TRANSLATING 'RHETORIJCKELIJCK' OR 'GHETROUWELIJCK':
Dutch Renaissance Approaches to Translation

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1

The history of Renaissance translation, as a European phenomenon, may be said to begin on September 5th, 1400. On that day, apparently, the Italian Humanist Leonardo Bruni first used the Latin verb 'traducere' ('to lead across, to ferry across') in a new sense: 'to translate' (IJsewijn 1988, 37). The term subsequently passed into Italian and hence into French, where 'traduire', replacing the older 'translater', is first attested in 1509 (Chavy 1981, 293; Berman 1988, 30). Between 1400 and the early sixteenth century Humanism had grown into a major cultural force in Italy and beyond, reaching the Low Countries towards the end of the fifteenth century. Suffice it here to mention the names of Agricola and Erasmus, the Latin grammar of Despauterius and the printing presses at Deventer and Leuven. The verb 'vertalen' was current already in Middle Dutch and it had a range of meanings, but 'to translate' was not among them; the first occurrence of 'vertalen' meaning 'to translate' is to be found in the Liesveldt Bible of 1526 (*WNT*). How common this meaning of the verb was in the first half of the sixteenth century is hard to say; the next occurrence attested in the *WNT* is from 1561.

The appearance of these new verbs, or of old verbs with new meanings, roughly coincides with that spectacular growth of vernacular translation which we normally associate with the emergence of the Renaissance in the various vernacular cultures of Western Europe. Among these translations, those from the Classics enjoyed the highest cultural prestige. In England and France the first major upsurge in translations from the Classics occurred in the 1530s (Foster 1918; Lathrop 1933, 311ff; Chavy 1981, 1988). In the Low Countries we have to wait another twenty or so years, until the mid-century, when Cornelis van Ghistele and D.V. Coornhert become active as translators (Geerebaert 1924, 1925). Exact figures concerning the increased production of Dutch translations or the share of translated work in the total book production are not available for this period. Such quantitative and bibliographical data as we have, are all restricted in scope, covering specific genres (e.g. epic poetry, cf. Smit 1975), publishers (cf. Furstner 1985), or source languages (Latin and Greek, Italian, Spanish; cf. Geerebaert 1924, Clemens 1964, Davids 1918).

As in the other countries of Western Europe, there develops in the Low Countries, directly in the wake of the growing tide of translations, a vernacular discourse on translation, a theoretical and critical reflection that accompanies, explains, justifies and legitimizes the translators' practice. It is this discourse that I am concerned with here.

2

Before considering some aspects of the Dutch Renaissance discourse on translation, a moment's reflection on the aims of such an investigation will help to put things into perspective. The importance of translations in the history of Dutch literature in general, and of Dutch Renaissance

literature in particular, has been recognized ever since the days of Worp, Kalff and Te Winkel. Nevertheless, remarkably little is known about what translators and other actors on the literary scene thought about translation, what they expected of it and how they responded to it, why translators went about their task in the way they did, what rules and what foreign or indigenous models they followed in translating. In other words, for the Renaissance as for other periods of Dutch literature, both the poetics of translation and the socio-cultural contexts of translation need to be studied.

The present exploration fits into this larger whole, the ultimate goal being a fuller understanding of the place and role of translation, and especially literary translation, within the broader context of Dutch Renaissance culture. In other words, the issues under discussion here refer to a more comprehensive programme of research, anchored in questions like: who translates what, when, how, and why, for whom, with what effect?; what are the relations between translational attitudes, models, norms and behaviour?; what is the place and function of the translation in relation to both the literary and the other communicative systems of the period? (Hermans 1988, 16-23).

A programme like this is raises more problems, in terms of both practicability and methodology, than can be solved at this stage. That being so, there is a measure of comfort and encouragement to be drawn from a recent article by E.K. Grootes which recommends that, when faced with the practical and theoretical paradoxes of literary historiography, the fieldworker adopt an attitude of "pragmatic indifference" (Grootes 1989, 243) towards them and start somewhere (anywhere?), provided he or she keep the long-term perspective in mind and employ the tools currently available.

The immediate aim, then, is to consider translational views, positions, topoi, attitudes, explicitly stated motives, rules and norms, and their poetic and socio-cultural context. The primary material for such a study consists of the metatexts of Dutch Renaissance translation. What type of texts are they? Where do we find them? How do we read them?

In the absence of extensive and seminal treatises on the subject of translation of the kind produced by, say, Etienne Dolet in France and Luther in Germany (comparable monographs do not appear in Dutch until well into the eighteenth century), we have to make do with a variety of shorter pronouncements, ranging from statements of principle to casual comments. They occur in private letters, in grammars and other writings on language and literature, and - by far the most important source - in the liminary texts accompanying the translated works themselves. Each of these text types obeys its own rules. The liminary discourses - prefaces, dedications, laudatory poems - in particular are to be approached with caution, for they invariably display the rhetoric proper to the genre: the translator's self-portrait is usually designed to elicit the reader's goodwill, the publisher's remarks are mostly informed by commercial considerations, and the laudatory poems are given to hyperbole. Besides, even when the translator means what he says about his craft or his good intentions, there is no guarantee that he will act accordingly - but that is another story, beyond the scope of the present essay.

3

It soon becomes clear to anyone who spends some time reading around in the discourse on translation in the Dutch Renaissance that, despite its fragmentary nature, there are patterns and

traditions in it, central issues and international echoes, synchronic oppositions and diachronic shifts. In other words, there appears to be an intertextual element linking not just certain translations and re-translations, but also a number of the significant metatexts of translation. The major points of reference are provided by dominant practitioners. In the sixteenth century, for example, we can single out Cornelis van Ghistele and Dirk Coornhert, both with their individual priorities but both held up by Karel van Mander at the end of the century as models to be followed ("...en wilt vertaelt uytgeve*n* / Poëten oudt in Druck vry bin u leven: / Oft onverstandt al laeckt sulcx niet en acht./ Als Coornhert en Ghistel...", Van Mander 1597, 'Den vertaelder ten Leser'). In the seventeenth century the views of Vondel and Huygens appear to be seminal, judging at least from the number of references to them by both contemporaries and subsequent generations.

The first major translator of the Classics in the sixteenth-century Low Countries is the Antwerp Rhetorician Cornelis van Ghistele (*ca.* 1510-1573). In the 1550s and '60s he produced commercially successful renderings of works by Ovid (*Heroides*, 1553), Virgil (*Aeneid*, 1554, 1556), Terence (*Comedies*, 1555), Horace (*Satires*, 1569), Erasmus (*Lingua*, 1555) and - not directly from the Greek but through a Latin version - Sophocles (*Antigone*, 1556). As a rule, the titles of these books stress, truthfully but also by way of self-advertisement, that this is the first time they are being translated into Dutch, and that they have been rendered "in the rhetorical manner" ("... nu eerst ... rhetorijckelijck overgesedt ...").

There are good reasons to believe that Van Ghistele's translations were intended for a well-defined and discerning market. As Mireille van Caekenberghe (1974, I, 84) has shown, several of them were given a fresh, adventurous look by being set in a very modern letter. The outward presentation of the books - enterprising, cultured, distinguished - has a parallel in Van Ghistele's consistent practice of putting cross-references to the Latin original in the margin of his Dutch versions, to facilitate the comparison between the translation and its source. In the preface to Horace's *Satires* of 1569 he says that he has

> ... Dlatijn in Margine doen setten, om dat een yeghelyck metten Duytsche dat confereren soude, ghelijck ick in Vergilio, Térentio, ende Ovidio, ghedaen hebbe, om dat ick my teghen de onverstandicheyt veantwoorden soude. (quoted in Van Caekenberghe 1974, II, 125)

Van Ghistele's intended audience, that is, was well-to-do and culturally progressive, and it included the growing category of readers who had been educated at the many new Latin schools, where they had acquired some Latin but probably not quite enough to read it independently or fluently (*ibid.*). We can assume his readership overlapped at least to some extent with that prosperous Latin-loving urban patriciate which, in Jozef IJsewijn's words, provided "the indispensable social base for a full flowering" of Humanist culture in the Low Countries (IJsewijn 1975, 269; Cameron 1990, 140). Van Ghistele's intended audience may also be contrasted, at the other end of the cultural scale, with the mass market aimed at by the adaptation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* published simultaneously in a Dutch and a French edition in Lyon in 1557 (*Excellente figueren ghesneden uuyten Uppersten Poete Ovidius... Duer Guillaume Borluit*). In this edition, as the title suggests, the woodcuts are of prime importance, the texts merely serve to support the illustrations, and the introduction stresses the work's lighter qualities

of distraction and recreation (Sluijter 1986, 306). This is not the way Van Ghistele and his publishers present their wares.

Van Ghistele's public was obviously broader and more downmarket than the Latinizing and intellectually highbrow Humanist circles, and comprised also those largely or wholly ignorant of Latin but with a growing interest in Classical culture. Van Ghistele himself commonly refers to his readers as "de verstandigen", and directly appeals to the self-esteem of this audience when he voices his contempt for those popular chapbooks that still represent Virgil in the medieval manner, as a sorcerer (Van Ghistele 1554, 'Totten Lesere') - one such chapbook had appeared in Antwerp around 1525 and been reprinted in Amsterdam in 1552 - and when he emphasizes the serious cultural value of his own products by contrasting them with low-status prose collections such as "Ulespieghels beuselen oft met soedanighen boeverye" (Van Ghistele 1555, 'Tot den Leser').

These attacks on popular literature are part of Van Ghistele's double defence of translation, which kicks in two directions simultaneously. In the first place he has to contend with those, especially in ecclesiastical circles, who hold that the Ancients should not be translated at all, because their works contain dangerous lies and pagan myths. Erasmus, among others, had countered that argument in his *Enchiridion* (1503) and in a number of other publications by pointing to the positive, pre-Christian qualities of virtue and wisdom to be found in the Ancients. Van Ghistele's prefaces take the same line, as when he reminds his readers that

> ... al ist sake dat Vergilius een Heydens Meester was / dat daerom sijn schriften niet onduechdelijck oft te verachten en sijn / wa*n*t alle Heydensche Philosophe*n* / en*de* Poeten / al en hebben si gheen kennisse van Christo ghehadt / nochtans haer groote wijsheyt en*de* verstant hebben si wel laten blijcken... (Van Ghistele 1554, 'Totten Lesere')

His denigration of chapbooks and other entertainment literature is the other side of this coin, belittling the popular and sometimes raucous genres so as to highlight the positive, edifying qualities of his own work.

At the other end of the intellectual spectrum Van Ghistele defends himself against those Humanists of high Latin culture who hold that one should not diminish Latin books by translating them into the vulgar tongue ("...menich constich gheest ... hem ontsiet / ende grouwelt / yet in onser duytscher talen over te settene; *ibid*.; and elsewhere: "Men vint vernufte mensche*n* / die segghe*n* dat onbehoorlijck is latijnsche boecke*n* in onser duytscher talen over te setten: haer laten dunckende dat de latijnsche sprake daer door onteert / en*de* te cort ghedaen wort", Van Ghistele 1555, 'Tot den Leser'). He counters that charge by pointing to the example, firstly, of both the Ancient Romans and the modern Humanists themselves, many of whom translate from Greek into Latin, and, secondly, of all the other European nations who have recently been translating into their vernacular languages as well - an argument used by Dutch Renaissance writers from Lucas de Heere to Bredero whenever they are seeking ways to overcome the Humanist disrespect for the vernacular:

> Maer waerom dan hebben so veel gheleerde manne*n* de Griecxsche Poeten / ghelijc Homerum Euripidem Sophoclem en*de* noch meer ander int Latine over gheset / en noch daghelijcx doen ... [D]e Italianen / Overlanders / Franchoysen / en*de* de Spae*n*sche natie

elck ijn zijn tale daghelijcx (soe men siet) oversettende zijn. (ibid.)

Both lines of defence and polemic are symptomatic of the position of this type of translation at this time. What Van Ghistele is offering in the context of mid-sixteenth-century Dutch literature is a new type of work, still on the periphery of the existing literary field but making a determined bid for a place at the centre, and relying on the prestige of the Ancient writers and on the example of neighbouring modern literatures to do so. This explains the ambitious marketing and the appeal to serious but not exclusive culture, but also the need for self-justification, and the choice of a 'safe' poetic form. Subsequent generations of Dutch-language translators will not need to be quite so defensive. Typical of the early Renaissance translator is also Van Ghistele's acute awareness of the imperfection of the mother tongue as a literary vehicle, another 'topos' of the sixteenth-century translators' discourse that will have become redundant a few generations later. In some cases the shift was rapid and self-conscious: in the 'Aenwysinghe' of his 1557 version of Boethius, Coornhert still speaks of his "barbarische ongeleerde penne", but in the re-translation published in 1585 he pointedly omits the word "barbarisch" (Becker 1938, 247).

Van Ghistele proudly declares on the title pages of his translations that he has translated 'rhetorijckelijck', i.e. in a naturalizing manner, resolutely tailoring the source text to fit the prevailing conventions in the receiving culture. Van Ghistele's literary language and his verse forms are those of the Chambers of Rhetoric. That this was a commercially sound course to take is demonstrated *ex negativo* by the fate of his *Antigone* (1556), after Sophocles, the first Greek play ever to be rendered into Dutch. Van Ghistele's version, probably based on a rather literal student rendering into Latin, was done with minimal target-literary adjustments. It turned out to be a commercial failure, and Van Ghistele's only translation never to be reprinted (Arens 1960; Van Caekenberghe 1974, I, 107).

Two particular aspects of the 'rhetorical' form which proved unacceptable to subsequent generations concerned Van Ghistele's uninhibited use of French loanwords and his habit of dividing his text into familiar-looking stanzas ending on a moralizing 'sententia' or 'sluytreghel', reminiscent of the structure of a Rhetorical 'refrein'. The scathing comments made about these features first by Coornhert (in the prefaces to his *Odyssee*, 1561, and his 1585 version of Boethius) and later by Van Mander (*Bucolica*, 1597) and Bredero (*Moortje*, 1615/17) clearly reflect the demise of the Rhetoricians' linguistic and poetic norms, in translated as well as in original literature.

4

Although chronologically Coornhert's activity as a translator overlaps with Van Ghistele's, it is evident that their criteria and priorities differ profoundly. Whereas Van Ghistele's interests are primarily literary, Coornhert's are philosophical and linguistic as well. He disapproves of Van Ghistele's source texts on moral grounds, arguing against the reading of Terence in the Latin schools, for example, and speaking in one breath of "Ovidius Nasonis ende andere onkuyssche boecken ende Poëterien" (Van Caekenberghe 1974, I, 104). His own selection of texts for translation is demonstratively different from Van Ghistele's and includes - apart from Homer (1561, via the Latin) and a judicious selection from Boccaccio (1564, via the French) - Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (1557, 1585), Cicero's *De officiis* (1561), Seneca's *De beneficiis*

1562) and a number of shorter works by Plato, Castellio and others on philosophical and moral subjects (cf. Bonger 1978).

Coornhert's purist concern with proper vocabulary is in evidence in several of his prefaces. It affects his practice as early as 1557, when he reworks an older Flemish translation of Boethius (dating from 1485) and systematically replaces not only Flemish terms not current in the Northern Netherlands, but also most loanwords of French origin (Becker 1938, 253ff).

For all their differences, however, Coornhert and Van Ghistele are in agreement on the usual topoi of sixteenth-century translation: the original text is a priceless treasure that lay buried in a foreign tongue but can now be enjoyed by all; translation is a laborious task for which the translator is poorly equipped, and so on. They also agree on the choice of verse form, invariably opting for the most commonly used one. The poem 'Tot den goedwilligen lezer' prefaced to Coornhert's *Dolinge van Ulysse* (1561) dismisses the novelty of metrical versification and sticks to the traditional unbound verse of the Rhetoricians (Weevers 1939). More interestingly perhaps, Van Ghistele and Coornhert also agree on the undesirability of literal, word-for-word versions. Van Ghistele is more explicit on the issue than Coornhert. In the preface to his first published translation (Ovid's *Heroides*, 1553) he argues - no doubt with a view to accommodating his audience - that a literal rendering would sound so awkward as to be unacceptable, and that the 'sense' of the original can be preserved intact even if the translator strays from the original's exact words:

> ... dat daeromme den zin vanden Poeet niet gecorrumpeert en is, want zoudemen het duydtsch zo plat naer dlatijn stellen, tsoude dickwils seer vrempt in des lesers oore luyen (Van Caekenberghe 1974, II, 127).

5

The broader significance of this point, and of both Coornhert's and Van Ghistele's strategies in translating, becomes clear when we contrast their approach with the much stricter conception of translation in the 1566 Dutch version by the Antwerp translator Marcus Antonius Gillis (or Van Diest) of Johannes Sambucus' *Emblemata*. The book was brought out by the elite publisher Christopher Plantin, at his expense (as he informs us in the Dedication; Gillis 1566). Here we have a poetic form, the emblem, that is new to Dutch literature, presented in a translation that is formally unaccommodating and linguistically source-oriented.

The title page of Gillis' *Emblemata I. Sambuci* characterizes the translation as 'ghetrouwelick'. In his preface the translator, having first explained the name and nature of the emblem, declares that he has rendered the Latin source text word for word, even in those places where it is dense and obscure and even though, as a result, the translation may be lacking in elegance:

> ... latende de dingen sulcs als ickse int Latijn ghevonden hebbe, die alleenlick oversettende met luttel woorden (dwelc in alle dusdanighe manieren van scrijven so grootelics gheeyscht wort, datse daersonder alle haer gratie ende eygendom verliesen) so claerlcik en*de* bescheydelick alst my immermeer mogelick geweest is, al ist dat het Latijn op veel plaetsen duyster en*de* swaer, mits hertheit ende cortheyt des stijls, om verstaen is,

gelijc my dat wel betuygen sulle*n* die in beyde talen vervare*n* zijn ... De woorden oft sententien boven de figure*n* gestelt (welcke t'same*n* d'Emblema maken, so voorscreven is) hebbe ick meest al overgheset na luyt der Latijnscher woorden, de welcke daerom dicwils veel van haer gratie verliesen ... (Gillis 1566, 'M.A.G. totten goetwillighen Leser')

As regards the difficulty of grasping the subject-matter ("de dingen en*de* geschiedenissen") presented or alluded to in the emblems, Gillis calls for active cooperation on the part of the reader, "dient veel ae*n*genamer is dat hy door zijns selfs ondersoecken en*de* bedencke*n* verstaet, dan dat hem met la*n*c verhael en*de* wtlegginge wijs gemaect wort" (*ibid*.). On the level of language, too, he makes a virtue out of necessity, arguing somewhat curiously that, since idiomatic usage in Dutch differs so much from one region to another, his verbatim translation will allow readers in all parts of the Low Countries to complement it for themselves by providing a suitable wording in their own dialect:

> ... want het gemeynlick gebuert, dattet ghene dat in d'een sprake wel luyt oft een gemeyn spreecwoort is, in een ander sprake va*n* woorde tot woorde overgeset zijnde, qualijc luyt en*de* gansch onbekent is, waer tegen wel weder een ander in die sprake is, d'welc met soo goeden gratie onder ander woorden t'selve bediet: maer want daer in by ons eenen grooten cuer is, die dicwils van lande tot lande, ia va*n* stede tot stede verandert, so heeft my t'beste gedocht te volgen t'ghene dat ick voor my hadde, latende allen verstandigen Lesers vrijlijcken toe, na datse de meyninge en*de* leeringe wel verstaen hebben, sulcken woort daerby te voegen, alst hen sal duncke*n* alder bequamelics daertoe te dienen, om de*n* aenschouwers haestelick t'versta*n*t vander schilderien te gheven. (*ibid*.)

Commercially speaking, of course, Gillis' point is perfectly sound: while it remains close to the source language idiom, his version avoids identification with any particular dialectal variant of Dutch and should therefore sell throughout the area. Linguistically, too, it is less odd than it sounds, considering the absence of a standard language at the time; a similar awareness of regional variation may be found, for example, in Joos Lambrecht's *Nederlandsche spellijnghe* (1550) or in Radermacher's 1568 outline of a Dutch grammar (Bostoen 1985).

However, the first reason Gillis gives for translating literally is probably also the main one: he counts on more gratitude than criticism from his readers, he declares, because in rendering the source text word for word he has discharged, as best he could, "the task of a faithful Translator" ("wa*nt* ick bekenne mijn beste gedaen te hebben om d'officie eens ghetrouwen Oversetters hier in te voldoen"). The phrase is significant, if only because it is redolent with associations, so much so that Gillis' words could almost be a deliberate conflation of two celebrated statements on translation in Classical times, echoing both Horace's "fidus inter-pres" ("ghetrouwen Oversetter") and Saint Jerome's "officium interpretis" ("d'officie eens ... Oversetters").

Horace's famous lines "Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus / interpres" (*Ars Poetica*, lines 133-4), which had often been read as meaning "do not, faithful translator, render word for word", had been correctly reinterpreted in the 1540s by the Swiss Humanist Henricus Glareanus, a friend of Erasmus, as meaning exactly the opposite, i.e. that the imitator (for the passage deals with *imitatio*) should not do what the faithful translator does, who is expected to translate word

for word (cf. Norton 1984, 233ff); for Horace, that is, the faithful translator does translate verbatim. Humanist circles were becoming aware of this new reading around the mid-sixteenth century.

Gillis' phrase also echoes Saint Jerome's Letter to Pammachius, written at the end of the fourth century, in which he defends his style of translating. Quoting from a preface he had written some fifteen years earlier, Jerome summarizes the translator's dilemma in the words: "si ad verbum interpretor, absurde resonant; si ob necessitatem aliquid in ordine vel in sermone mutavero, ab interpretis videbor officio recessisse" ("If I translate word for word, the result sounds absurd; if, of necessity, I change something in the order of words or the discourse, I will appear to have fallen short of the task of the translator"; Jerome ed. 1953, 61). Here too the implication is that, in essence, it is the translator's task ("officium") to translate literally – even though Jerome will define his own position in sharp contract to this view.

It is a matter of conjecture whether Gillis had any direct knowledge of either Horace's or Jerome's statements on translation. Given his undoubtedly sound knowledge of Latin (Sambucus' language is notoriously difficult) and his contacts with a publisher of Plantin's stature, it does not seem unlikely. Even if he did not, he could have encountered references to the 'law of translation' in contemporary vernacular texts, including some of high standing. They routinely equate the 'law of translation' with literalism. The chapter 'Des Traduccions' in Jacques Peletier du Mans' *Art poétique* (1555), for example, takes on board a correct reading of Horace's lines and confirms that literal translations are consistent with 'law of translation' even though they lack elegance ("... les Traductions de mot à mot n'ont pas grâce: non qu'elles soient contre la loi de Traduction: mais seulement pour raison que deux langues ne sont jamais uniformes en phrases"; Peletier ed. 1930). Joachim du Bellay's *Deffence et illustration de la langue françoise* of 1549 has no faith in translation as a viable literary mode precisely because the 'law of translation' forbids any deviation from "the limits of the [original] author" ("... la loy de traduyre, qui est n'espacier point hors des limites de l'aucteur", Du Bellay ed. 1948, 36). As late as 1662 Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt, the standard-bearer of the French 'belles infidèles' school, speaks of the 'rules of translation' as requiring literalism (d'Ablancourt ed. 1972, 201).

The literalist principle has a long tradition, stretching back to Antiquity and powerfully present throughout the Middle Ages (cf. Schwarz 1985, 42-53). In sixteenth-century translation practice, in the Low Countries as elsewhere, it is particularly strong in Bible translation, both Catholic and Protestant (except in the Lutheran tradition). Nicolaus van Winghe's Catholic version of the Bible (1548) follows the original's every word ("Volghende seer scerpelijck den voerseyden latijnschen text / niet alleen inden sin der redenen / maar ooc in die maniere van spreken der heyligher schriftueren / ende int vervolch der woerden"), as indeed the ecclesiastical authorities, fearful of problematical Lutheran liberties, had instructed him to do ("Die welcke liever hadden een ghetrouwe ende warachtige translacie / al waer die niet seer constich van talen / dan contrarie"; Van Herreweghen 1949, 304-5). Among the Calvinist translations it is enough to recall Utenhove's linguistic experiments in both in his Psalm translations and in his New Testament (1556) and later, as the crowning achievement, the States Bible of 1637. The justification for literalism in this domain is a theological (and paradoxical!) one: the Bible contains God's word, which must not be tampered with, even when it is being put into another language. The hierarchy of 'divine' versus 'secular' norms is nicely illustrated by the decision of the Synod of Dordt, which commissioned the States Bible, that the apocryphal books, being

merely the work of man, did not need to be translated with the same strictness required for the canonical books (*Acta* ed. 1987, 20-21).

In most other domains, it would appear, literalism is on the defensive in Renaissance translation, although it remains an important normative concept. As the vernacular cultures become more self-confident and assertive, and the awareness of the idiomatic nature of individual languages grows, literalism is eventually pushed back into 'special purpose' categories, notably Bible translation and philological translations with a comparative, pedagogic aim. The latter, which are closely linked to the educational world and to the use made of translation in foreign language learning, were often published in bilingual form or in a form designed to facilitate line-by-line reference to the source text. This type of translation still occurs in the seventeenth century; examples include the 1638 prose version of Guarini's *Pastor Fido* by one I.V.D.M.D.H. (The Hague, Dirck Maire); Hendrik Zwaerdecroon's *Ses comedien van Terentius* of 1648 (Rotterdam, Johannes Naeranus); Jonas Cabeljau's *Heroides*, after Ovid, 1657 (Rotterdam, Naeranus); and the versions of the *Aeneid* by Roeland van Engelen (Books 1-6) published in 1662 (Antwerp, Marcelis Parijs) and by Dirk Doncker a year later (Gouda, Kornelis Dyvoort). Similar but more isolated cases of literalism are P.C. Hooft's Tacitus translations, which were done verbatim on request, as Geeraerdt Brandt tells us (Hooft ed. 1972, 7: 'Voorreede') and Vondel's prose rendering of the *Aeneid* in 1646, which combines a semi-religious motivation with a pedagogic intent, although the latter may be little more than an afterthought (Hermans 1985a, 55-59). Van Ghistele, as we saw, also made a point of catering for readers with a certain command of Latin, although his overall strategy in translating was not literal.

6

At the opposite end of the translation spectrum lie paraphrase, adaptation, and *imitatio*. Already Van Ghistele steadily expanded his versions of Ovid's *Heroides* with epistles of his own invention (Van Caekenberghe 1974, I, 83-84), as if to demonstrate the imitative potential of the form. On the whole, the choice between translation and adaptation seems to be a matter partly of political, ethical and other extra-literary motivations and partly of genre-bound considerations. In his adaptation of Daniel Heinsius' *Auriacus*, in 1606, Jacob Duym explains that the original's "wijdloopighe spreucken" did not suit the Dutch language and prohibited a literal rendering (Duym ed. 1977, 62); the real reason becomes clear when he goes on to alter radically the play's political and ideological import, in an obvious attempt to contribute to a topical debate. A similar if more moralistic case is the anonymous 1677 version of Molière's *Tartuffe*, its action transplanted from Paris to The Hague and from Catholic to Reformed circles, the better to depict the vices of contemporary Dutch society, as the publisher informs us in his preface ("om de superstitie, de hypocrisie, de scheursugt, en andere Kerkelijke gebreken, in ons Land in swang gaande, ten spiegel en verbeetering uit te beelden"; *Steyl-oor* 1677, 'Gunstige Leeser'). As early as 1564 Marius Laurier, in the preface to his version of Ovid's *Art of Love*, had invoked the cultural differences between Rome and the Low Countries as well as the original's objectionable morals as reasons for not translating literally (Laurier 1564, 'Den Amoreusen Leser oft Minnaar'); the book still ended up on the Index a few years later.

More exclusively genre-related factors are at work in some later versions of the *Art of*

Love. In 1622 Johan van Heemskerk substitutes Amsterdam for Rome and his preface employs the traditional metalanguage of *imitatio* while still looking over its shoulder to translation: Ovid's text, he says, has been "opsen Hollands hersmeedt ... op de zeden van onse Eeuwe passende, ende nae 's lands wyse buyghende ... sijn meyninge niet te min so na komende, als onse huydens-daeghse gewoonten eenighsins toelieten", and he realizes "dat ick dus doende voor geen trouwen Vertaelder deur magh, ande dat ick even-wel gae dorsschen 't geen een ander gesneden heeft" (Van Heemskerk 1622, 'Voor-reden'). Jacob Westerbaen's 1665 version is set in The Hague, its source text freely altered to suit its new environment ("dat Roomsche kleed ontarrent en versneden,/ Gelanght, gekort, gelast, gepast nae onse leden"; Westerbaen 1665, 'Aen den Leser'). But here we have entered the domain of *imitatio* proper, and the terminology in these prefaces changes accordingly.

Equally genre-bound, but this time responding to an immediate cultural and commercial need, is the practice of adaptation at the time of the Nieuwe Schouwburg in Amsterdam (after 1637), when the demand for popular Spanish plays and the scarcity of translators with a knowledge of the source language results in a form of collaborative translation in which one person supplies a prose crib which is then put to rhyme by someone else; the versifier-translators often have close links with the theatre, some of them being actors themselves. In the circumstances, it is not surprising to find that free adaptation is common in these versions, as is the unproblematical acceptance of translations via an intermediate language, usually French. One Jacobus Baroces, about whom virtually nothing is known, appears to have supplied prose cribs of perhaps up to a dozen plays subsequently rhymed by others. But even the seventeenth-century arch-translator Jan Hendrik Glazemaker, when he was still at the beginning of his long and successful career, made a literal prose version of Jean Rotrou's *Laure persécutée* (itself based on Lope de Vega) which was put to rhyme by the actor Adam Karels van Germez and went through fifty performances between 1645 and 1665 (Van Germez 1645, Preface; Oey-De Vita & Geesink 1983, 202; this translation is not listed in Thijssen-Schoute's study of 1967).

7

Generally speaking, Dutch Renaissance translation runs its course between the two opposite poles of literalism, or translating "ghetrouwelijck", in a source-oriented manner, on the one hand and, on the other, translating "rhetorijckelijk", in conformity with literary and other conventions at the recipient pole, a practice which blends into adaptation and, beyond that, imitation. The literalist impulse remains strong and pervasive, if only because it is felt to constitute the hard core, the 'law' of translation; but it is tempered by the increasing regard for the stylistic and idiomatic proprieties of the target language. Literalism in its strict form continues to flourish only in particular types of text, on the periphery of the literary domain. Nevertheless, the phrase "d'officie eens ghetrouwen Oversetters", with its imperative overtones, continues to reverberate throughout the period.

Imitation, in the contemporary sense of *imitatio*, remains largely beyond the bounds of the translational debate in Dutch Renaissance literature. That this exclusive relation is by no means self-evident, is borne out by the developments in France and England, where towards the middle of the seventeenth century the translators of the 'belles infidèles' school and, in England, the 'libertine' translators move decisively closer to the concept of *imitatio*, and show themselves to be

fully aware of this by exploiting the metalanguage of imitation to state their aims and methods (Hermans 1986). In Holland, by contrast, a book like Gerardus Vossius' *De imitatione* (Amsterdam, 1647) makes no mention of translation at all, not even when discussing the lowest, "servile" form of imitation.

Finally, the dominance of the stricter conception of translation in the Dutch seventeenth century is clearly reflected in - and was probably reinforced in turn by - the views on translation held by such major figures as Vondel and Huygens, who both enjoyed considerable prestige as translators as well (Hermans 1985a, 1987). In both cases their early pronouncements are the ones that echo the literalist tradition most strongly. Vondel's very first statement on his method of translation dates from 1620 (the preface to the *Heerlijkheid van Salomon*, after Du Bartas) and obviously harks back to the ideal of a word-for-word rendering. In later years his position becomes gradually less constrained, as he comes to believe in the possibility of a middle course between following the source too closely and deviating from it; the preface to *Sofompaneas* (1635) is the first text to take this somewehat freer line.

Huygens starts out around the same time as the early Vondel with a norm that is at least as strict. He introduces his first published comment on translation, the well-known 'Voor-maningh' of 1623 (prefaced to the fragments from Guarini's *Pastor Fido* and published in *Otia* in 1625), by declaring himself to be "a resolute opponent of all Translations" ("een stout wederspreker van alle Oversettingen") and goes on to advocate - and to demonstrate in practice - a new poetic form, i.e. rhymeless verse, designed to reduce to a minimum the inevitable deviation from the words of the source text in translating verse. Thirty years later Jacob Westerbaen will emphatically reject this solution and opt for a more liberal approach, with more regard for the established forms and conventions of the recipient culture. It is in an exchange of letters between Huygens and Westerbaen in the 1660s that Huygens indicates his awareness of the principles of the French 'belles infidèles' school – the first occurrence of the term 'belle infidèle' outside France – and in the same breath registers his disagreement with those principles. Given Huygens' personal views on the subject of translation and the climate of opinion in Dutch Renaissance culture generally in this respect, the outright rejection of the libertarian challenge should not surprise us. The Dutch, it seems, always knew what translation ought to be.

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