Translating New Zealand Poetry into French:
Anna Jackson's Poetry as a Case Study

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Abstract

What are the challenges of translating New Zealand poetry into French? I present here some of the issues encountered in my translation process for a selection of poems by Wellington poet Anna Jackson. I first discuss the problems raised by intertextuality in her work, which itself proceeds from "translation": her 2014 collection *I, Clodia, and Other Portraits* can be described as "hauntological" translation (Derrida). I then outline my strategies when confronted with difficult fixed forms or wordplay. Despite the expertise required, formal constraints are often less problematic than the rendering of the poetic voice, especially in the context of Jackson's predilection for multidirectional voices experimenting with tone and registers. Working on a case-by-case basis, I question the concepts of equivalence and fidelity and mostly apply Christiane Nord's functionalist model (1997) by prioritising the notions of skopos, loyalty and balance.

Introduction

As part of my doctoral project on the translation of New Zealand poetry into French, I have selected the work of Anna Jackson to carry out an in-depth exploration of issues related to the translation of poetry. I focus on three main points here. First, there is the problem of the compatibility of intertexts between the two cultures' repertoires and contexts. I take the example of Jackson's first collection *The Long Road to Teatime* (2000)[1], in which Dante's *Inferno* (14th C) is re-contextualised in a contemporary setting typical of New Zealand. The *selva oscura* becomes a grove of cabbage trees near Karekare Beach; the eponymous creatures of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) echo the beasts of *Inferno*'s *Canto Uno*; and the sinners of lust and gluttony are relocated to the red-light district of Ponsonby, in Auckland. How might a poem be translated, then, that is already a "translation" – or adaptation – based on another translation? Given that Jackson's poems are regularly layered with other poets' works – either as a subtle wink or as the poem's backbone – I aim to make the intertextual substrate as visible for target readers as it is for source readers.

I next focus on more conventional issues in poetry translation. For instance: what strategies might be adopted when dealing with fixed-form poems, or poems centred on wordplay? Jackson's verse shows a great formal variety. Traditional iambic pentameter meets syllabic experimentation in the style of Modernist poet Marianne Moore, for instance. In "I, Clodia", a sequence based on Catullus (and a follow-up to the 2003 selection *Catullus for Children*) one finds classic metres such as the dactylic hexameter or the Sapphic stanza. Translating these forms requires a questioning of the concepts of equivalence[2] and fidelity: the impossibility of rendering the source poem's fixed forms and exact meaning perfectly leads

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[1] Jackson's œuvre consists of seven collections since 2000; her most recent book *Pasture and Flock* was published in March 2018.

[2] The concept of 'equivalence' was largely dominant in earlier translation theories (Nida, 1966). It has recently been brought back into focus, for instance by Sergio Bolaños Cuellar and his "Dynamic Equivalence Model" (2016) or by Anthony Pym in *Exploring Translation Theories* (2nd Ed. 2014).

me to embrace the functionalist model, and I aim to create translations that work as poems in the target language-culture. Christiane Nord's emphasis on loyalty as opposed to fidelity is key here:

> Translators, in their role as mediators between two cultures, have a special responsibility with regard to their partners, i.e. the source-text author, the client or commissioner of the translation, and the target-text receivers, and towards themselves, precisely in those cases where there are differing views as to what a "good" translation is or should be. As an interpersonal category referring to a social relationship between people who expect not to be cheated in the process, loyalty may replace the traditional intertextual relationship of "fidelity," a concept that usually refers to a linguistic or stylistic similarity between the source and the target texts, regardless of the communicative intentions and/or expectations involved.
> (Nord "Loyalty and Fidelity in Specialised Translation", 33)

The challenge is therefore to employ a skopos that is loyal to Jackson's writing intentions, acknowledging that reproducing form often requires semantic adjustments.

Third, despite the high level of expertise required, the translation of these forms can be less problematic than translating the poetic voice. Roland Barthes writes: "La voix est un phénomène proprement inthéorisable, dans une logique du supplément, de l'entre-deux, entre corps et discours. La voix est le lieu privilégié de la différence qu'aucune science n'épuise" [Voice is properly an untheorisable phenomenon, in a logic of supplement, of in-between, between body and speech. Voice is the privileged site of difference: a site which escapes all science] (247). Jackson's focus on tone is a key characteristic of her work. Never formal but always elegant, her verse also plays with sociolects and orality in a number of poems where contrasted characters replace the poet persona. The ease with which she switches between registers, codes and genres can be disconcerting for the translator. From lyrical abandonment to prosaic matters, from metaphysical sentiments to mundane concerns, she creates a polyphonic collage that may be either harmonious or a rapturous mix of tonal mismatches. This strategy raises the problem of interpretation – on what should the translator base his/her interpretation of a voice that is always resonant, sometimes multiple, never ordinary?

Problematic intertexts and a plea for balance

Of *The Long Road to Teatime*, Jackson writes: "the stories I tell and am told translate and are translated through stories I read, in the newspaper, in the library, in prose and poetry" (*The Long Road to Teatime*, back cover). Her creative process might recall Octavio Paz: "language itself, in its very essence, is already a translation – first from the non-verbal world, and then, because each sign and each phrase is a translation of another sign, another phrase" (154). The concept of poetry as a translational process is not unknown in French poetry, from Stéphane Mallarmé and his "transposition" (3) to Yves Bonnefoy recovering his "expérience de présence" (66). However, Jackson's sequence can only be called a translation in a wider, metaphorical sense. She retains Dante's famous incipit "In the middle of the journey of our lives" and the chorus "When he moves on, I move on close behind," which translators Henry Longfellow, Allen Mandelbaum or John Ciardi all kept, but the plot is condensed and edited, the *terza rima* transformed into septets or octets. While Jackson has since published some translations of poetry[3], it is best to consider this earlier work as an adaptation, as George Bastin

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[3] In 2017, Jackson published *Last Stop Before Insomnia / Dernier Arrêt Avant l'Insomnie*, a selection of translations of the work of French poet Marlène Tissot.

would define it: "a set of translative operations which results in a text that is not accepted as translation but is nevertheless recognised as representing a source text" (3).

This, in fact, is a recurrent trait in Jackson's work, which relies on intertexts as varied as the works of Ovid, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Emily Dickinson, Charles Perrault, William Carlos Williams and Virginia Woolf (among others). These references transfer relatively easily into French because they are already part of the French intertextual repertoire, whereas New Zealand references are more problematic. When the presence of Robert Sullivan ("16 Pākehā Waka", *The Long Road to Teatime*), Kendrick Smithyman ("Departmental Cats", *Catullus for Children*), Ursula Bethell ("Detail", *Catullus for Children*) or Paula Green ("Cookhouse", *The Long Road to Teatime*) is felt in Jackson's verse – whether by allusion, in a dialogue, or in a game of invitations reminiscent of Green's *The Baker's Thumbprint* – I have little choice but to add a gloss to explicate their function. As an exercise in creative writing, Jackson's project in *The Long Road to Teatime*, further developed in *Catullus for Children*, is therefore part of a tradition of 'loose' translations, versions, imitations, adaptations that has existed since the Renaissance (for Dante, and *a fortiori* for Catullus).

In the sequence "I, Clodia," Jackson gives voice to Clodia, Catullus' lover, and imagines her version of their love story, reconstituting the dialogue and conjuring a ghost from the past: "Who am I, Clodia, but a ghost once loved by a poet?" (*I, Clodia, and Other Portraits* 33). This process might recall Jacques Derrida's concept of 'hauntology', albeit without its political dimension:

> [T]he "scholar" of the future, the "intellectual" of tomorrow should […] learn to live by learning not how to make conversation with the ghost but how to talk with him, with her, how to let them speak or how to give them back speech, even if it is in oneself, in the other, in the other in oneself: they are always there, spectres, even if they do not exist, even if they are no longer, even if they are not yet.
> (Derrida *The Spectres of Marx*, 221)

If one perceives "I, Clodia" as a tentative resurrection/resuscitation of a woman's voice with a poetic and feminist focus, then Jackson's imaginative translation/adaptation is 'relevant', to reuse Derrida's pun: it is "a version that performs its mission, honours its debt and does its job or its duty" ("What is a Relevant Translation?" 177). Jackson's poems are hypothetical and 'hauntological' translations of "better poems in the original Latin, that these versions only gesture towards but can never quite touch" ("An Interview with Anna Jackson: *I, Clodia and Other Portraits* by Joan Fleming" 2).

How, then, one may translate poems that are based on translations and that already proceed from a specific kind of translation/adaptation? First, any intertext in the poems must be thoroughly researched to uncover the layering of texts. In the case of Jackson's rendition of Mayakovsky, reading the source poem influences my choices. Her leitmotif "sto ste sto ste" is a mimetic adaptation of the Futurist poet's onomatopoeia, which originally evoked the sound of hoof beats ("Гриб. Грабь. Гроб. Груб")[4]. Jackson's onomatopoeia, on the other hand, suggests cicadas singing in summery Wellington. This prompts me to offer "tso tse tso tse", conveying the cicada's stridulation to French ears.

Second, if I were to replicate Jackson's writing intentions in an 'equivalent' manner, in the sense of Jean Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (38-39), I could rewrite her New Zealand adaptation of the Italian masterpiece using French references. Karekare Beach might become St Tropez, Ponsonby might become Pigalle, and the iconic cabbage trees, *platanes* (plane

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[4] Translated as "grib, grab, grob, grub" by Dimitri Obolensky (373).

trees). In Lawrence Venuti's terms, this would mean "re-domesticating" (1995) what is already a kind of domestication[5]. Such an approach would not result in a translation *stricto sensu*, and in addition it would undo Jackson's adaptation of *Inferno* to a New Zealand context. In this case, my skopos is to focus on the fresh perspective offered by her poetry of place, and keep the New Zealand setting of the text.

However, I do not systematically steer in the opposite, "foreignising" direction, as implied by Venuti (1995). I propose instead to operate on a case-by-case basis, in a pragmatic and heuristic way, choosing one or the other option and, at times, one *and* the other option in the same line. I either borrow topographic references (Karekare or Ponsonby) or use a more or less satisfactory equivalent ("cordyline" for cabbage tree), with the aim of striking a balance between the two options.

At Karekare Rose and I	A Karekare, Rose et moi avons
left the children to walk	laissé les enfants pour marcher
the length of the beach.	jusqu'au bout de la plage.
"What was it like?" she asked.	Elle a demandé: "c'était comment?"
It was like a dark wood.	C'était comme un bois noir.
We walked across sand	Nous avons marché sur le sable,
next to water, under sky.	près de l'eau, sous le ciel.
We walked back to the car	Nous sommes revenus à la voiture
across the dunes and through	en passant par les dunes
a wood of cabbage trees.	et un bois de cordylines.
Johnny said, "Be quiet	Johnny a dit: "faites pas de bruit,
or the wild things will hear."	les bêtes sauvages vont entendre."
There might have been a leopard.	Il y aurait pu y avoir un léopard.
There were dogs.	Il y avait des chiens.

Translating fixed form poems and wordplay

I will now consider some issues of form, taking examples from "Just a Mineral Water with Marianne Moore" (syllabic metre) or "The Coming on of a Maths Brain" (a "fib")[6] or "A God in his Way" (Sapphic stanzas). Translating a poem based on a formal experimentation without respecting its form would be questionable. In the first text, a literary game occurs that may recall Sudoku or crosswords, yet this game has narrative significance and poetic resonance in a sequence where the poet imagines 'inviting' illustrious authors and contemporary influences to everyday New Zealand scenes. She savours fish and chips with Virginia Woolf, shares breakfast with Katherine Mansfield, has tea with Paula Green. Jackson is influenced by the stylistic signature of her guests, and in the case of Marianne Moore, this verges on pastiche. As well as Moore's characteristic attributes (her tricorn hat), Jackson caricatures the American poet's "strict use of quotes" and copies her syllabic metre and rhyming pattern. The four octets all follow the pattern: 7 / 6 / A3 / B6 / C10 / B11 / C 9 / A 2. In this case, my skopos is to reproduce the scheme because form is a constitutive feature of an inspired and amused portrait, as the eccentric character is challenged: "I'm not afraid of getting my head bitten / off by this American treasure".

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[5] About her work on Catullus, Jackson writes: "My domestication of Catullus has involved not just a rendering of his work into a contemporary idiom, or a New Zealand setting, but a bringing home of the poetry into my own life and the lives of my children" ("Catullus in the Playground" 105).

[6] A poetic game invented by Greg K. Pincus, the "fib" uses the Fibonacci sequence to determine the syllable length.

Just a Mineral Water with Marianne Moore
who would have had 'orange zuice,
farina, banana',
earlier
and then would have written
several poems in syllabic measure.
Well I'm not afraid of getting my head bitten
off by this American treasure,
her purse

clasped in her lap, head shadowed
by her hat, her great hat
framing that
face all smiles and wrinkles
as she disagrees with what I haven't said.
'No indeed, no not I, not at all,' she twinkles,
nor am I much too disconcerted
by that

stone sharp poet laureate.
Phrase by phrase she decon-
structs each one
of the principles she
expounds. She'll say once again, 'why paraphrase?'
A 'collection of lies in amber' gaily she
refers to the particular ways
she makes

her own so strict use of quotes
but I could swear I caught
sight of at
least a fly paralysed
if not paraphrased in her quotation.
She left. I poured an orange juice, sighed,
poured and drank instead a Sapphire gin.
Then wrote.

Juste une eau minérale avec Marianne Moore
qui prendrait "un zus d'oranze,
floraline et banane"
avant ça
puis écrirait après
plusieurs poèmes en mètres syllabiques
mais je n'ai pas peur de me faire mordre la tête
par ce trésor venu d'Amérique
son sac

sur les genoux, tête à l'ombre
sous son chapeau splendide

encadrant
ce sourire tout de rides
quand elle réfute ce que je n'ai pas dit.
"Non, mais non, mais non pas du tout", elle pétille,
non que je sois vraiment déconfite
par tant

d'acuité chez cette Poète.
Phrase par phrase, elle décon-
struit chaque
principe qu'elle énonce.
Elle répètera : "pourquoi paraphraser ?"
Un "amas de bouches prises dans l'ambre", gaie réponse
sur le moyen strict, particulier,
qu'elle a

de faire siennes les citations
mais je jurerais avoir
vu, prise,
une mouche paralysée,
non paraphrasée dans sa citation.
Elle est partie. J'ai versé le jus, soufflé,
puis bu un Gin à la place, j'ai donc
écrit.

This is very much a balancing act with compensation, modulation, and transposition. In the first line, retaining the syllabic pattern requires changing the conditional perfect ("would have had") to conditional present ("prendrait"). I also try to respect the source tone, rhythm, and paronomasia. In the third and fourth stanzas, I offer the pair "mouches-bouches" to render the pun "lies / flies" subverting Moore's quotation. While most rhymes are turned into near-rhymes ("ça/sac", "rides/pétille", "citation/donc"), some more 'ostentatious' examples ("syllabiques/Amérique", "énonce/réponse", "paraphraser/particulier") compensate for the double rhymes "wrinkles/twinkles" or "bitten/written". Regarding the rendering of rhymes, Peter Low encapsulates the problem by warning that often: "the rhyme at the end of the line plays such an important role in shaping a line that the tail indeed wags the dog" (94). This artificiality was targeted by André Lefevere, the translator of Philippe Jaccottet's poetry: "the reason why most translations, versions, and imitations are unsatisfactory renderings of a source text is simply this: they all concentrate exclusively on one aspect of that source text only, rather than its totality" (99). I take into account a multiplicity of factors and instead of obtaining a rigorously faithful equivalent, I turn to linguistic, prosodic and semantic transformations, hoping to achieve a translation that works in parallel with the source poem but also by itself.

The importance of form is even more visually obvious in the playful "The Coming on of a Maths Brain." As a game recalling *Oulipo*, the syllabic pattern follows the Fibonacci sequence with cascading stanzas:

1 The
1 world
1+1= 2 unfurled
1+2= 3 unfurling

11

2+3= 5 all over again –
3+5=8 for a real mathematician
5+8=13 a walk round the block must be a symphony swirling

The Coming on of a Maths Brain
The
world
unfurled
unfurling
all over again –
for a real mathematician
a walk around the block must be a symphony swirling,

all
those
perfect
ratios.
Though also I guess
there must be ratios that clash –
where I see the green lawn clashing with the blue windows,

he
sees
what would
be good squares
of window and lawn
ruined by the wrong proportion
of the (I think) beautifully cream-coloured front door.

Here is my translation of the first three stanzas (of nine):

L'Avènement d'un cerveau matheux
Le
monde
déferle
déferlant
encore et encore –
pour un vrai mathématicien
le tour du quartier c'est symphonies et tourbillons,

de
si
parfaits
ratios.
Quoiqu'il doit aussi
y avoir des ratios qui jurent –
où je vois l'herbe verte jurer avec les fenêtres bleues

il

voit
là de
beaux carrés
de fenêtres et d'herbe
gâchés par la fausse proportion
de la si belle (je trouve) porte d'entrée couleur crème.

The fixed form poems of "I, Clodia" provide unique examples. Their classic metres have an intrinsic musicality – Catullus translator Peter Green describes the hendecasyllabic as "dancing and perky" (33) – but also a narrative function. The Sapphic stanzas of "A God in his way" replicate Catullus's own elaboration on the basis of Sappho's fragment 31, where he addresses his lover as "Lesbia" (Catullus 51). Jackson imagines Clodia's answer, also in the metre of Sappho, as part of a dialogue and using a rhythm that is 'mimetic' of the Latin rhythm: "I have used an English stress-based version of the Latin metres, which can be heard as rhythm in a way metres based on vowel-length simply can't be heard, I don't think, in English" ("Jessica Wilkinson Interviews Anna Jackson" 3). The metre's musical and narrative functions therefore justify my skopos reproducing the Sapphic stanzas in French. Here are the first two stanzas (of four):

A God in his way
I am Sappho, you like to say – it's you, though,
body burning, thundering heart, your eyes blind,
ear drums ringing, who's mute at last, no more talk
      leading to kisses,

all your focus on someone else, not on me
but on he who can talk to me, who when you
drift off homewards will, you suppose, be all mine,
      husband forgotten…

Un dieu à sa façon
Je suis Sappho, comme tu aimes dire – c'est toi, non,
le corps brûlant, cœur qui tonne, les yeux aveugles,
tympans qui sonnent, enfin muet, plus un mot
      pour d'autres baisers,

toute ton attention sur un autre, pas sur moi
mais sur lui, qui sait me parler, qui, quand tu
files chez toi, sera, tu supposes, rien qu'à moi,
      mari oublié…

In these examples, the aim is not to create a translation that is semantically faithful or rhythmically equivalent; Green notes that "What is sacrificed is the linguistically unattainable ideal of true metrical equivalence" (30). The aim is to be loyal to the poet's intentions in terms of narrative and music on one hand, and to balance these with the interpretation of the form's functions on the other hand. This hermeneutic stance is key as one cannot lose sight of the elusive nature of poetry, as Allen Curnow reminds us: "The best poems should not leave one with that 'been there, done that' feeling, there's something there that you will never get, they

will remain teasing, and their essence, whatever their essence is, will elude one" (quoted in Johnston 16).

Translating the poetic voice: a tall order
While formal issues are technically challenging, these are less problematic than translating the voice in a poem. Edwin Honig suggests that a poet's voice is an "arbitrary locus made out of pressured words, the projection of some imaginative possibility vocalized, as the self is, to stand for the individual" (8). Jackson's poetry often gives room to a polyphony of voices, reminiscent of Bill Manhire's 'code-switching', as described by Terry Sturm: "the deployment of multiple voices, multiple registers, producing texts crammed with voices, locations and perspectives, in order to break down, move beyond the control of a single homogenising voice" (302). In the poem "Sparrow (as told by Elvira)" (2003), the vocal signature is such a striking feature that Jackson's experimentation somewhat questions the concept of the 'poetic' – is it a poem? Readers are given the transcription of a little girl's story in quotation marks. The girl's awkward syntax and confusing narrative significantly echo Carmina 2 and 3, in which Catullus emphatically mourns the death of his lover's pet bird. Here are the first lines:

> **Sparrow (as told by Elvira)**
> "I found a couple of some feathers
> from a bird. I pretended
> it was a real bird. But we saw
> it was a pretend bird. It looked
> like a real bird but it was a pretend
> bird. So we put it in my breadbin.
> It looked like it was a real bird. […]"

About the poem, Jackson writes:

> There was nothing I could write that would be better than using Elvira's own words. My own role as a "seer" here is less important than her role in "domesticating" the most foreign of concepts to a small child, the concept of death.
> (Jackson "Catullus in the Playground", 114)

For target readers to grasp the most profound levels of this poem (allegory of death, echoes to and subversion of Catullus) the translation must first convey the surface level, and render the naive and awkward touch in a credible manner. Children's literature translation expert Carina Gossas explains:
> The rendering of a childlike tone and features of orality in general has been identified as a major topic in the realm of translation studies that deal with children's literature. In translation, the childlike tone is also influenced by the translator's image of children, her/his ideals for the mimetic rendering of that tone.
> (Gossas 185)

My interpretation of the voice can therefore only be based on an intuition of this voice, an image of what a child sounds like in my imagination. As strategies, I choose repetitions, grammatical errors, and clumsiness in style:

> **Passereau (raconté par Elvira)**
> "J'en ai trouvé deux des plumes
> d'un oiseau. J'ai fait semblant que

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c'était un vrai oiseau. Mais on voyait
que c'était un faux oiseau. On aurait dit
un vrai oiseau mais c'était un faux
oiseau. Alors on l'a mis dans ma boîte à pain.
On aurait dit un vrai oiseau. […]"

In the middle section of *The Gas Leak* (2006), the voice of a teenager, with typical rebelliousness and effrontery, is heard. Here too, shrewd wordplay enables several layers of significance. In "The Gas-Fitter's Daughter's Recurring Solution," the poet plays with the slang expression 'to get totally written' taken in its figurative sense (to get drunk) and its literal sense (lexical field of literature: 'written'). Here are the final lines:

The Gas-Fitter's Daughter's Recurring Solution
When we can talk we agree
we *obviously* are going
to have to get *out* of here
go somewhere where we can
get totally *written*.

Rendering the bottom line requires creativity, and noting that the writer's voice doubles up with her juvenile character. Amid the plethora of French slang expressions referring to drunkenness ('se prendre une caisse', 'se mettre une mine', 'se picher la calebasse' for the most inventive) not one refers to writing, and I essay a few neologisms in compensation – 'se réécrire la page', 's'écrire une cuite', 's'en écrire une bonne', 'se mettre une écriture', 's'écriturer', 'se scribouiller' – before settling on 'se mettre carrément hors d'état d'*écrire*'. Here I subvert the idiom 'mettre hors d'état de nuire' (literally 'to put one out of the state of causing harm') implicitly suggested by rhyming association with *écrire*. I therefore somewhat invert the source meaning but retain the idiom play and the idea of writing; that is to say, the voice of the writer 'floating over' the page. As for the voice of the adolescent, I use the typically hyperbolic vocabulary of teenagers with the emphasis adverb 'carrément' for 'totally'.

La Solution récurrente de la fille de l'installateur du gaz
Quand on peut parler on est d'accord
qu'*évidemment* il va falloir
qu'on *sorte* d'ici,
aller quelque part où on puisse
se mettre carrément hors d'état d'*écrire*.

Regarding tonal shifts, a poem like "Doubling Back" offers a metaphysical reflection on time relativity on the basis of a shopping list at the supermarket. This is representative of Jackson's work, where the mundane casually meets the profound. "Salty Hair" evolves gradually from a dramatised domestic scene (waking up with the pillow "wet through to the sheets" by tears) to a crescendo of intensity with a lyrical effusion of the self ("not a hope of lying still when you are overflowing") and ends with a linguistic pirouette, a word of thanks for an enigmatic "you." In retrospect, as Jackson points out, there is also humour and derision: "I think one of my funniest poems is 'Salty Hair', in *Thicket*, which really is about being prostrate with grief" ("Jessica Wilkinson Interviews Anna Jackson" 4).

Salty Hair
In the morning my pillow is wet through
to the sheets. I have to wring out
the salt from my hair before
I can lift my head
and drink five cups of coffee
before I can speak – but when I open
my mouth an ocean pours out
from my eyes. I know
just how glaciers must feel
when spring comes on, loosening
from the inside out, leaking all
those hard-won centimetres
out in a rush to the sea,
and the *sea*, oh I know how
the *sea* feels, swallowing more and more
with more still coming at it, not a hope
of lying still when you are overflowing, your
own insides turning endlessly over
and beaching themselves on each
and every shore.
You wish the *shores* would go away.
But thank you, all the same,
for holding out your sands.

Maintaining a credible voice and distilling a highly strung emotion is a matter of finesse and sensitivity. I reproduce the play on idioms ('sands' instead of 'hands' in the final line) and the lyrical sentiment, while modulating the syntax and transforming strict meaning to do this. At the end, I keep the wordplay and the rhyme, and aim to play with readers' expectations with suggested collocations, while extending the marine metaphor present throughout.

Cheveux salés
Le matin mon oreiller est trempé jusqu'aux
draps. Je dois essorer
le sel de mes cheveux avant
de pouvoir lever la tête
et boire cinq tasses de café
avant de pouvoir parler – mais quand j'ouvre
la bouche un océan se déverse
de mes yeux. Je sais exactement
ce que les glaciers doivent ressentir
quand arrive le printemps, quand tout lâche
de l'intérieur, quand tous
ces centimètres durement gagnés fuient
d'un coup dans la mer,
et la *mer*, oh je sais ce que
la *mer* ressent, elle qui avale, avale et
avale encore tout ce qui coule vers elle, pas d'espoir
de calme plat quand tout déborde, quand ton

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intérieur chavire sans cesse
et s'échoue sur chacun
de tes rivages.
Tu voudrais que les *rivages* s'en aillent.
Mais merci, c'est bien aimable,
de m'avoir tendu tes sables.

My process for "No Rough Verses" (2014) illustrates that the rendering of form – the poem is in hendecasyllabics – is a mere technical issue when compared to the reproduction of voice. The rocky rhythm conveyed by hendecasyllables justifies to render the metre: readers should feel tossed about by the waves in a 'storm of curses'. However, finding the right mix of vindictive attitude and deceiving vulnerability in tone with Jackson's ease is truly testing. In the final line, I stress the contrast between elegance in tone (the distinguished "imputé", "allégations", "sous mon joug") and orality with "on s'en ficherait." I rely on my perception of the voice as I hear it in the poem, and the voice in my translation can only be my own for the poem to work as a poem, and the emotion be expressed.

No Rough Verses
No rough verses, but like a surf-tossed sailor
wielding wisely his gaff-rigged fore-and-aft sail,
so shall I keep your favourite of Greek metres
to steer my way free of your storm of curses.
What I owe you – these claims you make are madness –
but to counter them one by one in order:
first, consider, what we owe Aphrodite –
your voyage here, as plunder of my husband,
your change of plans, your brother left unaided,
none of this can be laid as charges on me,
all was fated, and I merely received you.
Oh, I loved you, and being loved by me did
you not take more than you could ever give me?
Your 'exile' here – to live in Rome is *living*,
I don't see you, in thrall to me no longer,
rushing back to your farmhouse in Verona, or
setting sail to do business in Bithynia.
Had you stayed put, a poet of the provinces,
not one person would know your name – or care to.

Pas de vers agités
Pas de vers agités, marin ballotté
maniant sagement sur les flots sa voile aurique,
je reprendrai tes mesures grecques préférées
pour naviguer hors de ta tempête d'injures.
Ce que je te dois – tes folles allégations –
mais pour les contrer une par une et dans l'ordre:
d'abord, vois ce que l'on doit à Aphrodite –
ton voyage ici, butin de mon mari,
ton changement de plans, ton frère abandonné,
rien de tout cela ne peut m'être imputé,

c'est le destin et je t'ai seulement reçu.
Oh, je t'aimais, et aimé de moi, ne crois-
tu pas avoir pris plus que tu n'as donné ?
Ton "exil" ici – mais vivre à Rome c'est *vivre*,
je ne te vois plus sous mon joug désormais,
pressé de rentrer dans ta ferme de Vérone,
ou de faire voile pour affaires en Bithynie.
Si tu y étais resté, poète de provinces,
personne ne saurait ton nom – on s'en ficherait.

Conclusion

I conclude by returning to Nord. Although she has written little on poetry translation, she has thoroughly described the connection of empathy and trust linking writer and translator, or poet and 'meta poet' as James Holmes puts it: "The relation of the metapoem to the original poem is as that of the original poem to 'reality'" (10). Nord writes:

> Let me call "loyalty" this responsibility translators have toward their partners in translational interaction. […] It must not be mixed with fidelity or faithfulness, concepts that usually refer to a relationship between the source and the target *texts*. Loyalty is an interpersonal category referring to a social relationship between *people*. […] Only if [authors] trust the translator's loyalty will they consent to any changes or adaptations needed to make the translation work in the target culture.
> (Nord *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*, 125)

Jean Anderson underlines the translator's responsibilities in terms of reading but also listening:

> You just have to read a lot, and listen carefully, and make these kinds of critical notes to yourself, it's the kind of awareness of language that you need to be able to do this halfway properly. I don't think anyone ever claimed that they translated anything literary perfectly but you like to give it a good go, like a challenge.
> (Anderson 2011)

In my process, the challenges raised by intertextuality, fixed forms, wordplay and voice have led to a variety of solutions. However, I observe that aiming exclusively for textual equivalence or semantic faithfulness proves to be a poor strategy, merely because of the impossibility of achieving a perfect translation. Systematically 'foreignising' or 'domesticating' would also make no sense in my project. It is best to follow a case-by-case, heuristic and pragmatic approach based on loyalty, balance and hermeneutics, and leave the 'metapoems' open to a plurality of interpretations. Beyond the challenges encountered, the solutions found and the principles invoked, it is overall the building of a trusting relationship, a human adventure almost tacitly intimate, "a secret transaction", as Jaccottet puts it (drawing from Virginia Woolf), that constitutes the wealth of my experience.

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