains to pre-empt such queries by providing substantial linguistic and cultural detail. A comparison of the literal translation and Hare’s text suggests to me that Hare had read and was influenced by earlier translations, as, indeed, he acknowledges in his *Adapter’s Note*, referencing Tom Stoppard’s 1973 English version and Nuria Espert’s 1986 production (García Lorca 2005a: vi)<sup>34</sup>. Chapter Five further considers the detail of Hare’s translation in relation to Scardifield’s literal and other translations of *The House of Bernarda Alba*.

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<sup>33</sup> As playwright: *The Absence of War* (1993), *Skylight* (1995), *Amy’s View* (1997), *The Permanent Way* (2004) and *Stuff Happens* (2004). As adapter: *Mother Courage and her Children*, by Bertolt Brecht (1995).

<sup>34</sup> Hare does not, however, mention that Espert’s production was based on a translation by Robert James Macdonald.

Scardifield informed me that he had no communication with Hare during the creative process<sup>35</sup>. Although I formed the impression in interview that he would have preferred a more active role, the lack of communication should not be taken as a measure of his contribution to the process. The limitations perceived by literal translators regarding their role in the translation process are explored further in Chapter Four, section 4.8. However, Scardifield's perception does not necessarily reflect Hare's appreciation of the value of his labours. Scardifield's translation addressed not only translational but also cultural and staging issues in the text relevant to the London audience. That this was needed is acknowledged by the fact that a new literal translation was commissioned, even though there are many extant translations of this play in existence, including scholarly versions. As I outlined in Chapter One, section 1.3, the use of a literal translator is the source of heated disagreement in translation circles, one of the reasons given being the low value in which the literal is held, both financially and in terms of status (as exemplified by the inconsistency of the programme credits). The fact that Scardifield's literal translation was commissioned especially for this production, rather than using one of the existing academic or theatrical texts listed in Appendix A1d, denotes its cultural if not monetary value. Hare's indirect translation required a tailored literal translation, and potential access to the translator. Provided with these linguistic resources, Hare was in a position to create a personalised version.

These circumstances, however, create a conflict of interests: to what extent should Hare claim authorship of this version in relation to the original playwright and the literal translator? He is unable to consult the author, but the privileged position of Lorca in the canon should make it possible for Hare to present this work as his own reading of Lorca's play without fear of compromising the standing of the original. Not all critics, however, agree with this approach, as I discuss below in this section. Nevertheless, Hare's personal narrative is well-known at the National, to practitioners and audience alike, and his name attached to this translation would act as a pointer to the way in which the work would be presented. Hare's identity is that of an explicitly political playwright<sup>36</sup>, commenting on

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<sup>35</sup> Personal interview 30 June 2010.

<sup>36</sup> 'I went into the theatre with political aims', he explained in an interview with John Tusa (BBC 2004).

affairs in his own country and also internationally, as exemplified by his 2009 work for the Royal Court, *Wall*, 'a searching 40-minute study of the Israel/Palestine separation barrier' (Royal Court Theatre 2009c). His interpretation of *The House of Bernarda Alba* as a 'stunningly clear' metaphor for the political situation of its time, still relevant today (García Lorca 2005a: v), enables him to absorb Lorca's work into his curriculum vitae, adding it to Pirandello, Brecht, Chekhov and Schnitzler in his list of adaptations. Thus Lorca and Hare experience a symbiotic relationship, each enhancing the status of the other in the canon for the British audience. The conflicts of culture and interest in this translation are consequently laid out overtly to the onlooker.

Even Hare's legal ownership of the translation is explicitly jointly held: unusually, the published playtext includes a post-publication addendum stating that the copyright is held by 'David Hare and Herederos de Federico García Lorca' (the Lorca family trust) (ibid). The standard position is that the copyright for an original is owned by its author while translators may claim rights over their own translation. The shared copyright in this case suggests that the Lorca family exercises an interest in any additions to its intellectual property, and the question arises as to whether this interest extends beyond the legal to artistic decisions. This would act as a reminder to the reader of the text that Lorca is present in the translation itself and not only the original. It may also put Hare on notice that he has a responsibility to Lorca while working on a version which bears his own name. He has commented, in an article relating to another of his translations, that it is important to him to allow the identity of the original author to be presented (Hare 2006). Although it is not clear how he might achieve that, particularly in situations where he does not speak the original language, it is nevertheless the case that he recognises the position whereby he has to negotiate the conflict between his own and another voice.

Hare's view that Lorca's play 'is not at all some timeless, literary version of Spain' (García Lorca 2005a: v) explains his approach, moving away from the usual treatment of the tyrannical mother enclosed with her five daughters in a stifling, black-clad, white-walled environment. He was supported in this by non-verbal nuances from other members of the production team. Vicki Mortimer's design was far-removed from the customary setting. Bernarda's house, described in a review as 'a handsome Moorish-style mansion, with gilt,

lofty ceilings and stained glass' (Hepple 2005), made a comfortable prison for its inhabitants, who were themselves dressed in fashionable and relatively colourful thirties costumes in the Second Act, although still supposed to be in mourning. Penelope Wilton portrayed Bernarda as a physically fit woman in early middle age, smoking and dancing, whose stick made only a limited appearance as a weapon, not required as a walking-aid. In such ways, the production reinterpreted the repressive elements of the play, downplaying the Andalusian *pueblo* surroundings and presenting the characters as women who speak and behave in a way that is recognisable to modern audiences. While this reading broadens the application of the tensions within the play to a wider audience, echoing the 'universal' appeal lauded by Nicholas Hytner in his 2006 Annual Report, it moved too far for at least one critic, who complained that it 'seems to parachute us into the sexual morality of Cheltenham Ladies College [a traditional girls-only boarding school] as it must have been thirty years ago, rather than into the stifling aridity of conservative Spanish Catholicism at its worst' (May 2005). The Lorca scholar Gwynne Edwards similarly considers the set 'misconceived' and complains that 'because the production was conceived for a southern English audience, it is likely too that, set in the 1930s, it was somewhat influenced by the bourgeois English plays of that period' (2005: 384). This reception reveals an unwillingness on the part of some viewers to accept an overt retelling aimed at a modern audience not necessarily familiar with Spanish culture and history; but it also acknowledges the cultural issues arising from translation and indicates that the audience engages with the translation debate. The intervention of Hare, his documentary style of writing<sup>37</sup> and the cumulative effect of his earlier work is significant in its recognition by the critical reviews. In spite of, or perhaps, paradoxically, because of, its overt acknowledgement of an English audience, *The House of Bernarda Alba* is a visible translation differentiating itself from the original, and the conflicts within its translation framework were readily identified by the audience. This can to some extent be attributed to the specific identity of the named translator, David Hare, and the wider theatrical context in which he was operating.

Hare's standing in the theatre in general and the National in particular also leads me to the conclusion that he was a principal participator in devising this translation project. None of

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<sup>37</sup> Hare describes his dialogue as 'verbatim', which I discuss in greater depth in Chapter Five, section 5.3.

my interviews shed any light on the commissioning procedure for this production, but it is reasonable to assume that an individual with Hare's social capital and reputation would enter negotiations at high levels of management, thus by-passing the Literary Department where most projects are likely to be transacted. In identifying this production as part of a 're-investigation of great plays that will always be staged for the universal truths that they embody' (Royal National Theatre 2006: 5), Nicholas Hytner presents *The House of Bernarda Alba* as the type of cultural product which can be expected to originate at the National. As such, it provides a yardstick against which to measure the remaining plays in my sample. While not claiming it as a typical example of mainstream translation, since my sample demonstrates the variety inherent in the translation process, the National *House of Bernarda Alba* represents what audiences might expect when buying a ticket to see a mainstream translated play: a reinvestigation of a classic by a reliable writer. My case study of this production in Chapter Five considers Hare's interaction with the material of this play in more detail, but I now move on to the other National translation and its points of similarity and difference with the Lorca production.

### **3.3 *The UN Inspector***

Produced in the largest of the three theatres at the National, the Olivier, *The UN Inspector* was advertised as a 'free adaptation of *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol'. David Farr, at the time the Artistic Director of the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith, directed his own adaptation from a literal translation by Charlotte Pyke, an actor and Russian translator.

The genesis of this project is unclear. According to the Stagework website<sup>38</sup> the playwright Patrick Marber suggested, at a regular Associates' planning meeting, putting on a modernised production of *The Government Inspector*. Then David Farr, 'after throwing the

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<sup>38</sup> A website commissioned by Culture Online, part of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and produced in conjunction with the National Theatre. Culture Online is now available as a limited selection of snapshots in the UK Government Web Archive, part of the National Archive. The final snapshot, taken on 3 July 2009, can be seen at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090703120012/http://www.cultureonline.gov.uk/index.html>.

idea around and suggesting it to different directors [...], decided to take on the dual role of both director and adapter' (Stagework 2005). Patrick Marber's involvement in programme planning demonstrates the breadth of experience and ideas drawn upon by an Artistic Director (in this case, Nicholas Hytner). The Associate Directors listed in the Financial Statements for 2003-4 and 2004-5 (the possible periods in question) were Howard Davies and Tom Morris, but a further list of around sixteen 'NT Associates' shows where Hytner might look for advice: high-profile theatre practitioners from a variety of roles, although principally directors and actors.

As far as the idea of updating *The Government Inspector* is concerned, Patrick Marber, a writer, actor and director who started working in television and radio, turning to theatre later in his career, could be expected to provide innovative advice. His play *Closer* (1997), subsequently made into a Hollywood film starring Julia Roberts, is described by Michael Billington (2007: 409) as making the 'wittiest use' so far of new technology, recognising its 'tremendous dramaturgical possibilities'. (The play achieves this by including a scene in which two of the characters engage in obscene and mendacious chatroom conversation in real time, shown to the audience by means of a large back-projection.) David Farr has a similar reputation for taking a fresh approach to the traditional repertoire, having written such adaptations as *Crime and Punishment in Dalston* (2002 at the Arcola Theatre). It is instructive to compare Farr's title of his revision of Dostoevsky's classic work with Patrick Marber's *Don Juan in Soho*, after Molière (2006 at the Donmar Warehouse)<sup>39</sup>. Both are overt updatings and localisations of classic and well-known literary works. *The UN Inspector* expands this genre. Its title, accompanied in promotional material by the rubric 'freely adapted from *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol', makes clear to the ticket-purchaser that they will be viewing a modernised version reflecting current events, but can nevertheless expect to identify the original.

Marber may have identifiable points of similarity with Farr, underlying his involvement with the development of the project, but his role is hazy. The Education Pack for *The UN Inspector*, written by Hanna Berrigan for the NT Education department, attributes the

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<sup>39</sup> The literal translation for Marber's *Don Juan* was translated by Simon Scardifield, an example of the use of the National as a resource for translation recommendations.

inspiration for the updated play to a different source, crediting the Artistic Director, Nicholas Hytner: 'Having seen David Farr's highly-successful adaptation of Dostoyevsky's Russian classic novel *Crime and Punishment*, he asked David to think about weapons inspections in the Middle East as the subject of a new version of Gogol's play' (Berrigan 2005: 5). The fact that alternative versions are available of how the project took shape points to team involvement in a translation project. Ideas are discussed, passed around and evolve in the process, so much so that the shape they eventually form can scarcely be credited to any one individual. On looking back, power and prestige may dictate who ultimately takes ownership (in this case, Nicholas Hytner, a senior figure at the National), as indeed applies to the possession of the translation itself (see my comments below in this section concerning the credit given to the literal translator, Charlotte Pyke).

The finished adaptation is in fact set in an unnamed former Soviet republic, thus maintaining a Russian intertextuality, and the bogus inspector is believed to have been sent by the United Nations, commissioned to investigate the use of international funding in the new country. The programme includes an essay on the Orange Revolution (in the Ukraine), by Timothy Garton Ash and Timothy Snyder, reprinted from the *New York Review of Books*, and the published text dedicates the play 'to the memory of the anti-government journalist Georgi Gongadze whose headless body was found in the year 2000 in the Ukraine' (Farr 2005: np). The transfer of the setting, therefore, from a remote Russian provincial town to somewhere not dissimilar from the Ukraine is not as distant as the move to the Arabian Gulf, which Hytner originally suggested, and therefore retains a geographic resemblance to the original, not to mention the author himself, who was born in the Ukraine. Most of the characters' names are also maintained in a simplified form, the most notable exception being that of the bogus inspector, Ivan Alexandrovich Khlestakov, retained in Pyke's literal translation. He becomes Martin Gammon in Farr's version. As Pyke explains in her *Translator's Notes* (Gogol 2005: np), the connotations of the Russian name are 'whipping, beating, slapping, gurgling and pouring (I think obviously it is a soundscape...perhaps this points at prattling)' (ibid). To convert this to Gammon, with its connotations of 'ham' (which might be understood, particularly in the theatre as 'overacting', 'declamatory' or 'fake') is again not moving so far from the original when the name of this key character is required to give some kind of indication of his motivation. Furthermore, it appears from the *Stagework*



web pages that an early name for this character was Michael Remmington Gammon (Stagework 2006). This preserves, in a manner, the Slavonic adoption of three names, but also may refer to a 1980s United States television character, Remington Steele, a charming rogue impersonating a fictitious detective. These are two examples which show that the adaptation's movement away from the original is limited, possibly no more distant than a translation which eschews the description 'freely adapted'.

Indeed, the translation of proper nouns in respect of Gogol's original has been loosely interpreted since the first translation, as can be seen from the title itself. Early translations transposed the Russian into English as *The Inspector-General* and *The Inspector*, although the work is now best known as *The Government Inspector*. The Russian title, *Ревизор* (*Revizor*), translates as *auditor*, a term still used in modern English to denote an appropriately qualified individual appointed to examine books and records for external verification. Arguably, this title would be more expressive today than the more archaic term of *Inspector*, which has Victorian associations, particularly when coupled to *Government*. The title *The UN Inspector*, then, is hardly a radical translation, localising *Government* to *UN*, and referring back to the accepted English title with *Inspector*. Although billed as a 'free' adaptation, this version does not appear to me to be significantly more 'free' than other translations (including some of those examined in my sample). This appellation may be appropriate to signal the inclusion of a sub-plot concerning a murdered journalist, which did not appear in the original, but could be argued to be commensurate updating, providing a 'back-story' to contextualise the invasion of the townspeople (now 'activists') towards the end of the play.

A comparison between the published playtext and Pyke's literal reveals that departures from the literal translation owe more to modernisation than to appropriation. For example, Osip's opening speech of Act Two, bemoaning his hunger, commences in Pyke's translation: 'The devil take it, I'm so desperately hungry, my stomach is rumbling so much it feels like a whole regiment has just started blowing their trumpets in there' (Gogol 2005: np). Farr's character Sammy wails: 'Christ I'm hungry. [I am utterly famished.<sup>40</sup>] It's like the Iraq war is

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<sup>40</sup> Cut for the performance, according to my own notes from the production recording in the National Theatre Archives.

taking place in my stomach' (2005: 23). In this case, the imagery has been retained but updated. However, where an image retains its immediacy, Farr appears to respect his source, such as at the beginning of the play when his President describes a nightmare: 'I knew something was up. I had a dream last night. There were these rats, giant blue rats, sniffing round my sleeping body, sniffing, sniffing' (ibid: 4). This adheres closely to Pyke's interpretation: 'It's as if I had a presentiment. Last night I had a dream about two extraordinary rats. Seriously, I have never seen rats like them - black and enormous. They came in, sniffed around a bit, and then disappeared' (Gogol 2005: np). A subsequent version of Pyke's translation by David Harrower for Warwick Arts Centre and the Young Vic in 2011 conveys the lines as follows: 'Two black rats. A premonition I had last night. I dreamt about two black rats - massive rats - *monsters*. Never seen rats that size...' (Gogol 2011: 5). Harrower's version was not described as 'free', but his variations from the literal when compared with Farr's display similar propensities of omission and sentence reduction while retaining the core image. It is debateable whether a 'free' adaptation can be measured in any dispassionate sense. However, describing a play as 'freely adapted' enables the adapter to assert his rights as original author, whilst referring to a canonic text. This may be another example of marketing technique to generate recognition in the widest possible audience, but it also provides an illustration of the power struggle inherent in translation.

When evaluating the incidence of the 'freedom' of the translation, it should be taken into account that *The Government Inspector* has historically been the subject of wide-ranging interpretation, even in its original language. In a much-referenced production by Vsevolod Meyerhold in 1926, the play was used to demonstrate 'the director as interpreter and orchestrator of both the *mise en scène* and the text with a confidence that caused shockwaves', according to Paul Allain and Jen Harvie (2006: 96). 'Critics balked at [Meyerhold's] heavily altered adaptation of the play, which he divided into fifteen episodes and interpolated with lines from other works by Gogol' (ibid). It is thus in the tradition of this particular text to play around with the structure and to interpolate items which a theatre practitioner deems appropriate. On closer examination, therefore, it seems that Farr is more respectful of the piece's history than would at first appear, and is in fact following in the footsteps of Meyerhold, 'placing the onus of interpretation on himself as

auteur rather than on the writer' (ibid). This is not an unusual operation in the field of theatre translation, as can be seen from most instances in this chapter. It explains Farr's presence as translator *and* director, but in combining the two roles, Farr demonstrates an activity which in other cases occurs between two and more individuals.

What of the role played by the literal translator, Charlotte Pyke? Even though the programme is explicit in its identification of the play as a reworking of the original ('freely adapted'), it does not mention the translated source of the adaptation or the name of the literal translator. Nor is any reference made in the published text (copyright David Farr), even though a page is taken to dedicate the play to Georgi Gongadze, as mentioned above, and to thank eleven contributors, including Patrick Marber, Nicholas Hytner and Nikolai Gogol. The Education Pack similarly omits reference to a translator, even though it includes a section on *Adapting Gogol* (Berrigan 2005: 5). However, the National's website page for *The UN Inspector* commences with the words: 'Freely adapted from Gogol's *The Government Inspector* by David Farr. From a literal translation by Charlotte Pyke' (Royal National Theatre 2005b). I have not seen Pyke's collaboration acknowledged elsewhere by the National or David Farr. In our interview, she explained the website reference as a late addition at her specific request. She acknowledged that this was her first literal translation and she therefore did not have the experience to insist on recognition, but that, on subsequently discovering that her involvement was not credited, she had contacted the Literary Department requesting identification. Her name was then added and remained on the production's website page as at 24 November 2010. This suggests that failure to acknowledge the literal translator does not stem from unwillingness but rather from a lack of protocol, although it does point to a pervasive overlooking of the literal translation and its creator.

Charlotte Pyke has gone on to produce further literal translations which have been substantially acknowledged. The credits page of the Almeida programme for *Enemies*, for example, is headed: 'ENEMIES (large print)/ By Maxim Gorky/ A New Version By David Hare (medium print)/From a literal translation by Charlotte Pyke (smaller print)' (Almeida Theatre Company 2006: np) before listing the remaining cast and creative credits. The programme also includes a biography and photograph of Pyke, on the same page as Sound,

Casting and Assistant Director, facing the page for Adaptation, Director, Designer and Lighting. This treatment indicates the different conduct accorded to literal translations by the Almeida, although it is not universally applied even by this theatre. It also demonstrates Pyke's increasing confidence and awareness as a translator.

Pyke's presence in her literal translation of *The Government Inspector* is mostly unremarkable, with relatively few footnotes and comments. A literal translation is often the translator's only opportunity to communicate with the indirect translator (or, indeed, communicate with anyone, as the literary manager and the indirect translator are the only people likely to read the literal translation). It is therefore often the case that the literal translation will be heavily footnoted and prefaced, not unlike the annotated translations submitted by the MA students as part of their degrees in Translation Theory and Practice at University College London. Pyke's translation, however, limited the use of footnotes, providing additional information in the form of endnotes. Nevertheless, in the last long speech of the Governor, during which he shouts, 'What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves! You are laughing at yourselves!', she interpolates (in red): '[these lines are the most famous in the play and are usually spoken to the audience]'. Pyke justified her intervention to me as essential because this moment is 'what the play is all about, it goes a long way to explaining the humour of the play'<sup>41</sup>. The lines are maintained in the final version, with a contraction from 'you are' to 'you're' and the video recording shows that they are spoken to the audience, who laugh. Pyke's observation is hardly ground-breaking: a Google search on 'you are laughing at yourselves gogol' produced a result of about 35,600 results in 0.15 seconds on 2 December 2010. Perhaps for this very reason, it would have been a serious omission not to have made this point. Pyke's role as literal translator and her relationship with other practitioners is reviewed further in Chapter Four, section 4.8.

*The UN Inspector* differs from *The House of Bernarda Alba* in claiming to be a free adaptation rather than a version, thus suggesting a greater distance from the original. Both productions, however, resemble each other in prominently advertising their indirect translators, whose signature styles resonate through the translated text. Both productions

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<sup>41</sup> Personal interview 14 July 2010.

move visually away from their originals, *The UN Inspector* in modern dress and design, although located vaguely in the same region as the original. *The House of Bernarda Alba* is set in the same period as its original, but in a very different environment from the norm, as I described above. In spite of their translation classifications, *The House of Bernarda Alba* could be seen as a more radical translation, since it moves further in appearance and acting style from traditionally-accepted presentations whereas *The UN Inspector* has a history of and reputation for adaptability. Even so, *The House of Bernarda Alba* apparently is more representative of what the National likes to present as translation. The play was somewhat warily reviewed, as I discussed above, whereas the notices for *The UN Inspector* were distinctly warmer<sup>42</sup> and the archive recording provides evidence of frequent laughter from the audience at appropriate moments. Nevertheless, it is *The House of Bernarda Alba* which is singled out by Hytner for praise in his Annual Report, whereas *The UN Inspector* goes unmentioned. I now present a third play with National roots, and endeavour to assess whether a discernible trend is developing among my sample.

### **3.4 Hedda Gabler**

The former National director Sir Richard Eyre adapted and directed *Hedda Gabler* for the Almeida, with a subsequent West End run at the Duke of York's Theatre. The play was advertised as a version, and the literal translators Karin and Ann Bamborough are credited in the Almeida projects pack and the published translation. The projects pack states: 'Aware that he was already working at one remove linguistically, [Eyre's] intention was to find out what the characters would say in English...and to copy as far as possible the original cadences of their voices by referring to the Norwegian original' (Manson Jones, Dickenson, and Ingham 2005: 16). It does not say how he achieved this. Recognising a 'Norwegian original' in itself raises issues of identity. Erika Fischer-Lichte points out that the Norwegian language only became official in 1905, so that in some way, 'Ibsen's plays [the last of which

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<sup>42</sup> Of the nineteen reviews collected in *Theatre Record*, six were largely positive, twelve not entirely convinced by the adaptation but praised the direction and performances, particularly that of the actor in the title role, Michael Sheen, and one (Lloyd Evans in the *Spectator*) was disappointed (Shuttleworth 2005b: 816-821)

was written in 1899] are all translations. There is no “original” text’ (2011: 5)<sup>43</sup>. But Ibsen’s engagement with translation is not restricted to Scandinavian language divergences. Even as he was composing *Hedda Gabler* in 1890, Ibsen was already planning the consequences of its translation into German, writing to his publisher, Philipp Reclam, ‘May I ask you at some convenient time to get your translator to write to me with reference to a number of alterations which I think are desirable for a German public (1966: 500)<sup>44</sup>? Not unlike *The Government Inspector*, *Hedda Gabler* has a background of instability which, when subjected to interrogation, can impede any claims to ‘faithfulness’ or, indeed, distance.

According to the Ibsen.net website (a project established in 2001 with funding from the National Ibsen Committee of Norway), the first performance in English of *Hedda Gabler* was at the Vaudeville Theatre, London on 20 April 1891, the same year of the play’s first production (January 1891, translated into German; it was not staged in Norwegian until later that year: June 1891 for two performances only) (Ibsen.net 2011). Even these few facts demonstrate the significance of translation in the history of this play. When considering its translation into English, the role of the translator becomes unusually controversial in the transmission of the play to English-speaking audiences, although generally overlooked in popular summaries and histories of *Hedda Gabler*. From the earliest appearances of Ibsen’s work in English, two translators, Edmund Gosse and William Archer, were associated with the project. Their relationship was publicly combative, and this was particularly evident in the staging of *Hedda Gabler*. Elizabeth Robins, an American actor based in London, conducted negotiations with Gosse, Archer and William Heineman, Ibsen’s agent in London, in an attempt to obtain the rights to stage a production in a workable translation. According to Eric Samuelsen of Brigham Young University, ‘Robins had a rudimentary knowledge of Norwegian from her mother, and had begun to translate the play herself. She soon came to realize that her Norwegian was inadequate, but in working with the role, she began to see how it might be approached from an acting

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<sup>43</sup> Sensitive and complex issues surround the Norwegian language in historical and current usage, with repercussions for the language and orthography in which Ibsen was writing. I use the term ‘Norwegian’ throughout.

<sup>44</sup> Letter written in German on 2 December, 1890, translated by James Walter McFarlane in *The Oxford Ibsen*, Volume VII.

perspective' (Samuelson, Cheng-yu, and Smith 1992: 9). These early details suggest that the playability of a translation, along with copyright and ownership problems, has been a feature of *Hedda Gabler* productions in English from the outset. Indeed, the intrinsic theatricality of translating *Hedda Gabler* is underlined by Maria Irene Fornes's 1998 play, *The Summer in Gossensass*, which fantasises around Robins's discovery of Ibsen and her interpretation of his play (Fornes 2008)<sup>45</sup>. Eyre is following a tradition as a theatre practitioner in wishing both to give his impression of how Norwegian should be conveyed in English and to control the translation for his staging.

The choice of *Hedda Gabler* as a play for production at the Almeida is itself telling in any analysis of theatrical power relations. Whilst this play falls into my sample of translated plays because it was originally written in Norwegian, Ibsen's status in the English-language canon is such that 'it is not always remembered that Ibsen's work is only known in English through the mediation of translation' (Anderman 2006: 8). *Hedda Gabler* is a well-known occupant of the traditional theatrical repertory, particularly popular as a vehicle for more mature actresses. The Ibsen.net Repertoire Database records that there were 358 productions of this play in English between 1891 and 2010, 34 of which were performed in London. Robert Tanitch's review of West End productions in the twentieth century includes 17 entries for *Hedda Gabler* in its index, fewer than *Hamlet* (48) but more than *Antony and Cleopatra* (13) or Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (15) (2007: 323-26). This indicates the continuing popularity of this work for theatre practitioners and audiences alike. *Hedda Gabler's* status is assured and an audience attending a new production such as Eyre's at the Almeida could be expected to hold a pre-conceived notion of what they would see on stage.

Why, then, would Sir Richard Eyre, former Artistic Director of the National, take such an established play to the Almeida, the home of 'bold and adventurous play choices' (Almeida Theatre Company 2010a)? I raised this question with Jenny Worton, Artistic Associate at the Almeida since 2007. As she was not a member of the Almeida team at the time of the decision to stage Eyre's *Hedda Gabler*, she was only able to surmise according to her

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<sup>45</sup> As a Cuban-born playwright and director who also translates plays, Fornes's career represents a long and productive engagement with processes of translation and linguistic transposition.

general knowledge of commissioning processes that Eyre might have wished to signal a difference in his production of the play by casting Eve Best as Hedda. In her early thirties at the time of casting, Best was considered to be a 'young' Hedda. Typical well-known actors who had previously played the role include Harriet Walter (40s) at Chichester Festival Theatre in 1996 and Geraldine James (40s) at Manchester Royal Exchange in 1993. However, both Janet Suzman (*Duke of York's*, 1977) and Juliet Stevenson (National Theatre, 1989) had played the role in their thirties, suggesting that Best was not such a controversial choice.

In fact, Eyre was the Artistic Director of the National in 1989 when *Hedda Gabler* was performed there and noted in his diary,

Howard [Davies]'s production of *Hedda Gabler* has opened in the Olivier. It raises the old questions of how to use that theatre and how to do the classics. The auditorium forces Howard into an expressionistic design and the actors are pulling in the other direction. (2004: 62)

This earlier version was by Christopher Hampton, a well-established theatre translator (directly from French), who was later responsible for the Royal Court's version of Chekhov's *The Seagull*, which I discuss in Chapter Two, section 2.4. Robert Tanitch amplifies Eyre's doubts around the National production, noting that the 'absurdly large set with sweeping staircase, sweeping chimney (to belch out smoke when the manuscript is burnt) and a conservatoire (with glass to be shattered by bullet) was designed to fill the Olivier stage, but architecturally it didn't make sense' (2007: 264). This detail provides a further impression of National staging requirements: a play which has to fill the auditorium of the larger theatres also has to fill the stage. *Hedda Gabler*, one of the most popular classics in the British repertoire, would be expected to sell well, and therefore programmed into the largest theatre. The open-stage amphitheatre of the Olivier is described by Hytner in his online tour of the National as a suitable place for 'big debate plays, big state-of-the-nation plays, big plays about society' (Royal National Theatre 2011a). This depiction explains why *The UN Inspector*, as a critique of contemporary international behaviour, might sit well in the Olivier, but *Hedda Gabler*, a domestic drama set within the confined space of a drawing room, might not look so comfortable. Eyre's desire to reapproach *Hedda Gabler*,



differentiating it from a National production, reveals that lavish funding may have its limitations.

Site apart, Worton's instincts as to the importance of the actor in the Hedda role are supported by additional evidence. Tanitch complains about the National *Hedda Gabler* production: 'Hedda was so rude and unpleasant that it was inconceivable that Tesman was not regretting the marriage as much as she was' (2007: 264). Nevertheless, Juliet Stevenson, in the role, was probably the actor most associated with the part at the time that Eyre was planning his version, and replayed the role in a recording for Naxos AudioBooks in 2002, in the translation by Gosse and Archer. This addition to the Classic Drama series, likely to be used for teaching and personal study purposes, illustrates Stevenson's occupation of Hedda. Indeed, on my own visit to see Thomas Ostermeier's touring production of *Hedda Gabler* in German at London's Barbican Theatre in 2008, I saw Stevenson engaged in intense discussion with her companions. On that occasion, Hedda was played in very youthful style by Katharina Schüttler, who had been only 27 when winning an award for her portrayal in 2006. Ostermeier's reading of the play, in a contemporary set, using a laptop in place of the manuscript, and with a subverted delivery of the famous last line of the play, 'People don't do such things', was markedly different from what I would term the respectful approaches to which the English-speaking audience is accustomed. It seems to me that Eyre wished to improve on the earlier National version by producing a more intimate staging using an actor who had been critically very well-received in a relatively short space of time<sup>46</sup>. The age of the actor in relation to the character (29, according to Ibsen) was less material than the association of being 'new'. However, viewed with the hindsight of the Ostermeier reading, Eyre was continuing very much in the mould of 'traditional' Ibsen stagings rather than offering a 'bold and adventurous production'. Perhaps his National conditioning made it impossible to break

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<sup>46</sup> Best was awarded the London Critics Circle Theatre Award for Most Promising Newcomer and the London *Evening Standard* Theatre Award for Best Newcomer for her performance in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (Young Vic) in 1999, and the London Critics Circle Theatre Award for Best Actress for her performance in *Mourning Becomes Electra* (National Theatre) in 2003.

away. Or perhaps an Ostermeier reading is considered unacceptable to the mainstream London audience<sup>47</sup>.

Eyre himself writes in the introduction to his published translation of *Hedda Gabler* that he took ‘the synchronicity’ of reading an article about a ‘rich posh young woman’ who proclaimed that she had ‘a great talent for boredom’ and watching a production including Best, ‘who seemed born to play Hedda’, as ‘a sign that I should do the play and got myself commissioned by Robert Fox and by Michael Attenborough at the Almeida Theatre to do a new translation’ (Ibsen 2005: 8). I take this to mean not that Best is blatantly rich, posh, young and bored but that Eyre aimed to present a revised reading consistent with current fashions. The statement is revealing in that it suggests that Eyre’s plan for the production was presented fully formed to both the Artistic Director of the Almeida and the commercial producer who took the play to the West End. Eyre had play, translator, director and key actor in place with little left for the decision-makers to do other than reply positively or negatively. This is the prerogative of Eyre’s position as a central figure of power (connected to the National Theatre, a further repository of power) within the cultural field of theatre and theatre translation.

Thus Eyre was able to write his version unencumbered by commissioning briefs from other theatre practitioners. He was translating from a position of power. Does that manifest itself in the translation? The literal translators, Karin and Ann Bamborough, are credited, even though their literal translation was already in existence (produced for the earlier production at the National). Karin Bamborough, now Head of Producing at the National Film and Television School, has informed me that Eyre used their translation ‘without any reference to us, so I had no involvement in the transition from literal to final version’<sup>48</sup>. Eyre refers to the use of a literal again in his introduction:

It can’t properly be called a ‘translation’ because I speak not a word of Norwegian. I worked from a literal version by Karin and Ann Bamborough, and I tried to animate

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<sup>47</sup> Louise Jeffreys, Director of Programming for the Barbican Centre, suggested in her presentation to the 2011 Theatre and Performance Research Association (‘TaPRA’) conference that the Barbican International Theatre audience needed to be expanded from its current constituency of theatre and academic professionals.

<sup>48</sup> Private correspondence, 18 January 2011.

the language in a way that felt as true as possible to what I understood from them to be the author's intentions – even to the point of trying to capture cadences that I could at least infer from the Norwegian original'. (Ibsen 2005: 9)

This suggests that Eyre looked at the original Norwegian. He has some experience of language work, having studied Russian at school, and so it may well be that, similar to the approach described to me by other practitioners such as Ramin Gray and Mike Poulton, he looks at the pattern and sequences of the original language on the page and tries to replicate them in his own writing. Whether this increases the authenticity of the translation is an area for debate larger than I am able to address in this thesis. Eyre, however, recognises that the creation of a translation necessitates the making of choices: 'the choices we make are made according to taste, to the times we live in and how we view the world. All choices are choices of meaning, of intention' (ibid). It is a short step from this statement to Theo Hermans' view that translation 'has an evaluative attitude built into it [...]. While translators may disclaim responsibility for the re-enactment of someone else's discourse in the form of direct speech, they can be held accountable for the diegetic aspect of their mimesis. The decision to translate, the presentation of the enactment and the value judgements that inform the performance are theirs' (2007: 85). Eyre makes it clear that he takes on this responsibility: 'What I have written is a 'version' or 'adaptation' or 'interpretation' of Ibsen's play, but I hope that it comes close to squaring the circle of being close to what Ibsen intended while seeming spontaneous to an audience of today' (Ibsen 2005: 9). Eyre is aware that his own voice speaks through his translation.

The production was very well-received, winning four Olivier awards in 2006 (Best Revival, Best Actress, Best Director, Best Set Design) and two further nominations. The reviewers acknowledged Eyre's role as director and translator, often using the words version and adaptation. An overt example of a review understanding the projection of Eyre's voice through both direction and script can be seen in Toby Young's piece for the *Spectator*: 'Eyre has tweaked the part (he's credited as the author of this version) [...]. In Eyre's interpretation [...Hedda's] boredom and dissipation are depicted as the inevitable by products of a corrupt ruling class' (2005: 702). But Adrian Hamilton in the *Independent* complained that such versions take the play 'a good stage further from the author's

intentions [...]. Richard Eyre's *Hedda Gabler* anglicises Hedda into a sort of wayward Mitford girl [...]. At bottom it's a form of cultural imperialism' (2005: 406). Hamilton resents the use of the medium of translation to 'interpret' a work in a foreign language, although he apparently considers himself qualified to identify Ibsen's 'intentions'. As the other translations in my sample show, interpretation takes place whether or not the translator is familiar with the original language. Indeed, when can interpretation ever be absent?

This *Hedda Gabler* shares several features with the preceding translations in the sample. All are affected closely by the National ethos, even if, in Eyre's case, it is to some extent a reaction against those theatrical exigencies. All have been indirectly translated, and in two cases directed, by high-profile writer/directors who are steeped in the conventional English theatre tradition. All were developed from literal translations created by English-speaking theatre professionals with a good knowledge of the original language (but who received very little acknowledgement or consultation). All presented themselves with a purposefully English face, which was remarked upon by the reviewers. All were based on originals which had a history of translation. I turn now to a translation with a very different genesis from the above three, but which also emanated from the Almeida, and can be usefully contrasted to provide a further insight into the practice of theatre translation.

### **3.5 *Festen***

*Festen* enters this research sample by way of its commercial production at the Lyric Theatre Shaftesbury Avenue in London's West End, but it was first shown at the Almeida Theatre in 2004. The published text states on the cover that it is 'by David Eldridge. Based on the Dogme film and play by Thomas Vinterberg, Mogens Rukov and Bo hr. Hansen' (Vinterberg et al. 2004: np). The programme also attributes the Dogme film and play to Vinterberg, Rukov and Hansen, but labels Eldridge's work, 'a dramatisation'. Information released by Premier Public Relations on behalf of the Almeida stressed the originality of this production with the appellation 'World Première' and an emphasis on 'this new adaptation' (Premier Public Relations 2004). There is no mention of a literal translator in any of these documents. From the print evidence, at least, the method of creation of this piece, and its

transfer from Danish film to English-language play, is unclear, although the number of names connected with the English playtext suggests a wide circle of collaborators.

Only when Jenny Worton, Artistic Associate at the Almeida, suggested that I spoke to Marla Rubin did the genesis of this project become apparent. Rubin is a freelance producer with experience in documentaries and film production, but, as I learned in a personal interview with her, the production of *Festen* the play was both a personal and a professional commitment with career-changing intentions and consequences. To understand Rubin's involvement, it is necessary to consider the antecedents of the play.

*Festen* (The Party) was released as a film in 1998 by the Danish Dogme 1995 collective, a group of filmmakers formed with the intention of differentiating their approach artistically and organisationally from Hollywood-style procedures. *Festen* was the collective's first film. Made in Danish, and released outside Denmark with subtitles, it was nominated for, and won, a large number of awards, including at the Cannes Film Festival, largely in the 'Foreign Film' category. The success of this and subsequent films brought Dogme international attention and, to some extent, notoriety, largely as a result of the combination of subject matter (*Festen* deals with the revelation of incest at a family patriarch's birthday party weekend) and its matter-of-fact exposition. The collective's narrative approach is codified in a manifesto and ten film-making rules, labelled the 'Vow of Chastity', which require simplicity and transparency in filmic techniques. For example:

- 1 Shooting must be done on location.
- 2 The sound must never be produced apart from the images or vice versa.

The rules, while largely adhered to in *Festen*, have mainly gone on to be broken by the collective itself in later films. Further information regarding the Dogme group and the making of *Festen* is covered in Claire Thomson's forthcoming volume (Thomson forthcoming).

Marla Rubin saw the film in 1999 and spent the next four and a half years bringing an adaptation to the stage. She negotiated the rights with Dogme, identified David Eldridge and Rufus Norris respectively as the writer and director for the project, and presented a

completed package, including theatre script, to various London theatres. In the resulting bidding war, she chose to work with the Almeida because, in her words, Michael Attenborough, the Artistic Director, was 'very good at knowing how to nurture things'. In interview, Rubin takes personal possession of this project at all stages. She sees herself as an 'ideas producer', claiming, 'I create an idea and try to make it happen from inception'. She saw her role in the production of the playtext as editor, particularly in evolving a structure for the play prior to detailed writing. She stresses the importance of producing a new work for the stage and declared herself 'horrified' to have been presented with an English playscript by the Dogme collective, as she had been clear 'from the get-go' that the film would need to be remade in a substantial adaptation if it were to be suitable for stage production<sup>49</sup>.

The translation of *Festen* can therefore be differentiated from the other translations in my sample because it overtly displays the features of intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation, as labelled by Roman Jakobson in his essay 'On linguistic aspects of translation' (2004: 139), since it constitutes transfers from English script to English playtext, Danish script to English script, and Danish film to English play. It is clear in discussion with Marla Rubin that several agents participated in this process: the Dogme collective, within which she conducted negotiations with at least two individuals, Thomas Vinterberg and Mogens Rukov; David Eldridge, English writer; Rufus Norris, British director; the Almeida staff, headed by Michael Attenborough; and, not least, Rubin. And yet within this collaborative process, Rubin distinguishes herself as the driving force behind the project. She could not have accomplished it alone, but she was present at all stages of the process, and indeed still participates, as the owner of the stage rights for this translation, in the production of *Festen* on stage, around the world and translated on into further languages. I hesitate, however, to identify these further translations as relay translations. Rubin sees the English playtext as a work distinct from the film, emphasising that 'you can't compare the two; each is a gem in its own way'<sup>50</sup>. Commercially, this is corroborated by the fact that the playscript produced by the Dogme collective appears to have been sold separately from the rights to convert

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<sup>49</sup> Personal interview, 15 July 2010.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

the film to the play obtained by Rubin. Rubin's *Festen* and Dogme's *Festen*, even when appearing on stage, will be structured and presented differently. How much meaning then, returning to Jakobson, has been 'captured'?

The playwright David Eldridge insists that he is an adaptor and not a translator, with no knowledge of Danish and little formal training in any language other than English<sup>51</sup>. Nevertheless, he takes moral ownership of the text uttered by the actors and heard by the audience, and consequently he takes at least partial responsibility for the transmission of meaning. His ownership is indicated by several means. Firstly, the published text, while asserting the rights of Vinterberg, Rukov and Hansen 'under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as authors of this work' states that 'David Eldridge has adapted this work for performance in the English language. This edition of *Festen*, first reprinted in 2005, incorporates revisions made to the text in rehearsal and should be regarded as the definitive version' (Vinterberg et al. 2004: np). His name is thus clearly associated with the text, even more so as the only authorial name on the spine of the published book. Secondly, having seen the film he produced a draft document setting out the narrative structure for the play in order to conduct negotiations with the Dogme group<sup>52</sup>. This short document demonstrated revisions to the film narrative which reflected Eldridge's own playwriting technique of enclosing a small number of characters within a limited space and focusing on certain key properties. His play *Under the Blue Sky*, for example, restricts the action to three consecutive pairs of characters, loosely connected with each other, in a domestic setting. The first act is largely dominated by a kitchen knife, the second by a bed (Eldridge 2000). His *Festen* is similarly dominated, in turns, by a dining table and a bed and reduces the number of characters from the screenplay to a smaller number of protagonists of more even weighting within the ensemble, all connected to the family within which the main plot device of incest takes place. In this way, Eldridge underlines the intertextuality between the reworked structure and his own original work. The lengthy, and at times tense, negotiations which took place in relation to this document suggest that an implicit ownership contest was understood by all participants.

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<sup>51</sup> Personal interview, 26 January 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

The third indication of Eldridge's ownership of the text, and a demonstration of how his understanding of meaning is transmitted to the audience, is his approach to writing the adaptation. He explained to me that, when producing his first drafts for translated plays, he prefers to refer only to the English translation from which he is working so that his version is more likely to reflect his personal response to the original piece. He will then do any research he finds necessary, which could include information about the author, the subject matter, the context or the translation itself, and make further drafts as appropriate. This is his adaptation process, applied here to *Festen*, but also developed in the several Ibsen adaptations he has created (working with the same literal translator each time, Charlotte Barslund). He only differentiated between Ibsen and *Festen* to the extent that the original authors were still living and therefore might wish to approve the adaptation. Nevertheless, he told me that he was prepared to take a stand to defend his work and creative decisions, whether adaptation or original, while it was in the writing stage and in early rehearsal. However, he made the point that later in the production process he was more likely to accept changes and step back to being part of the team where an adaptation was involved. This to me indicates two important features of the theatre translation process: firstly, that the final translator consciously creates their own reading of the original work, which is overtly presented as such to the audience by means of naming that translator; secondly that this reading is mediated and refracted by other theatre practitioners during the process of staging the performance, which although less overtly stated is nevertheless implicit in the extensive list of cast and creative participants in the programme, and selected individuals from this list in promotional material.

A fourth indication of Eldridge's ownership lies in the production information released prior to the press night (an early performance to which theatre critics are formally invited, and on which they base their opinions which will form the published reviews likely to influence the sale of tickets). The need to balance sales-generating information with accurate creative credits resulted in the lines: 'Rufus Norris directs the World Première of David Eldridge's English Language stage adaptation of *Festen* (The Celebration) [sic]. This new adaptation of the original Dogme film and play, opens [...]' (Premier Public Relations 2004). The production is flagged as new, carefully applying the term to Eldridge's adaptation. This is necessary because an English-language play, closely based on the film script, was given to



Rubin during the negotiation process. This play had already been performed in London by the time Eldridge's version opened, but in Polish with English surtitles, in an 'avant-garde production' directed by Grzegorz Jarzyna, at Sadler's Wells (Bassett 2002). Thus Eldridge's association with the Almeida's production was crucial, distinguishing it from the alternative adaptation and enabling his text to be identified as new. Whilst the relationship between the film and Eldridge's play is stressed, and was mentioned in most of the reviews, very little reference is made by the critics to the other play.

I hesitate to write 'original play' because, even after interviewing Eldridge, Norris and Rubin, I am not clear to what extent Eldridge's version is dependent on the Hansen script. Rubin suggested to me that the script was written for her when she first approached Vinterberg and Rukov about bringing an adaptation of the film to the stage. However, in her book on *Festen* the film, Thomson cites Rukov attributing the creation of the play to 'Somebody in Germany' (forthcoming: 127). Thomson observes, based on Danish and French versions of the text, that the 'dramatisation is indeed very close, in terms of language and narrative shape, to the original film; many lines can be recognised more or less verbatim' (ibid). My comparison of Eldridge's published play with the English subtitles of the film (Vinterberg 1998) suggests to me that Eldridge may have been working from an English script based on the film, as the dialogue frequently resembles the subtitles. However, his adaptation does not confine itself to reducing the expansive surroundings of the film's mansion-setting to the theatrical stage. It re-orders parts of the narrative, releasing the revelations of the patriarch's molestation of his children at different points in the evening from the film's account. Act One, Scene Three of Eldridge's play also reworks a film sequence which cuts between three conversations in different rooms, bringing all six characters onto the stage around one bed and requiring the actors to perform their dialogues as if still in three separate rooms, with the conversation moving between each pair every few lines. Eldridge's adaptation thus displays his familiarity with dramatic stage technique and his confidence in the actors' ability to portray a theatrical device convincingly, allowing him to move away from a purely filmic representational narrative. Rubin gave me the impression that agreeing the revised structure of the play was the most significant and testing area of negotiations with the Dogme group. Eldridge's comments in the *Festen* Projects Pack supports this:

I wanted to shift the order of things that happened in the story, in order that it would work better in a theatrical context. This led to some big debates because their story had been grown so organically and so carefully. They made a rule that I could cut things but that I couldn't change the narrative order of scenes: I had to fight for them to trust me and to understand that any re-ordering was for good reason. (Manson Jones and Dickenson 2006: 10)

Eldridge's words demonstrate his struggle to claim some kind of ownership of the English play.

The conflict was not apparent to the critics. Reviewing Eldridge's version in the *Independent*, Kate Bassett had apparently forgotten that she had seen a play of the film in a different production just over a year before, writing, 'You may wonder why anyone would rework Thomas Vinterberg's celebrated Dogme film *Festen* for the stage' (2004a: 396). Susannah Clapp in the *Observer* pointed out that 'some 40 versions are now being staged around the world' (2004: 398), apparently referring to Hansen's play, but not making that distinction. Only Michael Billington in the *Guardian* compared the two productions:

Thomas Vinterberg's original 1998 Dogma film had the feel of docu-drama. A recent Polish stage version turned the story into doom-laden Shakespearean tragedy. Now David Eldridge's adaptation heightens the work's element of black comedy. (2004a: 397)

Billington's ability to differentiate between original and adaptation demonstrates his understanding of theatrical processes: each production reflects the personalities of its immediate creators but also subscribes to an intertextuality with its predecessors and the wider literary field in which it is situated. Thus Eldridge's *Festen*, in my opinion, is an excellent example of the 'architextuality', developed by Theo Hermans from Gérard Genette (Hermans 2007: 32), which characterises translation generally but is more clearly marked in theatre translation. This play owes its existence to a film of the same name, shares many characteristics with another play of the same name, and bears the marks of the original film's developers, the Dogme collective, along with the distinctive style of its adapter, Eldridge. Yet it can also stand alone.

I have referred to this production as 'David Eldridge's *Festen*'. However, as I described at the beginning of this section, this play overtly displays an unusually highly-populated circle of collaborators. The producer Marla Rubin played a key conceptual role in bringing together the collaborators and smoothing the path for them to progress their work. I explore this further in Chapter Four, section 4.3. Compared with the three foregoing translations in my sample, *Festen* has a varied background, both in source and progenitors. The main differentiating factor is the identity of the personality publicly associated with the translation. In the three previous cases, the indirect translator has been the principal name connected to the translation. The *Festen* reviews frequently acknowledge Vinterberg, Dogme and Eldridge in establishing the play's credentials, displaying a difficulty in awarding possession of the translation, but nevertheless using a writer as referent. They do not, however, mention Marla Rubin. Thus in a highly collaborative enterprise, the identity of the participants may not be recognised in proportion to their activity. The next play in the sample explores this phenomenon further, as a commercially successful play where the vision and control apparently extends beyond the indirect translator.

### **3.6 *Don Carlos***

Friedrich Schiller's *Don Carlos* was commissioned by the Sheffield Crucible Theatre, where it was performed from 2 September to 6 November 2004, thereafter transferring to the Gielgud Theatre in London from 28 January to 30 April 2005. Chapter Two provides some background to both the Sheffield and Gielgud theatres, with which this production was associated, along with an introductory discussion of the role of its Director, Michael Grandage. At the time of the production he was fulfilling three positions which have a bearing on this translation: Associate Director of the Sheffield Theatres, Artistic Director of the Donmar Warehouse theatre in London and Director of this production of *Don Carlos*. I discuss his role as Director and Artistic Director in relation to the translation in Chapter Four, sections 4.2 and 4.5. In order to consider the context of the translation itself, however, it is useful to note Grandage's status in the London theatrical field at the time of

my sample, and the effect it is likely to have imposed on both the creation and reception of this translated play.

Grandage's achievements in theatre are set out on his website<sup>53</sup>, where it can be seen from his lists of awards and transferred productions that he has been spectacularly successful since his career began at the Sheffield Theatres, and particularly in relation to the Donmar Warehouse. His Donmar predecessor, Sam Mendes, had departed in order to develop a burgeoning career in Hollywood and there was doubt as to whether Grandage would be able to continue the artistic and financial trajectory which Mendes had initiated. In the event, Grandage has consolidated his own and the Donmar's reputations as creators of innovative and well-crafted theatre productions and furthermore instituted outreach both into affordable West End productions (a season at the Wyndham Theatre in 2008-09) and more experimental productions showcasing young directors at the Trafalgar Studios in a three-year agreement beginning in 2010. Furthermore, his grasp of administrative matters provides a solid financial foundation for creative practice. That he chose to include the following extract on his website reveals the importance he places on organisational stability alongside artistic activity:

In 2008, Michael announced that the Donmar organisation had secured the purchase of the Donmar Theatre site on Earlham Street. In 2011, he announced the Donmar had also secured the purchase of their own offices, rehearsal studio and Education space in Dryden Street, Covent Garden. (Grandage 2011)

Fundamentally, Grandage's approach to theatre and his reputation indicate both a deep personal involvement on his part with all aspects of production and a predisposition among the participants and receivers to look beneficially on any project in which he collaborates. These effects are displayed on analytical consideration of the translation of *Don Carlos*.

Prior to Grandage's production, *Don Carlos* had rarely been seen on the London stage, with only limited appearances elsewhere in English. The RSC transferred their 1999 production from the Other Place (the third Stratford-upon-Avon theatre, used for studio productions)

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<sup>53</sup> <http://www.michaelgrandage.com>

to the Barbican Pit theatre (another studio theatre used for small productions and audiences) in 2000. A review for this production declared:

It ought to be a matter of some shame that this is the first production of Schiller's play that the RSC has put on but it probably won't be. It's a shame that it's so rarely performed and, consequently, better known in this country for the Verdi opera.  
(Cooter 2000)

This was apparently the only production appearing in the main London theatres for at least 100 years: Robert Tanitch's *London Stage in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, which covers 'all the London premieres of world playwrights, all the major classics and modern revivals, and all the major visitors from five continents' (2007: 1), does not list *Don Carlos*, and notes only two productions of Schiller's *Mary Stuart*, in 1922 (ibid: 67) and 1958, the latter in a translation by Stephen Spender (ibid: 172). Bettina Göbels, in her PhD thesis *The German classics on the British stage* (Göbels 2008) lists six *Don Carlos* productions after 1945 prior to the Crucible production, two of which emanated from London theatres: Bridge Lane Theatre, Battersea (1986) and the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith (translated by Peter Oswald in 1992). Both of these theatres were situated in West London suburbs and therefore considered as fringe or local venues. The remaining productions originated in Cheltenham (1975), Manchester (directed by Nicholas Hytner in 1987), Glasgow (1995) and Stratford-upon-Avon (1999), with only the latter touring to London's Barbican Pit, as mentioned above (ibid: 233 - 37). Yet since the Sheffield 2004 production, Schiller has been further represented in London at the Donmar by *Mary Stuart* (in a version by Peter Oswald and directed by Phyllida Lloyd, 2005) and *Luise Miller* (in a version by Mike Poulton and directed by Grandage, 2011), while Mike Poulton's versions of *Mary Stuart* and *Wallenstein* were produced by Clwyd Theatr Cymru and Chichester Festival Theatre respectively, and his *Don Carlos* revived in a student production at the Oxford Playhouse, all in 2009. Göbels' analysis demonstrates that Schiller has been performed more often than is apparent from studying Tanitch, but nevertheless the Sheffield production was greeted as a fresh approach.

Matthew Byam Shaw, who brought the production to London as producer, takes the view that this *Don Carlos* revitalised Schiller for an English-speaking audience. Göbels comes to a similar conclusion, and gives her reasons as follows:

Grandage's status in the theatre world is one explanation [for the reaction from the press], but the reason for the overwhelming, unprecedented attention to and success of a Schiller play in England was the fact that this was the first production to combine three crucial factors: star theatre; a domesticating translation that avoided Schiller's Shakespearean borrowings without descending into a prosaic or inappropriately restrained style; and a high degree of political topicality that gave spectators a heightened sense of relevance and urgency of the themes. (ibid: 215-16)

I am reluctant to apply the label 'domesticating' to this translation, and discuss its style in more detail below. However, I do agree that direction, cast, translation and contemporary approach combined to promote this production. It has generated interest in a neglected dramatist, filled the Donmar, and given Poulton and Grandage a stream of work over the seven years since it first appeared.

The SOLT advertisement for *Don Carlos* at the Gielgud in 2005 used the label 'adaptation'. However, this production, of all in my sample, has had the largest variety of descriptions, and was the most opaque when it came to identifying its means of translation. The cover of the published text proclaims itself to be 'a new version by Mike Poulton' (Schiller 2005: np), whereas the London programme terms it a 'new adaptation' on the title page (which was also used for the publicity posters), but a 'new translation' in the cast list, while identifying Poulton as the 'Translator' in the biographical pages. The Sheffield programme adopts the terms 'new translation' and 'Translator'. Nowhere in the literature can be found any indication of whether there was a literal translation. Poulton writes in his published 'Note on the Adaptation':

Where I am competent in the language I am to work in, I make my own literal translation before beginning the serious, and lengthy, business of adaptation. In languages where I am not competent – most of them – I commission a literal translation (ibid: xiii).

Intriguingly, he does not disclose which applies in this case, but goes on to say that he studied the play at university, so it seems reasonable to assume from this information that

he has a working knowledge of German, which would be corroborated by the use of the term ‘translation’. This turns out not to be the case, as I discuss later in this section.

That adaptation, version and translation can all be applied to this one text might perhaps reflect Poulton’s admission in relation to another of his translations that he ‘cut the play brutally, re-ordered scenes, combined characters or invented new ones, and underpropped the whole thing with new and more plausible action’ (Jackson 2006: np). Furthermore, Poulton admits in his ‘Note on the Adaptation’ of *Don Carlos* that he was ‘faced with the task of bringing it in at under three [hours]’ (Schiller 2005: xiii). In the event, he accomplished this task comfortably, the London performances running for 2 hours 50 minutes, including a 15-minute interval, according to the Gielgud Theatre Programme<sup>54</sup>. A comparison between Poulton’s text and Schiller’s original immediately demonstrates how Poulton approaches his work; the very first scene of the play provides an example, shortening the lines of both speakers significantly, and completely cutting Carlos’s last soliloquy (Schiller 1912: 9, lines 122-27), replacing it with the opening stage direction, ‘Carlos looks as if he’s falling apart mentally and physically’ (Schiller 2005: 5). The translated text continues in this vein.

A glance at Poulton’s other translations and adaptations (for example, his *Morte d’Arthur* for the RSC, 2010), suggests that his use of virtual scissors is a trademark, and might well be one of the reasons he was commissioned by Grandage to produce the translation of *Don Carlos*. Grandage is known for his spare productions of Shakespeare; Michael Billington’s review of his 2011 *King Lear* for the Donmar represents the general reception:

the miracle of Michael Grandage’s production is that it is fast (under three hours), vivid, clear and, thanks to a performance that reminds us why Derek Jacobi is a great classical actor, overwhelmingly moving. (Billington 2010)

This review could apply equally well to *Don Carlos*, even down to the critique of Derek Jacobi’s performance (he played Philip II, the main role in *Don Carlos*). It overtly sets out

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<sup>54</sup> Poulton’s efficiency in condensing and cutting probably had more than artistic appeal for Grandage: overtime payments become payable after three hours, so an ability to keep within this limit may be crucial to the production budget.

some basic features of Grandage's *modus operandi*. But it is also clear that Grandage imposes his vision on the production in ways which affect the entire *mise en scène*. He tends to work with a regular group of collaborators, who accept his multi-faceted directorial supervision. Interviews with the creative team for the Sheffield Theatres Creative Resource website display a recurring theme of responding to Grandage's detailed ideas. Paule Constable, the Lighting Director, for example, who later won an Olivier award for this production, reveals that 'Michael was also acutely aware of the pace that the play requires and he uses both music and light to make links and keep a rhythm of change' (Sheffield Theatres 2004b). The Music and Sound Score Composer, Adam Cork, also described their collaboration as follows:

What he generally does when we work together is firstly to go away and sit down with the play by himself and read and make notes. I picture him imagining very strongly how the production will be as Michael is a very intensely imaginative director. So he starts off with ideas and then he emails me a document. (Sheffield Theatres 2004a)

This insight portrays Grandage engaging with an existing script as he consolidates his plans for the production; in this case presumably a script created by Poulton. However, his interventions continue into rehearsals, according to an unattributed Diary on the same website:

Michael [...] briefly clarifies a stage direction with Mike Poulton. (Sheffield Theatres 2004d)

Michael adds that they may create a 'silent' scene prior to Scene 10 [...] as he feels the audience need to know how the King has these items in his possession in the following scene. (ibid)

Michael amends tiny details to ensure that the audience is clear and that the scene plays truthfully. (Sheffield Theatres 2004c)

Grandage is indeed behaving as one would expect a director to behave: orchestrating the creative output of the whole team in order to present his over-riding interpretation of



Schiller's play. The information available on the creation of this play in translation is unusual. As Eva Espasa has observed, when asking for permission as a research student to attend rehearsals, 'A theatre director rejected my petition, on the grounds that rehearsals were like a love affair between him and the performers, and he did not want voyeurs' (2000: 61). However, the Sheffield information is notable in that it publicly exists (Grandage pointed me to it himself), and that it demonstrates the teamwork involved in staging a translated play. Teamwork in which the lead figure is not necessarily the translator; however, that translator may well be present and consulted for any revisions.

There was further teamwork related to this translation, although very much less public. Only in a personal interview did Poulton reveal to me that he did in fact use a literal translation for his indirect translation. He commissioned it from Christine Madden, who I assume to be the 'writer, translator, dramaturg and arts journalist' who was also one of the 2010 judges for the *Irish Times* Theatre Awards (Irish Times 2010)<sup>55</sup>. Although this was the least visible literal translation in my sample, it was the most active site of collaboration: Poulton told me that he worked with Madden on a regular basis, and even cancelled a meeting with me because he needed to discuss translation issues with her. This was the only instance of a literal and an indirect translator meeting in my sample. When I asked Poulton why Madden had not received a credit for her translation, he seemed surprised, explaining that in his experience literal translators preferred not to be mentioned, often because they held some other more formal employment. However, I have since seen what I assume to be indirect translations by Poulton from Swedish (Strindberg's *The Father*, Chichester Festival Theatre, 2006) and Norwegian (Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, Almeida, 2008) and not found a literal translator credit. On the other hand, the Chichester Festival Theatre production of Eduardo de Filippo's *The Syndicate* (2011) is also described as 'a new version' by Mike Poulton. In this case, he prepared his own literal translation from Italian. I obtained this information from Poulton himself when I unexpectedly met him at a preview of the production. The programme is silent on the matter, and therefore the manner of the creation of the playtext remains a mystery to the public, for this as so many other translated plays. When I queried the apparently random use of the appellations

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<sup>55</sup> I was unable to contact Christine Madden to arrange an interview.

translation/version/adaptation for *Don Carlos* with its producer, Byam Shaw, he admitted that applying each term had been a matter of quite delicate negotiation. It would seem then that the use of translation/version/adaptation terminology serves more as a reminder that translation is a site of contention than providing an indication of the detailed processes involved in creation.

Göbels is equally unfocused on the manner of translation, taking this view: 'The power of the habitus makes it necessary for a foreign play to be anglicised, not only in terms of fluency [...] but also in terms of taste' (2008: 33). I understand her to suggest that all German classic plays must therefore be adaptations, and that this is a result of the style of the performed translation rather than the fact that it might be reworked from a literal translation. The incidence of literal translations she sees rather as a mark of the 'lower, more ancillary status of translating' in British rather than German theatre (ibid: 63). Consequently, she does not attribute what she sees as the 'domesticating' nature of this translation to the use of the two-stage method. Although Göbels does not pursue this theme in any detail, she acknowledges its controversial nature, concluding: 'Though this is often criticised by translation theorists as part of the parochialism and cultural xenophobia of the British theatre world, it has paved the way for the German classics' (ibid: 231). For Göbels therefore, in contrast to many translation critics, domestication is not necessarily a negative attribute and has brought about the assimilation of neglected German classics into the English repertoire. She nevertheless remains hopeful 'that after Schiller has been established in the dramatic canon in Britain, audiences will be ready for a return to more faithful versions' (2007: 439). I cannot agree that this Sheffield *Don Carlos* is in some way a domesticated second best leading to future perfection. For me, the features that made the production stand out, the decisions of the director, cast and translator and the topicality of the treatment of the subject matter, can only be assessed in the context of the time and place of their creation. The team combines to highlight the translation.

When compared to the foregoing translations in this Chapter, *Don Carlos*, displays a variety of features. Once again, the named translator worked on a largely unacknowledged pre-existing translation. Like the first three translations, *Don Carlos* is a revision of an established classic; and like all four, it is presented with an English outlook (Göbels cites the

use of the phrase ‘the authority of Parliament’ (Schiller 2005: 118) as an example of ‘domestication’ (2008: 216-17)). As for *The UN Inspector* and *Hedda Gabler*, an argument can be made for reworking a shifting original - the Marquis of Posa character in *Don Carlos* is an inserted fictional character within a historical frame, an intentional anachronism which allows Schiller to ‘use a sixteenth-century setting to challenge the political absolutism of the eighteenth’ (Schiller 2005: vii). Like the National translations, *Don Carlos* makes oblique references to current events in its critique of the power of state and religion. And like *Festen*, the translation is the result of an orchestrated collaboration, the vision of an individual outside the formal translation process: in this instance, Michael Grandage. My next play differs from the foregoing in that it is a direct translation, and I consider whether the translational features identified up to this point can still apply in this circumstance.

### **3.7 *Hecuba***

Tony Harrison describes himself in his 2008 play *Fram* as ‘a grubby Yorkshire poet with a bad degree in Greek’ (2008: 10). Although he appears to have carried out a direct translation of *Hecuba* for the RSC, produced at the Albery in London, the play was described as a ‘version’ in the publicity. The published text calls itself ‘a new translation from the Greek by Tony Harrison’ (Euripides 2005: np) and was subsequently included by J. Michael Walton in his ‘Comprehensive List of all Greek Plays in English Translation’ (2006: 243), the requirement for inclusion being ‘fairly rigid adherence to the original’ (ibid: 7). Nevertheless, the use of the term ‘version’ in this case hints at a degree of freedom from the original. I explore the relationship between this play and other translations, along with their refraction of the original, in Chapter Six, during which I also discuss the genesis of this translation project and the role of Tony Harrison as translator/adaptor. In the current section, I address the contextual effects on the translation

This production appears in my sample by virtue of its appearance at the Albery Theatre in the West End (since renamed the Noël Coward). The ownership history of the theatre

building itself provides a potentially comparable background to the peregrinations of this translation, as it appears to have been through a succession of investors in freehold, long and short leases, including the Ambassador Theatre Group, Associated Capital Theatres and Delfont Mackintosh Theatres, all prominent names in commercial theatre. At the time of the *Hecuba* production in 2005, the Albery was managed by the Ambassador Theatre Group, but moved into the management stable of Delfont Mackintosh Theatres shortly afterward on 19 September 2005. Delfont Mackintosh had already acquired a leasehold interest in the Albery in 1999 from the owners of the freehold, the Salisbury Family Trust's Gascoyne Holdings (Delfont Mackintosh Theatres 2011). The theatre premises were therefore under differing levels of control, even between competing producers, at the time of the *Hecuba* production. This cloudy history and subsequent name change suggests that the Albery was experiencing troubled times when it hosted *Hecuba* in Spring 2005. Whilst this should have no direct bearing on the translation, the stability of the physical site of performance is crucial to the effective function of the production team. As I discuss in Chapter Six, this production was not well-received in London, and there must be a question as to whether an underlying discomfort can affect the creation and portrayal of a play.

As the RSC had no regular residency in London, the Albery provided a temporary base for the 2005 London season. The following year, Michael Boyd (RSC Artistic Director from 2003) opted to show transferred productions at the Novello Theatre. The theatrical site of the RSC London season was in itself controversial after the then Artistic Director of the RSC, Terry Hands, had suspended the RSC contract with the Barbican Theatre in 1990-91, a decision confirmed by the next Artistic Director, Adrian Noble (1991–2003). Given that the Barbican Theatre had been designed specifically to RSC specifications as a permanent London base, the cancellation of this contract (ostensibly to save money) caused consternation at the time and, judging from the RSC's future London trajectory, provoked distrust of the RSC among London theatre management. It was 2010 before a more permanent agreement for a regular base in London was agreed, and then only a five-year contract with the Roundhouse in North London. Again, this background may appear barely relevant to the *Hecuba* translation, but it reveals a long-standing unease within the RSC management, at odds with the Company's cultural standing as one of the top recipients of ACE funding, second only to the National Theatre. From my own point of view, I have found

the RSC least likely to co-operate with my research: letters and emails requesting interviews remain unanswered, despite several reminders. When I finally managed to contact more junior staff, they would only speak to me off-the-record. My experience suggests a pattern of behaviour: I learned at the 2011 TaPRA conference that a Professor of Theatre and Performance conducting oral history research for a new book had succeeded in interviewing all his identified subjects apart from Boyd, having therefore to use material already in existence as opposed to new interviews from the other high-profile theatre practitioners (Pitches 2011)<sup>56</sup>. A culture of non-communication among senior management can filter down to affect creative projects. My case study suggests that this might be a possibility in the *Hecuba* translation.

The production of *Hecuba* also experienced scheduling challenges. As I explain in Chapter Six, section 6.3, its genesis within the RSC commissioning procedures was unusually fast. This may have been related to the involvement of the leading actor, Vanessa Redgrave, and the topicality of the approach. Unusually, all performances in the Stratford home venue were cancelled due to Redgrave's illness, and the theatre remained closed for the nights when the play should have been performed. Even where a performer has the status of Redgrave, it is rare for a production to be closed rather than shown with an understudy. Notably, the RSC had recently announced a new policy with regard to understudies, with Boyd declaring that they were 'the hidden talents of the theatre' and introducing 'understudying performances' for which the audience would be charged 90 per cent less than the normal ticket prices (Alberge 2004). Furthermore, where a principal role is occupied by a box-office draw, the RSC has a history of using an understudy, most famously replacing the *Doctor Who* star David Tennant by his understudy, Edward Bennett, for large stretches of the London run of *Hamlet* in 2008 (Billington 2008). Nevertheless, for Redgrave and *Hecuba*, the theatre was closed by her indisposition, and the entire Stratford season cancelled, with the production premièring in London on 7 April 2005. The clue to this decision might be revealed by the note in the RSC's financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006: 'Other income was boosted by an insurance payment of £0.2m relating to the

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<sup>56</sup> Jonathan Pitches, *The Russian Tradition in Britain Today*, Abingdon: Routledge 2011. Includes interviews with Declan Donellan and Katie Mitchell.

cancelled *Hecuba* performances in late 2004/5' (2006: 8). However, the previous year's glossy Annual Report attributed a net cost of £0.9m and lost income of £0.5m (2005a: 27-28) to the cancellation of *Hecuba*, which suggests that the insurance payment was insufficient to compensate for earlier losses. Therefore, even with recourse to insurance compensation, a loss would result from cancellation. It may not be unreasonable to draw a conclusion that there were problems additional to Redgrave's illness affecting this production, as Chapter Six discusses in further detail.

Thus a troubled production found itself in a troubled theatre: both of them about to change hands and apparently in need of refurbishment. This might be seen as an example of paratextual influences on translation, as I explore in Chapter Six, section 6.4. In *Hecuba*, as in my previous plays, the culture of the organisation commissioning and hosting a translation is transmitted to the production and the text. Further similarities, which are analysed in detail in Chapter Six, are the retranslation of a classic, well-known work by an established writer of English; overt manipulation of the text and performance to reference current events; and the evidence of collaborative input in the text and production. My final two plays, like *Hecuba*, were directly translated from the original language. Unlike *Hecuba*, they were both recent plays translated into English for the first time and therefore might be expected to present a contrast to the foregoing plays in my sample, as I now discuss.

### **3.8 *Way to Heaven***

David Johnston was commissioned by the Royal Court to translate *Way to Heaven* (original title: *Himmelweg*) for the first full professional staging of a play in London by one of Spain's leading modern dramatists. Juan Mayorga's work had been staged in Spain, Croatia, Portugal, Venezuela, Argentina and the USA (Theatre Catalyst, Philadelphia, a fringe theatre) by that time, both in the original Spanish and in translation. Even so, Johnston was effectively introducing a play and an author which were both relatively new to English audiences. Mayorga is also a *new writer* in the sense that he was born in 1965 (in Madrid) and his first professionally performed play was staged in 1992. He fits the Royal Court profile as an author who takes on challenging themes, as demonstrated by *Way to Heaven*

and his other work. In 2003, he published his study, *Revolución conservadora y conservación revolucionaria. Política y memoria en Walter Benjamin*, to which I shall return, which supports his dramatic output by strengthening his political and intellectual credentials for the Royal Court repertoire. He had also been awarded several prizes for his theatrical work by 2005, including the Premio Enrique Llovet for *Himmelweg* in 2003. In short, Mayorga had recognition and a substantial track record in Spain and elsewhere; already the author of a defined body of work, he was unknown only in the sense that his work had received very limited exposure in London and to other English-speaking audiences. The translation therefore had to reflect the fact that this was the work of a confident, established and well-regarded playwright while acknowledging its unfamiliarity but simultaneous suitability for the Royal Court audience.

The advertising material addressed this as follows:

The heart of Europe. 1942. Children playing, lovers' tiffs, a deserted train station and a ramp rising towards a hangar. This is what you can see, but what should the Red Cross representative report say?

Juan Mayorga was a participant on the Royal Court's International Residency 1997. WAY TO HEAVEN has previously been produced at the Teatro Mara [sic] Guerrero, Madrid by the Centro Dramatico [sic] Nacional. His other work has been produced in Spain and around Europe as well as in Argentina, Venezuela and USA. (Royal Court Theatre 2005a)

The biography emphasises Mayorga's links to the Royal Court, his status within the Spanish theatrical field and his international standing. The play is positioned in Europe - vaguely, considering the text itself specifically places the action 'thirty kilometres north of Berlin' in the first spoken lines of the play (Mayorga 2005: 19). The circumstances of the setting are made personal to the audience ('This is what you can see...') and the wartime context referred to only obliquely by including the date 1942. The image accompanying the advertising material, of a clock-face with shadowy figures super-imposed, is equally mysterious. The invitation extended to the prospective audience is open in its scope. Does the translation reflect the flexibility of this invitation?

*Way to Heaven* has been described by its translator as a work of ‘extended monologues and hypertheatricality [...] where the monstrosity of the Holocaust is reflected through the story of the camp at Theresienstadt’ (Mayorga 2009: 13). The play reflects upon the report of an unnamed Red Cross Representative who, on visiting a concentration camp, fails to notice that the apparently well-treated Jewish prisoners are following a script devised and stage-managed by the camp Commandant. The camp station clock permanently stands at six and a ramp leading from the station to a closed-up hangar is called ‘the way to heaven’. The visit is discussed and displayed from the differing perspectives of the Red Cross Representative, the Commandant and Gershom Gottfried, a prisoner. Johnston’s direct translation is from Spanish, but once in its English translation, the genesis of the play is obscured as only its original language gave any clue to its source culture.

Mayorga has changed some of the historical details of the notorious Red Cross visit to the concentration camp in what is now the Czech Republic, creating a fictional camp and characters whose motives and allegiances are of more relevance than their nationalities. As I have pointed out, the site of the play’s action is explicitly set thirty kilometres north of Berlin in 1942. There are no allusions to Spain, other than the Commandant’s inclusion of Calderón alongside Corneille and Shakespeare in his library (Mayorga 2005: 41-42), and the fact that the clock’s balances originated from an earlier clock built in Toledo (Mayorga 2004: 20). The international nature and themes of the play for its Spanish audience would have been underlined by the title, a German word: *Himmelweg*. The first lines spoken explain that this means ‘Camino del cielo’ in the Spanish version (Mayorga 2004: 13), translated as ‘way to heaven’ in English. This German-language title has been retained in translations of the play into other languages such as French, Italian and Norwegian, but the Royal Court production used the English translation of the title for the reason, as I have heard informally that foreign-language titles, particularly in German, are perceived to be less favourable for ticket sales in London<sup>57</sup>. This anecdotal explanation is supported by the reference of the advertising material to ‘the heart of Europe’ rather than Berlin, echoing the Commandant’s enigmatic words (Mayorga 2005: 48) which implicate Europe while

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<sup>57</sup> David Johnston in answer to a question at the conference *Translation: Process and Performance*, Institute for Germanic and Romance Studies, University of London, 24 November 2007.



querying German responsibility. Looking back to the Royal Court's concern, expressed in the financial accounts as I discussed in Chapter Two, that its work 'presents a challenge to the Press, Marketing and Development departments', it is possible to discern here an example of external influences imposed on the translator: commercial imperatives, in this case built on cultural assumptions, may interfere with the transmission of the author's intention and the translator's scope.

These cultural assumptions are not necessarily shared. The official website of the off-Broadway production of David Johnston's translation at the Teatro Círculo in New York between May and August 2009 shows *Himmelweg* prominently in brackets below the English title of the play (Way to Heaven The Play 2009). The published French translation translates 'Himmelweg' on the inside cover as 'Chemin du ciel', in brackets, but not on the outside front cover (Mayorga 2006). The Spanish published text does not translate the German into Spanish other than in the course of the playtext itself (Mayorga 2004). The English published text operates the same non-translation approach but reversed in that 'Himmelweg' only appears in the playtext and is not used to subtitle the play (Mayorga 2005). Similarly, it was not used in the advertising material. The absence of this German title serves to blur the site-specificity of the Royal Court production and translation, at least prior to arriving at the theatre or opening the text. It offers the play as a subject for open interpretation. A review of Mayorga's drama suggests that in this, the translation was echoing a persistent theme of his composition.

Mayorga broadly adopts a pan-European approach in his work. His plays make international references to place, such as *Hamelin* (2005) and *Love Letters to Stalin* (1999), and even, perhaps in an allegory for his work as a whole, a train crossing western Europe in the case of *Blumemberg's Translator* (2000). His work also 'draws upon, and enriches itself from, the radical philosophical tradition of Montaigne, Kant, Benjamin and Agamben', according to Johnston (Mayorga 2009: 14), thus covering a wide range of European philosophy. On the one hand, this pan-European approach is reflected in the geographical vagueness of the Royal Court's advertising material. On the other hand, the translation of the play's title into English, especially when compared with the strategies I discussed above, to some extent negates the otherness of the play and the fact that it deals with issues outside London

boundaries. It presents theatre practitioners, including the translator, with the challenge of signalling the cultural conflict inherent in the original title to an English-speaking audience unfamiliar with Mayorga's work. In the event, such signals were attempted once the audience had been drawn inside the theatre, in various ways. Johnston, as translator, retains the back-translation of 'Himmelweg' in the first utterances of the play, and this was very clearly articulated and repeated by the actor playing the Red Cross Representative. Even before that, the props list and rehearsal notes show that each member of the audience was to be presented with a book supposedly from the Commandant's library on entering the theatre, these books being "classic European paperbacks" from several different European countries in their own language<sup>58</sup>. These props would serve as a reminder to the spectators of the inter-lingual nature of the play, but also draw them into the creative process in a gesture of inclusion.

Does this inclusion process, already noted in the advertising material ('This is what you can see [...]'), sharpen or blur the cultural conflict inherent in the play? It might be expected that the international nature of this play's characters and subject matter lessen the pressure on the translator to negotiate cultural difference. The play already presents a neutral canvas: the Red Cross Representative is not connected with any national allegiance. The cultural dilemma for the translator is whether to pursue the indeterminate portrayal of the character, permitting the viewer to impose their own back story, or to intervene in the script to clarify that the Red Cross Representative must be from a neutral country (Switzerland, in the historical event). In other words, should the translator go beyond the original text to make explicit to the English audience that this is not an English play? Johnston's translation maintains the neutrality of the original with no furtherance of the Anglicisation of the title. The effect of this can be seen from the newspaper reviews. Out of 13 reviews collected in the journal *Theatre Record* (Shuttleworth 2005c), two specifically identify the Red Cross representative as British or English<sup>59</sup> demonstrating the extent to which the audience identifies with the character, domesticating his nationality. On the other hand, ten reviews include a reference to Spain, suggesting that the writers are clear

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<sup>58</sup> My own notes from the Royal Court prompt book for *Way to Heaven*, viewed 15 April 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Nicholas de Jongh in the *Evening Standard* and Paul Taylor in the *Independent*.

about the provenance of the play, but not concerned with the implications of its translational status: only three reviews include the word 'translation' and only one critiqued it - 'lucid', *The Times* (ibid: 850). The name of the translator is shown prominently close to that of the author in the publicity material and the programme/text, along with a reference to the International Playwrights series. The importance of the paratext in identifying and locating the translation is thus evident, but even so the receivers choose to focus on other aspects of the play from their own national perspective.

Possibly, this reception of *Way to Heaven* demonstrates Mayorga's intended affect. Interviewed in *El Pais*, he explained: 'Ese personaje [...] se parece a mí y a mucha gente que me rodea, que queremos ayudar, pero acabamos siendo cómplices de acciones crueles o injustas' (Vallejo 2008)<sup>60</sup>. Perhaps a portrayal of everyman is appropriate here. Johnston has the advantage of access to Mayorga, and indeed has written in respect of his translation of *Nocturnal* that Mayorga works with the translator and is prepared to rewrite if necessary (Mayorga 2009: 14). The subject matter of Mayorga's plays and his detailed study of Benjamin also indicate on his part an interest in the theory and practice of translation. *Way to Heaven* itself reflects upon translation and the relationship between author and translator. Specifically, the Commandant appoints Gottfried as his psychological translator to pass on his directions to the other prisoners: 'You will find the right words' (Mayorga 2005: 47). His words comment on the importance of the translator's role and the significance of collaboration in translation for performance.

When I consider this direct translation, I see similar cultural negotiations to those taking place in the creation of an indirect translation, the distinction being that they might be conducted between a smaller number of agents because the cultural tensions are distributed differently. David Johnston, who translated Juan Mayorga's *Way to Heaven* in my sample, for production at the Royal Court, notes Mayorga's 'willingness to work collaboratively with new directors, actors and translators, to re-assess as new sensibilities engage with his plays' (Mayorga 2009: 14). As Ana Gorría Ferrín critiques, the axis of

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<sup>60</sup> 'That character [...] resembles myself and many people around me, who want to help, but end up complicit in cruel or unjust actions' (my translation).

Mayorga's work is his use of metafiction<sup>61</sup>. His narratives and characters are open to transformative interpretation, and he says himself that none of his work is ever finished or in a definitive version (personal interview). Mayorga informed me that he likes to work with Johnston because of his active approach as a translator: another indication of his acceptance of being part of a team. Mayorga played a double role in the *Way to Heaven* translation team: dramaturg for the translated play and writer of the original. Furthermore, Mayorga takes on the task of indirect translator himself on occasion, such as his 2011 version of Büchner's *Woyzeck* for the Centro Dramático Nacional at the Teatro María Guerrero in Madrid. He sees the strengths he brings to indirect translation as those of the dramaturg and prefers to leave linguistic translation to an expert<sup>62</sup>. In other words, Mayorga is happy to be a team player in the production of translated work, be it his own or that of another playwright. For him, a specialist in the work of Walter Benjamin, there is no stable text and no perfection, and other contributors enrich the creative process.

*Way to Heaven*, then, bears some similarities with my foregoing sample, in spite of its direct translation from a new play. It accommodated its English audience, in title and cultural specificity, which was made possible by the flexibility of the author and a shifting Spanish text. Thus it was also a result of collaboration. The name of the translator was displayed prominently on the theatre's website and in the text, although not in the SOLT advertisement, a fate shared with the other translators of contemporary plays, David Eldridge and David Tushingham, whose work I discuss in the next section. David Johnston's name may not constitute the box office draw of David Hare or Tony Harrison, but he combines a high academic profile with a reputation for creating performable theatre translations, including versions and adaptations<sup>63</sup>. Perhaps a focus on the identity of the translator is of less significance with a new play, which does not have to distinguish itself

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<sup>61</sup> My own notes and translation from 'Poesis, memoria y ficción en dos experiencias teatrales contemporáneas: Griselda Gambaro y Juan Mayorga', seminar given at UCL, 2 February 2011.

<sup>62</sup> Personal interview, 2 November 2010.

<sup>63</sup> For example, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, adapted by David Johnston (2008) and Molière's *The Miser*, in a new version by David Johnston (2010), both for the Belgrade Theatre Coventry.

from foregoing translations, but it may also be related to the Royal Court emphasis on the writer. I consider this further in my next and final play of the chapter.

### 3.9 *The Woman Before*

Roland Schimmelpfennig is a contemporary German playwright, seven of whose plays have been selected by the Goethe Institute as representing major new German plays since 1999/2000 - *Der goldene Drache* (2009), *Hier und Jetzt* (2008), *Die Frau von früher* (2004), *Vorher/Nachher* (2002), *Die arabische Nacht* (2001), *Push up 1-3* (2001), *Vor langer Zeit im Mai* (2000) (Goethe Institut 2011). His work has been produced in over forty countries. A description of Schimmelpfennig's plays as 'surrealistische Textmontagen[, die] scheinen von García Marquez [sic] oder Antonioni inspiriert'<sup>64</sup> (Kultiversum 2011), provides some insight into the cross-border intertextual references which may be found in his plays and the extent to which his creations lend themselves to translation.

*Die Frau von früher* (Schimmelpfennig 20004) became *The Woman Before* (2005) in a direct translation by David Tushingham, a regular translator from German for the Royal Court, who has also translated other Schimmelpfennig plays for performance in London: *Arabian Night*, premièred in 2002 by the Actors Touring Company ('ATC'), and, more recently for the same company, *The Golden Dragon* at the Arcola Theatre in London, 2011. Tushingham, who I discuss further in Chapter Four, section 4.7, worked as a Literary Assistant at the National Theatre, and then extensively in Germany as a dramaturg, and has tended to specialise in translating modern German-language plays. He has also authored a book of interviews with theatre practitioners, *Not What I Am: the experience of performing*, which explores 'that strange collision between the worlds on and off stage, between the performers and the audience' (1995: np). His credentials as a theatre translator from German into English are therefore impeccable, meeting both linguistic and performability

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<sup>64</sup> 'surreal text montages which appear to be inspired by García Márquez or Antonioni', my translation.

requirements. His, however, is a name known to the Literary Departments and commissioners of translations, but not a ticket-sales-booster.

The same could be said of Schimmelfennig himself within the boundaries of the United Kingdom. Modern German plays are not widely known or produced in London, in spite of the best efforts of the Goethe Institut. Dramatic performance works in German were more likely at the time of my sample in 2005 to be associated with opera than theatre: the Online Review London, for example, included two operas by Richard Strauss (*Salomé* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*), three by Richard Wagner (*Twilight of the Gods*, *Siegfried* and *The Rhinegold*), Alban Berg's *Lulu* and Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. That is seven out of a total of thirty-five reviews, or 20%, for six venues (English National Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Glyndebourne, Richmond Theatre, Sadler's Wells, Bridewell Theatre) in the 2004/5 season (Online Review London 2005). Such popularity does not translate through to theatre. Göbels points out the rarity of classic German plays in Britain since 1945 (2008: 80). Certain twentieth-century playwrights, especially Bertolt Brecht, receive regular productions. However, the presence of two German plays in my sample of eight (the only other language represented twice is Spanish) surprised me. The trend towards an increase in German translations, generated by the success of *Don Carlos*, would not have been apparent at the time of commissioning this translation. Even though it is a direct translation, this Royal Court production resembles its German colleague in displaying marks of absorption into the mainstream English repertoire, as I discuss below.

In Chapter Two, I describe the composition of the Royal Court as two theatres: the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs (seating 400) and the Jerwood Theatre Upstairs (seating 90) (Royal Court Theatre 2011). As Chris Campbell, the Royal Court's Literary Manager somewhat laughingly explained to me, the Downstairs theatre is the reason for the inclusion of the Royal Court in SOLT, with its more mainstream offering<sup>65</sup>. The other play in my sample from the Royal Court, *Way to Heaven* translated from Spanish, was shown Upstairs, as is usually the case with translated modern plays. Classic translated plays are more likely to be shown Downstairs, for example, Eugène Ionesco's *Rhinoceros*, translated by Martin Crimp; Max Frisch's *The Arsonists*, translated by Alistair Beaton; and Chekhov's *The Seagull*, in a version

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<sup>65</sup> Personal interview, 10 January 2011.

by Christopher Hampton, all in 2007. The latter, as I pointed out in Chapter Two, section 2.4, was a notable departure from the Royal Court's practice of commissioning direct translations from source-language speakers, but all were attached to prominent names in the playwright/translation field. It is unusual for a modern translated play to be produced Downstairs. A recent exception is Marius von Mayenburg's *The Stone*, translated by Maja Zade, in 2009. Neither of the names in this translation project is widely known, but an earlier Mayenburg play, *The Ugly One*, was revived Downstairs in 2008 after achieving a sell-out Upstairs in 2007 (Royal Court Theatre 2007). This revival, along with two other plays, was christened the 'Upstairs Downstairs season' by the Royal Court in a wry nod to a long-running television series portraying the lives of an upper-class Edwardian household and their staff. It might also be possible to read into this title a reference to the second-class status of translated plays.

*The Woman Before* joined the select group of translated plays in the Downstairs category. During the course of my interview research with a selection of Royal Court practitioners, no firm answer came to light as to why this might be the case. Neither Schimmelpfennig nor Tushingham had previously provided a best-seller for the Royal Court box office, though both were respected writers. However, it is thought that Ian Rickson, the Artistic Director, knew Schimmelpfennig personally and supported the production of his play. As I note in Chapter Two, section 2.4, this play was not incorporated into the repertoire as part of the International season or series, but rather included in a Downstairs season made up of new plays from up-and-coming English writers, including Debbie Tucker Green (*Stoning Mary*), Richard Bean (*Harvest*) and Jez Butterworth (*The Winterling*). At six weeks, it had one of the longest runs of the season (Royal Court Theatre 2006: 8). It was not promoted as an international play, but with the following blurb:

"You swore that you'd love me for ever"

Frank doesn't recognise the woman at the door. She's come to remind him of a promise made twenty years before. She tells his wife, 'Frank and I were lovers, and still are'.

Roland Schimmelpfennig's previous work includes PUSH UP for the Royal Court and ARABIAN NIGHT for ATC. His plays have been performed throughout Germany at theatres including the Schaubhne [sic], Berlin and the Deutsches Spielhaus, Hamburg. (Royal Court Theatre 2005b)

It is notable that the name Frank also exists in English, so that the blurb is not pointedly international. The synopsis for Schimmelpfennig's previous play at the Royal Court, *Push Up*, translated by Maja Zade and performed Upstairs as part of the 2002 International Playwrights scheme, is even more purposeful in its reminder of universality:

Everyone wants to get to the executive suite. Everyone wants the Delhi job. Everyone wants sex, everyone wants love. So, they push for it. Push Up is set in a world we all know: the world of work. (Doollee 2011)

The paratext demonstrates the subtlety with which Schimmelpfennig is made accessible to the English audience while displaying its international background.

Even this assimilative technique does not fully explain this play's presence Downstairs, but, having arrived in the larger auditorium, the play was endowed with a creative team which should justify its inclusion. Both female roles were played by actors seen regularly on television, in particular Helen Baxendale, who had played an important supporting role in 1998 as the love-interest of one of the main protagonists of *Friends*. This Warner Brothers television series garnered immense international popularity, running from 1994 to 2004, still available in boxed sets and satellite channel repeats as I write. The other familiar creative name was that of the director, Richard Wilson, best known at the time for his portrayal of the character Victor Meldrew in the BBC television series *One Foot in the Grave*, and the recurrent catch-phrase, 'I don't believe it'. These popular cultural associations were more appropriate to a mainstream play, and the Downstairs venue, although the question remains as to how Schimmelpfennig's play was deemed appropriate for this cast and site.

One clue lies in an interview given (to an unnamed interlocutor) on 5 June 2005, reproduced on Richard Wilson's website. He points out in answer to the question, 'Do you have ultimate choice on what plays you direct at the Royal Court Theatre? What do you



look for?’ that, as an Associate Director at the Royal Court, he reads a large number of plays anyway, and that ‘[t]he thing about Roland Schimmelpfennig’s play was that there aren’t many people writing that sort of stuff in Britain at the moment and it was just a page turner inasmuch as you never knew what he was going to do next’ (Richard Wilson Archive 2011). Wilson stresses the importance of new plays and new writers at the Royal Court, but otherwise does not address the question of his own choice.

Further information can be gleaned from the recording of a post-show talk at the Royal Court on 24 May 2005. The then Literary Manager, Graham Whybrow, discussed the play with Wilson and four of the actors, revealing, on his own part, a familiarity with the play and its themes:

We can’t speak for the writer, but there is a kind of visitor’s logic here in Britain, which is predominantly Anglo-American in its theatre culture. When you see a new German play, you tend to make slightly false connections with other German plays, because we don’t quite get into the detail of where this writer is sitting. It represents a challenge to us as a theatre to try and break out of that and connect again with continental European theatre, Eastern European theatre, because we find it quite challenging to the directors, to the actors, to the designers. The plays in a sense take you to a place that you wouldn’t otherwise go, which is appealing<sup>66</sup>.  
(Whybrow 2005)

I interpret Whybrow’s statement as a desire to present this play as ‘not-English’, but also as ‘not-German’: to strip away any tendency to stereotype or appropriate. Perhaps he identified this play as particularly suitable for such treatment, and Wilson agreed to direct accordingly, underplaying the German context and emphasising a universality of approach.

The subject matter of the play lends itself to a non-culturally-specific treatment as it makes strong connections with Greek myths, most obviously Medea’s revenge of the poisoned robe (in this case, a gifted bag from former lover to wife, causing spontaneous combustion), and the extended chorus-type monologues of a minor character. In fact, the reviews refer more to links with Greek tragedy than to the play’s German provenance (Shuttleworth

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<sup>66</sup> My transcription.

2005d). This may indicate that Whybrow's intended effect was achieved. However, there is also the possibility that any German-ness is downplayed for another reason: its unreliability at the box office, as suggested by the translation of *Himmelweg*, discussed in the previous section. There was no question of removing *The Woman Before* from Germany; all the character names were retained, including that of Romy Vogtländer (a potentially challenging enunciation for an English-speaking actor), and the character's name Claudia was pronounced in the German way. Almost subliminal hints were used to reference things German: the Props List cites a marker pen that is 'German made', and the Rehearsal Notes call for 'a set of Mercedes car keys'<sup>67</sup>. Nevertheless, the affect of this play, recounted by the audience contributing to the post-show discussion, was one of formality and distance. Both the play and its reception can perhaps be summed up by the actor playing Claudia, Saskia Reeves:

We were struggling in the last week [of rehearsals], and I remember thinking, if this is Beckett we wouldn't argue so much, and then I remembered Brecht and cheese. Richard [Wilson] also said, this is a European play, this is a German play. These aren't English people<sup>68</sup>. (Whybrow 2005)

I assume that in her reference to Brecht and cheese, Reeves is thinking of the cheese ceremony in the Prologue of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Meg Mumford recounts an anecdote concerning Brecht's direction of that scene, and his insistence in rehearsal on using a real piece of cheese as a prop to 'help build the episode into a historical moment' (2009: 104). One of the characters in this scene also speaks the line: 'You see, our goats didn't like the new grass. Different grass, different cheese, see?' (Brecht 2009: 4). Reeves displays her awareness of Brecht's concepts of epic theatre and *Verfremdungseffekt*, thus associating Schimmelpfennig's work with alienation, otherness and, for good measure, Beckettian absurdity. It would appear therefore that the audience's reception of 'distance' reflected the Royal Court's approach to the play.

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<sup>67</sup> My own notes from the Royal Court files for *The Woman Before*, viewed 15 April 2009.

<sup>68</sup> My transcription.

The play was thus presented as 'Other' rather than 'German' and, not unlike *Way to Heaven*, approached its English audience by way of non-cultural specificity, offering classical references and what the audience considered as the universal theme of love. Schimmelpfenning's writing lends itself easily to this treatment, as can be seen from the inter-cultural composition of his other plays - *Arabian Night*, for example, concerns a diverse group of immigrants (2002), *The Golden Dragon* is set in a 'Thai/Chinese/Vietnamese fast food Restaurant' serving an assortment of generically described characters such as 'The Grandfather' and 'First Stewardess' (2011: 19,21). Furthermore, my comparisons of Tushingham's submitted draft, the published text, the prompt book and the performance recording reveal that there were barely any amendments to Tushingham's translation. This of course could reflect Tushingham's professional competence in writing performable English, but in my opinion also demonstrates the classical simplicity of the German in which it is composed: a German which invites translation.

How, then, does *The Woman Before* compare to the previous translations in my sample? Of the eight plays, its translated text appears to display the least intervention from London theatre practitioners, and even the translation itself seems to me to be the closest follower of its source text. It is apparently a long way from the overt adaptations of the *UN Inspector* or *Hecuba*. Nevertheless, there are signs of its approach to its English audience. Like *Hedda Gabler* and *Way to Heaven*, the source-language play expects to be translated, and sits easily on the English stage, received at face-value by the reviewers. Like most of the plays, *Way to Heaven* being the possible exception, there was an element of celebrity casting, both on- and off-stage, bringing the play into the domestic arena. So *The Woman Before* slipped into the English repertoire, recognised more for its allusions to Greek tragedy than for its German origins, and joining the cohort of translated plays on the London stage.

### 3.10 Conclusion

These brief summaries of the translated plays in my sample give an indication of the variety of processes which arise when a playtext is translated into English for the mainstream

London stage. The translator may be composing for his own use as director, or at the request of a director; may be using a literal translation prepared by a theatre specialist or translating from the original in consultation with its author; may work regularly with a specific playwright or a particular genre. The practice cannot easily be divided into distinct types and the practitioners themselves move between different procedures, as will become clearer in the next chapter. Also, as I mentioned earlier, the use of the word 'celebrity' to refer only to indirect translators does not seem appropriate when studying my sample. All the direct, indirect and literal translators of the sample are known in their field, many are also more widely recognised by the theatre-going public. All are selected as theatre specialists by the commissioners of the translations. And in most cases, a lesser-known translator is supplemented by a celebrity elsewhere in the production. The exception to this practice is possibly *Way to Heaven*, where the contributors were seasoned professionals rather than household names, but as this production was shown in a studio theatre it is likely to have been operating on a smaller budget and also had fewer tickets to sell. This practice does, however, indicate the importance of a 'package' when putting together a translation team: a degree of visibility is deemed to be required in the production.

One of the most noticeable, but possibly least useful, trends in my sample is that of possessing the name David: this is the case for five of the eight translators. Taking a more theoretical approach to this observation, it is striking that all the direct and indirect translators, directors and playwrights in this sample are male, with the least visible contributors, some literal translators and a producer, being female. As Lori Chamberlain asserts:

Feminist and poststructuralist theory has encouraged us to read between or outside the lines of the dominant discourse for information about cultural formation and authority; translation can provide a wealth of such information about practices of domination and subversion. (2004: 319)

It would certainly appear from this sample that there is information to be gleaned about the visibility of the (dominated and subverted?) literal translator. There is unquestionably a lack of celebrity in the sphere of literal translations. I consider the status and visibility issues for literal translators in the next chapter. However, the above analyses demonstrate the

fundamental role played by the literal translator in the production of the translation. In particular, I suggest that, as for indirect and direct translators, stagecraft skills are as much as a priority as language ability. This is evident from the use of literal translators who are well-grounded in theatre, from literary departments or as practising actors. In every case, these translators pursue a career connected to performance in addition to their translation work. This is significant to their part in the collaborative process.

Five translators were named in the SOLT advertisements, a mixture of direct and indirect translators. If a celebrity sells tickets, this suggests that celebrity names are used for direct as well as indirect translations: the advertisers are not distinguishing between translation processes when including the name of the translator. I would argue, however, that they are muddying the translation waters by using other terms. None of the plays with named translators are labelled as translations in the advertisements: they are offered as versions or adaptations, although they may be described as translations somewhere in the accompanying literature. In naming the translator whilst denying the translation, these advertisements suggest that it is not translation skills being sold, but something else: the translator's voice and its expression of the original play. In my sample, it is the recognized plays from the theatrical canon that are tied by advertisement to a celebrity name. New plays are apparently not considered to be in need of being linked to a new voice. In my view, this suggests that the identity of the translators is relevant for what they add to the performable text - their novelty value. The advertisers need to give their prospective audience a reason to buy a ticket for a play they have seen before, hence the name of the translator and, invariably, the appearance of the word *new* in the advertisement. This blurs the association of 'celebrity' with indirect translation alone and suggests that it has further uses.

My proposition is that the use of a celebrity translator highlights the act of translation and the existence of translations themselves as what Sirkku Aaltonen, borrowing from Derrida, suggests might be 'supplements of their source texts'<sup>69</sup>. The fact that the audience is not seeing the original text is pointed out to them by the prominence of the translator's name.

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<sup>69</sup> In her unpublished paper, 'Translations as Supplements in the Theatrical Practice of Drama', presented at the IGRS conference *Translation: Process and Performance*, 23 - 24 November 2007.

In a further twist, the translator, particularly the indirect translator, is expected to produce a text with which the audience will feel comfortable: a 'domesticated' text whose 'transparency' will contribute to Venuti's invisibility of the translator and the translation. Paradoxically, in my view, the celebrity translator chosen for the position they adopt towards the text, that evaluative attitude of translation which Hermans points out 'is inscribed in and comments on the actual translation' (2007: 85), is more visible precisely because of their overt intervention in the text. Their role is not to mediate, but, as Mona Baker describes, to 'participate in very decisive ways in promoting and circulating narratives and discourses of various types' (2005: 12). I am arguing here that the celebrity translator adds more than a name to a translation: their presence gives visibility to the act of translation, demonstrates the importance of the translator's voice, queries the mediation role popularly expected of an unseen translator, highlights the collaborative processes of theatre translation and foregrounds the existence of the genre of 'plays in translation'. However, beneath the visible surface of the named translator, the contributions of other collaborators may go unseen. In the next chapter, I delve further into these contributions, and how the collaborators themselves view their involvement.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE AGENTS

### 4.1 Introduction

[T]he atmosphere and the audience are a consequence of the show, and it is always to the show, on what it has to say and how it says it, that we return; and the quality and integrity of the imaginations of those who create it are paramount. To sustain those imaginations we rely [...] on both the ticket-buying public and on the patronage of the state. We will continue to do everything we can to attract both of them. (Royal National Theatre 2006: 5)

With these words, Nicholas Hytner, Artistic Director of the National Theatre, concludes his annual report for the 2006 financial accounts. In this chapter, I follow Hytner's lead and investigate the creative techniques of those who contribute to translated plays in production. I consider how these 'imaginations' are marshalled by theatrical management, of which Hytner is a leading example, into a team responsible for the theatrical performance of a translated playtext. Is the teamwork itself, the collaboration, manifest to the audience in the 'atmosphere' around the play or in the translated text? And how is that visibility managed, creatively and financially? This chapter summarises my conversations around the topic of theatre translation with a selection of theatre practitioners connected with the eight plays in my sample. I interviewed agents involved at many stages of production, from commissioning to presentation on stage, discussing the practical processes of translation for performance in relation to the specific plays in my sample along with the general approach and experience of these agents to theatre translation.

Manuela Perteghella has concluded from her own descriptive study of collaboration in theatre translation that 'inequality in power relations is [...] unavoidable in collaboration' (2004: 195), and I would echo that each power relation is unequal in its own way. My research reveals different levels of collaboration both within and beyond the translation process, much of which is unknown to the audience, ignored by the reviewers and discounted by theatre practitioners themselves. I discuss these issues as they arise in each section, but they are rarely discrete and there is therefore a certain amount of cross-

referencing between sections, as indeed between different agencies. I have grouped my interview subjects under broad headings which provide the closest descriptions of their role, but it became obvious during interview that many practitioners have experience of more than one position within the spectrum, and are sometimes fulfilling both simultaneously. Michael Grandage, for example, was both Artistic Director of the Sheffield Theatres and Director of the play *Don Carlos* and these intersecting roles are reflected in the fact that he is therefore included in two sections of my analysis. Similarly with the translators, Mike Poulton, interviewed as an indirect translator, translates directly from Italian and therefore his general views are informed by that practice. Simon Scardifield, interviewed as a literal translator, translates directly for performance, and has acted in translated plays. Several practitioners have worked in a Literary Department at some stage in their career, and most of my interview subjects had some connection to the National Theatre through their theatrical experience.

Such instances are the norm rather than the exception, and for this reason I have not attempted to stratify translation practices along the descriptive lines advocated by Perteghella in her table of nine different types of theatre translation agency (ibid: 114), since it would require the attachment of several labels to each practitioner, creating a graphic web rather than a tabular illustration.

As a prerequisite to my research, I was required to obtain ethical clearance for the interview process, including the approval of a generic questionnaire to be discussed (Appendix B2). However, I tailored these questions for each subject, according to the role and play under discussion. The interviews were also constrained by time factors, the extent of preparation and recollection of the subject and their engagement with my topic. Therefore each interview differs in its conduct and subject matter and while my analyses below seek to draw out consistencies of approach among different agents the results must ultimately be seen as subjective, and only applicable to each individual concerned. This subjectivity extends from my own involvement as the preparer of the questions and the conductor of the interviews, through the willingness of the subject to be interviewed (a few potential candidates declined, and many more did not reply to my request or were unobtainable), to the responses given. I sometimes felt that I was told what the speaker



thought I wanted to hear or, in one case, what they hoped would be repeated to my supervisors. Nevertheless, the nineteen interviews which I conducted (one off the record), along with the negative responses from other candidates, combine to supply a record of translation practices in mainstream theatre around 2004-5, and may be used to interrogate current procedures along with the future of stage translation.

Perteghella sees literal translation as ‘a first draft of a collaborative project’ and insists that literal translators ‘play a prominent role in the dissemination of contemporary foreign theatre in Britain’ (Meth, Mendelsohn, and Svendsen 2011: 209). In my sample, two of the three modern plays were directly translated and the third, *Festen*, was an amalgam of intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation, in which an English playscript, never intended as a literal translation, was one of several elements. The remaining four literal translations all related to new versions of classic texts, and were specifically commissioned for performance, even though a range of extant English translations were available. Why might this be the case? What functions are the literal, direct and indirect translators performing in the dissemination of translated theatre? And must the translation of contemporary theatre be differentiated in approach, practically and theoretically? If, like Perteghella, I consider literal translations to form an important part of the collaborative project of staging translated plays, I have to establish the purpose of an invisible and laborious body of work which apparently retraces steps that have already been taken. In order to do this, I look beyond the first tap on the translator’s keyboard to the practitioners who commission not only the translations but also the inclusion of the translated plays themselves in the repertoire. Who sets the process in place and who can be identified as collaborating? I begin by considering the roles where projects are generated, but as the process is more circular than sequential, the following order is pragmatic rather than descriptive.

## **4.2 Artistic Directors**

An informative description of the role of Artistic Director is provided by the American Association of Community Theatre: ‘responsible for conceiving, developing, and

implementing the artistic vision and focus of the organization, and for major decisions about the ongoing development of the aesthetic values and activities' (American Association of Community Theatre 2011). This, then, is a key position in a theatre's management structure, setting the tone of the in-house culture and the parameters for the annual programme of productions. The Artistic Director is highly influential in the progression of a translated play, from commission to performance. All the subsidised theatres discussed in Chapter Two employ an individual who performs the functions of Artistic Director, and this will be the case in most commissioning theatres. Generally, additional directors are engaged on a contractual basis to conduct specific productions. The majority of directors are therefore self-employed, with only a small number of Artistic Directors in permanent employment. Consequently, the position of Artistic Director is highly prized among theatre practitioners, where unemployment is a regular occurrence, as explained by the United States Department of Labor:

Work assignments typically are short term—ranging from 1 day to a few months—which means that workers frequently experience long periods of unemployment between jobs. The uncertain nature of the work results in unpredictable earnings and intense competition for jobs. Often, actors, producers, and directors must hold other jobs in order to sustain a living. (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011)

It is reasonable to assume that once in possession of this role, its holder will feel under pressure to maintain a critically and commercially successful output, conducting business accordingly.

Commercial theatre groups operate on a different basis, whereby independent producers, often in consortium, will put together financial and artistic proposals for productions which are then accepted into West End theatres. I discuss producers in the next section. The three commercial organisations in my sample, Delfont Mackintosh, Nimax and Ambassador Theatre Group, do not have Artistic Directors. Their Chief Executive will generally be ultimately responsible for the programming of productions in their owned and managed theatres, assisted by additional members of staff such as, for example, the General Manager Production and Programming at Nimax Theatres. I did not interview anyone in

these organisations as I was either unable to identify who to approach, or my request went unanswered.

I requested interviews from the Artistic Directors of four of the subsidised theatres (I did not approach Michael Attenborough at the Almeida as his Artistic Associate, Jenny Worton, covered a wide-range of topics in her interview, discussed in the Literary Department section). Nicholas Hytner at the National Theatre and Ian Rickson, formerly of the Royal Court (1998-2006), declined to be interviewed, Hytner blaming too many demands on his time, and Rickson because he was away filming. Michael Boyd at the RSC did not reply to two emails and a letter. As I pointed out in Chapter Three, section 3.7, I am not alone in this reception of requests for access. Michael Grandage, however, replied rapidly from the Donmar Theatre, even though I had approached him without introduction. I found this response informative, especially when considered in relation to the public funding obtained by the respective theatres, discussed in Chapter Two. The National and the RSC are two of the largest recipients of ACE funding, receiving around £15 and £13 million respectively in 2005. The Royal Court obtained some £2 million, and Ian Rickson, as Honorary Professor for Drama and Theatre Studies at the University of Kent, might be expected to contribute to academic debate in his specialist area. However, it was from the Donmar (ACE funding £302,247 in 2005) that I received the only positive reply. To me, this demonstrated a degree of willingness to engage with the public on the part of Grandage which might go some way to accounting for his successful track record of critically and commercially successful productions.

My interview with Grandage covered his activities as Artistic Director in a theatre and Director of a play, but in this section I focus on his role in planning and programming a translated play. It became clear during our discussion that Grandage has an overview of the shape any translation will take, and assembles the creative team accordingly. The play itself is the first item to be chosen, which may be a work he already knows, as was the case for *Don Carlos*. In such instances, Grandage has an impression of the play which he

characterises as being ‘more about a narrative than the text’<sup>70</sup> and he may not feel the need to conduct further textual research before continuing the process. Where Grandage is less familiar with a play, he will read ‘quite a few’ translations as they ‘can vary so widely’. He will then commission a literal translation in advance of appointing a writer to work on the project. His assumption is that a literal will be needed as very few writers are sufficiently comfortable in another language to work from the original, although he named Christopher Hampton as an example of a writer who would not want or need to work from a literal translation of a French-language play.

It is notable that Grandage characterises the creator of the performed translation as a professional *writer*. He makes the point that this practitioner need not be a playwright, and could be a poet or other writer, but must be someone whose ‘job is language’. For him, therefore, there is not an initial question, or official policy, of operating a two-stage translation process. The essential task for him as Artistic Director is to identify a writer who complements the original: ‘I always try and customise the skills of an individual voice to the temperament of the play’. This may take the form of identifying a writer who deals in subject matter similar to that of the play, but may result from more ‘lateral thinking’. David Eldridge, for example, writes about domestic drama in a voice which Grandage felt would bring a fresh approach to Ibsen’s *The Wild Duck*, because the themes of Eldridge’s own work made a good fit with Ibsen’s content, even though the writing styles might be very different<sup>71</sup>. Grandage therefore prioritises voice over linguistic ability, commissioning a literal translation at the beginning of the process merely to save time and not because he believes the two-stage process to be superior. He may not yet have identified the writer selected for the translation, the source-language proficiency is therefore unknown, but a literal translation is likely to be required.

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<sup>70</sup> For the remainder of this chapter, unreferenced quotations are my transcriptions from my recording of personal interviews with the relevant subject. See Appendix B1 for a list of interviews and the dates they were conducted.

<sup>71</sup> In the event, this production, premièred in December 2005, was the subject of both critical acclaim and box office success, leading to a further collaboration between Eldridge and Grandage on Ibsen’s *John Gabriel Borkman* (2007).

In my view, this emphasis on the matching of writing talents rather than linguistic abilities effectively commodifies the literal translation. Presumably, an unwanted literal translation would simply remain unused, a sign of the immateriality of its cost to the overall project. If a literal translation were expensive, its commission would be an act requiring more deliberation. Accordingly, Grandage will commission a new literal for each project, in the same way that he prefers to commission a new translation, even when an existing translation remains 'fresh and contemporary'. For him, it is crucial that his theatre's production has 'new life and a new breath'. This discernment extends to the appointment of the literal translator. Grandage will make enquiries to establish who is likely to produce a workable literal translation, using the Literary Department at the National as a resource for this information. However, if he is aware of a 'serious expert' in the relevant language, he will approach that person by preference. He commended Helen Rappaport, translating from Russian, 'because she comes up with fantastic notes'. This demonstrates his emphasis on the precision required from a literal translation, offering a context for the decisions to be made and providing dramaturgical advice.

Grandage's investigative approach to commissioning a play as Artistic Director applies equally to the appointment of the writer and director, and he assumes responsibility for the progression of a translation until the creative team is in place. For *Don Carlos*, the distinctions were blurred as he fulfilled both directorial roles. However, his summary of commissioning procedures in general made it clear that all productions under his governance as Artistic Director would fall in with his overall vision of how the theatre's offering should be presented. As Grandage appoints translators and directors, he sets the tone for a production, although he acknowledges that this is 'tricky' because he cannot know how the as yet unappointed director will 'interpret the play'. At this stage, he differentiates his position as Artistic Director, explaining that he is 'speaking for the play rather than the production'. He also referred to a case where the translation, when it arrived, was not what he had requested, stipulating that he was responsible for any lack of communication, and that he had learned from that incident to be very clear in his commissioning requests. This clarity in management expressed itself throughout the interview: Grandage replied to my questions in a focused and ordered way, illustrating his points with examples. As a result, although this was one of my shortest interviews, he

addressed all the issues I had prepared. I could imagine how he would succeed in imposing his vision on creative and administrative personnel, as he is well-organised and clear in his approach to management.

For *Don Carlos*, Grandage selected Mike Poulton as translator on the basis of research and informal professional references. They had not worked together previously, but the actor Derek Jacobi, who had agreed at an early stage to play Philip II, had appeared in a Poulton translation<sup>72</sup>, to his satisfaction. Grandage specified that he had read and seen several of Poulton's translations and was attracted to his work by

an unusual ability to create something that felt very contemporary but classic in style. I haven't come across that in a lot of translators or adapters. I absolutely wanted *Don Carlos* to breathe for a modern audience, so that they didn't think they were watching some kind of fusty museum piece.

That this desire was achieved can be seen from the reception to the play, discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.6. It also demonstrates Grandage's ability to conceive of a directorial strategy and then successfully communicate it to his creative team. I discuss his response to directing *Don Carlos* further in section 4.5. As Artistic Director, Grandage's approach to plays in translation can probably be summarised as privileging what he sees as holistic production values (the totality of the *mise en scène*) over textual matters, including translation issues. He views the writer/translator as part of a dynamic and synchronised team under his control. Grandage devotes great attention to the assembly of the production team, which is frequently made up of trusted individuals known to him from previous assignments. Translation is just one of the elements to be considered, and the translator part of a collaborative team. As he says, 'I assemble an overview, a vision of a production [...]. That's the visual starting point. You then want to draw on people who will help you create that'.

Grandage's view is instructive for translation purposes, both for its emphasis on collaboration and for its subordination of translatorial issues to his personal vision. It makes clear that any translation appearing in a theatre over which Grandage has control must

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<sup>72</sup> Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, directed by Bill Bryden at Chichester Festival Theatre, 1996.

subscribe to the culture, themes and values of that organisation. This is to be expected, and my impression of the other theatres in my sample is that the personality and management style of the Artistic Director is likely to influence strongly the approach to all productions, including translations. Unfortunately, I was not able to pursue this in interview with the remaining Artistic Directors. I was, however, present at a public interview given by Nicholas Hytner to discuss his direction of Richard Bean's *One Man, Two Guvnors*, a comedy based on *The Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni<sup>73</sup>. I asked him to comment on an article he had written for the *Financial Times* in which he had claimed that this translation 'reconciles a degree of literary critical analysis with a shameless determination to entertain, and that it, therefore, has something in common with our Ibsen and our Chekhov' (2011: 2). Did this reflect the National's policy to translation in general? Hytner appeared embarrassed, both by the question and by the reference to the *Financial Times*, but his answer, while side-stepping the issue of translation, focused on the National's aim to entertain. Perhaps the National's overall approach to translation can therefore be illustrated by a further quotation from the same article:

I often find myself juggling a profound belief in the transformative power of theatre with a fear of pretension. I think the strength of the British theatre often lies in the reconciliation of the desire to elevate and the desire to entertain.<sup>74</sup> (ibid)

If, as I believe, the priority to entertain can be understood to include offering productions likely to attract an audience, Hytner appears remarkably similar to Grandage. They both describe the tension between creative imagination and audience accessibility which they have constantly to address in their roles, and which must also be applied to translation for the theatre. The significance of their approaches is underlined by the position of these two practitioners in *The Stage 100 - The Stage newspaper's annual guide to the 100 most*

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<sup>73</sup>'Nicholas Hytner discusses his production with Emma Freud', NT Platform, 27 June 2011.

<sup>74</sup> The combination of entertainment and instruction is not a new concept, neither in the theatre (for example, the founding mission of the British Broadcasting Company to 'inform, educate and entertain') nor in Britain. Lope de Vega's *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (1609) extolled 'engañar con la verdad' ('tricking with the truth' - my translation) (line 319) to entertain and instruct, a precept taken up by Lorca in his adaptation of Lope's works for the Barraca touring company (1932-35). I discuss Hytner's endorsement of Lorca in Chapter Five.

influential people in UK theatre: they share second place with Dominic Cooke of the Royal Court, behind the Ambassador Theatre Group in first place (Stage 2011a). For the successful Artistic Director, a translation, like any other production, must have audience appeal. And the Artistic Director has the power to ensure that this focus is achieved.

### 4.3 Producers

Four plays in my sample transferred to West End theatres from the subsidised sector. Of these, two began in production at the Almeida, *Festen* and *Hedda Gabler*, *Don Carlos* originated at Sheffield Theatres and *Hecuba* was an RSC commission. Although I was not able to contact Richard Eyre, the director and indirect translator of *Hedda Gabler*, the genesis of his project is laid bare in his introduction to the published text, as I set out in Chapter Three, section 3.4 (Ibsen 2005: 8). In presenting the Artistic Director of the Almeida, Michael Attenborough, and the commercial producer, Robert Fox with a pre-arranged package for production, Eyre apparently displayed a similar approach to Marla Rubin, the producer of *Festen*. I discuss Rubin's assembly of the creative roles and script in Chapter Three, section 3.5, along with her self-identification as an 'ideas producer'. Rubin differentiated her role from that of a 'moneybags producer', insisting that raising money was only a small part of her role, and that she was more interested in managing the creative aspects of the project. She was able to recount to me in detail her search for creative collaborators who would coincide with her vision of the project, not only at the writer/director level of Eldridge and Norris, but even going so far as the production designer, Ian MacNeil, whose work she had admired on Broadway in the touring production of *An Inspector Calls*<sup>75</sup>.

On transfer from the Almeida to the Lyric, Rubin entered into a partnership agreement with Bill Kenwright, a well-established commercial theatre producer with a long track record of

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<sup>75</sup> Originally directed for the National Theatre by Stephen Daldry in 1992 and still touring in 2012. This non-naturalistic production, addressing murder in a dysfunctional middle-class family contains several parallels with *Festen*.



staging successful productions in the West End and on Broadway<sup>76</sup>. Rubin explained that Kenwright ‘brought infrastructure and capital’ to the project, although she had already raised (undisclosed) funds herself, and took her own investors onwards into the transfer. While this demonstrates the importance of funding for West End productions, it does not preclude artistic endeavour from the business of production. Bill Kenwright’s employees include a Resident Director and Graphic Designer among the production specialists, which suggests that in-house creative decisions are made on a regular basis (Bill Kenwright Ltd 2012). Indeed, Rubin expressed delight at the memory of their agreement that she should take precedence in the production credits, ‘for the first time in his career’. This manifested recognition of the combination of ideas and money in the production process.

In spite of Rubin’s claim to be unusual in focusing on the creative side of production, Matthew Byam Shaw’s insistence on the interaction of creativity and finance in his role as producer suggests that these elements are intertwined. Byam Shaw, who produced the West End transfer of *Don Carlos*, claimed that in this instance, as he was also functioning as Literary Associate for Sheffield Theatres, ‘hired by Michael Grandage’, he was in a more subordinate role than would usually be the case. As producer, he would usually expect to be consulted in decision-making concerning the creative team, translation included. In this case, however, the ideas came mostly from Grandage, described by Byam Shaw as ‘a strong artistic leader’. Even so, Byam Shaw suggested that this production was not untypical in its genesis and subsequent arrival in the West End: ‘most fresh producing in the West End comes from forged relationships between the subsidised and commercial sectors’. It is certainly the case that the four West End productions in my sample all started life in subsidised theatres. Byam Shaw suggested, however, that at an early stage in the development of a production, the possibilities of a West End transfer are factored into planning.

While still in preparation, *Don Carlos* seemed a likely candidate for transfer, and Byam Shaw was ‘marking out a possible theatre and marketing strategy, in readiness’. This practise, he explained, is a feature of his production planning, even though transfer may

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<sup>76</sup> Kenwright’s production *Blood Brothers*, for example, has been running in the Phoenix Theatre, London, since 1991, was staged in the Music Box Theater, New York, from 1993-1995, and continues to tour worldwide.

not ultimately take place. He considered *Don Carlos* a 'huge gamble' in the West End, as it did not fit the general 'rule of thumb': 'title, stars, reviews'. Schiller's plays had made only infrequent appearances in London, as I discuss in Chapter Three; Derek Jacobi is a well-known actor, but not a guaranteed box office draw at the time, having been in a new play by Hugh Whitmore, *God Only Knows* (2001), which had disappointed the critics, subsequently running at the Vaudeville Theatre for only twelve weeks; the Sheffield reviews for *Don Carlos* had been excellent, but not necessarily permeated as far as London. However, Byam Shaw asserts that the 'rule of thumb' is not always correct, and, in this case, his artistic involvement with the production in Sheffield encouraged him to push for transfer. This exemplifies what Byam Shaw enjoys about the production process: 'the tension between the art and the commerce'.

Byam Shaw takes the view that 'an unlikely hit will always get out' because it will be noticed in some way. In the case of *Don Carlos*, he recounted a telephone call from the box office early on a Saturday morning ('very rare to take money on a Saturday') asking for permission to put on an extra member of staff to deal with bookings. The night before, the production had received uncharacteristically glowing reports on the BBC *Review Show*. He attributed the success of *Don Carlos* to its narrative structure and tautness: 'it works as a thriller'. He also praised Grandage for making sure that the audience does not have to sit for too long. This seems to me to be recognition of the collaboration between Grandage and Poulton to cut and structure the play, discussed in later sections of this Chapter. The unlikely success owes much to the translation of the play.

Byam Shaw claimed to include translated plays among the corpus of potential West End productions, but was inclined to the view that 'a named translator can help a British audience towards a title they might otherwise be shy of', in addition to bringing 'their undoubted dramaturgical skills'. However, he thought that the most important factor in a successful production was the nature of the creative team: 'everything is about the collision of the collaboration'. As producer, he is generally closely associated with building that team. The producer, therefore, is influential in the translation process and financial considerations play their part among the many elements which make up a production.

A further area where the producer has influence over translation and its perception is in the billing of a production. Byam Shaw pointed out that advertisements could become cluttered with too many names, and that many key participants would be omitted, himself included (another invisible agent). This might include the translator, direct, indirect or literal, depending on their perceived recognition in selling tickets. However, everyone should appear in the programme. He was not able to comment on why no literal translator appeared in the *Don Carlos* programme. He also remembered the negotiations as to whether the production should be labelled a translation, version or adaptation being 'delicate' and was not willing to discuss this matter any further. In fact, it bears all three labels in varying formats. Speaking more generally, however, Byam Shaw felt that there might be times when a writer would push for the term 'adaptation' while the director preferred 'translation', which to some extent reflected the degree of creativity which each contributed to the project. Negotiations are likely to continue.

My interviews with Rubin and Byam Shaw reveal the inextricable place of funding within the translation project. While neither discussed their financial transactions in any detail, they acknowledged that their role was to combine finance and creativity, and demonstrated their inclusion in the team-building process which ultimately sustains any production. Additionally, in their descriptions of the negotiations taking place throughout the commissioning and rehearsal process, they reveal a glimpse of the tensions and power-struggles around the site of production. Translation, with its multiplicity of agents and voices, further contributes to that tension.

#### **4.4 Literary Departments**

I spoke to six practitioners engaged in Literary Departmental work at the theatres in my sample. The nature of their work and job title varies between organisations, as does the Literary Department itself. Defining the activity of a Literary Department is a challenge, not least because it is an area of Theatre Studies which remains largely untheorised. Reference and other works on theatre rarely mention the practice. At times, it will be conflated under the alternative title of dramaturgy, but Cathy Turner and Synne K. Behrndt's study of UK

dramaturgy claims that the job title is ‘distinct from “literary manager”, “artistic associate” and so on’ (2008: 13). Adam Versényi, however, describes the typical function of a Literary Department in his contribution on dramaturgy in the *Oxford Companion to Theatre and Performance*:

the literary management necessary to select a theatre’s season, collaboration with a director to create a new approach to a Shakespeare play, aid to a contemporary playwright in the gestation of a new work, writing programme notes or leading a post-show discussion, preparing a new translation of a play, or providing the visual, textual, or aural tools to stimulate a company’s rehearsal process. (2010: 176)

My interactions with Literary Department personnel support this description: they are engaged with day-to-day theatrical activity in a large variety of spheres, and are generally very knowledgeable about their own theatre, its productions and the literary and performance fields from which the productions are drawn. If a translation is to be commissioned, the Literary Department is likely to be involved. Furthermore, this resource is well-known to theatre practitioners: many of my other interview subjects referred to a Literary Department in discussion, and at least three had been members of such a department during their careers<sup>77</sup>. Nevertheless, this activity, which, as Versényi points out, is always being carried out, ‘whether or not someone carrying the title of dramaturg is involved’ (ibid), is overlooked when considering the influences on productions and, for my purposes, translations. Even Manuela Perteghella, who sees the work of a literal translator as akin to that of a dramaturg (2004: 206), writes of commissioning in the passive tense and characterises literary departments as sites of ‘reading’ (ibid: 91). The source of the instruction to commission a translation, and the function of carrying out that instruction, is rarely investigated<sup>78</sup>.

Although I was able to make contact with Literary practitioners representing the National, Royal Court, Almeida, RSC and commercial theatre (Jack Bradley, Literary Manager at the

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<sup>77</sup> Karin Bamborough, Matthew Byam Shaw and David Tushingham.

<sup>78</sup> This omission is to be corrected, as I understand that Katalin Trencsényi has been commissioned by Methuen to write *Dramaturgy in the Making*, which is due for publication in 2013. In preparation for this volume, Trencsenyi has been investigating the function of the Literary Department.

National from 1994 to 2007, currently fills the position of Literary Associate for Sonia Friedman Productions), I was unable to obtain many specific details relating to the plays in my sample. Either the practitioner had not been at the relevant organisation at the time, or they claimed not to have been directly involved with that particular production. I was, however, able to obtain an impression of the processes in a Literary Department applicable to commissioning a translation, particularly as my interview subjects tended to recount similar procedures.

Paul Sirett, currently Associate Artist at the Soho Theatre, and formerly in the Literary Department of the RSC, described a Literary Manager as a 'matchmaker with a bulging address book'. Their job is to 'look for a particular writer to match the sensibilities of the Artistic Director', each of whom has 'a particular aesthetic'. It may be that the Artistic Director has already conceived of a pairing between play and writer, in which case it is the Literary Department's task to make practical arrangements and monitor the progress of the project, along with administrative procedures such as agreeing a contract. On the other hand, the Literary Manager may be required to suggest names or find substitutes, in which case they need to be aware of current practitioners in the field. This requires substantial networking ability, and many attendances at performances in other theatres. It is unsurprising that I found Literary personnel to be so well-informed.

Sirett also made the point that 'only a fraction of commissioned work gets put on'. There are many reasons why a project may not come to fruition: 'through the subjective tastes of the people running the building, and the pragmatic choices because of how much money there is around, which actors are available, how it fits with other stuff going on'. This insight demonstrates the pressures of finding an effective pairing of a translator with a play, and explains the attraction of using at least one component that has a track record of progression through the obstacles paving the way to production. One area of particular difficulty, in his experience, was the marketing of new plays from new writers, 'especially in a theatre which has a broad range of programming'. A specialist theatre has a prepared audience, but otherwise a Marketing Department needs to find some element about an unknown play and writer that can be used to attract audiences. Plays that are not only new

but also translated are correspondingly more difficult to market, because they contain more of the unknown.

Although my subjects were aware of marketing constraints, our conversations emphasised the priority devoted to the literary aspects of their work, as might be expected in a Literary Department. All took a literary approach to the translation of plays, and were aware of the ethical issues of ownership between writer and translator(s), even more aware of the problems of the public perception of translation. Several had had direct exposure to the theoretical debate around the visibility of translation and translators. Jack Bradley, Chris Campbell and Paul Sirett contribute to academic conferences, for example. Réjane Collard has an MA in Literary Translation<sup>79</sup>. It would be inappropriate and unfair to categorise their approach to translation as focused on selling tickets. I found a great understanding of the tensions inherent in the two-stage indirect/literal translation process, and some sympathy for the literal translator who tended to be ‘undermined and underappreciated’, in the words of Bradley. Nevertheless, there was a consensus that a translation must play well on stage, and translators be appointed accordingly.

The hierarchical structure of London theatre was frequently referenced throughout the entirety of my interview data, but particularly strongly in discussion with Literary personnel. It was clear that the Artistic Director’s tastes informed each theatre’s cultural practices in general terms, and also governed specific decisions. Even Chris Campbell at the Royal Court, where the writer is foregrounded, made it clear that ‘with all things in theatre, the Artistic Director has to say “yes”’. Within those parameters, the extent to which the Literary Department is involved in commissioning a translation varies between productions. Jack Bradley did not recall working on *The House of Bernarda Alba*, which he thought was likely to be because David Hare and Howard Davies were regular contributors to the National, familiar to Nicholas Hytner, and accustomed to working together, and therefore would not need dramaturgical assistance. He was however asked to commission the literal translation, and turned to Scardifield, knowing him to be a linguist and actor who would want to take the opportunity of working with Hare. It was thought that Tony Harrison would also have

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<sup>79</sup> From the University of East Anglia, where Roger Baines, whose research interests include stage translation and adaptation in performance, is among the staff.

been able to approach the RSC's Artistic Director himself with suggestions for *Hecuba*, thus by-passing the Literary Department. If the above suppositions reflect actuality, the appearance of the voice and interests of named, high-profile translators in a performed production demonstrate their power to express their creativity across a large field of participants. It does not necessarily follow that high-profile translations are less well-matched than other translation pairings.

The Royal Court is frequently differentiated in theatre translation circles as explicitly favouring direct translation. As Campbell underlined, the theatre's International Department is 'unique' in its outreach to international playwrights through mentoring and residency programmes. Such projects present the Royal Court with the opportunity to supplement new English-language plays, their priority, with translated international plays. For Elyse Dodgson, Associate Director International, 'translation is the purest way' of showcasing these new plays and writers: 'if you are presenting a writer for the first time, you want to stay close to the original'. While this may seem to be a departure from the approach adopted by other theatres and Literary Departments, for whom a version is apparently preferable (lending itself to the indirect/literal route), on close analysis, Dodgson and the Royal Court have a similar goal to other commissioners, but their material requires a slightly altered set of parameters. Dodgson defines the *version* as 'making [the text] theatrical', and written by someone who does not speak the original language. She admits that her preference is to use translators who have English as mother tongue and experience of writing for the stage. In this, she is no different from the other commissioners of translations in my sample. The variation in her approach stems from the resources available to her. She heads a department which can seek out translators from languages infrequently encountered on the English-speaking stage, such as Korean or Turkish. Having experienced some difficulty in sourcing translators with the desired capabilities, she has set up an informal training system of group meetings between novice theatre translators and experienced English mother-tongue stage translators. Even accompanied by this attention to detail, supported by designated funding from the British Council and private foundations<sup>80</sup> and therefore outside the theatre's general operating budget, these

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<sup>80</sup> Designated donations for International programmes amounted to £226,784 in the year ended 31 March 2006, according to the English Stage Company Ltd. accounts (p 24).

translations mostly do not go on to full production, but are given rehearsed readings or workshops. The International programmes inform the Royal Court's approach to translation, but in many ways represent translational work-in-progress. Fully performed translations, while generally created using the direct method, are commissioned according to Campbell's most important attribute for a translator: 'a dramatic writer who can speak the other language'.

Questioned on the importance of matching direct translators to texts, Campbell's reply resembled Michael Grandage's approach to commissioning translations: there must be 'a sense of affinity, or an interesting lack of affinity, some kind of relationship with the original material'. However, Campbell stressed that the choice of translator was no more important than any other member of the team; the same would be true of the lighting designer. They are all collaborators in the production. Conversations with Literary personnel reverted to this theme every time: stagecraft takes precedence over language ability, and the commissioner's interpretation of the original play dictates subsequent choices. Jenny Worton at the Almeida took a similar view, but went on to explain that decisions may be further complicated by copyright requirements. Where a playwright is still living, or their estate managing their legacy, agreement has to be obtained to create a new translation. This may extend to agreeing the identity of the translator(s), and the resulting text will also be subject to scrutiny before approval. Worton suggested that in translating living playwrights there might be less freedom for the translator and production, and that the translation of new writing was a specialist area, in which Campbell was an expert. The Almeida does not therefore generally produce new plays in translation, although they will consider new adaptations from another medium, such as *Festen* and, her 2010 project from the Bergman film, *Through a Glass Darkly*. Worton seeks to 'think of a writer who suits the material', and identified key attributes such as comic timing or the ability to move a large number of actors around the stage when commissioning a translation. This reinforces the notion that a play's textual features are only one of the factors taken into account when planning its translated manifestation on stage.

Nevertheless, all Literary agents who commissioned literal translations stressed their importance of their function in the translation process for the stage. Worton explained that



she would always commission a new literal translation unless the playwright had sufficient command of the source language. A published translation would not be adequate because prepared 'for understanding, not for performance'. The literal translator must have knowledge of the theatre industry, and be aware of 'the specific meaning [of the play] as it is related to performance'. The resulting literal should be 'uninfluenced' and include many footnotes. Furthermore, the literal translator should be available for consultation by the indirect translator, and provides a valuable resource on the source text beyond verbal translation, including advice on what the 'original playwright wanted to achieve'. Worton was inclined to believe that a literal translator would be consulted more if the playwright wanted to make significant changes, such as conflating several characters, in an effort to remain 'faithful' to the original<sup>81</sup>. It becomes apparent that Literary Departments have a high opinion of the ability of the literal translator to represent the text and its original creator. Such expectations may be unattainable: how can any translator possess an absolute understanding of authorial intention, especially when the original writer is distanced by geography or time? Nevertheless, the perception of the extent to which literal translations contribute to the staging process demonstrates a key theoretical concept of translation: its cultural ramifications beyond relatively simple code-switching.

My conversations with Literary Department personnel support Perteghella's claims that a literal translator provides dramaturgical support and collaborates in the translation process. However, they also offer many examples of the complexities in commissioning a translation. The nature of the source text is crucial, and it seems that there is an overwhelming view that a first-time translation should be carried out by a direct translator, but that stagecraft is prioritised over language ability when a translation is reworked. First-time translations also tend to be shown in smaller spaces, cheaper productions, organisations which are more open to risk. Commissioning a translation takes place at an early stage in the production process, it is key to the successful outcome of the project, and many careers may potentially be affected by the result. Considerations of copyright, availability of key performing or creative cast, rehearsal time, cohesion of the team,

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<sup>81</sup> Reducing the number of characters may be required for the purposes of 'tightening' the script and its focus, but could also bring a corresponding reduction in expenditure on salaries. Thus a literal translator is also drawn into advising on the production budget.

physical stage constraints, all came up in my discussions with Literary personnel. Marketing, when mentioned, tended to be referred to the relevant department and was not cited as a major factor in decision-making. As a result of this piece of research, I was not inclined to characterise the appointment of a translator, direct, indirect or literal, as a principally economic exercise, but more as a tried and tested team member. It did however introduce the significance of another scarcely visible agent: the staff of the Literary Department.

#### **4.5 Directors**

Visibility remains pertinent when considering my next group of practitioners. Paul Allain and Jen Harvie make the point that ‘the public perception of theatre directors’ work is that it is often invisible’ (2006: 148), suggesting that visibility issues in theatre are not merely the domain of the translator. If invisibility is equated with lack of power, then it might be assumed that directors have little sway in affecting the transmission of a translation. Certainly, at a superficial level, directors have minimal visual presence, they do not appear on stage, their names in the programme are generally unaccompanied by their photograph, and they are rarely promoted in the advertising literature, unless they have sufficient “star quality” to sell a production. Unlike the invisible Literary personnel, they are usually freelance contractors, with no job security and only short-term prospects. How much influence can a director exercise? Maria Delgado and Dan Rebellato summarise their edited volume of essays profiling the role of contemporary European theatre directors as follows: ‘Directing is shown to be both a function and a profession, a brand and a process, an encounter and a market force’ (2010: 21). In spite of the apparent disadvantages of the directorial mode of operation, it is a position occupied by individuals with the confidence and ability to impose their own tastes on others, with far-reaching effects. Three directors from my sample discussed their approach to translated plays with me, from which their traces in the translations can be assessed.

Rufus Norris, the director for *Festen*, works regularly on adaptations of plays, books<sup>82</sup>, and even direct speech<sup>83</sup>, frequently with his wife, the adapter Tanya Ronder. Together, they teach workshops on 'Adapting for the Stage' as professional development for such organisations as Living Pictures Productions and the Royal Court. Norris is therefore in a position to theorise his directorial practice in this respect. He sees his role as primarily concerned with the theatricality of a production, leaving the writing to the expert, David Eldridge for *Festen*. Norris considered *Festen* to be a 'classic example of something made for adaptation' in that it takes place over the course of one night, in one location. He had been instrumental in bringing the film to Eldridge's attention, and admitted to lobbying Marla Rubin, the producer, for the job of director once he knew that Eldridge would be working on the text. Norris pressed for a black and white set, providing a neutral background, distinct from the film which travels through the well-appointed rooms and grounds of a large country house, so that all attention would be focused on the characters. He remembered that two-thirds of the rehearsal time was spent working on Act One, Scene Three, in which six characters conduct three conversations, oblivious of each other pair, around one bed. This is the most theatrically envisaged scene of the play. Norris explained that although the spoken words did not change very much through the process, the order was moved around (this can be seen very clearly when comparing the published text to the film) and many different variations were attempted, influenced by assorted practitioners, including the Sound Designer, who was unable to support certain combinations. Norris spoke inclusively of these collaborations, but made it clear that his was the ultimate decision when there was a range of opinions.

Norris stressed that his general aim in directing is audience-focused, with the intention of creating 'accessible' theatre, especially for a younger audience: 'more theatrical than literary, more musical in tone, more visual'. This is not dissimilar from the statements quoted from Grandage and Hytner in the Artistic Director section above, emphasizing the holistic qualities of visual narrative and entertainment, of which text is only one element.

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<sup>82</sup> DBC Pierre's Booker Prize-winning *Vernon God Little* was first staged in Ronder's adaptation, directed by Norris, at the Young Vic in 2007.

<sup>83</sup> *London Road*, directed by Norris at the National in 2011, was created by Alecky Blythe and Adam Cork, based on recorded interviews with the inhabitants of an area in Ipswich where prostitutes had been serially murdered.

Ramin Gray, directing at the Royal Court, also retains a visual conception of his production, *Way to Heaven*. When I explained that I had been unable to see the play, conducting my research via an audio recording for the British Sound Archives, Gray gave me a detailed description of the *mise en scène*, even noting the audience's viewing positions (standing, then sitting on the floor). However, Gray differentiates his attitude as a director, in that he feels a particular affinity for language, identifying himself as 'half-Iranian': 'I love language. I learned about directing from a playwright (Gregory Motton): the sanctity of the text. I take an exegetic approach to text.' Gray also describes himself as a specialist in international theatre, working on many of the Royal Court's international plays. Since our interview, Gray has been appointed Artistic Director of ATC, a theatre company which 'challenges and inspires a wide-range of audiences by touring ambitious contemporary theatre with a strong international focus' (ATC 2011). Gray's specialism perhaps distinguishes both his style and his material from his peers, evidenced by the approaches to translation discussed in interview.

Gray and Norris both worked on plays which were being presented in English on the London stage for the first time. Gray, however, was able to communicate with both the original author, Juan Mayorga, and the direct translator, David Johnston: 'the Royal Court pays for writers to come over, even in the small theatre'. They therefore attended early rehearsals, and he was able to conduct textual negotiations *in situ* and in collaboration. Gray spoke warmly of both men, but described his encounters with Johnston as, at times, 'combative', complaining that he sometimes 'took decisions on behalf of Juan'. Gray explained that his attachment to an original text might lead him to question the loss of a full stop in a comparison between an original and a translation. He admired the translation technique of David Tushingham, which he described as loading the file onto his computer and overwriting, so that the shape of the play remains. He is very clear that he prioritises the original text above other considerations: 'I'm not the Artistic Director, running the building. My job is to deal with the writer, it's very pure'. Gray and Richard Wilson, who agreed to be interviewed but whose agent was unable to arrange a time, were the two directors in my sample of eight who engaged with plays unknown to the British audience. The remaining plays were reworked from originals which had already been shown in London, either in translation or, in the case of *Festen*, with subtitles (as a film and a play,

albeit structured differently). Wilson, in his post-show discussion recorded for the British Archives, commented that ‘the language of [*The Woman Before*] had a formality about it; it had a rhythm about it. We said in rehearsal that it’s not really a very actor-friendly play’ (Whybrow 2005)<sup>84</sup>. The prompt book, however, showed very few alterations to Tushingham’s translation. This circumstance and the above comments suggest that neither Wilson nor Gray gives the impression of seeking principally to accommodate the audience or the actors in their interpretation of the text for production. The implication is that a translation of a new text requires a different approach from a retranslation.

This approach extends to the location of stagecraft, the quality most frequently cited as essential in theatre translation, as discussed in the previous sections. Gray took the view that the original writer possessed stagecraft, and that was the reason why the translator should follow the source-language text as closely as possible, and not ‘come between the director and the writer’: ‘the translation shouldn’t draw attention to itself’. Other directors privileged the English-language writer. Norris asserted that a ‘singular voice [in the translation or adaptation] is crucial’, adding: ‘What’s most important for me is that a writer has written the language’. These sentiments are reminiscent of Grandage’s insistence on the ‘skills of an individual voice’. If translation is a process, it seems to me that the directors of new plays focus on input while the practitioners working on new translations concentrate on output. ‘New’ seems to be the conditioning element in decision-making. Directors share a horror of the museum. I heard the same caution from Grandage and Norris, voiced by the director of *Hecuba*, Laurence Boswell, interviewed for publication on Spanish Golden Age seasons. He stated: ‘it has to work on stage, it has to be fun, it has to be alive. This isn’t museum theatre’ (Johnston 2007: 153). Richard Eyre, director and indirect translator of *Hedda Gabler*, defined the choices made by ‘even literal translations’ as ‘according to taste, to the times we live in and how we view the world’ (Ibsen 2005: 9). Eyre summarises the tension inherent in translating as ‘being close to what Ibsen intended while seeming spontaneous to an audience of today’ (ibid). The spontaneity of the new raises additional problems for directors presenting well-known classics. Questioned on the binary oppositions of domestication versus foreignisation, Norris’s response was to define

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<sup>84</sup> My transcription.

domestication as British 'stereotyped ideas', for example of Lorca or Ibsen. For him, foreignisation would be to present a well-known playwright in an unexpected way, dispensing with romanticism and sentimentality which, in his view, 'deny a very theatrical writer his theatricality'. Thus 'new' can equate with 'foreignised' for the directors of retranslations, whereas a director of a new play translated for the first time is not forced to grapple with this dichotomy.

Speaking at a conference, the director Mick Gordon described his role as 'the author of the production', talking to and inspiring every other collaborator, but making the final decisions<sup>85</sup>. This encapsulates the approach of all the directors I interviewed, and others recorded elsewhere. It reveals the presence of the director in the translation, undermining any superficial invisibility. Even so, directors, like other theatre practitioners, are aware of a hierarchy imposed on their practice. It is instructive to examine their perception of this hierarchy in relation to translation. Like Gordon, most directors speak of collaboration in terms which indicate an uneven power-weighting. Gray and Grandage both exuded an expectation of realising their own vision, at the expense of other practitioners, if necessary. Gray related a vignette in which he had sacked an actor over the interpretation of a translated metaphor. On the other hand, he was pointedly focused on the privileged position of the original writer, which suggests that a writer might take priority in any conflict between director and writer. Grandage was more diplomatic: 'if a disagreement arose, we'd have to move on', he said euphemistically, from which I understood that the indirect translator would be doing the moving (away). He unapologetically described working 'very closely' with Mike Poulton during rehearsals for *Don Carlos* when they made many further cuts, 'changed the interval position, refined speeches, tightened up certain characters'. Poulton was 'very collaborative', said Grandage, but I had the impression that it was Grandage who took control. Norris, on the other hand, claimed that the (re)writer was the senior in the 'pecking-order'. Eldridge possessed a veto in any clash of opinions over *Festen*, and Marla Rubin would have to be included in decisions, because she had initiated the project. Norris, however, saw the writer-director team as the 'core

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<sup>85</sup> My own notes from Gordon's keynote speech, 'On Translation', at *Staging Translated Plays: Adaptation, Translation and Multimediality*, University of East Anglia, 1 July, 2007.

relationship'. Eldridge, in interview, described Norris, a good friend, as 'quite an interventionist' director in rehearsal. It seems from these hints that the director expects and obtains a significant amount of influence over the text. It is also the case that the writer/translator is usually in rehearsal for the first week and then towards the end of preparations, but the director is present every day. That is in itself an assumption of power.

Where does this leave the translator? In the case of the literal translator, their contact with the director is probably non-existent, and their contribution, while seen as important, is left to be managed by the indirect translator or Literary Department. From Gray's account, it would seem that the direct translator may be marginalised, seen only as a conduit for the original writer. The indirect translator takes on the role of the original writer in consultation with the director, and this is the arena where a power-struggle is most likely to take place. I shall review these agencies in the words of their occupants in the next sections.

#### **4.6 Indirect Translators**

In the miasma of near-invisibility which seems to apply to the theatre practitioners discussed in the above and following sections, the indirect translators take on a sharper focus. Their names are those which attach to the production, in the programme, the publicity and the published text. This is also the profession often criticised in academic translation circles. Susan Bassnett's critique voices the dissatisfaction:

translators are commissioned to produce what are termed 'literal' translations and the text is then handed over to a well-known (and most often monolingual) playwright with an established reputation so that larger audiences will be attracted into the theatre. [...] The key factor is the size of the audience and the price they are willing to pay for tickets, certainly not the ethics of translation. (1991: 101-102)

There is a feeling among professional translators and language academics that indirect translators are taking on work more appropriate to an expert linguist, whose ability to interpret the original text would result in a more 'faithful' reproduction. There is also a degree of disgruntlement that these 'celebrities' receive higher fees, sometimes a share of

the box office revenues, and the copyright of the translation, while the literal translator is paid a set fee<sup>86</sup> and retains no right to their translation. I have heard several theatre translators say that they would not be prepared to produce a literal translation because they are not satisfied with the ethical procedure.

Some writers for theatre are also linguists. The playwrights Christopher Hampton (translating from French and German) and Michael Frayn (from Russian) were mentioned to me on many occasions as examples, and I am aware of others<sup>87</sup>. Within my sample, Mike Poulton produces his own Italian literal translations, Richard Eyre has studied Russian<sup>88</sup> and David Eldridge admits to 'a bit of tourist French and Spanish'. Exposure to another language in some form does not seem unlikely for playwrights, who tend to have been educated to tertiary level. Furthermore, an ability to perform 'intra-lingual translation or *rewording*', as defined by Jakobson (2004: 139), is probably essential for a professional writer who spends their time transposing thoughts, emotions and observations onto a page, and between drafts. I am reluctant, therefore, to categorise indirect translators as monolingual. A better question, perhaps, might be, are they producing a translation?

Eldridge was very clear on his occupation, starting our conversation with, 'I don't consider myself to be a translator'. He was invited to become part of the project to stage *Festen* after the producer, Marla Rubin, saw his own play, *Under the Blue Sky* (Royal Court, 2000). Rubin felt that Eldridge's writing style would complement the *Festen* theme, and Grandage commissioned him to write a version of Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* for the same reason. It was Eldridge's voice as a writer that was demanded, and he sees himself as the writer *in situ* when working on an indirect translation. 'In the rehearsal room, I act as if it's a new play authored by me. I have that demeanour,' he insisted. 'If people bring in other translations, I'm not having any of that. We're doing my version.' In staking an ownership of his writing,

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<sup>86</sup> No-one I have spoken to wanted to go on record discussing amounts paid, but I understand that around £500 to £1,000 would be the price for a literal translation.

<sup>87</sup> For example, I attended performances of direct translations by Caryl Churchill and Martin Crimp from French and Alistair Beaton and Rory Bremner from German in 2007 and 2008.

<sup>88</sup> Richard Eyre mentioned his 'O' level in Russian during his presentation at *Chekhov's Major Plays*, Hampstead Theatre, 20 January, 2010.



Eldridge is not refusing to consider amendments or revisions, but he is taking responsibility for the playtext, based on an English-language playscript prepared by the film-makers and the subtitled film itself. 'I made a play from this source material', declared Eldridge, differentiating his new play from what had gone before.

Mike Poulton was less adamant about his title, which is perhaps reflected by the fact that *Don Carlos* has been described as translation, version and adaptation at various points in the programmes and published text. Poulton describes discussions with his agent, who takes the view that "'translator" covers everything', but admits that he thinks 'adaptation is a more suitable term', except for those instances when he prepares his own literal<sup>89</sup>. I interpret these stances as a distinction on the part of the indirect translators between what they produce and the source text from which they work. Their adaptation is not a polished version of the literal translation, but a new piece of work in itself. But it is a new piece of work which is circumscribed by its source text. Both writers acknowledged the difficulty of creating an adaptation and its subsequent terminology. Poulton described the technical problems:

But adaptation is not a good term. It implies that you've changed the foundations of the work, but it's not like that. There's not much choice in adaptation. The author demands that you stick to certain rules and follow certain lines. You can adapt within what he has given you, but you cannot provide your own solutions to the problems he has created.

Eldridge reflects on the creative implications of producing an adaptation:

Robert Holman [the playwright] says playwriting is energy distilled on paper. When you are creating a blueprint for living, breathing human beings, and can go at the speed of an actor's thought, you need something that can live on the moment. When you write an original play, that's much easier. If it already exists in a literal form, I do my best to recreate the conditions of being on the moment.

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<sup>89</sup> The play to which he was referring, *The Syndicate*, by Eduardo de Filippo, was ultimately presented at Chichester Festival Theatre in 2011 as 'in a new version by Mike Poulton'. Unusually, its Italian title, *Il Sindaco del Rione Sanità*, was displayed on the front cover of the programme, a reminder of the play's linguistic origins.

Thus both writers apply their own voice to the translation, but they are voicing a pre-determined outcome. They can only partially take possession of their creation, leading to a frustration apparent in my interviews.

This complex relationship with the text both results from and provokes a collaborative procedure in its development. Both writers acknowledged the literal translation as a vital starting point in the creative process. For Poulton, it is a compositional tool, the key to his understanding of the original work: 'I want to know everything that's going on under the line. Translation is not so much about translating the words, it's about translating the humour, the tone, getting the author right'. He compares the literal to the original text, with the help of a dictionary, the literal translator and source-language-speaking friends, and carries out extensive research. Eldridge adopts an opposing technique: 'I like to have a pure experience for a first draft, and not do academic research. I try to have a pure response to the literal'. This is Eldridge's approach for creating a text that is 'on the moment'. He insists, however, that he will go on to produce many more drafts, rigorously revised, the result being 'very, very faithful' to both the original playwright and to the literal translator. Both writers stressed the importance of the quality of the literal translation for their own work. They liked to use trusted literal translators, expressly commissioned. Eldridge remembered that, for *The Wild Duck*, he had seen an old literal translation and asked for advice from Jack Bradley on who would produce 'the best' new literal. Charlotte Barslund's translation 'had a clarity, and really good footnotes and references', he said, 'I'm there to write the acting text. Her job is to give me a translation that I can work from, not to put a spin on it'. Barslund is credited for her literal translation in the programme and the published text of *The Wild Duck*. 'It is important to credit her, the theatres by and large don't need to be told', explained Eldridge. Poulton, on the other hand, was surprised when I asked why his literal translator was not credited: 'I always ask, but they tend not to want to be credited'. He felt that this was because they had other jobs with which they preferred to be associated. I was reminded of Bassnett's reference to 'the tradition of translator academics being advised to keep quiet about their translations and not record them on their CV because this might hinder promotion prospects' (2006: 2). Bassnett's claim appears to relate generally (and anecdotally) to translations prepared by academics, not theatre translations in particular. She does not provide evidence to support her perception that

promotion prospects might be hindered by a hinterland of practical translation. My own discussions with theatre translators suggested that they would prefer more rather than less acknowledgement, but perhaps, by virtue of the fact that they were prepared to discuss their activities with me, this group was predisposed to take that view. Analysis of my interviews with literal translators, below, provides further insight concerning literal translator visibility and collaboration.

While collaboration with the literal translator tends to be at arm's length, judging from the above accounts, input from other theatre practitioners during rehearsal was shown as a significant influence in developing the performed text. Eldridge and Poulton reported that they produced a succession of drafts for themselves, the latter adding that he tested even his early drafts through informal workshops among actor friends. However, in both cases, and this reflects my own observations of the theatre translator Kate Eaton<sup>90</sup>, once in rehearsal the draft text is closely interrogated by all the participants, especially the director and actors. Poulton explained that there 'comes a point where the draft has a life of its own, when you work with the company, the actors, and feel that you have the freedom to make the changes that performance will require'. Eldridge remembered Norris requiring simplification of the bedroom scene, and a rewrite of later parts of the script because 'they just didn't work'. However, he also remembered a confrontation with an actor who referred back to the film when querying his lines. The upshot was that Norris banned the film from the rehearsal room. 'Any copies passed around had to be done out of our sight', laughed Eldridge. This was half-joking, but demonstrates the extent of negotiation required, and also the ultimate site of power in the rehearsal room. Even so, Eldridge differentiated his involvement in rehearsal for an adaptation from that of an original play:

What's different is the relationship to the actors after the read-through. Even though you have taken on the function of the writer in the room, you didn't create these characters. [...] As the creator of an original play, your opinion has huge value. But in a version, what I have to say doesn't carry the same weight.

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<sup>90</sup> I am grateful to Kate Eaton for allowing me to observe the workshops conducted by a professional director and actors while she was developing the translations described in her PhD thesis, *False Alarms and False Excursions: Translating Virgilio Piñera for Performance*, Queen Mary, University of London, 2011.

The writers recognise that their contribution to the translation project is more collective, and that the creation is shared among a group of collaborators. Eldridge does not even own the copyright to the translation, which belongs to Vinterberg, Rukov and Hansen. His comment is telling:

At the time, I was unknown. The pie was carved up between us. I knew this would be a good thing for me, so I accepted it at the time, and I accept it now. Now, my agent would say I shouldn't accept it. But everyone knows what I've done.

And with that, we looked at his name on the spine of the published text, and laughed.

So how have these indirect translators contributed to this translation that bears their name? A review of the interviews makes it quite easy to identify the skills which Poulton and Eldridge contribute to the project, less from their own insistence than because these features arise almost constantly throughout the conversation. Poulton was very aware of the audience, and of how a modern audience might react to language, to plot development, and even to staging. He describes the style of his dialogue as 'heightened language', reflecting the emotion and speech patterns of the German, but easily comprehensible to the audience and speakable by the actors. He uses an acting class at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts as a trial-ground for his language. Poulton revised one of the last scenes in the play which requires Don Carlos to disguise himself as his grandfather's ghost in order to effect a meeting with the Queen. This would appear absurd to the modern audience, who would laugh inappropriately at the tragic climax of the play. With regard to staging, Poulton remembered making small changes on transfer from the thrust stage at Sheffield to the proscenium arch in London. The audience was no longer seated on three sides of the stage, with a more three-dimensional view of the action, and therefore entrances and lines had to be changed to allow focus on Philip II's face in a tableau setting during the final interview with the Grand Inquisitor. 'We want the audience sitting on the edge of their seat for three hours', explained Poulton. When asked how he gauged what would be effective for an audience, Poulton replied, 'I have studied the audience for 45 years! The audience is key. It is like an orchestra, an elaborate musical instrument which the actors are playing'. This demonstrates his emphasis on performance and reception, and his professional experience.

Eldridge placed a similar prominence on theatricality in his approach. He frequently repeated the phrases ‘on the moment’ and ‘the speed of an actor’s thought’, reflecting the spontaneity and speakability of his approach to writing. He also emphasised the differences between theatre and film, relevant to *Festen*. He compensated for the inability to create camera close-ups in private moments by shifting the focus of the whole play to the abused son, Christian. In recognition of this, he composed a form for his play which he imagined as ‘something theatrically loose, which gets tighter and tighter, and ends in knots, like Christian’s stomach’. He referred to Sarah Kane’s *Blasted* as his inspiration for this approach, another example of the exclusive theatricality of his intention. Like Poulton, he was very aware of the audience in devising his adaptation, seeing it as a ‘subversion of a middle-class evening in the theatre’, so that the audience response is very much part of the atmosphere generated by the play, another theatrical effect. For Eldridge, the ‘liveness and shared space [of theatre] bring an intimacy that more than compensates’ for the inability to film close-up.

My interviews with indirect translators suggest that, while they do not claim to translate, these practitioners generate the textual and playable elements which are ultimately seen by the audience in a translated performance. Their commitment and professionalism towards the project was striking in interview. To suggest that they had been selected to sell tickets seems over-cynical. They were unquestionably focused towards communication with the audience. That, however, is an important ingredient in theatre and performance. While some performance theory focuses on process itself, the relevance of the audience to theatricality cannot be discounted when considering theatre translation. My next section on direct translators investigates whether similar factors apply.

#### **4.7 Direct Translators**

Only three plays in my sample were directly translated without recourse to an intermediate translation prepared by another agent. Two of these plays were translated into English for the first time, from recently-written source-texts, copyright 2004. The third, *Hecuba*, was first performed in its source-language in about 425 BCE (Walton 1991: xiii) and first

translated into English in 1726, with at least twenty further translations between that date and 2005, when Tony Harrison's translation was staged (Walton 2006: 242). These plays therefore present aspects of translation which are poles apart in time and audience-familiarity. Furthermore, the new plays, *Way to Heaven* and *The Woman Before*, were both staged at the Royal Court, which as I have already discussed, has an idiosyncratically distinct approach to theatre and translation, foregrounding new writing. *Hecuba* was produced for the RSC, and therefore emanated from a theatre specialising in the re-presentation of canonic texts. Not unconnected with this dichotomy, the Royal Court productions were presented as translations, while *Hecuba* was advertised for SOLT as an 'adaptation', described as a 'new translation' in the RSC programme, a 'new version' in the Brooklyn Academy of Music *BAMbill* when it appeared in New York, and a 'new translation from the Greek' in the published text. It might have been illuminating to explore this identity crisis with Harrison, but unfortunately he declined my request for an interview on the basis that he does not like to talk about past work and that *Hecuba* had been a problematical experience. Chapter Six investigates this *Hecuba* production in detail, with further consideration of Harrison's role as translator. I therefore focus on the processes discussed by the translators David Johnston and David Tushingham in this section.

Johnston and Tushingham perhaps had more in common with David Eldridge than Harrison, in as much as they all operated in the knowledge that the original creators were alive, scrutinising their writing process and likely to intervene in the result. Unlike Eldridge, Johnston and Tushingham were already acquainted with the original playwrights before beginning their translation projects. They are also regarded in theatre circles as translation specialists, alongside their supplementary careers, whereas Eldridge's sole profession is that of playwright. Johnston and Tushingham are language experts, in Spanish and German respectively, and were able to work from the source-language text. Nevertheless, similar themes regarding collaboration, ownership and visibility arose, with some variation relating to the direct translation process and the presence of a living author.

Most, if not all, translators and writers spend the majority of their time alone with a text, creating drafts, writing and revising. Tushingham, however, was the most expansive on the solitary nature of his working method:

With new plays performed in the English language for the first time, there is more of an investigative process [...] for everybody, including the translator. Translators sometimes work under very difficult conditions [...]. They aren't able to see the plays in performance, they often just get sent a playscript. They have to deal with dialect, sub-text and other issues which are hidden in the text for other people to find slowly. They have to work to a timetable.

The image of isolation conjured up by this description prepared me for a text that would require substantial revision. However, of the comparisons I made between the published playtexts and the prompt books or recorded productions among my sample, Tushingham's translation displayed the least number of changes. I was therefore surprised to hear that he had spent very little time in rehearsal, as he was concurrently working on a theatre festival in Germany. His translation was apparently found performable by the director and actors, and acceptable to Roland Schimmelpfennig, the author (who has a wide command of English, translating *Hamlet* for Schauspiel Frankfurt in 2011), with few revisions. Asked whether, in view of his limited availability, he had supplied detailed notes with his translation, as for a literal, Tushingham located that kind of intervention in the rehearsal process, but explained that he and Schimmelpfennig had met at the director Richard Wilson's house and discussed 'what might come up, read through everything, made the odd change'. Tushingham had worked with Schimmelpfennig and Wilson before, to his satisfaction<sup>91</sup>, and was obviously confident that his work on *The Woman Before* would meet their requirements. This confidence seems justified, given the limited changes in rehearsal, although Wilson's observation in the post-show discussion that 'it's not really a very actor-friendly play' (Whybrow 2005) also suggests that the focus in rehearsals may not have been on the ease of speaking the text.

David Johnston's account of his working relationship with Juan Mayorga on *Way to Heaven* suggested a much more integrated association. Johnston had initially translated the play with support from L'Atelier Européen de la Traduction. He was subsequently asked by the Royal Court to translate the play *Nocturnal*, developed by Mayorga from a shorter piece

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<sup>91</sup> Tushingham had translated *Arabian Night* and *Push Up* by Schimmelpfennig (2002), and David Gieselmann's *Mr Kolpert*, directed by Wilson for the Royal Court (2000).

commissioned by the Royal Court, and both plays had then been considered for production through a series of workshops and readings, with *Way to Heaven* ultimately selected<sup>92</sup>. Johnston's translation had therefore neither been commissioned by the Royal Court nor had he created the English playtext with that space in mind. Johnston, however, was familiar with Mayorga and his body of work before they came together to attend the first week of rehearsals. The section on playwrights, below, discusses Mayorga's open approach to the revision of his plays, supporting Johnston's observation that 'Juan infuriatingly, but understandably, rewrites and rewrites', necessitating co-ordinated modifications to the translation. Johnston felt that, if the play had been produced on the larger stage Downstairs, it would have required further alteration in order to conduct its inherent debate with a wider audience. As it was, during the rehearsal, 'the translation and the original were sparking off each other'. Mayorga, in interview, also acknowledged the contribution of the translator to the progress of his plays. This co-operation extended to the director Ramin Gray, who, as Johnston remembered, 'didn't impose many textual changes. Changes were done through prompting and questioning, in a genuine collaborative sense'.

Although the collaborative experience was recounted differently by these two direct translators, their view of the translator's locus in the rehearsal room was remarkably similar. For both, the presence of the original writer affected their ownership of the English text. Tushingham saw himself as a mediator, required to act as a dramaturg, 'occasionally a referee', when director, writer and translator were together. For his own part in the creative process, however, he took a more active view: 'Creative misreadings can be liberating, so I'm not too worried about speaking for the writer'. He pointed out that, 'knowing a language doesn't mean you know everything about a play', saying later that, 'I'm not infallible'. He seemed to accept that he might have a divergent response from that of the writer or director, which could validly be added to the mix of opinions. Ultimately, however, he insisted that 'theatre-making is happening in the present, and for an audience'. Communication with the audience informed his approach as a translator, and his closing words expressed his perception of the responsibilities of his role: 'Translation is part

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<sup>92</sup> *Nocturnal* went on to be produced at the Gate Theatre, London in 2009.



of practical theatre-making, not a literary exercise'. Tushingam's words could have been spoken by any of the directors, indirect or literal translators interviewed; the creative process addresses the target audience first and foremost.

Johnston was similarly focused on the practicality of his endeavours. His enthusiasm for and commitment to the text and argument of *Way to Heaven* was self-evident, but he was clear on the extent of his role:

The translator is in a relationship with the author, and the only representative of the process of writing if the author isn't there. But the translator has to say to the director, 'it's your show' [...]. Translators are not there as representatives of an author to say, 'no changes'; they are there to negotiate a text.

Johnston's ownership of the translated text extends to the copyright, but not to the unassailability of the text itself. In this he mirrors Mayorga as creator of *Way to Heaven*, but he applies the same logic to his other translations, including those where the original writer is unable to insist on a continuing interest. Johnston retranslated Molière's *The Miser* for the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry in 2010. The programme presented the play as 'in a new version', but Johnston was credited inside as 'translator and adaptor'. The play moved to Belfast later that same year, and Johnston explained to me how it had been 'rewritten to suit a Belfast audience'. He had clearly enjoyed the experience of writing for his home crowd, and the opportunity to build in features which he had not been able to employ in Coventry, such as a purposely-created song in French. For Johnston, a translation is constantly evolving to suit its current requirements, a challenge he is pleased to take up: 'A published text doesn't capture the whole organic process. I find that quite appealing: the contingency, provisionality and dynamism of theatre and translation'.

His work as an adapter, not to mention his position as Professor of Hispanic Studies and Head of the School of Languages, Literatures and Performing Arts at Queen's University Belfast, gives David Johnston a measure of visibility beyond his activities as a translator. For *Way to Heaven*, however, he was credited as the 'translator', as was David Tushingam for *The Woman Before*. Johnston prefers to include the term 'translator' among his credits, although he admits that 'every act of translation involves some measure of linguistic

adaptation'. He also accepts that the designation applied to his role rests ultimately with the professional marketing department, which has the 'specialist skill' of 'getting an audience into the theatre'. Tushingam was content to rely on the Royal Court standard translator's contract for his own credits, but conscious of the general visibility issues for translation in the theatre. He felt that larger theatres adopted the route of using a well-known playwright for translating existing classic plays because their 'name was there to reassure audiences, and only significant in marketing terms'. But he could conceive of occasions when a recognised name could be inappropriate to the circumstances:

A new play is a more invisible translation process because you are interested in a contemporary foreign writer, people who have no UK reputation. If coupled with an existing British writer, even of their own generation, their name would be very much eclipsed by the British writer.

Tushingam was concerned that the effect of such a coupling might be to blunt the different perspective that a newly translated playwright might have to offer. However, he was aware that even in the circumstances of a new play, a well-known British name might usefully be attached to the production, citing Mark Ravenhill's translation of Luis Enrique Gutiérrez Ortiz Monasterio's *The Girls of the 3 1/2 Floppies*<sup>93</sup> as an example: 'Sometimes a well-known name can be a great help to a production that otherwise wouldn't get very much attention'.

The overriding impression that I received from my conversations with Johnston and Tushingam was that of a devoted pragmatism towards translation. Johnston described himself as 'a thinking practitioner, or a practising thinker', and this portrayal seems appropriate not only to himself and Tushingam, but all of the agents I have interviewed in the course of my research. There was an acknowledgement that audiences must be attracted to see the production that has so painstakingly been put together, but the emphasis remained on constructing the highest-quality work possible, while attempting to reconcile the conflicts placed on a translation by the original author, the director, the actors, and one's own creative response to the material.

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<sup>93</sup> Performed at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh in Spanish with surtitles written by Ravenhill, 2005.

#### 4.8 Literal Translators

Four of the translated plays in my sample were created by professional stage writers or directors working on a translation prepared for this purpose by a literal translator. The fifth indirect translation, *Festen*, was translated into English by the Danish writer, Bo Hansen, who had adapted a playscript from the film script. I was not able to contact Christine Madden, the literal translator for *Don Carlos*, but I was able to meet and interview Karin Bamborough, Charlotte Pyke and Simon Scardifield, the translators for *Hedda Gabler*, *The UN Inspector* and *The House of Bernarda Alba*, respectively. All these literal translations had been commissioned by the Literary Department of the National, for use in its own productions, but Bamborough's literal had been reused by Richard Eyre when writing his version of *Hedda Gabler* for the Almeida. This is in itself unusual, as I discuss below. I was able to identify these three translators from either the programmes or webpages of the producing theatres, and obtained the literal translations for *The UN Inspector* and *The House of Bernarda Alba* from the Archives at the National. Therefore, although literal translation is in many ways one of the more invisible translation practices in theatre, its activities are evidenced by an archival trail whose ease of following depends largely on the systems development of the relevant organisation. On the whole, I was not aware of an intention to disguise or hide the existence of a literal translation, more an expectation that it was an internal theatrical practice of little interest to the public.

The three translators interviewed shared the combined qualifications of a background of study in the source language and performance experience. Pyke and Scardifield are actors who translate, in Scardifield's description, to 'supplement' their acting career. Bamborough previously worked in the National Theatre Literary Department, and is now Head of Producing at the National Film and Television School, Beaconsfield. This mix of qualifications applies to the translators I did not meet: Christine Madden, among her other literary activities such as journalism, is a practising dramaturg. Bo Hansen is a scriptwriter for film and television. Although not included in my sample, Helen Rappaport was mentioned by several theatre practitioners as a particularly effective literal translator from

Russian. A more visible literal translator than most, publishing and speaking about her theatre translation work, she also trained as an actor, and now describes herself on her website as ‘writer, historian, Russianist’ (Rappaport 2012). These are professional translators with targeted experience in theatre and performance, who are employed to carry out a specific task. The activity of a literal translator, to the extent that it is thought of at all, is popularly characterised as boring, derivative and undervalued. The dramatist Richard Bean, for example, whose new adaptation of Goldoni’s *A Servant of Two Masters*, entitled *One Man, Two Guv’ners*, successfully transferred to the commercial West End from the National in 2011, described his working process thus:

I worked from a literal translation because if you do this, you’ve got to get to the bare bones of it. If you’ve ever read a literal, though, you’ll know that you read it for five minutes then fall asleep. It’s impossibly dull. It’s like a blank piece of paper – you’ve got your structure but you’ve got nothing else. (Cavendish 2011)

Bean’s ungenerous depiction is all the more surprising in coming from a writer who has been listed in the small credits on previous occasions<sup>94</sup>, but it demonstrates both how literal translation can be perceived, and why academic translators may be unwilling to participate in such “downgraded” activity. Catherine Boyle, whose translation of Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz’s *House of Desires* for the RSC’s 2004 Golden Age Season was commissioned as a literal but ultimately used for the performed translation, objects to the nomenclature *literal*, preferring *blank translation*<sup>95</sup>. This impression of an empty page, or canvas, awaiting the creator, still seems to me to retain negative connotations. Neither of these terms conveys the skill, knowledge and dedication required to produce the targeted translation deemed essential for the non-linguist writer. Nor do they hint at another element mentioned independently by two of my interview subjects: *fun*. Bamborough, who produced literal translations jointly with her Norwegian mother Ann, recalled that she first began because it was ‘fun’, and then continued because it was an enjoyable joint activity

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<sup>94</sup> Bean was credited in the programme for Dion Boucicault’s *London Assurance* (National Theatre 2010) as responsible for ‘Textual Revisions’.

<sup>95</sup> My own notes from Boyle’s lecture, ‘Translating and Performing Theatre’, for the MA Translation Studies module at University College London, 4 February 2011.

for mother and daughter. Scardifield also explained that he enjoys providing notes and background information. 'The fun of it lies in the slightly nerdy, pernickety thoroughness', he analysed, adding, 'I solve problems, and that's satisfying'. In spite of the invisibility of the literal translator's activity, its operatives obtain an intellectual reward along with the monetary payment, the probable credit in the programme and the two tickets to Press Night. In interview, the intellectual and emotional investment of my subjects in their translations was rapidly perceptible.

Nevertheless, these literal translators were well aware, from the inception of their involvement in the project, what was required of them, and why. Bamborough, as a former member of a Literary Department, could be expected to have a clear idea of her role. Her approach to the translation was always on the basis that it would be used by a non-Norwegian-speaker, and therefore she would attempt to strike a balance between the cadences of the Norwegian language and the accuracy of the word. This might result in a 'clumsy, clunkier' translation, but 'you expect the person doing the final version to tidy that up'. Bamborough stressed, however, that such avoidance of polish was by design rather than the result of a rushed job: 'A great deal of work goes into it [but] you are paid the equivalent of one week's wage'. The Bamborough team would go through several drafts in preparation, reviewing each other's work, with Karin producing the final version, 'tidy[ing] up' her mother's English. 'I was aware of the need to make sure that quality was maintained in the translation' asserted Bamborough, seeing her translation as 'another way into the play' for the writer, assisting in their 'new interpretation'. Bamborough identified the desire for a new interpretation as the motive for commissioning a literal when extant translations were available. Her *Hedda Gabler* translation had originally been prepared for the writer and translator (from French and German) Christopher Hampton's version at the National in 1989, and she had been surprised to discover that Richard Eyre used it as the source for his own version in 2004. The Almeida had contacted her agent, at a late stage in production, as she had the residual copyright to her translation, and she had been invited to Press Night. Bamborough described how she would usually have a 'conversation' with the writer to explain Ibsen's use of 'certain words of the Norwegian language', but had not done so on this occasion. She was therefore unable to cast light on how Eyre might 'capture cadences that [he] could at least infer from the Norwegian original', as he claims (Ibsen

2005: 9), although she enjoyed the production, and noted with approval Eyre's use of the word 'mardy' to describe Hedda (ibid: 12).

Pyke and Scardifield had similarly severely limited contact with the users of their translations within my sample, although recounted discussions and meetings with practitioners in relation to other literal translations. For Pyke, *The Government Inspector* was the first literal translation she had prepared, and she 'had a good chat with Chris Campbell', who commissioned the translation, before beginning. Scardifield did not remember being asked to provide notes with his translation, but explained, 'I felt I had to. Any decisions I made were obscuring a truth or covering up part of the story, which I would need if I were writing a version'. Scardifield's own translation experience manifests itself in his mindfulness of the subsequent writer. Pyke is similarly aware of the user's requirements and her own response: 'they don't want bias or your own cultural interpretation, so I use extensive notes'. Both used the adjective *fresh* to justify the commission of a new literal translation when other translations were readily available. Pyke pointed out that an additional layer of adaptation would be required if working from an 'old scholarly' translation when modern English usage will be applied, although she herself consulted academic texts when preparing her translations. Scardifield suspected a 'built-in mistrust of the translation process', a fear that an older translation might be 'tainted with some awful fifties fustiness'. Writers 'want a literal that's still warm', he suggested, so that they can 'feel on virgin territory'. These three translators reveal through their comments their clarity on the use to which their translations will be put, and how they address those needs as they translate. This recalls Hans J. Vermeer's summary of his *skopos* theory:

Source and target texts may diverge from each other quite considerably, not only in the formulation and distribution of the content but also as regards the goals which are set for each, and in terms of which the arrangement of the content is in fact determined. (2004: 229)

The aim of a literal translation is to provide the subsequent writer with a current and reliable linguistic transposition along with contextual information relevant to its theatrical setting. When assessing such translations, it is essential to understand why they were commissioned if their value in the overall process is to be recognised.

Another area of translation theory with apparent application to theatrical literal translation is that of Kwame Anthony Appiah's 'thick translation' (Appiah 2004), the overt annotations, and framing contextual information a reminder of the process that has taken place. As Theo Hermans develops the concept, 'thick translation contains within it both the acknowledgement of the impossibility of total translation and an unwillingness to appropriate the other through translation even as translation is taking place' (2007: 150). The literal translation process overtly places the translator outside the translated text, Chris Campbell's description exemplifying the impressions given by most of the theatre practitioners I interviewed: 'flat, unaffected, uninflected, as neutral as possible [...] it is harder than doing a [direct] translation'. There must be an unwillingness to impose oneself on the literal translation if it is to be useful for the indirect translator. Furthermore, I suggest that the process of which a literal translation forms a part contributes to a wider conformity with Hermans' analysis of thick translation: 'As a highly visible form of translating, it flaunts the translator's subject-position, counteracting the illusion of transparency or neutral description, and instead introducing a narrative voice into the account and supplying it with an explicit viewpoint' (ibid: 151). The indirect translator's presence in the text depends on the literal translator's attempts at self-exclusion, the subjectivity of the former permitted by the assumed 'neutrality' of the latter. However, the exclusion of voice is impossible for all participants, as I demonstrate in my detailed case studies in Chapters Five and Six.

As part of their MA course in Translation Theory and Practice, University College London students submit annotated translations, foregrounding the process of translation, explaining code-switching decisions and providing cultural context and negotiation. Literal theatre translation resembles these examples of academic translation, and more seasoned academics are also approached to provide such translations on occasion; specifically if needed for unaccustomed language or subject-matter, or if, as in the RSC Spanish Golden Age series, a number of literal translations are required simultaneously. As I have already signalled, literal translators are language specialists. The translators I interviewed studied the languages from which they translate in detail. Bamborough and Pyke have lived and worked in Norway and Russia respectively, and have a connection with those languages through a parent. Scardifield attributes his linguistic ability in three languages (French,

German and Spanish) to a 'misspent adolescence doing homework', but was described to me by Jack Bradley as a 'brilliant linguist'. Certainly, all three demonstrated similar working practices and concerns to those I would expect from academic practitioners. Pyke and Scardifield informed me that they consult other translations to measure their own linguistic choices, and carry out extensive background research on the playwright and the play's context. This research is evidenced not only by the notes accompanying their translations, but also the inclusion of their research in theatre programmes for plays on which they have worked. For example, Pyke contributed a time-line and short biography of Gorky to the Almeida programme for the play *Enemies* (in a version by David Hare). Scardifield's essay, 'Don Juan - 350 years of offensive charm', was included in the programme for the Donmar's *Don Juan in Soho*, by Patrick Marber, after Molière (2006). In both cases, the contributions were attributed, accompanied by the writers' credentials as literal translators. Pyke's photograph was even included in the programme cast biographies, an unusual acknowledgement of her engagement in the project.

A specific area of translation emphasised by my interview subjects was the speakability of the lines they wrote. Bamborough stressed her awareness of dialogue in her approach to translating, insisting on the importance of her theatre background and her work in television and media. Pyke and Scardifield both felt that their acting experience informed their translations. Pyke revealed that, 'I ask whether it flows, I say it out loud', commenting that her acting training in St Petersburg had given her the additional experience of speaking on stage in Russian. Scardifield explained that, 'As an actor, I like to write something which I'd like to speak', and referred to Richard Pevear's exhortation to retain an author's idiosyncratic repetitions, in his discussion of translating Tolstoy's 'drops dripped' (2007: 29-30). 'If I really can't get it into my mouth, I have to find a different solution, but I try to respect that', Scardifield insisted, revealing the constant negotiation between speakability and closeness to text which preoccupied all my interviewees. This, I would say, is what marks out a theatrical literal translation from the side-by-side translation, foregrounding scholarly textual accuracy, which is epitomised by the Loeb Classical Library: the translators are acutely aware that the final product to which they are contributing will be spoken and performed. Even though it may not be their own words which issue from the actors' mouths, their influence over the staged text is paramount when translating.



How does this influence communicate itself to the subsequent writer? For the plays in my sample, there was very little correspondence between indirect and literal translator. Bamborough was not even aware that Richard Eyre was using her literal translation, although she gave me the impression that she had discussed it with Christopher Hampton, the first user. Pyke never met David Farr, was not credited in the programme, and recalled going to Press Night only to find that no tickets had been reserved for her. Scardifield remembered receiving an email from David Hare thanking him for the translation and asking a few questions, but no other communication. All had worked more closely with writers on other translations, however, and the perception was that this tended to take place in smaller theatres. Pyke pointed out that at the National there could be at least a year between commissioning the literal translation and rehearsal, so that by the time the lines were spoken on stage the writer would already have gone through many drafts and ‘moved on from the two-text stage, mine and his’. All the translators were frustrated by this closure to their involvement, characterised by Bamborough as, ‘you do your job and goodbye’. Pyke and Scardifield have both created direct translations, valuing their continuing involvement throughout the process. Pyke spoke of the ‘luxury’ of making later changes. Scardifield enjoyed the feeling of ‘working alongside the author, and always asking myself, would they be happy?’ But the fact that these translators have each supplied many literal translations and, in the case of Pyke and Scardifield, have gone on to create direct translations for production, demonstrates that their efforts are valued and in demand by the Literary Departments and writers who use their work<sup>96</sup>. David Eldridge pointed out that his lack of communication with his literal translator for Ibsen was ‘a testament to the clarity of her work’. The literal translations I have seen provide extensive information to their user, which I shall demonstrate through further analysis of Scardifield’s translation, in comparison with David Hare’s version and a translation for performance by David Johnston, in Chapter Five, section 5.4.

If collaboration is largely a-synchronic, with little communication between translator and subsequent writer, it might be expected that public acknowledgement of the literal

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<sup>96</sup> Although literal translations are generally commissioned by Literary Departments, writers may ask for a particular translator. Thus Simon Scardifield has translated for Tanya Ronder at the RSC (*Peribañez*, 2003) and the Almeida (*Blood Wedding*, 2005).

translation could reflect the extent of interaction. There does not appear to be any consistency of approach in this matter, however. When asked, most practitioners agree that literal translators should receive credit in the programme and published text, and I understand that such credit is usually included in a standard contract. Karin Bamborough was very firm that she would always be credited for her translation. Scardifield and Pyke had both experienced occasions where they were not acknowledged, however. Pyke put this down to her own inexperience, as it related to her first translation, *The Government Inspector*. When she discovered the lapse, she contacted Jack Bradley, who apologised and included her name on the National's website. Scardifield's omission had occurred at the Donmar Warehouse. He had found this particularly surprising as he knew the director well and had advised on whom to approach as indirect translator, an unusual shift in artistic decision-making.

Both Pyke and Scardifield commented that David Hare had been generous in acknowledgement of their work with him. I surmise that a writer of Hare's stature can afford to share credit. Frank McGuinness similarly credits his literal translators: the front page of his published version of Euripides' *Hecuba* reads 'in a new version by Frank McGuinness from a literal translation by Fionnuala Murphy' (Euripides 2004). Richard Eyre is very open in his introduction to the published text of *Hedda Gabler* that he used the Bamboroughs' literal translation. David Farr, however, does not mention Charlotte Pyke, although he thanks an assortment of people in the published text of *The UN Inspector*. Mike Poulton acknowledges that he uses literal translations, but does not identify the occasion or the provider. However, his claim that translators do not always want to be mentioned is supported in part by my own research findings. When I was sent the literal translation of *The House of Bernarda Alba*, I was surprised to find it authored by Simon Taylor. In answer to my query, Scardifield explained that he had originally preferred to use his stage name (Scardifield) only for acting; translating under his given name, because 'actors are not expected to do other things apart from acting'. Reverting to Susan Bassnett's identification of academics dissimulating their translation activities, it can be seen that practitioners themselves may be in part responsible for perpetuating the perception of translation as a low-status profession. If the translators themselves do not admit to their activities, why should anyone else hold it in esteem? Pyke, however, made a powerful case for the

recognition of the literal translator: in addition to a failure to acknowledge the extent of her own work, she felt that the concealment of the literal translator undermined the original writer, 'because there is no recognition of the transition between what [the original author] wrote and what [the subsequent writer] wrote. It is a long process which should be recognised [...] the literal translation is the beginning of an important writing process'.

Pyke's words reveal her understanding of her own role among the multiple voices in the lengthy and collaborative practice of theatre translation. Although often downplayed or overlooked, by its own practitioners in addition to the intermediate users and final audiences, it is recognised as an essential, specialist task by the Literary Departments, writers and directors who programme plays in translation and commission appropriate practitioners. An appreciation of this role should be made more apparent, to practitioners and audiences alike.

#### **4.9 Playwrights**

Only three of the plays in my sample were derived from living playwrights and one of these, *Festen*, had been collaboratively constructed in the course of the film production, described by Claire Thomson as 'a story whose authorship can be accredited to so many actors in the saga' (forthcoming: 122). I was unable to arrange a meeting with Roland Schimmelpfennig, but Juan Mayorga agreed to discuss the translation of *Way to Heaven*. This section therefore focuses on Mayorga's account of his own plays in translation, his relationship with his translators and his approach to translating the works of other playwrights, an activity in which he engages with some frequency. Where relevant, I include the published observations of other playwrights connected to my sample.

Setting *Festen* aside as a co-authored original, the two single-authored contemporary plays in my sample bear many of the same hallmarks. They were both directly translated, both marketed as 'translations', and both produced at the Royal Court, which identifies itself as a writer's theatre. In my opinion, as I discussed in Chapter Three, they are also both constructed in such a way as to render themselves amenable to translation. I therefore

asked Mayorga whether he wrote his plays thinking that they would be translated. He replied, speaking for 'most playwrights', that 'we know our audience can be anywhere' and therefore 'we try to communicate with any audience'. Mayorga gave the example of an earlier play, *The Scorched Garden*, given a rehearsed reading by the Royal Court, which relied upon the audience's knowledge of the Spanish Civil War. Since then, he has focused on 'subjects, topics, historic moments that can be more easily got by the audience'. Mayorga, whose interest in Benjamin has continued beyond his doctoral thesis, describes the interrogation of translation as something that 'me habita, me preocupa permanentemente' ('permanently inhabits and preoccupies me'<sup>97</sup>). Many of his plays, including *Way to Heaven*, reflect upon the practices and ethics of translation. Mayorga pointed out that the Commandant's Germanisation of another character's name 'closes the Other' in a decision not to see their alterity. He gave this instance as an example of the tensions arising in translation, analysed as follows:

Si la traducción es capaz de aceptar unos riesgos, y aceptar elementos que puede haber algo intraducible, que puede despertar una nostalgia del otro, es una cosa. Pero si la traducción persigue una plana, simplifica, reduce, es no querer ver al otro.

(If translation is capable of accepting risks, and accepting elements which may contain something untranslatable, which may awaken a nostalgia for the Other: that's one thing. But if translation pursues a plan, simplifies, reduces: that's refusing to recognise the Other.)

However, Mayorga accepts and even invites the localisation of names of his own characters. The translator (Calderón) and the final destination of the Berlin train (Madrid) in his play *Blumemberg's Translator*, for example, 'must be adapted to the local name', to reflect the theme of 'how fascism changes language', which can be relevant to any audience.

Mayorga also welcomed the different treatments of the original title *Himmelweg* in productions around the world, including Spanish-speaking countries, which varied between

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<sup>97</sup> My interview with Mayorga was conducted partly in English and partly in Spanish. Direct quotations are his words, with my translations in parentheses where he spoke in Spanish.

giving the Spanish translation in parentheses, as in Madrid, and the German-language title in parentheses, as in Buenos Aires: 'This instability of the title has something to do with the play. It's a play about a giant euphemism. For me, this instability is productive.' Nevertheless, Mayorga was aware of the potential for a perceived colonialism in localisation. He described the Royal Court's decision to omit the German-language title as 'conservative', a feature he recognises generally in the theatre world. He sees the theatre as a site of conflict between 'el escenario y el patio de butacas' ('the stage and the stalls'), but one which must be negotiated. However, any charge of colonialism with regard to the identification of the Red Cross Representative as a national of the receiving country, he countered with the observation that a spectator was thinking less of nationality and more, 'yo podría ser él' ('that could be me'). This was in fact Mayorga's desired affect, at one point inserting a stage direction for the little Girl to look at the spectators (2005: 40), thus drawing them into the identity of the Red Cross Representative.

Mayorga's engagement with translation in conversation and writing, and his recognition of the inherent tensions between the translatable and untranslatable, may be attributable to his academic training, but an acceptance of translational conflict is evident among playwrights within and beyond my sample. Mark Ravenhill, writing about the wide translation of his plays, admits to worrying that he might be perpetuating the Royal Court's sometime designation as 'the Starbucks of playwriting' and be seen as 'just another manager of a global franchise'. However, he concludes, 'Resonance for me now lies in the international. I am fascinated by the way a work mutates and is reborn through translation and re-production'. For Ravenhill, the potential disadvantages of translation, practically and ideologically, are outweighed by 'the exchange of ideas with theatre workers and audiences around the world and the exposure to varying theatre practices' which will make him a better writer and 'challenge theatre-makers in other countries to make better work themselves' (2009: xiii). The favourable outlook on translation by playwrights is echoed time and again. Thomson demonstrates how Mogens Rukov's reaction to the request to translate and adapt *Festen* for the stage swings from an initial 'How can it be so important?' to the eventual 'A London Opening, my God, what are the horizons?' (forthcoming: 127-29). Ibsen's papers equally demonstrate his desire to be translated, and his preoccupation with the result. James Walter McFarlane provides a translated extract of Ibsen's letter, written in

German, to his publisher, expressing his 'genuine pleasure and satisfaction' at the 'wide distribution' of his works, and requesting communication with the translator of *Hedda Gabler* 'with reference to a number of alterations which I think are desirable for a German public' (Ibsen 1966: 500). The playwright's willingness to submit to and amend for translation reveals his engagement in the process and his acceptance, like Mayorga, that 'theatre is dialectic'.

Ibsen's letter also displayed his dependence on the translator. Similarly, Mayorga's interview revealed his detailed consideration of this relationship. 'It's important to have confidence in the translator', he insisted, proceeding to compliment David Johnston as 'a playwright and a poet' who 'knows my plays very well, sometimes better than me'. He also named his preferred French and Italian translators, Yves Lebeau and Antonella Caron, explaining that he liked to have a relationship with his translators: 'It's important to have a permanent dialogue, someone who has an overall perspective, knows your obsessions'. Mayorga reads English, French and German, and therefore is able to sustain a bilingual dialogue in these languages, sustaining and controlling the degree of instability of his text. I asked him whether he was able to adopt a similar attitude when translated into an unknown language, a recent instance being the Korean-language production of *La Tortuga de Darwin* by the Seoul Metropolitan Theatre Company (2009). The translator was a Spanish scholar, who had made the initial approach to Mayorga, and had the necessary contacts to facilitate the Korean production. Mayorga declared himself 'happy' with the translation and the 'marvellous performance, very poetic', explaining that, even though he could not understand the result, 'Theatre is translation. The director translates it to a space, his ideas are translated by the actors, the audience experiences the translation. It is even more radical when there is a change of language'. Mayorga trusted the translator, and was able to evaluate that trust in his reception of the performed translation, beyond text. This acceptance is underscored by his Benjaminian interpretation of the act of translation:

I don't look just for communication. [...] If a language is just used to communicate, that has nothing to do with the important things. [...] We cannot reduce [a moment] to an easy sentence. But at the same time it says something to us about mankind, the human being.

Echoing Benjamin's exposition that 'whatever in translation is more than communication' points to the realm of 'a higher and purer climate of language' (1968: 86), Mayorga subscribes to the mystery of translation.

All the living writers in my sample speak English and engage in translation, such that they are able to assess the results of their translators into English, but they are also familiar with the process of translation itself. Both Schimmelpfenning and Mayorga have translated Shakespeare into their mother-tongue. Mayorga described the process he adopted for *King Lear*, making a first draft from the original, then reading as many other translations as he could find, including into Latin American Spanish, French and German. He explained that he was 'not trying to capture the best literary version, but to catch the poetic flower' of the original, and that other versions assisted him in identifying the strength of the text. 'I am an adapter, not a translator', Mayorga insisted, his commissions generated by his dramaturgical rather than language knowledge: 'I am asked because they know my work, they require my creativity'. For this reason, Mayorga refuses to translate contemporary playwrights, whom he considers require language expertise and 'big fidelity'. He prefers to work with classic plays, already well-known to the audience, because then, 'I am in dialogue with the director. I can take some freedoms. We can change things, and I must balance between fidelity to the original text and fidelity to our audience here'. Even in such cases, he detects fine ethical distinctions, distinguishing his approach to Chekhov's *Platonov*, 'porque no es una obra conocida por el público español' ('because it is not well-known to the Spanish audience'), from his translation of Ibsen's *Un enemigo del pueblo*. In the latter, he felt able to take 'más libertades' ('more liberties'). Mayorga's descriptions of his practices embody his location of the translator or adapter, working in 'the risk zone', constantly negotiating a line between the source-language and the target-language, the text and the audience, an 'amplifying' ('ensanchador') or 'reductive' ('reductor') task.

Although I have only been able to access the personal experience of one playwright in any detail, the analysis of my conversation with Mayorga illustrates his understanding of the implications of translation, both as a writer and translator. His Spanish text opens itself to translation and justifies Ramin Gray's privileging of the original writer as the contributor of theatricality, discussed in the section on directors, above. However, the importance of

Johnston's role as translator in so much of what is ultimately performed is made abundantly clear by Mayorga. The collaborative input in the early stages of rehearsal is significant, but also, as Mayorga explains, Johnston understands his 'obsessions'. The relationship between the playwright and translator is therefore essential for him in the transference of the text between cultures. Tushingham is also very familiar with the work of Schimmelfennig. This may be the key point which distinguishes the translator of a living playwright from the translator of a classic text: the ability to conduct a textual dialogue and also a dialectic connection.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

I had hoped to address the perception of translation by theatre practitioners, and its consequent transmission to audiences, through my interview process. On the one hand, there is the apparent negation of Venuti's paradox, the culturally violent invisible translator (1995: 1-42), by the promotion of a named theatre translator. On the other hand, there is the disappearance of the literal translator, who facilitates an Anglicised version by a monolingual writer. Then there is the issue of whether translation is actually labelled as such, and to what extent adaptations and versions can be accepted as part of the translation genre. Returning to Adrian Hamilton's criticism of the mainstream London theatre translation process as 'a form of cultural imperialism' (2005: 406), I wish to examine the argument that visible, high-profile writers and directors who use literal translations to create performed translated texts are culturally appropriating both the work of the original writer and the literal translator, based on the outcome of my interview research.

Firstly, I suggest that literal translators are part of a larger contributing team, made up of a range of practitioners from my interview groupings, including the artistic director, the director, the literary manager, plus additional creative personnel mentioned by my interviewees, such as the designer, the actors and so on. All these agents add to the overall impression of the work transmitted to the audience. It seems to me that a team is necessarily required if it is to fulfil Venuti's prescription for producing a translation 'that is both readable and resistant to a reductive domestication': expert knowledge of the source-



language culture; commanding knowledge of the diverse cultural discourses in the target language, past and present; and an ability to write (1995: 309). How often are all those qualities, along with an understanding of theatrical constraints, found in one individual? But not only translation necessitates such a team: the very concept of performance is dependent on communal activity. A theatre translation emanates from a community, and every member of this team, including the writer/translator, submits to change and compromise during the process of creating a production. This theme, above all, has emerged in my interviews with theatre practitioners, and can perhaps be summarised in the words of Chris Campbell, Literary Manager of the Royal Court, as ‘the conversations that take place every day and everywhere in the theatre’. So even when there is a controlling vision, such as that of the director Michael Grandage, who features as a strong personality through this interview process, a collaborative act takes place; its visibility is refracted through the production.

Secondly, when I consider the direct translations in my sample, I see similar cultural negotiations to those taking place in the creation of an indirect translation, the distinction being that they might be conducted between a smaller number of agents because the cultural tensions are distributed differently. David Johnston notes Juan Mayorga’s ‘willingness to work collaboratively with new directors, actors and translators, to re-assess as new sensibilities engage with his plays’ (Mayorga 2009: 14). The agents I interviewed in connection with directly translated new plays were as concerned to balance the obligations between audience and playwright as those in the remainder of my sample. They were to some extent released from the pressures of filling seats both by the theatrical site (the Theatre Upstairs, venue for *Way to Heaven*, holds a maximum audience of 90) and the fact that they were produced in a specialist theatre, the Royal Court, with a knowledgeable constituency. The only direct translation among the retranslations, *Hecuba*, was apparently forced to negotiate similar conflicts to those of the remainder of the sample; I have drawn that conclusion on the basis that very few participants wished to discuss the project with me, and explore the reasons further in my *Hecuba* case study in Chapter Six.

Thirdly, the practitioners move around the field, taking on different roles informed by their overall experience. Thus Mayorga moves from writer to indirect translator, Poulton from

indirect translator to direct translator, Scardifield from literal translator to direct translator, Byam Shaw from literary associate to producer, and so on. Each text, each production differs in its requirements, but the cumulative experience applies to every assignment. Even so, every engagement carries a risk of failure and no amount of experience or planning can mitigate the possibility that a production may not meet with the approval of the critics and/or the audience. This adds to the tension, pushing the agents to combine previously successful techniques with an element of novelty.

Box office sales lead to the fourth factor emerging from my interviews: financial imperatives. Producers and artistic directors have to consider the saleability of any production and a corresponding requirement to maintain expenditure within budget, which may be seen as artistic compromise. However, the impression I gained through my interviews was that finance was secondary to artistic endeavour. The 'moneybags' producers were as concerned as the directors and writers to create a high-quality production that would engage audiences. There was also an acknowledgement that, while strong box office revenues were desirable and career-enhancing, critical and artistic success was financially unpredictable and unquantifiable; a secret ingredient that could not be identified but was most likely to emerge from a collaborative team in an appropriate environment.

Lastly, the issue of visibility of original writers and literal translators is another factor in the tensions arising around all the negotiations taking place in theatre translation. This was largely acknowledged by my participants, and it was asserted that literal translators should be credited. Any absence of credit was on the whole by oversight rather than design. The original writer is always acknowledged, and repeatedly referenced by the translator, direct, indirect or literal, in explaining their approach to the task. In retranslation there is a desire to present a new reading of the text, differentiating it from what has gone before, and this seems to be the principal reason for commissioning a new literal translation, where needed. The literal translator therefore contributes to the 'new' in the same way as the indirect translator, and is aware of that requirement, indeed motivated by it. My impression was that each agent hoped to improve upon what had gone before and provide a more accurate reading of the original. For the first translation of a new play, the priorities

are different: the play itself provides the 'new', so that the translator can focus on other areas. Even so, the translators and all members of the production team have their prospective audience in mind, and the fact that the responsibility of the new writer's introduction to the public lies with them.

The results of my interviews suggest a re-evaluation of what collaboration means in the process of translation, enlarging the field to include other, sometimes less visible, theatre practitioners, and setting the translation in the context of its place and time. My summaries of the approach of certain practitioners demonstrate how there can sometimes be a controlling vision which dominates the performed outcome of a translation, but that vision, is always mediated by the other members of the enlarged team, and may even originate with a determined facilitator, acknowledged only in small print, like Marla Rubin. In the same way, the role of the literal translator may be underplayed and undervalued, particularly to the outsider, but the theatre industry implicitly validates the importance of this role by commissioning new literal translations from experts, and increasingly credits the literal translator more prominently. When a translation has been created by both literal and indirect translators, the issues of moral ownership of the translated product and responsibility for its cultural transfer become more complex. But even where there is no literal translation, a visible translator may be the figurehead around which other members of the cast and creative team gather to intercede. This is more likely to occur in a retranslation. The named translator also acts as gatekeeper and arbitrator for the ultimate transmission. Eva Espasa argues 'for putting theatre ideology and power negotiation at the heart of performability' (2000: 58). My interviews suggest that the interrogation of collaborative techniques exposes the power negotiations implicit in all theatre translation. Vision and visibility fluctuate around a wide circle of participants. But this variety culminates nevertheless in a single production, illustrating the substantially co-operative nature of translation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: *THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA* - TRANSLATION AS POLITICAL METAPHOR**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This case study returns to the investigation begun in Chapter Three, section 3.2, of David Hare's indirect translation of Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba*. I provide some background to the antecedents of the play as it was first written in 1936, examining the political myths which link its content to the circumstances of Lorca's death, and which Hare explores in his reading of the play. I then consider Hare's general stance as a political playwright, and how this stance manifests itself in his approach to the translation. A detailed analysis of Hare's imprimatur on the play follows, examining selected extracts in comparison to the original, the literal and a comparable direct translation, along with, where appropriate, examples from Hare's own plays written around the same period. To what extent is Hare's self-positioning as a verbatim playwright revealed through the translation? Finally, I assess the contribution of this production to the afterlife of Lorca's play in English by reviewing selected performed translations between 2005 and 2012. What does Hare's visibility as a playwright and indirect translator lend to the processes and sustainability of translation, and is it possible to draw any conclusion relating the mechanism of translation to the transmission of the original?

### **5.2 *La casa de Bernarda Alba*: Contemporary Myths and Circumstances**

Hare's statement that 'the metaphor of the play was stunningly clear' (García Lorca 2005a: v) calls for examination. Maria Delgado reveals the canonisation of Lorca and his work when she writes: 'As one of the first martyrs of the Civil War, García Lorca creates a romantic subject for exploitation, and his writings have been read [inter alia] as elegies where his own death has been anticipated' (2003: 206). *The House of Bernarda Alba*, as his final play, completed only months before his death in 1936, is particularly open to this type of reverence, dealing as it does with the imprisonment of five daughters by a tyrannical

mother, culminating in the suicide of the youngest daughter. Gwynne Edwards constructs a reading of how this association between the subject matter of the play and its writer's death can be achieved, using Juan Antonio Bardem's film *Lorca, Muerte de un poeta* (Bardem 1990) as an example. The film opens with the execution of Lorca and his fellow prisoners in the Andalusian countryside at dawn. The frame freezes over the shots from the execution squad, and the still picture is accompanied by a male voice-over reciting Bernarda's closing speech: 'Y no quiero llantos. La muerte hay que mirarla cara a cara. ¡Silencio! [...] ¡A callar he dicho! [...] ¡Nos hundiremos [...] en un mar de luto! [...] ¿Me habéis oído? Silencio, silencio he dicho. ¡Silencio!' (García Lorca 2004: 207)<sup>98</sup>. Edwards comments: 'The terrible circumstances of Lorca's death [...] are linked [...] to Adela's suicide [...], the dramatist and his character victims of a cold and heartless intolerance' (2003: 186). I assume that this is the 'stunningly clear' metaphor to which Hare refers: Bernarda's house representing an enclosed and isolated Spain and Bernarda herself a repressive dictator, as Franco was to become. Certainly, this is how the play was staged in its earliest performances outside Spain, both in its source language and in translation, and subsequently within Spain in its first public production in 1964, eleven years before Franco's death and consequent end of his dictatorship.

The representation of Lorca's plays on stage and the accumulation of myth around the legacy of his life and work have been the subject of substantial academic research, amongst which are Edwards on *Lorca: Living in the Theatre* (2003) and Delgado's study, *Federico García Lorca* (2008). My own research into early productions and translations of *La casa de Bernarda Alba* reached the conclusion that translation has played a significant part in the reading of the play as a political metaphor and its presentation as such to audiences both within and beyond Spain (Brodie 2007). However, the inevitability of this metaphor should not be taken for granted. Whilst Lorca's death at the hands of extreme right wing elements is accepted as fact, the detailed circumstances of his assassination, such as, for example, the degree of authorisation by the Nationalist faction, may never be established, as Lorca's biographer Ian Gibson has indicated (1990: 446-470). More recently, the lengthy legal

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<sup>98</sup> 'And I don't want any crying. Death must be looked at face to face. Silence! [...] Shut up, I said! [...] We'll plunge into a sea of mourning! [...] Did you hear me? Silence, silence, I said. Silence!' (My translation.)

dispute over Lorca's disinterment, and ultimate revelation that the assumed resting place was in fact empty, has revived speculation over the circumstances and motivations of the poet's death. The findings of the latest publication, *Las trece últimas horas en la vida de García Lorca* (Caballero Pérez 2011), were summarised in *El Periódico* as follows:

El libro intenta también rescatar la figura de un Lorca no partidista, aunque sí firmemente republicano, y niega que fuera un mártir de la izquierda ya que las rencillas familiares pesaron más que las ideológicas en su trágico fin. (Hevia 2011)<sup>99</sup>

The particulars continue to be disputed, as indeed are Lorca's own alleged intentions towards his work. Hare refers to Lorca's famous pronouncement concerning the play, 'Reality! Pure realism!' (García Lorca 2005a: v), as justification for his reading of the play as metaphor, saying: 'it is clear in which direction he was heading at the time of his death' (ibid). But Lorca was notoriously unreliable in his allusions to himself and his work. Any claims of political activism made on his behalf by his admirers may be tempered by his own brother's description of him as 'the antidote to ideology' (García Lorca 1989: 114).

Delgado addresses the complex relationship between these ideological and personal narratives in her summary of the play:

a dark, claustrophobic and elusive domestic drama in whose interplay of silence and malicious accusations lie a bitter microcosm of the larger conflicts played out on the country's political stages which were to erupt in a fratricidal civil war, scars of which still haunt the national psyche. (2008: 38)

This domestic drama thus presents a multilayered representation of Lorca's engagement with contemporary society, from the dramatization of the neighbouring Alba family in his childhood village of Asquerosa<sup>100</sup>, to a reflection of the foreboding within his own and wider

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<sup>99</sup> 'The book aims to re-establish Lorca as a non-partisan figure, although certainly a firm republican, and denies that he was a martyr of the left, given that personal rivalries contributed more heavily than ideology to his tragic end.' (My translation.)

<sup>100</sup> Asquerosa translates into English as 'disgusting, loathsome', although the origins of this name are thought to relate to the Arabic denomination of a local river. The village was renamed Valderrubios (referring to the blonde tobacco grown in the area) in 1943.

circles of political and societal upheaval. In retrospect, Lorca's brother Francisco provided a detailed account of the apparently substantial extent to which Federico had based his play on local characters and incidents, but insisted that 'onto this [village atmosphere] he projects a plot that has been invented in its entirety', emphasising his brother's 'artistic intentions' (1989: 236). Catherine Boyle has demonstrated Lorca's connection through his theatre with 'the sensibilities of his age and an engagement with a pretty uniform language of crisis, revolving around the questions of the audience, of dramatic writing and of social agency' (2006: 162). As she explains, Lorca's theory of the stage, his 'vocabulary of crisis', is present throughout his theatrical practice, conveyed in all aspects of the dramatic process. Viewing *The House of Bernarda Alba* as a metaphor, therefore, acknowledges the densities of Lorca's language. But the historical subtleties of the context in which Lorca was writing are also relevant in any subsequent reading of his play. The fratricidal civil war, and Franco's ascendancy and dictatorship, were all still in the future at the time of its composition. The myths and circumstances surrounding its writing, the subsequent political turmoil and continuing scar damage have influenced many later interpretations. Nevertheless, the 'stunning clarity' of any metaphor, either in 1936 or 2005, can be held up for scrutiny against the tensions within this text. Indeed, Hare's insistence on the play's metaphorical quality, without any exact stipulation of how that metaphor operates, requires an examination of his translation, both in the detail of its creation and in relation to his dramatic output in general, in order to assess his interpretive intentions. I consider these issues in the following sections.

### **5.3 Hare's *The House of Bernarda Alba***

Hare's plays have a reputation for demonstrating what Michael Billington has identified as 'a fascination both with the nature of England and the crisis in capitalism' (2007: 271). On this basis, Billington categorises Hare as a 'state of the nation' playwright, a label which Hare appears to find acceptable. Both prior to and since his engagement with *The House of Bernarda Alba*, Hare's work has addressed topical political and societal events from this distinct perspective. In his 2010 Garrick lecture to the Royal Society of Literature, 'Mere

Fact, Mere Fiction', he distinguished his plays on contemporary issues from journalism, insisting that his style of 'verbatim dialogue', quoting from actual words spoken, 'is still an artistic decision'<sup>101</sup>. Journalism, he considers, is reductive, 'life with the mystery taken out', whereas art restores this mystery. The significance for him of writing plays, rather than newspaper articles, about current events is that 'the intention of a play in describing one thing is to evoke another'<sup>102</sup>. This lecture not only demonstrates Hare's over-riding interest, brought out by so many of his own plays, but also provides some insight into his approach to translation. It explains why he might have agreed to accept the commission around the time that he was writing his own play about the Iraq War, *Stuff Happens* (2004). Ian Shuttleworth recounts his 'start of excitement' when, viewing Hare's *The House of Bernarda Alba*, he realised that Hare was less concerned with 'quintessentially Lorquista aspects' and more interested in 'contemporary geopolitics. His script is the continuation of *Stuff Happens* by other means' (2005a: 335). Hare's *The House of Bernarda Alba* must be viewed in relation to his position as one of the UK's most decorated playwrights.

As his invitation to address the Royal Society of literature suggests, Hare and his work are known quantities to theatre audiences, particularly National Theatre audiences where he makes regular appearances in one guise or another. The prominent placement of his name on the cover of *The House of Bernarda Alba* programme and published translation suggests that Hare is a good marketing draw. Joint billing with Lorca invests Hare with a degree of ownership in the play, identified by Sirkku Aaltonen as 'time-sharing' (2000: 9), which enables him to include this work in a listing of his own oeuvre. The 'celebrity' aura surrounding Hare's name may in itself be enough to sell a ticket, but it is likely that the purchaser will also have an expectation of the nature of the production on offer. David Hare is a sufficiently well-known quantity, certainly among National Theatre audiences, to

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<sup>101</sup> A number of Hare's plays, such as *Stuff Happens* (2004) and *The Power of Yes* (2009), includes dialogue which conforms with the basic definition of verbatim theatre as 'a play text that uses the actual words of an event, usually preserved in the media or documents' (Pickering and Woolgar 2009: 200). However, Hare's engagement is the adoption of a verbatim style rather than full immersion in a verbatim theatre which requires the actors to reproduce original speech patterns and intonation, as seen in the methods employed by Alecky Blythe in *London Road* (National Theatre, 2011), for example.

<sup>102</sup> My own notes taken from Hare's Garrick Lecture to the Royal Society of Literature on 12 April 2010.



possess a brand image. And therefore, to borrow from the advertisement of another famous brand: this is not just a translation of Lorca, it's a Hare translation of Lorca<sup>103</sup>.

This phenomenon seems to me to be in contravention of Venuti's analysis of accepted practice in contemporary Anglo-Saxon translation:

when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text – the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the 'original'. (1995: 1)

Hare's production makes no claims to be the 'original', or even the 'original translation'. The key word is 'new', there in the publicity for all to see. The prospective audience is thus notified that even though they may think they know this play, or this writer (Lorca *or* Hare), they should prepare to be surprised. Such neophilia is a regular theatrical occurrence, and therefore its application is as appropriate for the translation of a play as for any other aspects of a production. This singularity differentiates theatre translation for performance from other types of translation, but is a useful tool to analyse the role of the translator for wider application.

When there are already translations available, including one by another high-profile English-speaking dramatist, Tom Stoppard, how can further commissions be justified? In the NT Associates meeting at which I imagine this project was first discussed, there would be acceptance that the projected face of the production and translation team must be visibly different from earlier productions. Hare's verbatim style might not have seemed an obvious fit for the intricacies of Lorca's dramatic poetics, but there are several possibilities as to why he could be considered an appropriate transposer for this play. Chris Campbell, Literary Manager of the Royal Court Theatre, identified a potentially relevant approach when matching translators to plays as seeking 'a sense of affinity, or an interesting lack of

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<sup>103</sup> The UK retailer Marks and Spencer ran a series of advertisements between 2004 and 2010 with the slogan, 'This is not just food, it's M&S food', an award-winning campaign which garnered much popular recognition (and imitation).

affinity'<sup>104</sup>. Hare had no previous connection with Lorca, or any other Spanish-language playwright. However, one aspect of *The House of Bernarda Alba* suggests a meeting-point between these two writers: Lorca's exclamation, quoted by Hare in his Adapter's Note, 'There's not a drop of poetry! Reality! Pure realism!' (2005a: v). This perceived emphasis on realism, whether or not intended by Lorca, whose reported assertions often defy clarification, may have provided a link to Hare. Furthermore, Lorca's declaration at the foot of the Characters List, 'El poeta advierte que estos tres actos tienen la intención de un documental fotográfico'<sup>105</sup> (2004: 80), recalls Hare's verbatim style of documenting contemporary events, and is presented by Hare as a subtitle in the published translation, 'A Photographic Documentary' (García Lorca 2005a: 1). The omission of Lorca's original subtitle, 'Drama de Mujeres en los Pueblos de España'<sup>106</sup>, along with the absence of any conditionality in Hare's 'Documentary' label, supports my suggestion that the attraction of this commission for Hare was the play's diachronic contemporaneity for both himself and Lorca. Although it may not have been theorised as such, the decision to offer this translational task to Hare recognises the potential of what Theo Hermans identifies as 'the translator's discursive presence, as a distinct voice and subject position' (2002: 11). Hare's invitation to create a version of Lorca's play included an intrinsic permission to comment.

His comment on the translation is to situate it in 'the real world' - 'not at all some timeless literary version of Spain' as he says in the Adapter's Note (García Lorca 2005a: v) - and make sure it refers to the political events of its time. The reading of the play as a subversive metaphor for Franco's regime, sufficiently dangerous to be banned from public display, while in many ways reflective of events taking place around the time of writing, does not conform exactly with historical evidence. The National Theatre programme included a loose-leaf erratum:

The final paragraph of David Hare's programme note states that the first performance of *The House of Bernarda Alba* in Spain was in 1964 'after the death of

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<sup>104</sup> Personal interview, 10 January 2011.

<sup>105</sup> 'The poet gives notice that these three acts are intended as a photographic documentary'. (My translation.)

<sup>106</sup> 'Drama of Women in the Villages of Spain'. (My translation.)

Franco'. This paragraph was not part of the author's original note, and Franco did not in fact die until 1975.

The presentation of the play as a critique of Franco's dictatorship would have been strengthened if it had remained underground during his rule. In fact, it had received a single private performance in Madrid without restriction either from the censor or the Lorca family in 1950 (de Quinto 1986: 8, 26). Its first public appearance in Madrid in 1964, when the Franco regime still retained a tight hold over public gatherings of any description and all forms of art were subject to censorship, owed the subtleties of presentation to its director. Juan Antonio Bardem (subsequently the director of the film *Lorca, muerte de un poeta*, discussed above) had succeeded in conducting his career in Spain during the dictatorship while making prize-winning films of oblique social criticism<sup>107</sup>. Hare's political approach therefore follows previous readings, although perhaps, as the programme error suggests, it appropriates the historical timeline in support of its narrative aims.

Another point of similarity between the readings of Hare and Bardem is the move away from the stereotypical image of Southern Spain as the home of flamenco and castanets. Bardem expressed his concern to distance his staging from preconceived notions in no uncertain terms: 'El máximo peligro consiste en acercarse, por poco que sea, al terrible y zarzuelero drama rural español'<sup>108</sup> (García Lorca 1964: 119). Hare also shunned what he called a 'timeless' view of Spain, leading to charges of over-domestication from the critics, as I discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.2. The way in which Hare approached the text can be gleaned from a comparison of his version with Simon Scardifield's literal translation, from which he was working. In the next section, I consider some examples of Hare's intervention as indirect translator in order to assess further the extent of his occupation of the performed text.

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<sup>107</sup> *Bienvenido Mr Marshall* (co-directed with Luis García Berlanga 1953) and *Muerte de un ciclista* (1955) were both awarded prizes at the Cannes Film Festival.

<sup>108</sup> 'The greatest danger consists of approaching, by however small a degree, the terrible comic-opera of rural Spanish drama.' (My translation.) Bardem's reference to *zarzuela* is significant. My translation, *comic-opera*, does not fully convey the traditional, stock-charactered, folk opera which would be familiar to a Spanish audience.

#### 5.4 The Voice of the Translator

The literal translation from which Hare prepared his own text is a detailed and systematic deconstruction of the language and culture of Lorca's original. Scardifield includes 227 footnotes, in addition to a short introduction in which he sets out the credentials of the source text used for his translation ('the Losada text, published in Argentina and used by Margarita Xirgu when she starred in the premiere of the play there in 1945') and provides an overview of the speech patterns of the characters. His first paragraph sets the tone for his approach to the literal translation:

Bernarda speaks in a rural idiom full of colourful coinings. The fun and energy of her language lies in the tension between its poetry and metaphor, and its blistering bluntness. There is in her daughters just a touch of a more modern and open world, especially when they talk to each other: small seeds of their rebellion creep into their speech. (García Lorca 2005b: 1)

These few sentences demonstrate, in my opinion, the high quality of the source available to Hare. Not only is he given clear guidelines for the tenor of the dialogue, but 227 opportunities to make an informed decision about his writing choices. In some ways, this might present a difficulty for Hare, in differentiating his own voice from the literal translator's knowledge of the source text and ability in the target language. In his introduction to the published text, Hare refers to earlier English productions; scrutiny of his own version suggests that at times he moved away from the literal translation, perhaps influenced by other versions he had seen or read or preferring a variation based on his personal reading. In illustration of the emergence of Hare's voice from his indirect translation, I examine a short extract from each of the three acts of the play, reviewing the original Spanish, literal and indirect translations. As an additional point of reference, I compare the analysed lines with a direct translation prepared for performance by another translator from my sample, David Johnston. This translation was presented at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry in 2008, directed by Gadi Roll. Johnston's knowledge of both Spanish and Lorca is testified by his position as a senior academic in Hispanic Studies and his body of

publications devoted to Spanish literature, translation and Lorca in particular. However, the value of comparison stems also from the closeness in time between the translations, and Johnston's acknowledgement that the translation was 'shaped through dialogue' with the director, the dramaturg, Genevieve Raghu, and the actors in rehearsal (García Lorca 2008: 11). It provides a 'control' for the decisions of a direct translator faced with the exigencies of performance, as compared to the indirect route of Hare and Scardifield.

I begin by examining a speech that was criticised by Gwynne Edwards in his review of the National Theatre production. This is the second line of the play, delivered by Bernarda's senior servant-confidante, Poncia, in conversation with the Maid as they are preparing the room for the family to return from the funeral of Bernarda's husband.

LA PONCIA (Sale comiendo chorizo y pan.)      Llevan ya más de dos horas de gori-gori. Han venido curas de todos los pueblos. La iglesia está hermosa. En el primer responso se desmayó la Magdalena. (L82)<sup>109</sup>

LA PONCIA enters eating chorizo and bread:      They've been wailing<sup>6</sup> away for more than two hours. [*Gori-gori* is a conventional onomatopoeic rendering of the sung Latin responses at a funeral.] There have been priests coming from all the villages. The church is looking beautiful. Magdalena fainted during the first response. (S2)

*Poncia comes in, eating bread and chorizo.*

**Poncia** Two hours already. Ceaseless incantation. And priests from every village around. The church does look beautiful. Oh, and Magdalena fainted during the first response. (H3)

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<sup>109</sup> In this section, I abbreviate the source text references as follows: L: Lorca (García Lorca 2004), S: Scardifield (García Lorca 2005b), H: Hare (García Lorca 2005a), J: Johnston (García Lorca 2008). Each reference is followed by the page number(s). Scardifield's footnote numbers are retained in his text, and the content of the notes interpolated into the text between square brackets.

LA PONCIA: (She enters chewing on bread and sausage.) They've been droning away for hours. There's priests from all over the place. The church looks gorgeous. The first response, Magdalena fainted. (J17)

Edwards complains that 'it is hardly likely' that 'an uneducated and down-to-earth village woman' would use the phrase 'ceaseless incantation' when referring 'disparagingly to the two-hour church service' (2005: 387). However, the term 'gori-gori' is sufficiently unfamiliar for Spanish readers to require a note in Joaquín Forradellas's scholarly edition: 'fórmula popular para designar los cantos del responso de difuntos'<sup>110</sup> (García Lorca 2004: 82), which suggests that it is an expression which would bring the audience to attention. Scardifield and Johnston approach the difficulty with translations which are less likely to cause a jolt of strangeness to the listener, 'wailing' and 'droning'. In my opinion, Hare's 'ceaseless incantation' spoken by a servant both maintains the degree of surprise in the original, while parodying the formal ecclesiastic language to which it refers. An imitation of such language reappears later in the scene when Bernarda leads the mourners in a series of responses, described by Hare in the stage directions as an 'improvised litany' (García Lorca 2005a: 10). This addition to the stage directions is possibly prompted by Scardifield's note that 'Lorca has a bit of fun inventing an imaginary litany for B [sic] here' (García Lorca 2005b: 6). It suggests that Hare has invested a degree of significance in this mode of expression, justifying his use of 'ceaseless incantation' for Poncia. He addresses the colloquialism of her speech by inserting an emphatic auxiliary verb, 'the church **does** look beautiful'. A further addition, 'oh, and Magdalena fainted', highlights the impromptu nature of the dialogue.

Edwards is dissatisfied by the 'Englishness' of Hare's adaptation, citing the 'highly polished, educated southern English accents, regardless of the social status of the characters' (2005: 387). The recording of the National production supports his reception. This delivery, however, is representative of Hare's plays in general, and my analysis of Poncia's speech above demonstrates that Hare's interventions are very much in his characteristic style of dialogue. His tendency is to level out class distinctions, one example being the

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<sup>110</sup> 'Popular/colloquial formulaic expression signifying the chanting of the prayers for the dead' (my translation).

transformation of the Soldier and the Prostitute in Arthur Schnitzler's *Reigen (La Ronde)* into the Cab Driver and the Girl in his adaptation, *The Blue Room* (Hare 1998). His focus is elsewhere: communicating via middle-class intonation and vocabulary the uncomfortable issues, as he sees them, of contemporary existence. Poncia conforms to this manner of representation. At home in the impressive surroundings created by the set designer, her clothing and demeanour portray her more as a middle-class housekeeper than a servant, and her language reflects this presentation. Hare's indirect translation maintains a similar correspondence with Lorca's original to the literal and comparison text, but addresses the code-shifting challenges in his idiosyncratic manner. In spite of Edwards's reservations, I do not believe that Hare's emphasis is a less valid response than that of Johnston. Johnston's grammatically incorrect 'there's priests' may reflect a less-educated form of English for Poncia, but it is nevertheless a common error found in spoken, if not written, English at many levels of society. In some ways, Johnston's translation is more 'English', for example, in the stage direction substitution of 'sausage' for 'chorizo'. Now that chorizo is easily found on the shelves of British supermarkets, the decision to choose a generic term in its place, especially in stage directions which are a guide to the director and cast rather than the audience, suggests a move away from a Spanish setting. As can be seen from these illustrations, these translations both acknowledge their English audiences, but choose to address them from slightly different perspectives.

My second extract takes place at the beginning of Act Two, and offers an example of the rapid exchange dialogue of Bernarda's daughters. The stage directions call for the daughters to be seated in low chairs, engaged in sewing or embroidery. Pictorial representations of the play often draw on this scene as a classic image, the daughters clothed head-to-foot in black and demurely sitting, often around the (white) walls or in a semi-circle. The Belgrade production conformed to this austere, static atmosphere, increasing its severity by imposing a virtual grid on the stage, along which the actors had to move. The National's set design, however, already varied from the norm with its elaborate scenery of glass and archways. For this act, a hint of chaos was introduced, with sheets hanging on lines across the set; the daughters were placed at different levels around the room: at the table, the sewing-machine, the ironing-board. Most strikingly, especially following-on from the previous scene where all were in mourning-black, the daughters

were clothed in fashionable knee-length dresses in muted colours and prints<sup>111</sup>. The following exchange between Angustias, the middle-aged daughter preparing for her marriage with Pepe el Romano, and her younger sisters, develops the undercurrent of envy for her forthcoming freedom and marriage to a younger, desirable man.

ANGUSTIAS Yo me encuentro bien, y al que le duela, que reviente.

MAGDALENA Desde luego hay que reconocer que lo mejor que has tenido siempre ha sido el talle y la delicadeza.

ANGUSTIAS Afortunadamente pronto voy a salir de este infierno.

MAGDALENA ¡A lo mejor no sales!

MARTIRIO ¡Dejar esa conversación!

ANGUSTIAS Y además, ¡más vale onza en el arca que ojos negros en la cara!

MAGDALENA Por un oído me entra y por otro me sale. (L126-127)

ANGUSTIAS: I am fine, and if that bothers anyone then they'll just have to suffer<sup>97</sup>. [Lit: 'let them explode'. In fact it's not quite as blunt as that because the verb *reventar* has much wider use than ours and its various applications soften it here, but the basic meaning is there. Hence Magdalena's sarcastic response.]

MAGDALENA: Of course it must be said that chief among your gifts has always been your lovely figure and your delicacy.

ANGUSTIAS: Luckily I'll be getting out of this hell soon.

MAGDALENA: You might not be!

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<sup>111</sup> The Costume File in the production archive shows that these costumes were based on a 1934 French pattern book, *Modes et Travaux*.



MARTIRIO: Leave this conversation.

ANGUSTIAS: Besides, better to have gold in the trunk than black eyes in your head!

MAGDALENA: It's going in one ear and out the other.<sup>98</sup> [She means her own ears: 'I'm not listening'] (S18)

**Angustias** Yes, I'm happy, and if that bothers anybody, they can jump off a bridge.

**Magdalena** Of course, next to your beautiful figure, it's your generosity of spirit that's always marked you out.

**Angustias** Luckily, I'm going to be out of this hell sooner than you.

**Magdalena** Don't bet on it.

**Martirio** For goodness' sake, let's talk about something else.

**Angustias** Isn't there a saying? Something about money in the bank being worth more than fluttering eyelashes?

**Magdalena** I wouldn't know. (H29-30)

ANGUSTIAS: I'm fine. If you don't like it, you know what you can do.

MAGDALENA: No doubt about it. Your eloquence is only exceeded by your beauty.

ANGUSTIAS: Fortunately I'll be out of this hell-hole soon.

MAGDALENA: Perhaps you won't.

MARTIRIO: Leave it.

ANGUSTIAS: Better money in store than a pair of dark eyes in your head.

MAGDALENA: In one ear, out the other. (J36)

This exchange illustrates the sarcasm, antagonism and envy among the sisters. Once again, Scardifield feels obliged to offer explanatory footnotes, although he does not flag the Lorquian trait of manipulating an ancient proverb, in this case, 'Más vale prenda en el arca que fiador en la plaza'<sup>112</sup>, according to Forradellas (García Lorca 2004: 127). Lorca accentuates the forgery by borrowing the obsolete usage of 'onza' ('ounce') to mean a coin. Although not supplied with this information by Scardifield, Hare identifies the inauthenticity in his revelatory 'Isn't there a saying? Something about money', thus capturing Lorca's image and the wordplay. He also discards the misleading English 'in one ear' equivalent, which, as Scardifield suggests, is specific to Magdalena ('**me** entra...**me** sale') so that 'I wouldn't know' functions as an appropriate put-down to Angustias and closure of that conversational exchange. These lines indicate Hare's pursuit of the linguistic leads offered to him by Scardifield, and his own either instinctive or research-based ability to write speakable, accurate dialogue which reflects the underlying Spanish text while developing a characterisation in English of the sisters' word-battles.

It is notable that the National production recording discloses laughter from the audience during this exchange, and at several further points in the Act. On most occasions, as here, this occurs when a sarcastic comment is delivered humorously. Magdalena's line, 'Of course, next to your beautiful figure, it's your generosity of spirit that's always marked you out', has an extravagant cattishness that Johnston's 'your eloquence is only exceeded by your beauty' replaces with a terse poetry. Humour is a frequent motif in Hare's authored plays, which display a lightness of delivery, often in contrast to the weight of the subject matter. His play *The Vertical Hour* (2008), for example, an exploration of the ethics of war in Iraq through a series of conversations between a group of professional characters set in comfortable bucolic or academic surroundings, moves between convention, humour, anger

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<sup>112</sup> 'Linen in the chest is worth more than a pledge in the square' (my translation), suggesting that ownership is better than borrowing.

and pathos almost line-by-line. The following dialogue between father and son, Oliver and Philip, is an example.

**Oliver** Who do you want to be thinking about on your deathbed?

**Philip** I don't want to be on my deathbed.

**Oliver** No, well, nor do I. Nor does anyone.

**Philip** So?

**Oliver** In the normal sequence of things, it's a bad sign if you lie on your deathbed thinking about your father! That is not a sign of a life well lived. I would say if you're still thinking about your father, you've got real problems.

**Philip** I won't be.

**Oliver** Good.

**Philip** Don't flatter yourself. I won't! (Hare 2008b: 104)

This dialogue displays similar conversational cadences, sarcasm, light humour on an existential topic and a finishing put-down, to his retelling of the discussion between Bernarda's daughters. Hare's voice permeates his writing, but in performance it is varied through the subtlety of delivery. My personal reaction to the portrayal of the daughters in this production was that they were differentiated in a way that I have not experienced in other productions I have seen. I attribute this distinction to the slight softening of their discourse, a use of conversational fillers which enabled the actors to develop the personality of their characters. For me, therefore, Hare's idiosyncratic technique assisted the theatrical characterisation of the daughters.

Lastly, I consider the closing lines of the play, ending with Bernarda's speech that was used as the voice-over in Bardem's film. The climactic moment of the drama, insisting on the word, 'Silence', which is used by and associated with Bernarda throughout the play, this extract explores the depths of Bernarda's character. Poncia has just found the body of the youngest daughter, Adela, hanging off-stage.

PONCIA            ¡No entres!

BERNARDA        No. ¡Y no! Pepe: irás corriendo vivo por lo oscuro de las alamedas, pero otro día caerás. ¡Descolgarla! ¡Mi hija ha muerto virgen! Llevadla a su cuarto y vestirla como si fuera doncella. ¡Nadie dirá nada! ¡Ella ha muerto virgen! ¡Avisad que al amanecer den dos clamores las campanas!

MARTIRIO        Dichosa ella mil veces que lo pudo tener.

BERNARDA        Y no quiero llantos. La muerte hay que mirarla cara a cara.  
¡Silencio! (*A otra HIJA.*) ¡A callar he dicho! (*A otra HIJA.*) ¡Las lágrimas cuando estés sola! ¡Nos hundiremos todas en un mar de luto! Ella, la hija menor de Bernarda Alba, ha muerto virgen. ¿Me habéis oído? Silencio, silencio he dicho. ¡Silencio!  
(L207)

LA PONCIA:       Don't go in there!

BERNARDA:       No. I won't! Pepe, you're galloping off alive through the dark of the avenues of trees, but some other day you will fall. Bring her down<sup>223</sup>. [Spanish can say this: 'unhang her'.] My daughter died a virgin<sup>224</sup>! [Or 'has died' - here and later.] Take her to her room and dress her like a maiden<sup>225</sup>. [*Doncella* = here, a synonym for 'virgin'.] Nobody say anything! She died a virgin. Tell them to ring the mourning bell<sup>226</sup> twice tomorrow at dawn. [*Clamor* is the peal of bells at someone's death.]

MARTIRIO:        She was a thousand times happy to have had him.

BERNARDA:        I don't want any crying<sup>227</sup>. [*Llantos*. In this word, as in the English 'cry', shouting and weeping meet. It is a noise peculiar to grief.] Death must be looked at in the face. Silence! *To a different daughter*: I said be quiet! *To another daughter*: Leave the tears for when you are alone! We will all sink ourselves in a sea of mourning. She, the youngest daughter of Bernarda Alba died a virgin. Did you hear me? Silence, silence, I said. Silence! (S47)

**Poncia** Don't go in!

**Bernarda** No! Never! Pepe, we know where you are, **galloping off through the dark avenue of trees**. [The words in bold were substituted in performance with *galloping down the wide avenue of trees*.] But one day you will fall. Cut down the body. My daughter died a virgin. Take her to **her** [*my substituted in performance*] room and dress her as a virgin. Everyone: say nothing. She died a virgin. Tell them: ring the mourning bell twice at dawn.

**Martirio** She was a thousand times blessed to have been with him.

**Bernarda** No tears. No lamentation. Death to be looked direct in the face. Silence! (*Bernarda turns to one daughter*.) I told you, be quiet. (*Then to another*.) Leave the crying until you're alone. We shall drown ourselves in a sea of mourning. The youngest daughter of Bernarda Alba: she died a virgin. *Did you hear me?* [Cut in performance.] Silence, silence, I said. Silence! (H75)<sup>113</sup>

LA PONCIA: Don't go in.

BERNARDA: No... I won't... Pepe you're riding alive through the dark trees now, but your time'll come. Cut her down. My daughter died a virgin. Take her to her room and dress her in white. Not a word from anyone. She died a virgin. Tell them to ring the bells twice at dawn.

MARTIRIO: She's a thousand times happier. He was hers.

BERNARDA: I'll have no crying. Death, you look straight in the face. Silence! (*To another daughter*.) Silence, I said! (*To another daughter*.) Keep your tears for when you're on your own. We'll sink ourselves into a sea of mourning. The youngest daughter of Bernarda Alba died a virgin. Do you hear what I said? Silence, silence, I said. Silence! (J71)

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<sup>113</sup> Performance substitutions from my own notes comparing the production recording in the National Theatre Archive with the published text.

Hare's version remains very close to the literal translation, and it is notable that he expands one exclamation into two so as to include the word 'lamentation' when the Spanish 'llantos' has been highlighted for him in the notes. This extract marks a reversal from the Act Two example, as Hare's vocabulary and style are less colloquial and more staccato than Johnston's version. There is a poetry in the formality, as if the words themselves are the forbidden lamentation. Hare mirrors the poetic phraseology of Lorca himself, in that last speech, in marked contrast to the easily flowing conversation between the daughters in my previous example. He seems to be following Scardifield's guidelines which contrast Bernarda's poetry with her daughters' modernity. However, the late adjustments in Hare's version reveal a continuing negotiation with the text which perhaps displays a degree of insecurity. Bernarda's strings of exclamations and orders are not a natural form of expression for Hare, who is more inclined to use the rhetorical devices of question and ellipsis to convey emotion at key moments. For example, Mike's resignation speech, part of a central scene in Hare's play, *Gethsemane* (2008), which investigates the political and personal repercussions of scandals in government, ends 'The episode's disturbed me. It disturbed me profoundly. Because I've begun to think, what is this? What's going on? Who are we?' (2008a:111). Hare builds up tension through a conversational ebb and flow, often counterpointing a dramatic tone with a sudden descent into absurdity. Shortly after the above speech, for example, when Mike is distraught, another character re-enters, giving a canapé recipe (ibid: 113). Bernarda's high-pitched ending note, 'Silence!', is appropriate for her character, but not a customary ending for Hare. The omission of her penultimate line, 'Did you hear me?', might be explained by a desire to reduce the final tension. Also, as I describe below, the actions and delivery of the cast softened the impact of Bernarda's reaction to Adela's suicide.

Hare is an experienced theatre practitioner across the range of acting, directing and writing. His text is composed in the knowledge that it will be supported by an entire *mise en scène* of representation. Thus the delivery of these final lines of the play was reinforced in the National production by flashes of lightning when the body was found, followed by the sound of rain to the final curtain. Bernarda, who is frequently portrayed as grimly determined during these last lines, ignored Poncia's injunction, and rushed into the death room, emitting a scream. She then called for the body to be cut down in a sad, rather than

angry, tone. In the final speech, Bernarda intimated an element of madness, and embraced the body of Adela as the lights dimmed. This remorse seems at odds with the political metaphor of Bernarda as dictator, but was presumably intended to heighten the pathos of the final scene. Penelope Wilton had in any case portrayed Bernarda throughout as more approachable, less distanced from society than is the norm (particularly evident in an earlier scene when, finding herself alone, she turned on the radio and practised a few dance steps). The effect of this portrayal was to humanise Bernarda, presenting her as a more multifaceted character than is often the case, but simultaneously muddying the clarity of any metaphor. Hare informed me when declining my request for interview that he had been 'unhappy' with his own work, and 'never felt good with Lorca'<sup>114</sup>. Since he was unwilling to expand on the reasons for this unease, I offer my own interpretation of his dissatisfaction. Although Hare does not specify the nature of the metaphor which he sees so clearly, his aim appears to have been to link the Bernarda/Franco tyranny, and consequent death of Adela/Lorca, with his interpretation of the events leading to Western intervention in Iraq. I pointed out earlier in this chapter Ian Shuttleworth's awareness of Hare's treatment in *The House of Bernarda Alba* of a theme already explored in his play *Stuff Happens*: the abuse of power by heads of government (insisting on the existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction) leading to the deaths of powerless Iraqi subjects and the misleading of Western citizens. However, Hare's exploration of the latter was conducted in such a way as to provoke debate, with complex characterisation of the protagonists. His comparably humanistic approach to Bernarda and her daughters, while mining the rich seam already deposited by Lorca, problematized his revision of the play as a political double-metaphor. As the curtain fell, the audience was asked to reconcile sympathy for the mother caught between convention and compassion with a horror for her tyrannical insistence on subjugation at all costs.

Nevertheless, the technique of creating unlikeable characters in an everyday, recognisable light is one of Hare's trademarks. Presenting Bernarda as the woman who might live next door is not so different from his portrayals of Oliver in *The Vertical Hour* or Victor Quinn in *My Zinc Bed* (2000), plays in which the easy banter between the protagonists delivers some

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<sup>114</sup> Personal email, 8 February 2010.

laughs and a recognisable middle-class background. The audience is encouraged to identify with the dialogue, before realising that the content is deeply critical. *The House of Bernarda Alba* is written very much in Hare's recognisable style, with flowing, easily-spoken, contemporary dialogue, and a light touch of humour even when dealing with contentious subjects. As I discussed in relation to the second extract, the recording of the production revealed a number of points of laughter from the audience throughout the entire play, which would not usually occur, and cannot be gauged from the written text. The humour relies upon delivery, context and timing, which itself depends upon Hare's knowledge and trust of the team enacting his creation. In this connection it is noteworthy that Hare and the production's director, Howard Davies, had worked together on Hare's play, *The Breath of Life* (2004), only a year before this production, and collaborated again the following year on Hare's version of Brecht's *The Life of Galileo* (2006). It can be assumed therefore that Davies is a practised and trusted interpreter of Hare's playwriting. Any stage variance from an accustomed reading of the text, whether in relation to audience laughter or a slight release of horror, is likely to be intentional.

Johnston, on the other hand, while writing speakable and explanatory modern language (for example, clarifying that a virgin should be dressed in white), follows the rhythms and conventions of the original Spanish. The familiarity of Bernarda's language reflects her use of the informal second person endings (she is, of course, addressing her daughters and her servants). Furthermore, the phraseology of 'I'll have no crying. Death, you look straight in the face,' must be spoken with similar intonation and breathing to the Spanish, 'Y no quiero llantos. La muerte hay que mirarla cara a cara'. The same is not true of Hare's 'No tears. No lamentation. Death to be looked direct in the face.' Johnston's comma after the word 'death' demonstrates the linguistic finesse of an expert. Johnston's interpretation fully conveys Bernarda's determination for silence and cover-up, to the extent of translating '¡A callar he dicho!' as 'Silence, I said'. The remaining translations shown here opt for a synonym for silence, 'be quiet', in recognition of the Spanish verb 'callar'. Johnston's strengthening of the horror of this final scene was reinforced by the production at the Belgrade Theatre. The back wall of the, until that point, dark set was shockingly lit up in a brilliant light, depicting the shadow of a body hanging from a noose, and a graffiti-covered wall. This may have been interpreted as a reference by the Israeli director, Gadi Roll, to the



Israel/Palestine separation barrier<sup>115</sup>. Indeed, there were further intimations of this feature in the use of stone and wall imagery in Johnston's translation<sup>116</sup>. For Johnston as for Hare, performance and text intertwined to present the substance of their translations.

Comparison of Hare's indirect translation using Scardifield's literal with Johnston's direct translation provides evidence of the subjectivity of interpretation. The Lorca expert Gwynne Edwards considers that Hare's production was distanced from Lorca's theatrical aims and language, complaining about 'unjustified changes' and a 'number of misreadings or misunderstandings' (2005: 393), but in my opinion this does not give credit to the detailed reading and interpretation imposed by Hare which becomes clear even from the brief analysis I have performed in this section. Scardifield provided Hare with a comprehensive if not complete literal translation. He clearly had to make choices himself about which allusions were the most essential to Hare's appreciation. Otherwise, the richness of Lorca's text would require a footnote with almost every word, and a piece of work not dissimilar to Nabokov's four-volume annotated translation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, described by George Steiner as an artefact of 'permanent strangeness and marginality' (1998: 315). Scardifield had to find a blend of accuracy and accessibility, offering a text speakable by an English cast while attempting to repress any desire to influence the performance. Hare's use of the literal translation demonstrates his negotiation and awareness of its range alongside the imposition of his own voice.

But it is also clear that David Johnston made choices reflecting a personal reading of and response to the text and its author. Even the brief comparative extracts presented above demonstrate that Hare and Johnston follow the Spanish text closely, but with variations which, on examination, illuminate their individual interests and expertise. Both translations operate what Czech translation theorist Jiří Levý identified as far back as 1963, in his

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<sup>115</sup> This barrier is equally of interest to David Hare, who wrote and performed a study entitled *Wall* at the Royal Court Theatre, 2009.

<sup>116</sup> For example, Bernarda's line '¡No me persigas tú con tus malos pensamientos!' (L162) is rendered 'Then don't cast stones at my family' (J52). A few pages later, 'Si las gentes del pueblo quieren levantar falsos testimonios, se encontrarán con mi pedernal' (L166) becomes 'If the people in this town want to gossip about me, I'll be a stone wall' (J53). Scardifield translates these lines as 'Don't come after me with your wicked thoughts' (S27) and 'If people want to give false testimony, they'll come up against my flint' (S33), respectively.

analysis of drama translation within the broader translation activity, as ‘the principle of selective accuracy’ (2011: 162), suggesting that such variations are neither a recent phenomenon nor restricted to English. The translation decisions made by Johnston and Hare relate to their perceived location of the tension in the correspondence between original and translation. Thus, on a micro level, Hare, prompted by Scardifield, echoes ‘llantos’ with ‘lamentations’, while Johnston inserts a comma after ‘death’, to ensure that the speaker takes a breath. In the macro-narrative, Hare focuses on the transmission of the ‘stunningly clear’ metaphor; Johnston endeavours to give voice to ‘the silence at the heart of Lorca’s own life’ (García Lorca 2008: 9). Hare was engaged to present his own retelling of Lorca’s drama, itself a reimagining of a local narrative. Johnston is equally present in his script. Furthermore, my examples demonstrate the synchronicity of production values with the underlying direction of the translated text: the translators’ awareness of the ‘embodiment’ of their words shows the importance of the director, actors and other creative contributors in the telling. This applies to both productions analysed here.

I disagree, therefore, with the intimated reception that Hare was moving ‘too far’ from Lorca by expressing his own persona through his writing. Nor do I take the view that the use of a literal translation inevitably distances the resulting production further from the original than would be the case in a direct translation. Indeed, the following chapter provides a case study in which similar criticisms of distance were levelled at a direct translation. For *The House of Bernarda Alba*, my comparisons reveal the ‘positioning’ of Scardifield, Hare and Johnston within their translations, and their built-in evaluative attitudes, just as Hermans describes (2007: 85). As a public figure, Hare is a more convenient target for criticism: one of the drawbacks of celebrity. But his approach to *The House of Bernarda Alba*, widening the presentation in both mise en scène and cultural application, has been repeated in the years since its appearance, as I discuss in the next section. In this it follows a regular pattern, articulated by Hermans: ‘translation actively contributes to the shaping of cultural and other discourses because, whatever its actual complexion, it possesses a momentum of its own’ (1999b: 143).

### 5.5 Afterlives: the Momentum of Hare's *The House of Bernarda Alba*

'Spain is different' proclaimed the tourism campaign of Manuel Fraga Iribarne, Spanish Minister of Information and Tourism from 1962 to 1969. Productions of *The House of Bernarda Alba* have tended to support that theme, including the potential 'dobles y triples lecturas'<sup>117</sup> which Fraga may not have intended (Smith 2004: 119). I described earlier in the chapter the classic monochrome representation of static characters enclosed within a windowless space. Whether presented as a personal or national tragedy, Lorca's 'drama of women in the villages of Spain' is generally theatrically conceived as a geospecific representation. The National production, however, opened the portrayal visually and referentially. Other than the characters' names, Spanish language and customs were barely acknowledged<sup>118</sup>. The buzz of an aeroplane, and other military noises, could be heard in Act One in the aftermath of the funeral reception, even though not specified in the stage directions. However, in Act Two, the stage directions call for the farmhands' song to be accompanied with local instruments, translated by Scardifield as 'tambourines and carrañacas'<sup>136</sup> [a primitive wooden instrument from Granada]' . Although Hare includes these directions in the published playtext, the production recording shows that they were not used, the male voices instead going unaccompanied. In addition, as I have already mentioned, the set design was light and airy, with cool tiled floors, plantation shutters, marble columns and sweeping arches over the generous doorways, more representative of holiday "property porn" than Spanish architecture. There have been several representations on the London stage since that 2005 production which seem to me to owe a debt to the visualisation by Hare and his team of both the characterisation and the setting.

Between 26 September and 15 October 2006, Shady Dolls Theatre presented *Homestead*, 'inspired by [...] *La casa de Bernarda Alba*' at the Courtyard theatre in Covent Garden (Shady Dolls Theatre Company 2006a). This production, which relocated Lorca's play to the Primitive Baptist culture of the southern United States of the 1950s, was created by Steven

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<sup>117</sup> 'double and triple readings'. (My translation.)

<sup>118</sup> Although the production notes in the archive call for the Maid to use a 'more Spanish' broom.

Dykes for graduates of the American Theatre Arts programme at Rose Bruford College. The aims of the course - to study the history, politics and culture of the United States, alongside its theatrical and performance traditions, and 'bring that understanding to the study and practice of theatre in Europe and beyond' (Rose Bruford College 2012) - informed the transposition of Lorca's original. Of course, the time required for preparation of any production, usually at least one year, mitigates any claim that *Homestead* was heavily influenced by Hare's production<sup>119</sup>. Nevertheless, Steven Dykes informed me that when writing his play he used translations by Gwynne Edwards, Emily Mann, and Michael Dewell and Carmen Zapata for Penguin. 'I don't speak Spanish', he wrote, 'and so relied almost exclusively on my knowledge of the play in performance in the UK and USA'<sup>120</sup>. Although he did not mention Hare's production, it would be surprising if he had not seen this version at the National, eighteen months earlier when his own play was probably in preparation. Certainly, it contained echoes of the National's representation in its use of radio music (playing Elvis Presley), soberly coloured costumes for the daughters, a vigorous Bernarda (renamed Lillian Beckman and played by Hollie Garrett) and, most of all, its turn away from rural Spain. Furthermore, in spite of the renaming of the play and the characters, its debt to *The House of Bernarda Alba* was a matter of negotiation between Dyke and Lorca's heirs<sup>121</sup>, who were acknowledged prominently in the programme.

The Courtyard theatre was at that time in the basement of the now defunct Theatre Museum in Covent Garden, and was a small space inappropriate for elaborate sets. The set design for *Homestead*, therefore, was largely restricted to a simple table and chairs with a few additional properties, such as the radio. My next example, however, was a larger-scale production. *The House of Bilquis Bibi* was performed by Tamasha theatre company in 2010, opening at the Hampstead Theatre and then touring to the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry; the

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<sup>119</sup> In his Author's Note on the production website, Dykes cites Nuria Espert's 1986 production as his inspiration, also mentioning Michael John LaChiusa's 2006 new musical version, *Bernarda Alba*, at the Lincoln Center, New York (Shady Dolls Theatre Company 2006b). LaChiusa's version was staged in a well-received UK professional premiere at the Union Theatre, Southwark, in 2011. It may be relevant to note that all the new versions reviewed in this section placed importance on the music included in their productions.

<sup>120</sup> Personal email, dated 21 October 2006.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

Harrogate Theatre; and the Coliseum Theatre, Oldham. Tamasha, originally established 'to define British Asian perspectives and identities' (Tamasha 2012), presented the work as an adaptation by Sudha Bhuchar from *The House of Bernarda Alba* by Federico García Lorca. The programme stated that the play 'is set in a house in Jhang, Pakistan in the present day' (Tamasha 2010:14), and the play was performed in English, with some Urdu and Punjabi. The set, designed by Sue Mayes, bore similarities to the National set in that it portrayed an airy, tiled space with creamy rag-rolled walls, large lattice-covered windows and elegant, carpeted furniture. This was clearly a wealthy house, through which cool breezes might blow to counteract any stifling heat. Costume colours were largely restricted to white (the colour of mourning) and neutrals, although elaborate embroidery and needlework provided further evidence of high financial position in the community. However, where colour could not be used to suggest a degree of non-conformity in the daughters, as for the National production, the daughters' independence was invoked in the suggestion that they held professional employment outside the house, such as teaching. Bhuchar elaborated on this theme in the programme: 'The girls have embraced 21<sup>st</sup> century living with the ubiquitous mobile phones, Facebook and Skype which connect them to distant cousins, yet heighten their isolation' (Tamasha 2010: 7).

Although the title of the play and the characters' names were changed to conform to Pakistani culture, this production followed Lorca's original closely; the naming of the literal translator, Julia Good (also credited as the Tamasha General Manager), in the programme, demonstrates the degree to which the production was dependent on translation. Lorca's play was referenced in the programme on the first page, and also by means of a scholarly article<sup>122</sup>. When I questioned Bhuchar about the cultural complexities of transferring a Spanish play to a Pakistani setting, in the English language, she replied that she was writing English for a culturally diverse audience: 'through cultural specificity comes universality'<sup>123</sup>. This echoes Hytner's claim for Hare's production, a re-investigation of one of those 'great plays that will always be staged for the universal truths that they embody' (Royal National

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<sup>122</sup> 'About *The House of Bernarda Alba* by Federico García Lorca', Dr. Rosemary Clark, University of Cambridge (Tamasha 2010: 9-10).

<sup>123</sup> My own notes from the after-show talk at the Hampstead Theatre, 5 August 2010.

Theatre 2006: 5). But it seems to me that Bhuchar in fact borrowed the perceived 'universality' of *The House of Bernarda Alba*, as presented by Hare at the National, to investigate a cultural specificity. She explains in the programme:

It was my visits to Pakistan that led me to reflect on Lorca's play as a vehicle with which to tell this particular story of 'the sacrifice daughters': girls who are being denied a future of personal fulfilment in a society where decisions about their lives are taken by elders in the family. (Tamasha 2010: 5)

Bhuchar's justification for relocation to Pakistan was convincingly portrayed for me by the production. The cast was made up of British Asians, apart from the Bernarda character, played by Ila Arun, a veteran Indian actor and singer. The script gave her the opportunity to sing, for example in the prayers for the dead in Act One, her rich voice soaring in power over the household. Although I have insufficient knowledge to make any judgement of the appropriateness of this cultural approach (I could only respond on an emotional level), the performance I witnessed was very well received by an audience who clearly understood and reacted to the Punjabi interjections. Additionally, one section of the audience was attending as part of a Pakistani charity fundraising event. These indications suggest that the cultural relocation was competently effected.

A similar approach was adopted in a production at the Almeida Theatre in 2012. Retaining the English title of the play, *The House of Bernarda Alba* was on this occasion presented as a 'new version' by Emily Mann<sup>124</sup>. This version was set in present-day Iran, directed by Bijan Sheibani, of Iranian descent. Bernarda was played by the Iranian actor Shohreh Aghdashloo, and the performance included a selection of Dashti songs, for which English translations and cultural background were provided in the programme. While following the trend away from Spain, seen at the National and advanced by *Homestead*, and replacing Catholic rites

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<sup>124</sup> Although there is no mention in the programme of a literal translator, Mann is presented as the 'adaptor' of this 'new version'. Mann's 'adaptation' of the play was published in 1998 by the Dramatist's Play Service, New York. Presumably, this is the translation referred to by Dykes as a source for *Homestead*. Neither the Almeida programme nor the *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literature* (Snodgrass 2006: 346-347) present any biographical details suggesting a familiarity with Spanish language or literature on the part of Mann. Snodgrass suggests that Mann's adaptation (revised, I assume, for the Almeida) was prompted by the play's 'female wisdom about sexism'. It may be, therefore, that Mann drew on a literal or earlier translation for her adaptation.

with Islamic prayers, in the same way as the Tamasha production, this 2012 production used its relocation to refer back to earlier Lorca productions. The cast wore modest ankle-length costumes, mainly black, and the set, designed by Bunny Christie, was made up of grey-blue walls and floor, exposed brickwork and simple, solid furniture, all under a subdued lighting scheme. To me, the daughters seemed almost indistinguishable, and remote from their mother in terms of speech, as they used an English Received Pronunciation, while she spoke in an Iranian accent with an American inflection. This may have been a casting issue rather than a production intention, but I found it a reminder of the production as a site of translation and relocation. For me, this production was less successful than the Tamasha adaptation, while adopting a similar approach in its reading of the original. Whereas Tamasha, and *Homestead*, explored Lorca's text, pushing the boundaries as Hare had begun to do in 2005, the Almeida version seemed constricted by it. Many of the reviewers disagreed with me, however, with both Michael Billington in the *Guardian* and Libby Purves in the *Times* awarding four out of five stars. Nevertheless, this and the previous productions discussed here, demonstrate the momentum of translation. David Hare's reading mingled his specific preoccupations with his research into earlier translations and productions. The imposition of his voice, manifest in reception, gave subsequent translators the freedom to expand and differ.

I have discussed above three English translations which varied significantly from the previously accepted Lorca approach, since the appearance of the National production. However, even where a traditional representation has been presented, or revived, translation's momentum is still apparent. David Johnston's 2008 translation, discussed in comparison with Hare's production in section 5.4, was represented by the conventional black-clad, enclosed setting, but sharpened the images, rather like the fine-tuning of a digital photograph. This contemporising effect was borne out not only in the clipped colloquialisms of the dialogue, but in the grid-like stage presentation, as if in a video game. It was an unmistakably new production from a new translation. One year later, in 2009, the Nuffield Theatre, Southampton, presented Tom Stoppard's 1973 version of *The House of Bernarda Alba*, directed by Patrick Sandford. In comparison to the other productions I have discussed, this revival appeared to resort to familiar production tropes. This extended to the set design, by Juliet Shillingford, a busy period interior of polished wood furniture and

painted-glass lampshades, which I was unable to attribute to any specific time or location. David Jays in the *Sunday Times* noted the tension between a 'sharp and dry' translation and the softness of the set: 'the design team unlocks a counterintuitive sensuality, allowing rosy tints to flood the mercilessly clean white walls' (Jays 2009). For me, this production brought nothing new to the interpretation of Lorca's play, but providing a useful counterpoint to the other productions I have attended: an argument for the retranslation of plays, and an example of the stalled momentum of translation.

## 5.6 Conclusion

'In the political situation of 1936, the metaphor of the play was stunningly clear. So it is today' (García Lorca 2005a: v). Thus David Hare, in his Adapter's Note to the published playtext, sets out his position with regard to the translation of this play. But is he allowing a political metaphor to pass across from source to target or restricting the poetics of the original by imposing his own gloss? Scrutiny of the content of this translation demonstrates the idiosyncratic presence of Hare's voice and stance. His focus on the play as political metaphor, transmitted to the audience through translation, furnishes the observer with an overt example of the translator's role in theatre: offering new possibilities of interpretation. Hare's move away from the stereotype has been followed by a variety of productions, each presenting new readings that expand understandings of the original play.

I have argued elsewhere that the literal and indirect route for translation can result, counter-intuitively, in a more visible translation than the use of a direct translator, even though the result might be more domesticated (Brodie 2012: 78). In my opinion, Hare's translation of *The House of Bernarda Alba* not only says, 'I am a translation', but also, 'I am the play seen through the eyes of the translator'. This is brought about not only by the prominence of Hare's name in theatrical sites, and its attachment to this production, but also by Hare's overtly personalised reading of the play and the distinctive nature of his voice in the retelling. Furthermore, Hare's presence in the translated text, and the tension between the professional playwright's persona and the Lorca myth - what I have called 'the Hare effect' (Brodie 2010: 61) - provoke critical reaction, acting as a catalyst for future



retellings. This production therefore also illustrates translation's comment and momentum, reminding the audience and the academic researcher of translation's functionality. But this production could not have come into existence without the participation of a significant number of collaborators, all of whom influence the transmission of the translation's voice. Here is the titular head of a team which together creates a performance. In my next case study, I examine another team-production with different translational practices, providing further investigation of the transmission of voice.

## CHAPTER SIX: *HECUBA* - COLLABORATION AND THE TRANSFER OF MEANING

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the 2005 production of *Hecuba* by the Royal Shakespeare Company ('RSC'). My case study illustrates the participation of theatre translation in the transfer of meaning between page and stage, and between author and a variety of interpreters, including translators, theatre practitioners and audience-members (amongst whom professional critics take part). The play, dated 423 BCE, recounts selected episodes in the tragedy of the defeated Trojan Queen, Hecuba. It portrays the sacrifice of her daughter, Polyxena, by the victorious Greeks; and the murder of her son, Polydorus, by the treacherous ally, Polymestor, whose young children Hecuba ultimately slays before blinding their father in revenge. The poet, dramatist and classicist, Tony Harrison, created a new translation from Ancient Greek; Vanessa Redgrave took the title role; and Laurence Boswell directed this version, first shown in April at the Albery Theatre, London and then touring during May, June and July to the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington; the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Howard Gilman Opera House, New York; and the European Cultural Centre of Delphi. Harrison replaced Boswell as director for the post-London tour.

Harrison produced his translation without recourse to a literal translation, but it was advertised in London as a 'version'; billed as a 'new translation' in the London programme, which described Harrison as 'Britain's leading theatre and film poet' rather than a translator; billed as a 'new version' in the New York programme; and published as 'a new translation from the Greek'. The variety of appellations alone signals the blurred divisions between processes of translation and the potential shifts from source to target. This case study investigates the translation process by reviewing the context and reception of the production. Firstly, I consider Harrison's transmission of meaning through translation by situating his text alongside a selection of differently-authored versions of *Hecuba* in English translation. I then review the collaborative theatre practices which germinated and developed this project, influencing the relocation of meaning from source to target. Further

scrutiny of the roles of the agents in the production reveals the synergies and clashes of collaboration, which I discuss in relation to the performed translation, proceeding to demonstrate the marking of these collaborative tensions in the shifts of the touring production. Finally I interrogate the transmission of meaning, in the form of affect, as revealed by a study of the reception of this production. In other words: does this play indeed have a *soul*, as one critic somewhat gnomically suggests? If so, can the mystery be revealed through translation for a contemporary audience?

## **6.2 *Hecuba* in Performance and Translation: Contemporary and Historical Context**

This is a waste of a play, cutting off its soul to spite a president who couldn't care less, turning something strange, wild, rooted in the inexplicable extremes of human nature, into a production that exhibits all the unknowable mystery of yesterday's news. (Segal 2005: 447)

The above extract from a critique of the RSC's *Hecuba*, by Victoria Segal for the *Sunday Times*, reveals a reaction to the production which was echoed in a significant number of reviews. In detailing her dissatisfaction, Segal specifically picks out the translation, and particularly its political overtones, illustrating her objection through direct quotation, "Democracy demands a human sacrifice," says Redgrave, and you can almost feel the whole cast turning to give the audience a big, right-on thumbs-up' (ibid). Tony Harrison is known as a political dramatist, with a long-standing interest in Iraq, as demonstrated by his 1991 poem *A Cold Coming* (Harrison 1991), composed in response to Kenneth Jarecke's news photograph of a charred Iraqi soldier on the road to Basra during the Gulf War of 1990-91. It is possible that Harrison's reputation influences Segal's reception of his work. Segal must have been listening very closely to the speech, or Redgrave delivering it very clearly, to have absorbed this line. She could not have obtained it from Harrison's published text, which reads: 'Does something force them into human sacrifice?' (Euripides 2005: 11). The line spoken by Redgrave is a pencil amendment in the prompt book, the backstage

Bible used to order a production on a nightly basis. It is not unusual for a prompt book to differ from a published text, which is available for sale from the opening of a production: the text might be submitted to the publisher a month in advance, when many of the changes which result from the collaborative process of rehearsal have yet to be made. Pencil alterations in the prompt book, however, demonstrate a further collaborative shift at a late stage in preparation. I address the theme of theatrical collaboration in later sections of this chapter, but first I wish to consider in detail how the line ‘Democracy demands a human sacrifice’ has been presented in previous translations and assess what meaning might be gathered cumulatively and in relation to this production.

*Hecuba* has been translated into English on many occasions: J. Michael Walton provides a ‘Comprehensive List of all Greek Plays in English Translation’ in the appendix to his study of Greek drama in translation, *Found in Translation* (Walton 2006: 197), which records twenty-three individual translations of the play, and a further nineteen incorporated within collections (ibid: 230-35, 242-43). Furthermore, Walton includes ‘only very few “adaptations” and “versions”’ (ibid: 197), discussing the difficulties of these definitions in his chapter, ‘When is a Translation Not a Translation?’ (ibid: 179-96). For my current comparison, I selected a variety of contemporary translations, both for performance and for literary publication, along with two early translations similarly differing in their *skopos*.

The original line (260) reads: ποτερα το χριην σφ’ επηγαγ’ ανθρωποσφαγειν (Euripides 1995: 422), ‘Did fate induce them to slay men [on a grave/tomb, on which it is in contrast fitting to slay oxen (l.261)]?’<sup>125</sup> The Loeb Classical Library, a scholarly series which provides the original Greek on the left-hand page and an English prose translation on the right, gives David Kovacs’s translation, ‘Was it Fate that induced them to perform human sacrifice [...]?’ (Euripides 1995: 423); while James Morwood’s more colloquial but still annotated translation reads, ‘Was it necessity that persuaded them to slaughter a human [...]?’ (Euripides 2000: 8)<sup>126</sup>. The emphasis in both of these translations is on the intervention of an outside uncontrollable force (*Fate/necessity*), which Harrison’s published translation

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<sup>125</sup> I am indebted to Dr Dorothea Martens for providing this crib-translation.

<sup>126</sup> I assume that an annotated translation is not intended for performance.

watered down with the alliterative word: *something*. Translated specifically for performance, Janet Lembke and Kenneth J. Reckford's version reads, 'Do they feel bound to make a human sacrifice [...]?' (Euripides 1991: 36). The simplicity and rhythm of this line meet the performability requirements of theatre translation while addressing the inherent horror of the content. Nevertheless, in comparison, Redgrave's line, 'Democracy demands a human sacrifice', is stronger, both politically and poetically, than all three of my examples: replacing fate with a direct allusion to contemporary government, albeit conceptually of Greek origin, and the softness of the 's' alliteration with the hard 'd' of 'democracy demands'. But this line was apparently no less performable, as it came across so clearly to the reviewer.

It is almost certainly the use of the word *democracy* that prompted Segal to pick out that line in her critique: it represents the general tone of Harrison's version, the tone that was commented on in most of the reviews and which differentiated this production from a *Hecuba* produced in London a few months before at the Donmar Theatre, in a version by Frank McGuinness, with which the RSC's production was generally unfavourably compared<sup>127</sup>. McGuinness's reading of that line is, 'Did they put it down to fate?/They must have a human,' (Euripides 2004: 14). A typical response to the McGuinness treatment is given by Kate Bassett in the *Independent on Sunday*, 'A strength of this production is that it doesn't pile on heavy-handed allusions to contemporary conflicts' (2004b: 1170). The reviewers of the McGuinness version praised it for its portrayal of the horrors of war whereas Harrison's translation was seen as a condemnation of Western policy in Iraq. That this was an accurate reading of the translator's intention seems likely, given his introduction to the published text, which states explicitly: 'We may still be weeping for Hecuba, but we allow our politicians to flood the streets of Iraq with more and more Hecubas in the name of freedom and democracy' (Euripides 2005: x). 'Democracy demands a human sacrifice' spoken by Harrison's Hecuba is more than a critique of the Greeks of both Odysseus and Euripides: it is an updated reproach to modern society. But is that a translation of meaning, or an overt appropriation with a specific political aim? Compared

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<sup>127</sup> In a comparison of reviews collected in *Theatre Record*, all eighteen reviews for the RSC's *Hecuba* tended towards a negative reaction (2005 Issue 7) whereas sixteen of the seventeen reviews for the Donmar Warehouse's *Hecuba* were positive (2004 Issue 19).

with the other translations, it takes Hecuba's bitterness further, but has it crossed a line dividing it inseparably from the original?

War was on the agenda at the time that the *Hecubas* of both Harrison and McGuinness were conceived. Given that a play in a new translation may take eighteen months or more from commission to production, the Western invasion of Iraq in 2003 would have been very fresh in the minds of theatre practitioners when preparing the 2004-05 repertoires. The 9-22 September 2004 edition of the critical review journal *Theatre Record* makes this clear, including collected reviews of two plays overtly addressing war in Iraq, David Hare's *Stuff Happens* and Tim Robbins's *Embedded*, in addition to McGuinness's *Hecuba* and other play-openings during the period. The editor, Ian Shuttleworth, comments on the unusual interest of the non-theatre world in the theatrical treatment of this topic:

You'll find over a dozen pages about *Stuff Happens* in this issue, and around 40% of the pieces are not written by regular theatre reviewers [...] because these people may be mostly politicians or otherwise once-interested parties [...]. The rationale as far as the [newspaper] editors are concerned, is that the play is news. (2004: 1143)

This communal reaction to a major contemporary event strikes me as a particularly good example of Mona Baker's definition of public narratives, 'shared, collective narratives which circulate among several individuals (anything from the family to the nation and even larger)' (Baker 2009: 226). Theatre practitioners, newspaper editors and reviewers - including those classed by Shuttleworth as 'gratuitous celebrities' (2004: 1143) - agree on the relevance of an artistic response to the Iraq War and contribute to its foregrounding in the public arena. It is hardly surprising, then, if this narrative is carried through to tangential endeavours. Reviewed in the same week as the Hare and Robbins Iraq War plays, McGuinness's *Hecuba* is assessed on its relevance to that same war. Comments vary: reviews include overt references to the Iraq War, such as Sheridan Morley's, 'The war in Iraq [...] has made Greeks of us all, although David Hare has shown over the weekend [in his play *Stuff Happens*] that it is just about possible for a contemporary dramatist to tackle the horrors of conflict' (2004: 1170); more oblique allusions can also be found, like Mark Shenton's description of the play as a 'timely revival' (2004: 1170). Reviews and scheduling demonstrate a collective willingness to engage with the theatrical reflection of current

events at the time, and yet Harrison's overtly allusive translation was not greeted with enthusiasm, even though it purposely linked a two-thousand-year-old play with contemporary reality.

When addressing the mimesis of Classical plays in translation, Edith Hall points out: 'It is the traces left by the actors in the historically specific moment of performance, as much as the serial adaptors and authors, that mean that Performance Reception requires an unusual combination of *diachronic* and *synchronic* thinking' (2004: 66). Hall suggests that audience memory of 'a new performance of a famous role' extends to other collaborators in the performance, so that subsequent directors, writers and translators are forced to contend with previous productions when approaching a new version of a text. Theatre practitioners must therefore confront earlier interpretations when developing their own reading of a playtext, taking a historical view in addition to addressing contemporary issues. Harrison's translation provides an example of such diachronic and synchronic thinking, but to examine this further, I turn to a translation performed in 1725 by His Majesty's Servants at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. The line in question, italicised in the longer quotation below, makes Odysseus personally responsible for Polyxena's death:

Say, thou great Master in the Art of Words,  
 How is the Safety of your State concerned  
 In my Child's Death? Have you not Beasts enough  
 For Victims? *Must you squander human Blood?* (Euripides 1726: 11).

I interpret these lines as a direct attack on Odysseus, the powerful politician. The conjunction of nearby words *State*, *Victims* and *squander* resemble Redgrave's linking of *democracy* with *human sacrifice*. Like Harrison's version, the 1725 production was not met with acclaim, the anonymous translator<sup>128</sup> lamenting: 'I attempted unsuccessfully; and I am not the first Martyr to Truth' (ibid: iv). A later translator, T M<sup>129</sup>, claimed in 1749 that his new translation was in fact the first in English, as the earlier version 'can by no means be

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<sup>128</sup> The published edition does not name the translator, but he is identified in Walton's Appendix (op cit) as Richard West.

<sup>129</sup> Identified by Walton (ibid) as the Reverend Thomas Morell.

called a Translation; [...] so alter'd and transposed, that it bears very little Resemblance to the Original' (Euripides 1749: xiv). This new translation, 'entirely design'd for the use of the *English Reader*' (ibid: iii), translates the lines in a form recognisable in the modern versions I quoted earlier, as follows:

What dire Necessity can force the *Greeks*

Before the Tomb to shed this human Blood...? (ibid: 15)

This interpretation points once more to outside, uncontrollable forces ('Necessity'), swelling the ranks of the non-accusatory translation as exemplified in my comparisons above. However, the incidence of the performance translators West and Harrison, some three hundred years apart, projecting a focused political meaning in a similar way suggests that, even though beyond the typical reading of the original Greek, an understanding of a line, or indeed of a play, as an indictment of the behaviour of politicians in times of war may be conveyed. Thus translation displays diachronic and synchronic influences and thinking: a tradition of meaning being passed to the audience and down the centuries.

But how is that meaning defined and transmitted? Hans-Georg Gadamer uses translation as an example and a metaphor for the understanding of meaning, albeit 'an extreme case of hermeneutical difficulty' (2003:387). For him, the translator carries out and embodies the interpretive dialogue between the text and the reader, and demonstrates the essentiality of language. He writes, 'The linguisticity of understanding is *the concretion of historically effected consciousness*' (ibid: 389), suggesting that an attempt to create a historical reconstruction of meaning will not necessarily result in understanding, but that cognition born of historical and linguistic experience enables the interaction which brings about understanding. This describes the process taking place when Harrison and all translators before him intervene between the audience and the original text: their personal narrative informs their choices in translation, and this can include their absorption of previous translations, along with their political and social allegiances. It is hardly surprising that, if the play has a soul, each translation perceives it differently. What makes theatre translation particularly distinctive in the communication of meaning is the constant shift in transmission resulting from collaborative theatre techniques and the fact that no two audiences or even two spectators will respond identically. Even though the precise pattern



of each performance of a production is preordained, pre-recorded in the prompt book and inscribed in the performers' memories, the nightly reproduction will vary slightly dependent on the actors' response to the audience reception and the collective fine-tuning of the agents involved. Of all the plays in my sample, *Hecuba* is particularly marked as an example of the effect of collaboration in theatre translation in conveying and adjusting the named translator's 'intentions', as I discuss below.

### 6.3 Collaborative Theatre Practices in Translation

In this RSC *Hecuba*, some shifts which apparently result from collaboration are well-documented in archival evidence. Others are less obvious, although it is possible to conjecture from the available information, or lack of it, which processes may have taken place. Text-based collaborative changes, for example, are represented by pencil changes to the London production prompt book held in the Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive. These changes, revealing significant alterations from the published text, were enshrined in a Master Script which accompanied the play on its planned tour to Washington, New York, and Delphi. Tony Harrison replaced Laurence Boswell as director for the tour, indicating that he accepted these alterations, even where they were not of his instigation. Analysis of the prompt book reveals that many of the pencil changes occurred in Vanessa Redgrave's lines as Hecuba. Regarded as one of the English-speaking theatre's most accomplished, charismatic and politically-motivated actors, Redgrave is in a position to exercise influence over her own lines. She is a powerful figure in the theatrical field, her impact extending beyond stage appearances. Theatre hierarchy, overtly displayed in a practitioner's biography and positioning in the programme, is widespread in theatre practices, demonstrated by the references to a 'pecking order' from many of my interviewees in Chapter Four. Signs of the locus of a participant in the cultural field can be identified in most areas of theatrical practice. One backstage example cited by Aoife Monks is that 'the dressing room can also establish the star persona of the actor' (2010: 18) depending on its proximity to the stage and the degree of comfort in its fitting-out. In this vein, the *Hecuba* production archives include a list of Redgrave's requirements for her ease on stage,

including knee-pads (because she spent a considerable time on her knees) and throat-soothing sweets to be kept in the wings. Her influence in and over the production is tacitly expressed by these means. Redgrave's intervention in the script would therefore be one more signifier of her theatrical authority.

Another explanation for Redgrave's textual input might be that she was an initiator of the whole production project. I was not able to speak to anyone 'on the record' about the genesis of this translation, but it seems that it was commissioned and put into production with unusual speed, which would be in accordance with an urgent response to current events generated by an agent with sufficient cultural capital to put ideas into action. In March 2004, Michael Billington announced in the *Guardian*, based on an RSC press release, that Redgrave would be returning to work with the company :

after a gap of 43 years, to play Euripides' Hecuba in a new production by Laurence Boswell. It will open in Stratford-upon-Avon in February [2005], and then transfer to the RSC's new West End home (as yet unannounced) before moving to the Kennedy Centre in Washington in May. (Billington 2004b)

The date and content of this notification demonstrate the degree to which the production's trajectory was unplanned less than twelve months before it was due to open. Not only was the tour still to be finalised, but the London venue had also not been booked. This is consistent with my discussion of the RSC's presence in London in Chapter Three, section 3.7. On 31 August 2004, Alice Bernstein, Executive Vice President of the Brooklyn Academy of Music ('BAM'), was engaged in negotiating the production's visit to New York immediately after its London and Washington runs, and wrote to a member of the Board of Trustees: 'The set hasn't been designed yet and the script is not finished. These things are on perfect schedule for the RSC but given our marketing schedule and budget process, late for us'<sup>130</sup>. This time-scale is supported by the 'rough first draft August 2004' of Harrison's translation deposited at the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama,

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<sup>130</sup> Email correspondence from Alice Bernstein to Adam Max, subject 'Hecuba @ BAM', dated 31 August 2004. Source: BAM Archives.

University of Oxford ('APGRD')<sup>131</sup>. I take Bernstein's observation regarding the RSC's 'perfect schedule' to convey a sense of irony; most of the theatre practitioners in my interviews spoke of the distance between writing and production: twelve to eighteen months was the time-span usually mentioned. Further to this haste of commission, the press release coupling Redgrave's name with that of Boswell and *Hecuba*, while Harrison was unmentioned, suggests that the first two may have been the prime instigators of the project, Harrison being appointed as writer and translator only after the announcement. The fact that the script was still incomplete a few months before rehearsals were due to start supports this conjecture. This order of commission may also explain subsequent tensions among the protagonists which I explore later in this chapter.

If Redgrave were a principal initiator of this *Hecuba* project, its anti-war tenor would be in keeping with her public persona. While she was in New York for *Hecuba*, Redgrave appeared on television in an interview with Bob Costas on CNN's *Larry King Live*. She claimed that any connection between the production and Iraq was 'kind of an accident' (CNN 2005), but went on to say that she thought the main issue of the play was justice and that the basis of democracy was, in her view, access to law. Later in the interview she said, 'How can there be democracy if the leadership of the United States and Britain don't uphold the values which my father's generation fought the Nazis [sic]?' (ibid) and discussed the rule of law in more detail. Her words suggest that she was making some form of connection between the content of *Hecuba* and the status of democracy, and it is likely that this informed her portrayal of the role and any input to the script. It adds weight to my theory that the amendment, 'Democracy demands a human sacrifice', came from Redgrave herself. It may also be relevant to the time-scheme and genesis of the commission that on 27 November 2004 Redgrave and her brother, Corin, had announced their launch of the Peace and Progress Party, which would campaign for 'the withdrawal of British troops from Iraq' and in favour of human rights (Branigan 2004). The situation in Iraq was evidently an

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<sup>131</sup> In fact, this 'rough draft' (viewed 13 March 2012) closely resembles the published text, my comparison revealing one or two minor differences per page. I assume therefore that Harrison created earlier drafts, but that this was the first to be submitted to the RSC. The facts that so many changes were apparently made between the printing of the published text and the first performances, and relatively few beforehand, add weight to my argument that Redgrave (whose illness held back commencement of rehearsal and production) played a major part in the script interventions.

important motivator for Redgrave in her approach to the Hecuba role, and the timing suggests that she may have been active in proposing that the play adopt its political line. Her return to the RSC after so long indicates that the play in which she was to feature was at the least a significant element in her decision, and possibly of her own selection.

Although the prompt book does not provide a trail of how script changes come about, the processes of script development are documented in studies that chronicle the processes of the rehearsal room. Kate Eaton describes the function of workshops and rehearsals in creating a translation for performance, theorising her own practices as a translator. Her account demonstrates the input of the director and actors on a translated playtext:

The practical work undertaken to further develop the translated play script might include exercises such as liberating the play from the written text by playing the action of the scene rather than the word, finding the physical space of the play through the actions of the characters towards each other, converting the stage directions into the actions that they describe and using music, movement, games, mask work and other improvisational techniques to excavate the meaning that lies hidden beneath the surface of the written word. (Eaton 2011: 22)

Such processes shed light on how Redgrave might have engaged with the script to vary Harrison's words, drawing on stimuli outside the text. Moreover, I have been informed by Laurence Boswell, speaking in general terms, that verse translations are particularly difficult to work with because any changes have a ripple effect in the verse-form (and because the poet-translator tends to become more attached to their words)<sup>132</sup>. This insight suggests that the dialogue ultimately delivered in performance stems from detailed negotiations between translator, director and actor, all of whom approach the text with an individual reading. As if in confirmation, a theatre translator in the audience at a Round Table discussion on 'The Translator in the Rehearsal Room'<sup>133</sup> stood up and said that he dreaded the first rehearsal when everyone in the room would have brought with them a different

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<sup>132</sup> Private conversation at *Translation: Process and Performance* at the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies, University of London, 23 and 24 November 2007.

<sup>133</sup> At *Translation in the Air*, King's College London, 6 and 7 February 2009.

translation, and all want to question his own choices. In Chapter Four, my summary of interviews with theatre practitioners, particularly directors and translators, exposes the power-struggles around the text. The prompt book bears witness to the operation of such processes in Harrison's *Hecuba*. The text, in draft, published, or spoken, reveals the marks of intervention and collaboration, all of which affect the meaning which is further negotiated by the audience.

#### 6.4 Agency and Collaboration

As stated above, the London prompt book documents this translation of *Hecuba* as a site of collaboration, and the changes incorporated into the Master Script for the touring production confirm a cooperative agreement on the outcome. But it seems that only certain participants subscribed to the full tenets of the collaboration. Laurence Boswell left the production prior to its tour, amid disagreement. Neither Harrison nor Boswell would consent to be interviewed for my research concerning this translation, Boswell writing that 'although I am a very experienced collaborator in this area, on this particular project, no such work was possible'<sup>134</sup>. Among the three main collaborative agents, only Boswell had previous experience of *Hecuba* in performance<sup>135</sup>. In 1992, he had directed the play for the Gate Theatre, Notting Hill, in a translation by Kenneth McLeish. Credits for that production include Mick Sands as Composer, a role he went on to fulfil in the RSC production. Boswell's wife, Sara Mair-Thomas, played the part of Hecuba's sacrificed daughter, Polyxena, in the Gate production, although she was not in the cast for the RSC production. Her presence does, however, provide a link with Tony Harrison, as his partner, Sian Thomas, is Mair-Thomas's sister (Thomas 2009). Addressing the question of why he would wish to revisit the

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<sup>134</sup> Private email to the author dated 14 April 2010.

<sup>135</sup> As far as I can establish from my research, including searching the APGRD, compiled at the University of Oxford.

play, especially when other interpretations were in production<sup>136</sup>, Boswell explained in an interview for the *Birmingham Post*:

My production at The Gate ten years ago was the first major production for 30 years, so I jumped on the bandwagon before most people! I think people are interested in the play because the world's in a bit of a state. When we had the AmericanRussian [sic] stand-off, the world had a balance of terror. As communism collapsed, instead of moving on we've created a new scapegoat and bogeyman. [...] That's what Hecuba is about, it's about how we create baddies. [...] I'm surprised that people are surprised you return to these things, because if you're working on pieces written by some of the greatest minds there's always more to discover.  
(Grimley 2004)

Boswell indicates his intention to build upon a political engagement with the play already established in his earlier production. He would have had every reason at that point to expect a critical success. His 1992 production had garnered the award for Ann Mitchell, in the Hecuba role, of Performance of the Year, from the *Independent on Sunday*. Boswell was also in 2004 fresh from the critical and commercial success of his adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast* for the RSC, a reworking of an adaptation he had created for the Young Vic in 1996. The RSC version was so successful in the Christmas season of 2003 that it was revived for 2004. His track record as a director who could build on and transform an already effective production<sup>137</sup>, and his willingness to see *Hecuba* as a canvas for a political critique of contemporary current events should have made him an effective partner for Redgrave.

My interpretation of the foregoing material is that Redgrave initiated the project with Michael Boyd, Artistic Director of the RSC. He engaged Boswell, an Associate Director of the RSC at that time, who suggested Harrison should carry out the translation. Harrison's public stance against British involvement in Iraq through his journalism and poetry, and his professional credentials as a dramatist and translator from Ancient Greek, would have been

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<sup>136</sup> At the Donmar Warehouse, in a version by Frank McGuinness, and by Foursight Theatre, translated by John Harrison, both 2004.

<sup>137</sup> In addition to his success with *Beauty and the Beast*, Boswell had returned to Lope de Vega's *The Dog in the Manger* for the RSC, which he had first directed while a student at Manchester University (Cavendish 2012).

an excellent fit for the translator's job description. Unlike Redgrave and Boswell, Harrison had not previously worked for the RSC, his principal commissions coming from the National Theatre. Most relevantly, he had translated Aeschylus's *The Oresteia* trilogy (1981) and Sophocles' *The Trackers of Oxyrynchus* (1991), the latter under his own direction, both for the large stage of the Olivier Theatre at the National. Simon Featherstone's measured reference-book contribution summarises the reasons why Harrison might be considered appropriate for the *Hecuba* task: his 'interest in the relationship of classical and contemporary culture, and his commitment to a demotic poetic drama, have marked his theatrical work' (Featherstone 2010).

However, an impression of critical and audience reception intended for theatre enthusiasts, rather than specialists, sheds further light on what Redgrave, Boswell and the RSC management might expect from Harrison's involvement. Tanitch records that *The Oresteia* was 'one of the great productions of the 1980s' but then tempers this remark with a quotation from John Elsom in the *Listener*: 'It is hard to believe that such a mountain of extravagant effort should have produced such a mouse of a production' (2007: 248). Tanitch's account of *The Trackers of Oxyrynchus* continues this extended pun on the satyrs' erections ('the biggest cock-up'), including a large photograph thereof, signifying his personal reaction along with the evident notoriety of this production. He adds that 'the play became a political statement [...] about how once there had been no divisions between high and low theatre' (ibid: 272). In commissioning Harrison to translate *Hecuba*, the expectations based on his reputation and previous reception would be that he would approach the play with an overtly political stance, unafraid to make controversial references to current events and cultures. As a poet and classicist, he possessed the skills to engage with the original text while creating an English-language version of literary merit. Less reliable, but perhaps adding an 'edge' which might differentiate this production, was the reception of Harrison's work.

Previous reaction to his theatrical output varies, as I have shown, but adverse comment may be expected, as Harrison seeks to provoke. Edith Hall explains how this is achieved:

In order to address issues his audiences might prefer to ignore he has repeatedly adapted dramatic texts (especially Ancient Greek plays), as the type of literature

whose features of impersonation and absent narrator lend it to giving voice to the voiceless. (2003: 170)

The discomfort Harrison aims to impose on his audience is linked not only to the subject matter of the play itself, but also to the actual site in which the play is performed: the middle-class theatrical arena. Lorna Hardwick describes Harrison's classical education imprinting him with 'a mark of alienation, both personal and cultural, from his working-class roots' (1999: 8) and Hall points out 'the quandary of working in a medium whose consumers are not of the same class as that into which he was born - and to which he remains loyal' (2007: 85). Harrison's provocative reputation justified his inclusion in the production team, adding an appropriate frisson of danger.

My projection of the composition of the protagonists of this production team is based on my interpretation of events recorded in the public domain and contextual knowledge of the creation process obtained through my research, especially the interviews conducted with theatre practitioners, discussed in Chapter Four. It may not reflect the actual order of events, even though it is a plausible reconstruction. What is not in doubt, however, is that Redgrave, Boswell and Harrison formed a high-ranking team whose characteristics shape the production as a whole, and the translation in particular. If, as I have investigated in my earlier chapters, translations represent a negotiation between theatre practitioners, the viability of collaborative procedures is essential to the satisfactory completion of the project. I suggest above that the published text, prompt book and subsequent Master Script display signs of substantial negotiation in the number and positioning of the changes made during the trajectory from script, through rehearsal, to touring production. Further sections of this chapter investigate additional changes that were made for touring purposes, and the progressive reception, as marked by critical reviews. Additional insight into the formation of a performed translation may also, however, be obtained by considering the working practices of the individuals. Short of attending rehearsals, which, as Eva Espasa found, is generally impossible because the observer is considered the voyeur of a love affair (2000: 61), such material is notoriously ephemeral. This *Hecuba* production nonetheless provides a



trail of information which provides some clue as to the working relationships between the principal agents involved, and how they affected the ultimate outcome.

Redgrave, Boswell and Harrison had not previously worked together, as a team or in pairs, which is quite unusual when considered in the light of the other plays in my sample. In these plays there is a tendency towards regular pairings, such as David Hare and Howard Davies (*The House of Bernarda Alba*), David Eldridge and Rufus Norris (*Festen*) or Roland Schimmelpfennig and David Tushingham (*The Woman Before*). Another route evidenced is for one individual to fulfil dual roles, such as David Farr (*The UN Inspector*) and Richard Eyre (*Hedda Gabler*), who both wrote and directed their adaptations. Juan Mayorga and David Johnston (*Way to Heaven*) are regular collaborators, and although Michael Grandage and Mike Poulton had not worked together prior to *Don Carlos*, the remainder of the creative cast, including the lead actor, Derek Jacobi, appeared regularly in Grandage's production teams, and all have continued to do so. Mutual respect and understanding of the working methods of co-practitioners featured significantly in my interviews. The untried relationship of Boswell and Harrison, then, was likely to have a bearing on the outcome of the production. The significant addition of Redgrave to their partnership is marked not only by the intervention in her lines in the script, but also by the fact that the Stratford run was cancelled due to her indisposition. As I discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.7, this is remarkable in its rarity. It suggests that Redgrave was particularly indispensable to the production, perhaps because of the extent of her cultural stakeholding.

Redgrave and Harrison are both to some extent defined by their political opinions. Their left-wing allegiances and oppositional stance on, for example, external intervention in Iraq, frequently accompany profiles and interviews, not only as third-party commentaries, but also as they present themselves. Thus Redgrave's interview on Larry King Live for CNN, ostensibly to publicise *Hecuba*, included discussions of Iraq, Guantanamo, Chechnya, Palestine, Yugoslavia and Soviet dissidents. Even when Redgrave's interviewer, Bob Costas, attempted to move away from a political discussion, interjecting, 'Let's make a turn here and talk about acting', Redgrave's answer to his next question about an actor's worst nightmare was 'nothing to do with acting, it's to do with fire because of the Second World War [...] to actually see a whole city in flames is very traumatic'. She went on to refer to the

trauma of children in war in Yugoslavia. Costas described Redgrave as ‘one of the world’s most outspoken and at times controversial women’ (CNN 2005). Harrison similarly accepted John Tusa’s description of him in interview as ‘the Poet Laureate of the Left’, agreeing, ‘I’m not against addressing difficult public issues or engaging in political controversy’ (BBC 2006). As a participant at a 2010 British Academy Event entitled *Literature, Classics and Class*, Harrison read excerpts from his own poetry and translations, challenging what he sees as the accepted order of an ‘inner circle’ which excludes the lower classes from high art, and recording a teacher’s mockery of his own regional accent in *The School of Eloquence*. At another conference, Harrison recalled that, on finishing the *Hecuba* tour, Redgrave had presented him with a folio edition of William Simpson’s drawings of the Crimean War, used by her ex-husband, Tony Richardson, when making a film about that war<sup>138</sup>. This gift provides a measure of the value placed by Redgrave on her relationship with Harrison, in both monetary and emotional terms. Second-hand books of specialist interest such as this tend to command a premium<sup>139</sup>; more pertinently, Redgrave had reportedly been close to her husband beyond the break-down of their marriage, until his death in 1991. The gift of such a personal item, apparently received with reciprocated sentiment, since Tony Harrison referred to it unprompted, demonstrates the development of respect and friendship between these two practitioners during their work on the production. It also strengthens the likelihood that Harrison and Redgrave negotiated a consensus with regards to her lines in the play. ‘Democracy demands a human sacrifice’ may well echo both of their voices.

On the other hand, Boswell’s contribution to the production is more difficult to assess. He was replaced by Harrison for the post-London tour. This is in itself unremarkable. Directors are not infrequently represented by Assistant Directors when a production moves venue, particularly when a run is extended and the director may have contractual obligations elsewhere. However, the tour to the USA was both included at the early stages of planning

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<sup>138</sup> *Tony Harrison In Conversation and Performance*, Royal Holloway, University of London, 19 January 2011. I assume that the relevant film is *The Charge of the Light Brigade* directed by Tony Richardson (1968).

<sup>139</sup> Abe Books, a website specialising in second-hand, rare and out-of-print books, offered six books loosely fitting the description on 25 January 2012, ranging from £38.67 to £230.70 in price. Source: <http://www.abebooks.co.uk/servlet/SearchResults?bt.x=0&bt.y=0&sts=t&tn=crimean+war+simpson>

and a high-profile engagement which would usually be considered a career enhancement. In theory, this tour offered maximum publicity with a relatively small time-commitment. Bernstein succinctly expressed the motivation for visiting BAM in her project-summarising email: 'As is often the case the reason we score is because the star wants the New York exposure but is unwilling to play the minimum dozen - twenty weeks to breakeven (a small straight play) on Broadway'<sup>140</sup>. Boswell's disappearance from the credits is little commented upon, but an email from the Director of Communications to BAM's Executive Producer hints that there may have been problems in London:

In order to get the [New York] Times interested in Tony Harrison, I have to explain his new role in the production. His former role as adaptor of the play is not enough to garner their interest. This new information will lead them right to the story of what happened to effect the changes in the production [...]That's the quandary. Nothing in the Times? Or something potentially slightly painful? I personally think we should opt for the latter and try to control it; at least that way we get the word out that this is a different production than the one reviewed in London.<sup>141</sup>

This email reveals two issues: that there were sensitive changes made for the US run, and that the poor reviews in London were of concern. It suggests that these issues were not necessarily connected. There were no further references to this quandary in the correspondence folder, and therefore, based on the collected press-cuttings in the archives held in Stratford-upon-Avon and Brooklyn, I assume that it was decided not to refer publicly to the reason for the changes in production.

The decision may have been prompted by a telephone interview between Tony Harrison and Paulanne Simmons for *The Brooklyn Papers* on 25 May 2005, which resulted in an article subtitled 'Harrison "rescues" Vanessa Redgrave from "dysfunctional director" for BAM's *Hecuba*'. Harrison is portrayed as stepping in to the role of director on account of 'mixed reviews' for the production and Redgrave's performance in the UK, and quoted as

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<sup>140</sup> Email correspondence from Alice Bernstein to Adam Max, subject: 'Hecuba @ BAM', 31 August 2004. Source: BAM Archives.

<sup>141</sup> Email correspondence from Sandy Sawotka to Joseph V. Melillo, subject: 'RE: Hecuba/press', 10 May 2005. Source: BAM Archives.

blaming Boswell: ‘The worst disaster was seeing Vanessa demoralized by a dysfunctional director. Anyone who can demoralize Vanessa, a great spirit in theater, has to have a problem’. No additional light is shed on why Harrison should opt to speak publicly about a colleague and personal contact in such confrontational terms, or what prompted him to categorise Boswell in that way. My inference is that there had been a substantial disagreement over the direction of the production. The Simmons article goes further in dissecting the relationship of these three participants in the production, offering the following analysis: ‘If something has been lost with the intrusion of the director into the actor-poet relationship, Harrison believes that he was able to “liberate” Redgrave, and in doing so, liberated the entire cast’<sup>142</sup>. Someone has written ‘OK’ next to a tick mark on the corner of the photocopy in the file, but there is no further evidence of such publicity. Possibly, this print retelling was sufficiently negative to invoke the decision that no further reference to this ‘story’ should be made publicly. Or perhaps the potential New York audience was not interested enough in Harrison and Boswell to pursue any line of enquiry, the focus remaining on Redgrave. Nevertheless, this episode highlights the importance of the relationship of the principal contributors of the production. Not only does an uneasy collaboration affect the whole production, and thereby its reception, but it also destabilises content, as can be seen from the prompt script. The translation thus reflects the shift in relations between the practitioners during the production. Once Boswell had left the production, the remaining practitioners were able to focus on establishing the changes which would communicate the broad intent of the production and translation to the audience. In the following sections, I consider those changes, and discuss their reception.

## 6.5 Touring Changes

As I have explained, prompt book amendments from the London run were legitimised by incorporation into the Master Script for the production tour, but there were also significant non-textual changes, underlining the importance of the whole creative team in collaborating on a central theme: the changes seemed orchestrated to ensure that

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<sup>142</sup> *The Brooklyn Papers*, p. 9, 4 June 2005. Source: BAM Archive.

Harrison's war comparison was conveyed. The visually most obvious alteration was the stage set itself. For the London production, the set was described by its designer, Es Devlin, as 'a formal space composed of layers of recycled cardboard, areas decomposed with water during the tragedy' (Devlin 2011: Gallery). This design echoed images from the filmic work of the Iranian visual artist Shirin Neshat, whose production stills were included in the programme: seven black-and-white illustrations of women in dark robes and headscarves grouped together in otherwise deserted monumental landscapes. Devlin's set was similarly monolithic, a circular space seemingly at the base of an inverted columnar wall, with a back-cloth reproducing an image, *Rome '94*, from the artist Richard Long's series of muddy water circle sculptures, a circle of ridged sand-stone. Furthermore, the costumes, also designed by Devlin, perpetuated the associations with Neshat's images, including head-coverings and flowing robes for the women, although in shades of faded indigo rather than black, with a deeper indigo for Hecuba and jade green for her sacrificed daughter, Polyxena. These layers of images on stage, combined with the inclusion in the programme of photographs and a detailed map showing the site of the Trojan wars, appear to be attempting to link the play to current events in the Arabian Gulf. This is reinforced by bold-text statements in the programme (Royal Shakespeare Company 2005b):

The first great war between the East and the West is over. Troy has fallen and the victorious Greek coalition forces are on their way home.

'We've got no choice, no choice at all. We're slaves.' That's true for the Chorus at the play's end. But for us, and now? Euripides's [sic] challenge is as relevant as ever.

Whilst the first assertion points towards subsequent wars between East and West, and pointedly adopts the term 'coalition' (used by Harrison in his translation, but also generally associated with the Western forces in Iraq), the second statement issues a challenge to the audience, explicitly personalizing the play's subject matter. There could be little doubt from these paratextual indications that the play was intended to reference recent Western activity in Iraq.

Nevertheless, the design was substantially altered for the tour to Washington and New York from the formal space of the monolithic columnar set described above to what Devlin describes on her website as ‘an amphitheatre of Desert Storm tents returned from the Gulf War’ (Devlin 2011: Gallery). Four ‘before-and-after’ images on Devlin’s website portray the striking change in emphasis: in the London set, the stark figures of the actors are outlined against the surrounding wasteland, echoing the Neshat production stills reproduced in the programme; in New York, the characters are almost lost in their faded blue and green robes, surrounded by a busy backdrop of ragged, khaki tents, rising in layers above the centre stage, unmistakably giving visual reference to Harrison’s source of inspiration. This radical redesign of the set would have entailed significant time, both in design and organisation, and therefore not have been undertaken lightly. One sign of the inconvenience and expense caused by the new set was the cancellation of the first performance in New York. Copies of emails in the BAM archives show that this decision was taken in April 2005, while the production was still running in London, but it nevertheless resulted in a specific line of losses in the BAM budget<sup>143</sup>. The initial intention had been to rebuild the original design, described as ‘an unfussy sweeping unit set but that could be a canvas sail (light and cheap) or a teak monolith’, using new materials in the US, as there would be insufficient time to sea-freight the existing set<sup>144</sup>. In the event, the Desert Storm tents used were not only US-sourced, but US-specific. The scenery was assembled by the Kennedy Center in Washington, and returned there ‘for dispersal’ after the final performance at BAM<sup>145</sup>. The RSC’s acknowledgement that these changes were essential for the production, and its assumption of responsibility, is implicit in the analysis of the variances to the BAM budget: \$18,000 was saved because the RSC ‘picked up freight costs’, contrary to the original agreement<sup>146</sup>. This set change was the most visible sign of the

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<sup>143</sup> Email from Patrick Scully to Everyone, subject: ‘Change to Hecuba schedule’, 28 April 2005, and Memorandum from Avrom Caplan to Karen Brooks Hopkins and others, ‘Re: Final Budget Closeout/ Spring 2005/ Hecuba’, 25 August 2005. Source: BAM Archives.

<sup>144</sup> Email from Alice Bernstein to Adam Max, subject: ‘Hecuba @ BAM’, 31 August 2004. Source: BAM Archives.

<sup>145</sup> Memorandum from Martha Pitts to GM Files and others, ‘Re: Contract: Spring 2005/Hecuba’, 2 June 2005. Source: BAM Archives.

<sup>146</sup> Memorandum from Avrom Caplan to Karen Brooks Hopkins and others, ‘Re: Final Budget Closeout/ Spring 2005/ Hecuba’, 25 August 2005. Source: BAM Archives.

production's overhaul, and the most pointed reference to the underlying linking of Euripides' play with criticism of US involvement in Iraq.

Further paratextual evidence signals the strengthening of emphasis for the US audience and the shift in attention to the remaining protagonists in the production. The BAM programme doubles as a monthly magazine, *BAMbill*, providing listings and detailed credits, but not the contextual background of the RSC programme. Only one article, written by an academic from New York University, is included, unlike the collection of essays, maps, photographs and quotations in the RSC programme, which elliptically directs the audience to make connections between the production and current events. Paul Nadler's article, however, is more explicit than the RSC programme's contents, providing a brief background to the circumstances of Euripides' original composition, a synopsis of the play, a rather longer biography of Redgrave and a summary of Harrison's poetic and theatre credentials. Nadler states that the play is 'eerily relevant to today's world, particularly in the wake of the invasion of Iraq', and ends by paraphrasing Harrison's belief that the tour 'brings Hecuba home to the two major powers in the "coalition of the willing" that invaded Iraq in 2003' (2005: B-6 - B-7). Thus the link between the production and current events is firmly made, but this sole article cannot carry the weight of persuasion of the over-sized, luxuriously-printed, educationally-instructive RSC programme. The production had to rely on the internal mechanism of the *mise en scène* to make its point.

Thus even the lighting was adjusted. A sense of immediacy and currency was added for the tour in the US by displaying the artifice of the set construction: a design review reports that 'the stage is fully open, with no masking and revealing everything from heating ducts to hemp lines' (Lampert-Gréaux 2005). The lighting designer, Adam Silverman, notes that for the tour, 'The set is more contemporary [...]. It is much more like high noon, as if in bright sunlight' (ibid). He justifies this change on the basis that classical Greek performances were held during the day in natural light, but the reviewer, Ellen Lampert-Gréaux points out that 'the production has a contemporary patina' (ibid). Like the stage set, the lighting redesign serves to reinforce the juxtaposition of ancient and modern within the play. 'The text has been adapted with a modern resonance, in terms of language,' declares Silverman, 'as well as subtle references to Iraq and current events' (ibid). It appears that Harrison as director

intervened in the lighting design. *The Brooklyn Papers* records his intention to use 'lots of light': "'The Greeks believed that when the worst happens, the most light is shed. So we increase the light incrementally until when the worst happens it's at its maximum'"<sup>147</sup>. Of course, there can be a variety of reasons for such alterations beyond directorial invention, not least the features available in the different theatres. A comment by the chief electrician for touring at the RSC, Steve Daly, resonates beyond the technical sphere of watts and amps:

the biggest challenge is not always in the lighting itself but in the communication from theatre to theatre. "We all speak the same language," he says. "But the terminology can be different." (Lampert-Gréaux 2005)

Indeed, the arrangements for the tour indicate the importance of varying communication between theatres and between audiences; the redesign demonstrates the holistic nature of *mise en scène* and provides a concrete example of Paul Allain and Jen Harvie's definition of that concept, 'to differentiate between different stagings [...] of the same text and to designate them as, effectively, different theatrical texts' (Allain and Harvie 2006: 171-72). But why was it necessary to differentiate between the London production and its subsequent tour? The archival evidence suggests that text, design and lighting were adapted partly in response to the London reception and partly to reflect the developing power-struggle between the production's creators. The references to Iraq, although generally disparaged by the London reviewers, were strengthened for the touring production. Were American audiences expected to be more receptive to the modern Iraq allusions (which would permit such allusions to be more overt), or less likely to be aware of the analogy (thus requiring more intense imagery)? Or was it simply a case of the remaining creative team winning the freedom to impose their own readings on the production in a more overt fashion? There is also the possibility of some entirely different cultural reason entering the fray; for example, using battle-tents to link the Ancient Greek protagonists of the play to modern United States generals, since the American accents adopted by British

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<sup>147</sup> *The Brooklyn Papers*, p. 9, 4 June 2005. Source: BAM Archive.



actors in London might ring false when transmitted to United States audiences<sup>148</sup>. The likelihood is that all these factors influenced the changes made to the production.

Whatever the case, these theatrical shifts demonstrate the constant attempt to address the inevitable paradox of staging a revival, especially a translated revival: to maintain a link with the original play, as it has been passed down over time in text and theatrical tradition, but also to make it relevant to differing modern audiences. I have shown that Harrison and his collaborators have used various methods to reference current events, but I should also mark Harrison's insistence that this play provokes an awareness of 'that bond of empathy and compassion that can cross centuries' (Euripides 2005: v). His translation attempts to speak of now and then. Similar to Derrida's engagement with foundational Greek philosophical texts, as analysed by Miriam Leonard, Harrison treats *Hecuba* as a text 'far from originary and inert' which can be 'actively mobilized in an ongoing dialogue of the present' (Leonard 2010: 3). Harrison's translation presents his own reception of the play. A glance at further contemporary reception in the form of reviews gives some idea of whether theatrical shift through translation and other means is capable of affecting audiences with the diachronicity of centuries-old emotion in addition to a new realisation of current sentiment. Both of these might be called the *soul* of the play.

## 6.6 Reception of the RSC Production

My section on the context of translation and performance gives some indication of the London reception, which tended towards complaints that the contemporary references drowned out classical affect; for example, Segal's reaction: 'It's one thing to strive for relevance – it's another to drain away the play's enigmas in the quest for easy access' (Segal 2005: 447). This in comparison to the earlier Donmar Warehouse production which, although in modern dress, is held by Helen Chappell in the *Tribune* to convey an 'eternally-frustrating message' (Chappell 2004: 1174). Most of the London critics refer to the RSC

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<sup>148</sup> Which was, in fact, the case, according to a review by Les Gutman on [www.curtainup.com](http://www.curtainup.com): 'Odysseus (unwisely speaking in what turns out to be a very lousy Texas accent) [...]'. Last accessed 11 February 2009.

production's contemporary features. For example, Susannah Clapp in the *Observer* writes, 'The translation of the play's action into the 21<sup>st</sup> century is more or less seamless' (Clapp 2005: 442); and Michael Billington in the *Guardian* analyses the way that 'right from the off, Harrison insinuatingly suggests the play's modernity' (Billington 2005: 443). The juxtaposition between ancient and modern was not, however, deemed to be effective in creating empathy within the audience. The ingredients of the *mise en scène* were analysed and commented upon with differing degrees of negativity by the reviewers. Although there are brighter notes among the review collection, Mark Shenton in the *Sunday Express* summarises and typifies the response, complaining that the 'weirdly alienating production puts you at a distance to it instead of drawing you in' (Shenton 2005: 445). The reviewers appeared to understand the reading that was being offered to them by the production team, but refused to comply with its demands. This reception provides a good example of Vanda Zajko and Miriam Leonard's assertion that the duality of a classic text, which may operate both 'diachronically as an originary point in history' and 'synchronically as a constantly evolving point of reference, [...] is often regarded as an embarrassment or an affront to those who would want to emphasize the specificity of the classical past' (2006: 4). The London reviewers of Harrison's *Hecuba* were uncomfortable with the connections made between past and present: the specificity of Harrison's link with current events. The notices for McGuinness's *Hecuba*, on the other hand, demonstrated a preference for a past, even in modern dress, which kept itself at arm's length, as I will explain.

A comparison of the positive Donmar Warehouse reviews with the negative RSC evaluations six months later does not uncover an explicit identification of which ingredient made the former a critical success. Both plays were associated with highly regarded writers, Tony Harrison and Frank McGuinness; lead actors, Vanessa Redgrave and Clare Higgins; directors, Laurence Boswell and Jonathan Kent; and came from theatres with respected artistic directors, Michael Boyd and Michael Grandage. If anything, any production from the RSC should carry more prestige, since this theatre company represents one of Britain's national cultural icons, evidenced in part by its receipt in 2003-04<sup>149</sup> of £13,270,937 from Arts Council England, as opposed to £302,247 awarded to the Donmar Warehouse in the

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<sup>149</sup> Comparative figures for later periods are not available.

same period. Furthermore, both productions aimed to link past and present, the Donmar Warehouse production going so far as to clothe its actors in modern-day Western dress, in contrast to the stylised classical design of the RSC costumes. And yet, the combination of timeless and timely was applauded in the first play but disdained in the second. Perhaps the RSC version was too restrictive in its analogy; Sheridan Morley's analysis of the Donmar Warehouse's 'triumph' might provide an explanation:

just as the McGuinness version is neither slavishly modern nor very classical, so it is also clear that the production does not wish only to remind us of Iraq but also of all nations where lives have been unnecessarily lost in the futile cause of revenge.

(Morley 2004: 1171)

More recently, classicist Antony Smith, in his research paper, 'Translation and Politics in Frank McGuinness's *Euripides' Hecuba* and *Euripides' Helen*', took the view that McGuinness's version 'responds closely to the source text', even though refracted through a literal translation. In Smith's opinion, McGuinness lays claim to broader political functions in his translation, rather than the reduction of a modern version to act as a vehicle for protest. Harrison's use of 'narrowed anachronisms', suggests Smith, provides an overt demonstration of the politics of protest, whereas McGuinness employs anachronism more generally<sup>150</sup>. As an example, Smith cited the targeted contemporaneity of Harrison's *cul-de-sac*, which appears in lines spoken by the Chorus:

If your hopes were high, you were conned.

The road ends in Hades' cul-de-sac

[...]. (Euripides 2005: 39)

These lines present the purposely anachronistic and colloquial register on which Harrison draws to mark his protest against standard classical translation. Political protest is demonstrated more clearly in the frequent reference to the Greeks throughout the

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<sup>150</sup> My own notes at the Annual Meeting of Postgraduates in Reception of the Ancient World (AMPRAW) Conference, Senate House, University of London, 16 December 2011.

translation as the 'coalition'. Smith's academic analysis of the effect of generalisation supports Morley's review that McGuinness's translation resonates widely. It would appear that Harrison's specificity with regard to the Iraq conflict was not able to find favour among its UK receivers, who displayed signs of the embarrassment and affront recognised by Zajko and Leonard.

In spite of the generally unwelcome reception of the Iraq analogy in the RSC production, contemporary references to Iraq were even more overt in the redesign for the United States tour, as I discussed in the previous section. The American reviews of the tour, however, were less preoccupied by Iraq and tended to dwell at greater length on the controversial figure of Vanessa Redgrave. Her portrayal was admired, and subsequently nominated for the Helen Hayes Outstanding Lead Actress, Non-Resident Production, Award for 2006.<sup>151</sup> Many reviews suggest that Redgrave dominates the play, with Stan Richardson suggesting that 'If you're a die-hard Redgrave fan, then you should subway down and see it' (Richardson 2005). Charles McNulty's interview with Redgrave for the *Village Voice* demonstrates the actor's commitment to the play and her confident expectation of audience engagement with the themes she espouses:

You've got to ask yourself questions before you can ask others [...]. All of us in the cast are opening our minds onstage, and in turn we hope the audience will be opening theirs. (McNulty 2005: 2)

Redgrave's preparedness to associate herself professionally and personally with the production demonstrates the significance of her contribution. It is clear from the reception that, as predicted by BAM, Redgrave was the principal draw for US audiences. Her political commitment was regularly referenced, but the most frequent recommendation was the opportunity to see a world-famous actor perform live. 'When a goddess of the theater like Redgrave appears, staying home is simply not an option', declared *Next Magazine*, but this exaggerated response was reflected to a large extent by most of the reviewers<sup>152</sup>.

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<sup>151</sup> The award was ultimately awarded to Stephanie J Block in *Wicked*.

<sup>152</sup> I viewed and photocopied 28 reviews of the *Hecuba* production at BAM, themselves copies or print-outs of the original print or online review, in the BAM Archives, 1 Metrotech North, Brooklyn on 19 May 2011. Further examples unreferenced in the text are taken from this collection.

Harrison's translation was mentioned in most reviews, usually followed by a comment as to its currency, such as in *The Record* (Hackensack, New Jersey): 'Lean and very modern, most especially in its references to the "coalition force" of powerful Greeks [...] Any similarity to current events would appear to be purely intentional'. Several accounts commented on London problems, but rarely was there more than one sentence pointing out that changes had been made in response to poor reception. As a body, this collection of New York reviews was not rapturous, but largely respectful, particularly of Redgrave.

It does indeed appear that the American audience was able to respond to the play both as a classic and as a comment on current events, diachronically and synchronically. This is in marked contrast to its London counterpart who found it difficult to look through the contemporary references to find the originary source. For example, Peter Marks in the *Washington Post* is aware of the suggested parallels with Iraq, stating that this version 'suggests clearly – perhaps more clearly than necessary – that an unchecked superpower of the ancient world has a direct descendant in the modern one', and noting that Harrison 'has altered the physical environment to give it a more direct political relevance' (Marks 2005). However, Marks amplifies his comments, 'what's targeted in this admirable if [...] earnest enterprise is the conscience [...]. Still, this *Hecuba* holds on to too much of the flavour of Euripides to be regarded as outright agitprop'. Marks's review demonstrates the ability to differentiate between Euripides' original and Harrison's current version, but also accepts that both are able to make an offering of meaning to the audience. He even acknowledges that alterations have been made in Harrison's version to increase its topical relevance, but, again, makes no attempt to suggest that this might alienate Harrison's version from that of Euripides. For Marks, the 'flavour of Euripides' retains its presence in what he has just experienced on the stage.

There are many reasons why the American reviews might have tended more towards the favourable than those in London. Perhaps because the performances in Washington and New York were not in close proximity to another new version, the United States reviewers were able to set Harrison's production in a broader context and comply with Redgrave's request to 'open their minds'? Possibly, the revised set design enabled a specificity of reference which supported Harrison's interpretation more fully, allowing the audience to

locate his meaning. However, even though the American critics were more receptive than those in London, an awareness of the transmission of meaning from the original through translation is evident in reactions on both sides of the Atlantic. Segal searched in vain for the play's *soul*, while Marks was conscious of its *flavour*. Both demonstrate an unspoken understanding of the coexistence of two or more authors, present in one work.

Theo Hermans uses the concept of *Real Presence*, or *transubstantiation*, as a prism to review the genetic link and notion of derivation contained within translation (2007: 86-108). Hermans employs religious metaphor to establish connections between two texts which are linked through translation, but does not go so far as to make a mystical claim for a textual *soul*. George Steiner, on the other hand, in his book *Real Presences*, 'wagers on the presence of God as the guarantor' of meaning, creativity and self (Neumann 1994: 247) and describes different versions of a work (he provides, as an example, Racine reworking Euripides) as 'narratives of formal experience' (Steiner 1989: 86): interpretations of meaning which are themselves creative (and therefore mystical) assimilations. My contention is that each new version adds to an incorporeal unity of meaning; to return to Gadamer: *the concretion of historically effected consciousness*. That the reviewers react to and identify the translation, whether positively or negatively, shows that they are affected by the production. That they refer to the *flavour of Euripides* shows that they are affected by the play.

## 6.7 Conclusion

So what has been translated in the movement between *Hecubas*? Every aspect of the new production is a shifting interpretation by all the agents involved, not only the translator, director, designers and actors as I have suggested, but also each member of the audience at each performance. My investigation into this production reveals the extent of those shifts: the reactions of the agents to external influences, to their source material, and to each other. In addition to providing an example of an overt, targeted translation, this production furnishes an illustration of the limitations of collaboration, the struggles and injuries which occur when negotiation is unable to reach a satisfactory conclusion. And yet there is a

collaborative agreement amongst all these agents, overtly so for the theatre practitioners, unspoken for the audience, accepting that a *soul* or *flavour* of the original exists to be retained and transmitted, or possibly even lost, but that it in some way survives and commingles with the new version. I am attracted by the idea that there might be a mystical connection between the original and each new version, and it seems to me that the conditions of theatre translation, which I have analysed here in relation to Tony Harrison's work on *Hecuba*, go some way to demonstrating the ability of translation in general both to retain and to transmit a meaning which, like Hecuba herself, may be complex and contradictory in nature but remains embodied by one entity.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Summary of Findings

Translators do not 'just translate'. They translate in the context of certain conceptions of and expectations about translation, however much they may take them for granted or come to regard them as natural. Within this context translators make choices and take up positions because they have certain goals to reach, personal or collective interests to pursue, material and symbolic stakes to defend. That is where the concrete interplay of the personal and the collective takes place. (Hermans 1999a: 60)

The preceding chapters have analysed the role of theatre translators in the context of the sites in which they operate, the teams in which they participate and the products they generate. I have sought to map the processes of translation, attempting to identify the choices and positions of the agents, in order to assess the extent to which the interplay of the personal and the collective is demonstrable in theatrical translation, as a theoretical concept, but also as a perceptible activity. Analysis of the circumstances surrounding the translations of these plays reveals the effect of extra-textual theatrical phenomena on cultural transference in the translation of plays for performance. Nevertheless, in all cases consideration of context not only suggests reasons for why certain translational decisions were made, but also reveals the strategic importance of non-textual factors in directing the textual form of a translation. My reviews in Chapters Two and Three of theatrical site, financial and marketing imperatives - and the possibilities for interaction between original author, literal translator and translator (as affected by copyright obligations), discussed in Chapter Four - show the complexities beyond the text which have to be negotiated by the translator in the portrayal of another culture to an English-speaking audience. They also promote factors affecting translation as intersemiotic activity which have an application beyond the theatre: the circumstances leading to the performance of translation may apply as much to, for example, the voice-over on a television news item as the lead role in a revival of a classic play. Both depend on site, budget, time-span, the identities of the commissioners, translators and actors, and perceptions of who might constitute the



audience. Thus the contextual study of theatre translation can furnish particularly visible examples of socio-cultural pressures on translation, as I have demonstrated with regard to each of the plays in my sample.

Similarly, while non-textual factors may affect the content of a translated text, where a text is to be performed, translational issues may become visible and communicate themselves through non-textual means. Because theatre is a multi-agency medium, the external factors imposed on the translator by other agents can appear more overt, such as in the translation of *Himmelweg* (the title) as *Way to Heaven* for the English market (discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.8) or the splendour of the atypical scenery for *The House of Bernarda Alba*, also described in Chapter Three, section 3.2. Publicity materials, programmes and reviews, set design, costumes and direction may all supplement or even replace the text for the target audience, in the same way that the translated text supplements the original, as Sirku Aaltonen suggests. The translator within a team of theatre practitioners has to address these issues. In 1982, André Lefevere reviewed successive translations into English of Brecht's *Mother Courage* for a New York audience between 1941 and 1972, declaring that 'the degree to which the foreign writer is accepted into the native system will [...] be determined by the need that native system has of him in a certain phase of its evolution' (2004: 243). My investigations of these eight productions in 2005 show that even for a sophisticated internationally-inclined audience, such as that at the Royal Court, a rapprochement to the target culture is still perceived as needed to bring the audience to the play. Thus the translator's negotiation of culture may be influenced by many external factors, not limited to a relationship with the original text but also affected by the theatrical translation policy, the expectation of the audience, and the marketing and funding requirements. As I have shown, the counter-intuitive result can be that new plays like *The Woman Before* and *Way to Heaven*, whose originals lends themselves to translation, are received into the English-speaking repertoire with little comment on their source; on the other hand, the extensive acculturation of *The House of Bernarda Alba* or *Hecuba* foregrounds translation by generating comparisons with other productions and the originary texts. The translator thus performs a paradoxical role, both highlighting and suppressing cultural difference.

I began this thesis by asking, where is the translator? Sometimes very prominently in the text, as I demonstrated in Chapters Five and Six in relation to the indirect translator, David Hare, and the direct translator, Tony Harrison, whose voices are so clearly heard through their translations. But even such strong and recognisable authorial presence was tempered by the collaborative fields in which these agents were operating, as my case studies reveal. I provided specific examples of how Simon Scardifield's literal translation influenced Hare's choices, and how Vanessa Redgrave intervened in Harrison's script. The personal and the collective combined to produce these visible translations, and this collaborative interplay is also evident in the remaining six plays of my sample, as I discussed in Chapter Three. The quantities of ingredients in the overall mixture may vary, but the elements remain remarkably similar. Below, I summarise my findings on these elements.

## 7.2 Visibility

The name of the translator signals to the audience that a translation process has taken place. In the Society of London Theatre small advertisements, only the five retranslations had translating names attached alongside the original author, and each of these productions was labelled as a transposed text, although never using the term 'translation'. The three plays shown in English for the first time, *Festen*, *The Woman Before* and *Way to Heaven*, neither named their translators nor identified their translational status (although, as 'festen' is not an English word, this might have provided some indication). Visible translators promote visible translations, suggesting that interpretation extends beyond the stage performance to the text itself. Thus, even within the potential limitations of terminology and cultural appropriation, the prominent names of individuals connected with a textual revision for production foreground a transformative engagement with the original text. This could perhaps also be considered as staking a claim to shared ownership of the text, but, if so, only for this specific production, as transposition is so clearly signposted, both by the adaptation/version label and the signifier 'new'. Of the five retranslations, only *The UN Inspector* was not promoted as new; instead, the novelty of the title was tempered by a reference to the original, 'freely adapted from Gogol's *The*

*Government Inspector*', so that the link between the texts was maintained. However, issues of visibility arise with regard both to the term 'translation' and the involvement of the literal translator. In these cases, the activity and the agent are masked in their presentation, hidden behind the public face of the translating team, the celebrity translator.

### 7.3 Celebrity

The focal point for all the agents in the translating field is the named translator, who also assumes responsibility for the text, including the contributions of others. My *Hecuba* case study demonstrates Tony Harrison's role as gatekeeper of the translation, allowing Vanessa Redgrave to assist in the creation of the performed text while excluding Laurence Boswell. Harrison's public status, his celebrity, bestows this power on him, but it also forces him to bear the consequences of negative criticism. The reception of his *Hecuba* distinguished between his writing and Redgrave's acting, to his disadvantage. Similarly, the reception of *The House of Bernarda Alba* sought to differentiate between Hare's version and Lorca's original, as I discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.2. Hare's celebrity, bringing with it a widespread recognition of his authorial style, made it possible for the audience to draw comparisons, again not necessarily to his advantage. But responsibility for the text tends to fall on the named writer, even when celebrity might lie elsewhere in the production. David Eldridge's description of the rehearsal procedure in the development of *Festen*, relayed in Chapter Four, section 4.6, reveals the contributions of the other agents in the room: the director, the actors, the lighting designer, and so forth. But Eldridge's name is on the cover of the published text, so that he effectively acts as moderator for the translation: rejecting an actor's suggestion, accepting the director's views, and adapting the structure of a scene to comply with lighting technicalities. At that point in his career, Eldridge was still considered a newcomer (he accepts that *Festen* assisted his reputation as a playwright) and any celebrity in the production team was attributable to the cast, principally Jane Asher as Else.

So who constitutes the celebrity? As we have seen, the famous name in the production may belong to the direct or indirect translator, but it may also be that of another agent, such as

the actors Vanessa Redgrave or Derek Jacobi (*Don Carlos*), or the director, in the example of Richard Wilson for *The Woman Before*. The argument that a celebrity translator is selected to sell tickets seems to disregard not only the fact that mainstream theatrical recognition usually results from critical and box office success, and therefore that the chosen name is artistically and professionally reliable, but also that well-known names tend to feature generally in productions aiming for large audiences. Of the eight productions in my sample, most cast lists included names known to theatre and television audiences and most of the creative lists were made up of individuals who had built up a reputation through their work in theatre. *Way to Heaven*, in a small theatre, had a somewhat lower cast and creative profile than, say, *Hecuba*, but David Johnston, quite apart from his status as a Professor of Spanish, was known for his previous well-received stage translations<sup>153</sup> when commissioned to translate Juan Mayorga's plays for the Royal Court. Celebrity is relative, but within that relativity it has a function to perform in theatrical composition which extends beyond selling tickets.

#### 7.4 Agency

Celebrity may be relative, but its imbalances are particularly marked in the agencies of the literal and indirect translators. Who is actually translating? The unwillingness to use the term 'translation', even when a direct translation is created by such as Tony Harrison or Mike Poulton<sup>154</sup>, suggests that its creative status is lower than that of the writer, or that it is perhaps seen as a less 'theatrical' activity. Harrison was identified as the translator in the published text of *Hecuba*, but as the writer of a new version in the programmes. Poulton was first named as a translator in the Sheffield programme for *Don Carlos*, but had become the adaptor by the time it reached London. Mathew Byam Shaw suggested that the word 'translation' did not provide sufficient dramaturgical respect for the work of the theatre

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<sup>153</sup> His 2004 translation of Lope de Vega's *The Dog in the Manger* has been described as 'the hit of the Royal Shakespeare Company's season of Golden Age plays' (Dixon 2010: 621).

<sup>154</sup> Poulton, the indirect translator of *Don Carlos*, in my sample, translates directly from Italian, as I note in Chapter Four, section 4.6.

translator, in contrast to the use of 'version' or 'adaptation'. The Royal Court maintains the label 'translator' for the agents who carry out the work of transposition, but does not include either the task or the agent in its SOLT advertisements, thus ensuring that the focus remains on the original writer rather than a shared credit with the translator. Therefore, both direct and literal translators are pushed behind the living writer whether that writer is the source-language playwright or the creator of a 'new version'. The activity known as 'translation' in the theatre is not perceived as sufficiently creative for celebrity billing, whereas the product known as the 'adaptation' or 'version' has a recognised existence alongside the original text. It is this product that is privileged, and the process that is overlooked. The status of the agents is linked to the area of their participation, although there may be a mutual status endowment. For example, Caryl Churchill's agreement to translate a play by a young French-Canadian playwright not only ensured its production at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, but also its introduction to the Anglophone Canadian stage<sup>155</sup>. An instance of a literal translator emerging from behind their translation is Simon Scardifield's Radio Three 'adaptation' of Georg Büchner's *Danton's Death* (2011)<sup>156</sup>.

These are two examples to add to the multifunctioning theatre practitioners in my sample, which I have highlighted throughout. These agents move between roles, sometimes occupying two simultaneously. Scardifield is an example of an actor who can also create literal translations and direct translations/adaptations. Mike Poulton translates directly and indirectly. Richard Eyre and David Farr are directors and indirect translators. Tony Harrison directs and writes direct translations/adaptations. Is it possible to draw a line between translation and the practice of other stage skills? Is it possible to draw a line between different types of translation? I am not entirely comfortable with Manuela Perteghella's assertion that a literal translation is a 'first draft of a collaborative project', because the literal translations I have seen are not first drafts, but the result of painstaking and detailed work. They are not created to be 'improved' by indirect translators, but to provide a working 'source text' from which the indirect translator fashions a new

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<sup>155</sup> *Felicité* (2007) by Olivier Choinière was translated by Caryl Churchill as *Bliss* for the Royal Court in 2008, and given a new production at the Toronto Summerworks Festival in 2010, revived in Toronto and Montreal in 2012.

<sup>156</sup> Scardifield had worked on the literal translation for Howard Brenton's version at the National Theatre in 2010.

translation. Literal and indirect translations are prepared with different *skopoi*, and do not conflate into a direct translation. I do, however, agree with Perteghella that the literal translation is ‘the beginning of a process, of what you see at the end on stage’ (Meth, Mendelsohn, and Svendsen 2011: 209). In my opinion, literal translators deserve a greater acknowledgement for their participation in this creative process. Charlotte Pyke put forward a further argument for recognition of her agency as a literal translator: the original author is undermined when the literal translator is not credited, through the failure to recognise the long transition between what was originally written and what is performed on stage. In other words, acknowledgement of the process recognises the agency of all the participants, apportioning the value of the finished product across the team. And I would argue that this teamwork, *provided that it is exposed to view*, brings the act of translation into focus, reminding the user of the intercultural shift taking place.

## 7.5 Collaboration

This thesis asserts the function of the translation team as of key importance in the production of a staged translation. As I have discussed, the team gathers around one named focal point, but the driver of the overall activity may be a different agent from the visible team-leader. The director Michael Grandage and the producer Marla Rubin are examples of agents whose initiatives colour the project in addition to keeping it in motion. However, my research reveals that power and visibility rarely vest in one individual in the process. Indeed, on investigation, the influences on the translation are many and diverse, and include agents who may not have any detailed connection with the written translation, but who affect not only the manner of its composition but also the tone of its content. It is notable that all the translations in my sample originated in theatres which prioritise commissioning new writing and employ personnel whose specific task is to provide literary support. Interviews with these practitioners reveal the contributions of a sometimes extensive group of individuals, as, for example, in the originating of the contemporary slant of *The UN Inspector*, discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.3. Nevertheless, the process of translation locates the named translator at the centre of an influential group. For the

purposes of translation, the team-leader makes the gate-keeping decisions. This applies as much for the professional language-specialist direct translator David Tushingham as it does for the celebrity indirect translator David Hare, both of whom have to negotiate the demands of performance, the actors and the director, as they compose their translation.

Literal translators inform these decisions through the translation choices they have already made in the composition of their own translation, but they do not have the last word. The literal translators I interviewed were fully aware of this fact, and accepted that this was their role in the collaborative process. Helen Rappaport describes herself as 'cynical and discouraged about the position of the much-underrated literal translator' (2007: 75); these feelings are largely attributable to her public 'disappearance' in the translation process, although she also appears to be frustrated by what she sees as an increasing distance of new versions from the original. She asks whether we are 'coming to the point where new versions are commissioned just for the sake of it, when there are often more than enough good translations or versions already in existence' (ibid: 74). Although not among my subjects for interview, Rappaport was nevertheless named by several practitioners as a good example of an effective literal translator, suggesting that she is not professionally underrated even though she feels that may be true for the public at large. Her views on the over-population of translations and versions were not echoed by the literal translators I interviewed, who appeared to support the idea of a 'fresh' approach bringing out different aspects of a canonical text, and articulated an evident enjoyment of their part in the production. There was, however, consensus that the rewards, both monetary and by way of recognition, did not reflect the degree of effort and participation in the whole project. In my view, this area displays a limitation in the collaborative achievement. It is a defect that could be overcome systematically, by following the example of the Almeida's credit for Charlotte Pyke in the programme for its 2006 production of Maxim Gorky's *Enemies*, in a version by David Hare. Pyke's name was clearly displayed next to Hare's, with her photograph and biography appearing in the programme with the remainder of the leading creative cast. This should be standard practice, marking the extent of collaboration in the translation process.

## 7.6 Translation Theory in the Theatre

What is it about theatre that provides an effective site for the study of translation? Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush complain that ‘with the written text, read individually, or the performed play, seen by an audience, the illusion of the unmediated word has traditionally to be maintained’ (2006: 1). I do not agree that theatre strives to project such an illusion. On the contrary, the visibility of theatre translation, resulting from the appointment of high-profile interpreters, points to overt intervention in the translation process. The loud voice of the celebrity translator queries the act of translation as mediation and these agents engage visibly with the original author. My case studies show how the foregrounding of Hare’s voice liberates the source text for new possibilities of interpretation, a practical demonstration of translation’s theoretical comment and momentum. Harrison’s agency as translator displays the shifting interpretations which characterise translation, while his *Hecuba* production illustrates the process of collaboration in translation, and its effect on participating agents and the eventual product. However, the cooperative act of translation can be foreshortened, with other collaborators remaining hidden. This relates particularly to literal translators, but also underestimates the editorial interventions of producers, directors, literary staff and actors, along with additional theatre practitioners who enter and leave the process along the way.

Theatre provides overt displays of translation’s cultural negotiations, both through direct and indirect translations. Both methods interpose knowingly between the playwright and the audience, tailoring the content to reflect its current environment but generally with a self-awareness that alerts the receiver to the process that is taking place. The living source-language playwrights in my sample demonstrate a willingness to transpose or write for an other audience. But this is not a new characteristic of theatre translation, as Ibsen revealed over one hundred years ago (as I discuss in Chapter Three, section 3.4). Perhaps theatre enables this focus on the receiving culture because of the homogeneity of the audience language identified by Carlson (2006: 3)? Or it may be that the smaller groupings of theatre audiences, even though they are differently reconstituted on a nightly basis, engender a sense of communal reception which permits precision targeting for translation. Analysis of the corpus in this thesis suggests that the distinction between direct and indirect



translation seems less relevant than that between 'first' and 'new'. The phenomenon of retranslation may be a more significant feature than the presence of a direct or indirect translator. Classical reception studies demonstrate the appropriation of texts as society moves through time. Charles Martindale asserts:

our current interpretations [of ancient texts] whether or not we are aware of it, are in complex ways constructed by the chain of receptions through which their continued readability has been effected. As a result we cannot get back to any originary meaning wholly free of subsequent accretions. (1993: 7)

But those cumulative accretions combine to present meaning, as Gadamer suggests. Translation perpetuates some underlying meaning in a text, possibly even by means of contradiction. Theatre trials the efficacy of this tension in its experimental pairing of translators with texts. Two practitioners highlighted the possibilities of unorthodox matches, finding unexpected synchronicities between the source and target language writers. David Hare was not an obvious fit with Lorca, and yet his verbatim-style of dialogue resonates with Lorca's desire to create a documentary record. Hare's production presented Lorca's play as a diachronic political comment on twentieth-century Spain and twenty-first-century Western military activity, revealing the play in a new light even though the reviews were largely unaccepting of its allusions. And in theatre, if the results are not as anticipated, there is always the possibility of another attempt, as can be seen from the number of retranslations created of *The House of Bernarda Alba* even since I began working on this thesis.

One of the complaints about Hare's production was its domestication of the source text, reflecting Venuti's concerns about the cultural violence perpetrated by Anglo-Saxon translation methods. Visibility issues have been discussed throughout this thesis, and I also raised the domestication/foreignisation dichotomy with my interviewees. Rufus Norris took the view that foreignisation could amount to confounding the receivers' expectations, forcing them to question what is being delivered. If this is the case, 'new', even when, or especially when, relocating a source text to the receiver's environment, can still offer a reminder that the original lies elsewhere. Norris, however, is a director, not a linguist, whose influence on the construction of a translation reveals another feature of theatre

which is relevant in translation theory: the participation of commissioners in moulding the translation outcome. The choices both of texts to be translated, and the context of the site and accompanying texts framing that translation, generally lie beyond the scope of the translator. Theatre presents the opportunity to examine the significance of the commissioning process in translation via its listing of the agents involved in all aspects of production. Its visible procedures provide material enabling reflection on translation for the theorist, and the potential to raise awareness of translation for the practitioner.

I have suggested that London theatre provides a model of translation that does not necessarily conform to Venuti's equation of the invisible with the dominant. This theatrical model has its own invisibilities and power imbalances, but it also displays translation as an activity in which visible participators combine to comment critically on their own environment while paying tribute to the source text as their inspiration. Is this cultural appropriation? In my view it is impossible to avoid the influence of the target culture when translating, and therefore such appropriation is inevitable. However, theatre translation acknowledges the interpretive qualities of the translational process, providing a reminder of the inherent instability both of the source and target texts. Such reminders would be more powerful if the detailed practice of translation via a literal route were regularly and clearly signposted, preferably applying the term of 'translation' so that receivers were left in no doubt as to the provenance of the source. Venuti, instructing readers how to read a translation, insists that a translation 'ought to be read differently from an original composition precisely because it is not an original' (2004). Retranslation in mainstream London theatre in many ways complies with this instruction, but there are opportunities in theatre to highlight translation further, along with a societal awareness of its implications.

## **7.7 Further Opportunities**

The findings of my thesis draw on a range of factors, which expanded during the course of my research in accordance with the combinatory methodological approach adopted. The synthesis of contextual research and oral history provides a multi-faceted insight, not only into my own corpus but also into the working practices and products of the agents in my

sample, extending backwards and forwards in time from the three-month period under examination. This has enabled me to draw the conclusions posited above, in which I have commented on theatre translation on a more general basis. However, this thesis also demonstrates the variety that exists in creative theatre processes, such that any perceived trend should always be examined with caution for the exceptions and deviations which in many ways mark theatrical motivation: the search for the 'new'. Given this over-riding principle, the next stage for research could be to compare translation commissions with those for new writing and revivals of classic plays, in order to assess how and where translation sits amongst the overall theatrical offering to the public. How do translation processes fit within the creative procedures adopted when planning a seasonal programme? Does this vary between theatrical cultures and financial models of production? The line of enquiry which I have followed in this thesis could be adopted to examine the context for programming a season in contrasting theatrical organisations, providing further information around the positioning of translation within the very visible cultural product of theatre, and its implications for translation in the broader community.

How can the study of theatre translation shed light on translation more generally? My thesis demonstrates the range of interpretive possibilities available when negotiating cultural shifts. Although I have focused on its incidence on the stage, this range is not restricted to theatre, applying also to literary translation. For example, linguistic variety is currently evident in critically examined retranslations of canonic texts such as Edith Grossman's new version of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (2007) or the treatment of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* by Lydia Davis (2010). These are two recent instances of interpretations provoking the type of analytical comment which I have shown occurs regularly in theatre, highlighting the act of translation. These retranslations formalise and embody phenomena which take place every time translation occurs, either written or spoken: the subjectivity of the translator, and the variety of potential constructions available in transmission and reception. In my opinion, theatre foregrounds these features, but they could be conveyed more prominently.

Consequently, I would like to see the term 'translation' used more frequently in theatrical vocabulary, either by promoting the activity of the literal translator as was the case for

Charlotte Pyke in the *Enemies* programme cited above, or by indicating that a production has been ‘translated and adapted’ by a direct translator. In cases where the term ‘adaptation’ is unacceptable to the living source-language playwright, alternative means of highlighting the shift could be considered. One method would be to adapt the procedure Siri Nergaard advocates in publishing<sup>157</sup>, emphasizing the source-language with the inclusion of the phrase ‘translated from [source-language] by [translator’s name]’. The title page of the published text for *Hecuba* from my sample displayed the words, ‘in a new translation from the Greek by Tony Harrison’ (Euripides 2005: iii), but this was not repeated in the theatre programmes. However, the programme for Mike Poulton’s translation of *The Syndicate* gave the Italian title of the play on the front cover, as I noted in Chapter Four, section 4.6. These examples demonstrate that theatre has the means publicly to address its engagement with translation. These practices should be more widespread.

That such simple but prominent methods of highlighting the translational act do not occur with more frequency is, as I surmised in Chapter Four, section 4.8, more a demonstration of theatrical expectation of an absence of public interest in the process rather than any intention to suppress information. I heard of two occasions during my interviews where a theatre’s website had been amended in response to queries concerning the source of the translation<sup>158</sup>. The implications are obvious: theatre-goers should request additional information. There are various opportunities to do so, either through email, or by asking questions at post-show or platform discussions; my own experience, as an academic, audience-member and teacher of Theatre Studies in Further Education, suggests that there is substantial audience curiosity with regard to translation processes on stage once the basic tenets have been introduced. Theatre, especially mainstream theatre, aspires to communicate with its audience. My hope is that this thesis, and my engagement in the course of its development with theatre practitioners, academics and general audiences, will

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<sup>157</sup> In her keynote address, ‘The (in)visible publisher in translations’, presented at *Authorial and Editorial Voices in Translation*, University of Copenhagen, 3 November 2011.

<sup>158</sup> The National Theatre website was updated to acknowledge Charlotte Pyke’s work on *The UN Inspector* (see Chapter Four, section 4.8), and Jenny Worton informed me that she amended the Almeida website to credit the sources for her adaptation of *Through a Glass Darkly* (2010), after receiving enquiries from members of the audience.

encourage further communication and awareness around the theme of translation, both within the theatre and beyond its boundaries.

## APPENDIX A: PLAYS AND ARCHIVES

### Appendix A1: Sample Play Data

The following pages contain data gathered concerning each of the plays in the research sample. \*Starred\* data marks information that was presented in the Society of London Theatre small advertisements. Where dates are given for Literary Managers or Associates, these individuals were included in the interview selection. Although they may not have been personally involved in the translation process, they were able to discuss departmental procedures or had access to departmental records. Data for other translators into English is indicative of the extent to which translations have been carried out, but is not exhaustive. Literary translations are included.

#### 1a: *Don Carlos*

<b>Title</b>	<i>*Don Carlos*</i>
<b>Author</b>	<i>*Friedrich Schiller*</i>
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Don Carlos</i>
<b>Language</b>	German
<b>Translator</b>	<i>*Mike Poulton*</i>
<b>Literal translator</b>	Christine Madden
<b>Translation type</b>	Indirect/ <i>*adaptation*</i>
<b>Original copyright</b>	Expired
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	Mike Poulton (2005)
<b>Publisher</b>	Nick Hern Books
<b>Theatre</b>	Gielgud
<b>Original theatre</b>	Crucible, Sheffield Theatres
<b>Director</b>	<i>*Michael Grandage*</i>
<b>Artistic director (Sheffield)</b>	Michael Grandage
<b>Producer (West End)</b>	Matthew Byam Shaw
<b>Literary associate (Sheffield)</b>	Matthew Byam Shaw
<b>Dates of West End run</b>	28 January - 30 April 2005
<b>Principal actor</b>	Derek Jacobi - Philip II
<b>Date of original</b>	1787
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2004
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	1798

<b>Title</b>	<i>*Don Carlos*</i>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator(s)</b>	Georg Heinrich Noehden & Sir John Stoddart
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	<p>John Russell (1822)  John Towler (1843)  Charles Herbert Cottrell (1844)  R D Boylan (1846-49)  Thomas Selby Egan (1867)  Andrew Wood (1873)  James Kirkup (1959)  Graham Orton (1967)  J. Maxwell (1987)  Peter Oswald (1992)  Hilary Collier Sy-Quia (1999)  Robert David MacDonald (2005)</p>

**1b: Festen**

<b>Title</b>	<i>*Festen*</i>
<b>Author</b>	Thomas Vinterberg
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Festen</i>
<b>Language</b>	Danish
<b>Translator</b>	David Eldridge
<b>Literal translator</b>	Bo hr. Hansen (English script from play based on Danish film)
<b>Translation type (SOLT description)</b>	Indirect
<b>Original copyright (date)</b>	Thomas Vinterberg, Mogens Rukov and Bo hr. Hansen (2004) [Stage play]
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	'This edition of <i>Festen</i> , first reprinted in 2005, incorporates revisions made to the text in rehearsal and should be regarded as the definitive version.'
<b>Publisher</b>	Methuen Publishing
<b>Theatre</b>	Lyric
<b>Original theatre</b>	*Almeida*
<b>Director</b>	Rufus Norris
<b>Artistic director (Almeida)</b>	Michael Attenborough
<b>Producer</b>	Marla Rubin
<b>Artistic associate (Almeida)</b>	Jenny Worton (from 2005)
<b>Dates of West End run</b>	15 September 2004 – 16 April 2005
<b>Principal actors</b>	Jane Asher - Else; Jonny Lee Miller - Christian.
<b>Date of original</b>	1998 (screenplay)
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2004
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	2004
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator</b>	David Eldridge
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	N/a



*1c: Hecuba*

<b>Title</b>	<i>*Hecuba*</i>
<b>Author</b>	<i>*Euripides*</i>
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Hecuba</i>
<b>Language</b>	Ancient Greek
<b>Translator</b>	<i>*Tony Harrison*</i>
<b>Literal translator</b>	N/a
<b>Translation type</b>	Direct/ <i>*version*</i>
<b>Original copyright (date)</b>	Expired
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	Tony Harrison (2005)
<b>Publisher</b>	Faber and Faber
<b>Theatre</b>	Albery
<b>Original theatre</b>	Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon (cancelled)
<b>Director</b>	Laurence Boswell
<b>Artistic director (RSC)</b>	Michael Boyd
<b>Producer (West End)</b>	<i>*Royal Shakespeare Company*</i>
<b>Literary associate (RSC)</b>	Paul Sirett; Réjane Collard (from 2009).
<b>Dates of West End run</b>	7 April 2005 – 7 May 2005
<b>Principal actor</b>	<i>*Vanessa Redgrave*</i> - Hecuba
<b>Date of original</b>	423 BCE
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2005
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	1726
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator</b>	Richard West

Title	<i>*Hecuba*</i>
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	<p>Thomas Morell (1749)  D. Spillan (1825)  John Richardson Major and Richard Porson (1826)  Robert Potter (1827)  Frederick Apthorp Paley (1876)  Michael Woodhull (1888)  Thomas Nash (1892)  William Henry Balgarbie and Thomas Theophilus Jeffery (1899)  Gilbert Murray (1902)  St. George William Joseph Stock (1902)  John Tresidder Sheppard (1924)  Hugh Owen Meredith (1937)  David Grene and Richmond Lattimore (1958)  Arthur S. Way (1959)  Peter Douglas Arnott (1969)  John W. Ambrose Jr. (1981)  J. Michael Walton, D. Taylor, and Peter D. Arnott (1991)  Kenneth J. Reckford and Janet Lembke (1991)  Christopher Collard (1991)  Joel Tansey and Kiki Goundaridou (1995)  David Kovacs (1995)  Kenneth McLeish (1995)  Eleanor Wilner and Marilyn Nelson (1998)  Edward P. Coleridge and William-Alan Landes (1998)  Richard Rutherford and John Davie (1998)  Stephen Daitz (1998)  Philip Velacott (1999)  Robert Emmet Meagher (1999)  James Morwood (2000)  John Harrison (2004)  Frank McGuinness (2004)  Marianne McDonald (2005)  Robin Mitchell-Boyask (2006)</p>

**1d: Hedda Gabler**

<b>Title</b>	<i>*Hedda Gabler*</i>
<b>Author</b>	<i>*Henrik Ibsen*</i>
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Hedda Gabler</i>
<b>Language</b>	Norwegian
<b>Translator</b>	<i>*Richard Eyre*</i>
<b>Literal translators</b>	Karin and Ann Bamborough
<b>Translation type</b>	Indirect/*version*
<b>Original copyright</b>	Expired
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	Richard Eyre (2005)
<b>Publisher</b>	Nick Hern Books
<b>Theatre</b>	Duke of York's
<b>Original theatre</b>	Almeida
<b>Director</b>	Richard Eyre
<b>Artistic director (Almeida)</b>	Michael Attenborough
<b>Producer (West End)</b>	Robert Fox
<b>Artistic associate (Almeida)</b>	Jenny Worton (from 2005)
<b>Dates of West End run</b>	27 May - 6 August 2005
<b>Principal actors</b>	Eve Best - Hedda; Iain Glen - Judge Brack.
<b>Date of original</b>	1890
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2005
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	1890
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translators</b>	Edmund Gosse and William Archer.

Title	<i>*Hedda Gabler*</i>
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	Una Ellis-Fermor (1950) Peter Watts (1950) Eva Le Gallienne (1957) Arthur Miller (1957) Alan S. Downer (1961) Rolf Fjelde (1965) Edward T. Byrnes (1965) John Gassner (1965) M. Faber (1966) Christopher Hampton (1972) John Osborne (1972) Kai Jurgensen and Robert Schenkkan (1975) John Lingard and Ken Livingstone (1975) Michael Meyer (1977) James McFarlane and Jens Arup (1981) Per K. Brask (1991) Nicholas Rudall (1992) R. Farquharson Sharp (1992) Kenneth McLeish (1995) Jon Robin Baitz and Anne-Charlotte Hanes Harvey (2001) Doug Hughes (2001) Reg Mitchell (2002) Thomas Parry and R. H. Hughes (2003) Brian Johnston (2003) Andrew Upton (2004) Alyssa Harad (2005)

**1d: *The House of Bernarda Alba***

<b>Title</b>	<i>*The House of Bernarda Alba*</i>
<b>Author</b>	*Federico García Lorca*
<b>Original title</b>	<i>La casa de Bernarda Alba</i>
<b>Language</b>	Spanish
<b>Translator</b>	*David Hare*
<b>Literal translator</b>	Simon Scardifield
<b>Translation type</b>	Indirect/*version*
<b>Original copyright (date)</b>	Herederos de Federico García Lorca (1946)
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	David Hare and Herederos de Federico García Lorca (2005)
<b>Publisher</b>	Faber and Faber
<b>Theatre</b>	Lyttelton, National Theatre
<b>Original theatre</b>	N/a
<b>Director</b>	Howard Davies
<b>Artistic director</b>	Nicholas Hytner
<b>Literary manager</b>	Jack Bradley; Chris Campbell (Deputy, 2004-2010).
<b>Dates of run</b>	5 March 2005 – 30 July 2005
<b>Principal actors</b>	Penelope Wilton - Bernarda; Deborah Findlay - Poncia.
<b>Date of original</b>	1936
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2005
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	1947
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator</b>	Richard L O'Connell and James Graham-Lujan
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	Tom Stoppard (1973) Sue Bradbury (1977) Robert David MacDonald (1986) Michael Dewell and Carmen Zapata (1987) Dennis Klein (1991) Christopher Maurer (1992) Gwynne Edwards (1998) Emily Mann (1998 and 2012) Rona Munro (1999) Caridad Svich (2005) Rebecca Morahan, Auriol Smith, and Robert David MacDonald (2007) Michael Jones and Salvador Ortiz-Carboneres (2007) David Johnston (2008)

*1f: The UN Inspector*

<b>Title</b>	<i>*The UN Inspector*</i>
<b>Author</b>	Nikolai *Gogol*
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Revizor</i>
<b>Language</b>	Russian
<b>Translator</b>	*David Farr*
<b>Literal translator</b>	Charlotte Pyke
<b>Translation type</b>	Indirect/*free adaptation of The Government Inspector*
<b>Original copyright (date)</b>	Expired
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	David Farr (2005)
<b>Publisher</b>	Faber and Faber
<b>Theatre</b>	Olivier, National Theatre
<b>Original theatre</b>	N/a
<b>Director</b>	David Farr
<b>Artistic director</b>	Nicholas Hytner
<b>Literary manager</b>	Jack Bradley; Chris Campbell (Deputy, 2006-2010).
<b>Dates of run</b>	7 June 2005 – 5 October 2005
<b>Principal actors</b>	Michael Sheen - Gammon; Kenneth Cranham - The President; Geraldine James - Anna Andreyevna.
<b>Date of original</b>	1835
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2005
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	1916 as <i>The Inspector-General</i>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator</b>	Thomas Seltzer
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	Constance Garnett(1926) D.J. Campbell (1947) Peter Raby (1967) L. Ignatieff (1973) Guy R. Williams (1980) Adrian Mitchell (1985) E. Bentley (1987) Aleksander Segeyevich Griboyedov, Alexander Nikolaevich Ostrovsky, and Joshua Cooper (1990) John Byrne (1998) Christopher English (1999) Stephen Mulrine (1999) Alistair Beaton (2005) Robert Maguire and Ronald Wilks (2005) David Harrower (2011)

*1g: Way to Heaven*

<b>Title</b>	<i>*Way to Heaven*</i>
<b>Author</b>	<i>*Juan Mayorga*</i>
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Himmelweg</i>
<b>Language</b>	Spanish
<b>Translator</b>	David Johnston
<b>Literal translator</b>	N/a
<b>Translation type</b>	Direct
<b>Original copyright (date)</b>	Juan Mayorga (2004)
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	David Johnston (2005)
<b>Publisher</b>	Oberon Books
<b>Theatre</b>	Royal Court Upstairs
<b>Original theatre</b>	n/a
<b>Director</b>	Ramin Gray
<b>Artistic director</b>	Ian Rickson
<b>Associate director International</b>	Elyse Dodgson
<b>Literary manager</b>	Graham Whybrow; [Ruth Little, 2005-2010] Chris Campbell (from 2010).
<b>Dates of run</b>	16 June 2005 - 9 July 2005
<b>Principal actors</b>	Jeff Rawle - Red Cross Representative; Dominic Rowan - Commandant.
<b>Date of original</b>	2004
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2005
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	2005
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator</b>	David Johnston
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	N/a

*1h: The Woman Before*

<b>Title</b>	<i>*The Woman Before*</i>
<b>Author</b>	*Roland Schimmelpfennig*
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Die Frau von früher</i>
<b>Language</b>	German
<b>Translator</b>	David Tushingham
<b>Literal translator</b>	N/a
<b>Translation type</b>	Direct
<b>Original copyright (date)</b>	2004
<b>Translation copyright (date)</b>	2005
<b>Publisher</b>	Oberon Books
<b>Theatre</b>	Royal Court Downstairs
<b>Original theatre</b>	N/a
<b>Director</b>	Richard Wilson
<b>Artistic director</b>	Ian Rickson
<b>Associate director International</b>	Elyse Dodgson
<b>Literary manager</b>	Graham Whybrow; [Ruth Little, 2005-2010] Chris Campbell (from 2010).
<b>Dates of West End run</b>	12 May 2005 – 18 June 2005
<b>Principal actors</b>	Saskia Reeves - Claudia ; Helen Baxendale - Romy Vogtländer;
<b>Date of original</b>	2004
<b>Date of this translation</b>	2005
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> English-language translation</b>	2005
<b>1<sup>st</sup> English-language translator</b>	David Tushingham
<b>Other translators into English (dates)</b>	N/a



## Appendix A2: Archives Consulted

<u>Archive</u>	<u>Play</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Date</u>
Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama, Oxford.	<i>Hecuba</i>	Draft script, programmes, reviews.	12 March 2012
British Library Sound Archive, London.	<i>Way to Heaven</i> <i>The Woman Before</i>	Sound recording.	21 April 2010
Brooklyn Academy of Music Archive, New York.	<i>Hecuba</i>	Video recording, prompt book, programme, production files, reviews.	19 May 2011
National Theatre Archive, London.	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> <i>The UN Inspector</i>	Literal translations, prompt book, video recordings, programmes, production files, reviews.	23 October 2008
Royal Court Theatre, London.	<i>Way to Heaven</i> <i>The Woman Before</i>	Prompt books, production files.	15 April 2009
Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Stratford-upon-Avon.	<i>Hecuba</i>	Prompt book, programme, production files, reviews.	30 October 2008
Sheffield Theatres Archive, Sheffield	<i>Don Carlos</i>	Programme.	23 March 2011 (by email and post)
V&A Theatre and Performance Archives, London	<i>Don Carlos</i> <i>Hedda Gabler</i>	Video recordings, reviews.	19 November 2008 7 October 2011

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS

### Appendix B1: Interviews Conducted

<u>Interviewee</u>	<u>Play</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Karin Bamborough	<i>Hedda Gabler</i>	8 February 2011	London
Jack Bradley	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> <i>The UN Inspector</i>	28 April 2010	London
Matthew Byam Shaw	<i>Don Carlos</i>	5 April 2011	London
Chris Campbell	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> <i>The UN Inspector</i> <i>Way to Heaven</i> <i>The Woman Before</i>	10 January 2011	London
Réjane Collard	<i>Hecuba</i>	27 July 2010	London
Elyse Dodgson	<i>Way to Heaven</i> <i>The Woman Before</i>	4 August 2010	London
David Eldridge	<i>Festen</i>	26 January 2011	London
Michael Grandage	<i>Don Carlos</i>	28 May 2010	London
Ramin Gray	<i>Way to Heaven</i>	6 May 2010	London
David Johnston	<i>Way to Heaven</i>	1 June 2010	Belfast
Juan Mayorga	<i>Way to Heaven</i>	2 November 2010	Madrid
Rufus Norris	<i>Festen</i>	7 March 2011	London
Mike Poulton	<i>Don Carlos</i>	26 May 2010	Stratford-upon-Avon
Charlotte Pyke	<i>The UN Inspector</i>	14 July 2010	London
Marla Rubin	<i>Festen</i>	15 July 2010	London
Simon Scardifield	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i>	30 June 2010	London
Paul Sirett	<i>Hecuba</i>	17 January 2011	London
David Tushingham	<i>The Woman Before</i>	21 July 2010	London
Jenny Worton	<i>Festen</i> <i>Hedda Gabler</i>	22 June 2010	London

## Appendix B2: Pro-Forma Interview Questions

- 1) What is your translation policy (or the policy of the theatre) with regard to staging translated plays (eg, using a linguist to prepare a direct translation, or using a literal translation and a playwright to create a version)? Why?
- 2) Who is responsible for commissioning the following, and what criteria are used to make these decisions?
  - a) The play?
  - b) The translator?
    - i) Direct translator?
    - ii) Indirect translator (eg, a playwright)?
    - iii) Literal translator?
- 3) Who sets the translation brief (eg, setting, register, poetry/prose) and how is it decided?
- 4) What approach is taken to previous translations of the same play?
- 5) At what point is the text fixed for publication? How do you deal with changes that take place after the text has gone to press?
- 6) Who is involved in agreeing script changes, and how do they come about?
- 7) Who makes the following decisions, and why?
  - a) Whether the translation is termed translation/version/adaptation?
  - b) Where and how the literal translator is acknowledged?
  - c) The layout and content of the theatre programme (in general and relating to the translation)?
- 8) How many people participate in the process of staging a translated play from its inception and what are their roles?
- 9) Is there anyone else connected with this production/translation that I should approach?

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