Polish, Meaning foreign.

On Translating an (In)Famous Chapter of *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

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The Brothers Karamazov, a novel by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, has been present in the world of Polish letters since 1913, which is when the first translation by Barbara Beaupré was published (although previous to that, the chapter about the Grand Inquisitor was translated and published as a stand-alone text[1]). We might say that since that time this book has been a permanent and highly visible feature in Polish culture, republished a total of 23 times in six different translations.[2] The most popular of these has until recently been the version by Aleksander Wat from 1928; however since 2004 its greatest "competition" has come from a new translation by Adam Pomorski, a work which has been widely discussed and praised (in popular media channels). At the start of the 21st century other translations were also reprinted: those by Barbara Beaupré (in spite of serious omissions from the original text, and even a falsified ending!) and by Wacław Wireński from 1929. The most recent translation of *The Brothers Karamazov* was that by Cezary Wodziński (2015 – the book was issued just months before the translator passed away). One of the most meaningful and original aspects of the way the novel has been received in Poland – which includes discussion of the translations – has focused around the scene featuring Polish characters.

These protagonists appear in an inn in Mokre, where we witness a meeting after many years between Grushyenka and her first lover. The inn is also visited by Dymitr, who wants to stop the girl from going back to her beloved. Motivated by guilty feelings arising from his convic-

[1] M. Zdziechowski translated fragments of *The Grand Inquisitor* in his text titled *Mesjaniści i słowianofile / Messiahs and Slavophiles* (1888), and in 1907 J. Relidzyński published a translation-adaptation of this chapter for the theatre.

[2] In a formal sense there are five translations, though in this article I will also list the Puls 1993 publication, Wat's version "reviewed and corrected" by Z. Podgórzec. The changes are extensive enough to warrant this version be treated as a separate, sixth translation.

tion that he accidentally killed Gregory, and also fear of Grushyenka's anger, Mitia tries to behave with good grace and respect towards his Polish rival and his companion. They in turn however do not return his good will; they approach the Russians gathered at the inn with contempt and suspicion, wilfully enflaming the political conflicts between them. In the closing of the scene, however, it turns out that following glowing comments on the topic of Polish honour and respect for ladies there follow actions which completely counter these perceptions. It transpires that the Poles have all along been cheating at cards, and Grushyenka's beloved is ready to give her up to Dmitri and vanish in return for an appropriate sum of money.

The way in which this scene is perceived in Poland must be connected with Poles seeing themselves as the Other, with the efforts needed to see the self through someone else's eyes. A decidedly larger part of the critical and academic works on the subject hover however around questions not so much to do with how Poles are presented, but Dostoyevsky himself. The negative and two-dimensional way in which he presents Polish characters is explained by the author's own experiences,[3] as well as his political and religious leanings.[4] In responses penned by researchers and interpreters of the text addressed at the author, in the nature of the questions aimed *ad personam*, we sense feelings of being wronged and unjustly treated, in a range of varied contexts, separate to the novel itself, which is considered to be a bonafide masterpiece.[5]

The sections featuring Poles seem to encourage Polish researchers to burden the author with responsibility for the words and actions of his protagonists, going against the widely accepted notions of Polyphony penned by Mikhail Bakhtin. Czesław Miłosz wholly discredited (though not without a deeper sense of concern) the scene featuring the Polish characters in *The Brothers Karamazov* as a sort of black mark on Dostoyevsky's writing record: a great writer ought not to sink to such depths. "This is mere journalism!"[6] The poet also stressed that this episode is an argument for a restriction in terms of polyphony: "It is hard to find something more singular in voice than the scene featuring Poles in *The Brothers Karamazov*, an unsubtle satire discrediting the worth of this work".[7]

Even if we accept that in terms of ideas this particular scene really can be reduced to a homophonic, ridiculing utterance by the author, then in linguistic terms it is one of the most colourful and multi-voiced scenes in the book. The Polish characters are ridiculed by the author not only in terms of what they do, but also in the way they speak. In the original, a comic effect is achieved through a phonetic rendering of Polish words using Cyrillic letters. The protagonists tend to

[3] S. Mackiewicz, *Dostojewski*, Bielsko-Biała 1997; Z. Żakiewicz, *Polacy u Dostojewskiego / Poles in the Writings by Dostoyevsky* , in: ibidem, *Ludzie i krajobrazy / People and Landscapes*, Gdańsk 1970, pp. 30-47.

[4] T. Rembowski, *Polska i Zachód oczami Fiodora Dostojewskiego. Rosyjskie spojrzenie / Poles and the West seen by Fyodor Dostoyevsky*, in: Sprawy Wschodnie 2009, no. 1-2 (18-19), pp. 87-100; J. Smaga, *Wstęp / Introduction*, in: F. Dostojewski, *Bracia Karamazow*, trans. A. Wat, ed. J. Smaga, Wrocław 2013, pp. III-CXL; J. Uglik, *Polacy w powieściach i publicystyce Dostojewskiego / Poles in the Novels and Journalism by Dostoyevsky*, in: Przegląd Powszechny 2004 no. 11, pp. 194-206.

[5] The only exception I know of is the insightful essay by Jerzy Stempowski, which using a comparative analysis of the way central and secondary characters are presented in Dostoyevsky's novel, posits a theory about the moral ideas the author has as the source of the negative way in which Poles are presented. J. Stempowski, *Polacy w powieściach Dostojewskiego / Poles in Dostoyevsky's novels* , in: ibidem, *Eseje*, Kraków 1984, pp. 229-250.

[6] Cz. Miłosz, *Rosja. Widzenia transoceaniczne / Russia. Transoceanic Visions. Vol I. Dostoyevsky – Our Contemporary*, selected by B. Toruńczyk and M. Wójcik, ed. B. Toruńczyk, intro. C. Cavanagh, Warszawa 2010, p. 175.

[7] Ibidem, p. 101.

speak in Polish, rarely trying to adjust their language to Russian syntax. The author thus takes on the role of translator, who converts their utterances into Russian as a sideline, not always accurately in fact. An example of this is Grushyenka's beloved, who refusing to drink a toast to Russia explains:

> – Але не можно не мець слабосьци о своего краю? (FD, 513)
> (The direct speech transcribed phonetically into Polish: "Ale nie można nie mieć słabości [d]o swojego kraju?")
> (Is it not possible to have a weakness for one's own homeland?)

Dostoyevsky reveals himself in the novel not as its author, but as its translator. It is worth noting however that as a translator he has almost total control. The sentence in parentheses reveals and interprets the protagonist's words, taking us into a world presented through additional information, sharing with the reader knowledge which helps us understand the action being played out. To set oneself up as a translator is to put oneself in a superior position and to reveal this position. In this way, harmonious polyphony is disrupted, and the fiction which has been presented to readers – questioned and suspended. The author-translator takes over and speaks as the protagonist, taking control over the world of the book.

It is not hard to imagine the challenge of translating a scene described in this way into Polish. The translator must hence clearly define their own place in the text, which in the original already contains the structure of the translation, and the superior position of the author as the person already translating. Another challenge is in the need to present the Polish language elements as foreign, and as a consequence, the need to look at fellow Polish protagonists as the Other. Paradoxically their statements should be for Polish readers just as incomprehensible as for Russian readers. To equate the perspectives of readers from both languages is impossible; the translator in some sense becomes a "translator" in a second context, revealing to their readers that which the author-translator revealed to his.

Some translators completely abandoned this challenge. The most radical of all the solutions applied was that of Barbara Beaupré, who in the first ever translation into Polish excluded this Otherness (meaning here Polishness) from her version. Nowhere in the whole chapter is it mentioned that the two protagonists come from Poland; whole swathes of text referring to Poland and Poles have been cut out, while both characters speak the same tongue as the other characters. Their Otherness, barely mentioned in the text, is a vague Otherness: the Otherness of those who happen across Mitia by chance (Grushyenka's beloved is referred to as simply: *an unknown stranger*).

If these two protagonists differ in any way from the other characters, it is not in the language they speak in, but in their conduct, such as their gentlemanly way of dealing with women:

> "If my queen has no objections, he said at last."
> "What sort of queen! What queen, just stop with all that," Grushya interrupted impatiently. "It's funny to look at you and listen to all your talk.[8] (BB IV, 102-103)

[8] All English translations of Polish citations from *The Brothers Karamazov* are those of article's translator.

In the above translation, Grushyenka understands her lover's words perfectly, but she cannot understand why he behaves the way he does. Interestingly, a similar strategy has been utilised in the most recent translation of this novel. Although Cezary Wodziński no longer conceals from his readers the fact that these "sirs" are not Russian, he doesn't specify who they are linguistically:

> "If my princess will allow…", he began saying.
> "What princess? Maybe a tsarina too, eh?", Grushyenka interrupted him abruptly. "I just feel like laughing listening to all that you say." (CW, 452)

In the strategy selected by Wodziński what surprises is the emphasis on intercultural translation, with no focus on inter-linguistic aspects, as if these two spheres could be mechanically separated.

This exchange of dialogue looks very different in Aleksander Wat's version, although he too gives only a partial impression of the Poles' Otherness. The protagonists in his translation twist individual phrases, and yet use almost correct language, the same as the other characters:

> "If my queenie allows…", he began.
> "What queenie? Queen methinks, eh?", Grushyenka interrupted him. "Your speech is amusing." (AW II, 108)

Paweł Hertz was one of the first to draw attention to these linguistic problematics in Wat's translation and explained it in the following footnote: "The Poles who appear in Chapter VII and those which follow speak in imperfect Russian, interspersed with Polish words. This is rather hard to present in Polish translation, though it should clearly be noted" (AW II, 512). Hertz appears to justify in this way the failure in Wat's translation, considering the translation language is both the device and the subject of the inter-linguistic game being played by the author. This problem was also not successfully resolved in the version produced by Zbigniew Podgórzec, whose version differed from that in the Wat translation by only one word – *królewa (queenie)* becomes *królewiczowa* – and the addition of an identical footnote, in which much like Paweł Hertz, he explains what he was unable to communicate in translation. Józef Smaga (and subsequently Grzegorz Przebinda) considered Wat's offering unsatisfactory and postulated that in order to retain the Polish speech as presented by Dostoyevsky in its original sounds would inevitably involve transliteration into the Latin alphabet.[9] In his translation, Adam Pomorski did not make use of this suggestion:

> "My queen will allow me this much", he began.

> "What is it with this queen again, is it meant to be tsarina, yes?" Grushyenka interrupted suddenly, "I feel like laughing listening to you all speak. (AP, 504-505)

[9] J. Smaga, op. cit., p. CXXX; G. Przebinda, *Piekło bez sufitu*, [online] http://www.rubl.uj.edu.pl/pracownicy/fiszka.php?os=01_przebinda&jed=KKSW&opis=przeb_rzp1&w=1, [dostęp: 29.05.2013], nlb.

Grushyenka only corrects one single word, yet the whole sentence the protagonist utters evidences his linguistic alienation, his Otherness. What he says doesn't fit either with his source language nor the target tongue. In any case, the specific word Grushyenka draws attention to is translated from Polish into Russian, and thereby is no longer comprehensible to Polish readers. The translator doesn't explain this device, and so he only refers to the readers' awareness that they are not dealing directly with Dostoyevsky's original – he makes explicit the fact that this is a translation and in this way destroys the illusion of eloquence.

As much as Adam Pomorski in the above fragment "removed" the protagonist's utterance from the order imposed by both linguistic systems, Wacław Wireński in turn used simple inversion. In his translation, Poles speak in Russian with slight Polish inflexions:

> – Jeżeli pozwolit moja królewa… – zaczął.
> – Co za królewa – królowa chyba, czy co? – przerwała Grusza. – Aż mi się śmiać chce, jak wy obaj mówicie. (WW, 268)

> "If my queenie will allow…", he began.
> "What is this queenie? Queen, rather, what?", Grushya interrupted. "I feel like laughing when you both speak."

Wireński's strategy is paradoxically linked to appropriation and domestication of the original. The Poles' speech is incomprehensible both for the other characters as well as for readers of the translation, suggesting that the world presented in the book belongs to the same culture and language as the target audience. In the language of the original (Russian), this can represent Otherness and is the effect achieved. Inflexion, though seemingly purely "mechanical", is aimed (intentionally or else not) to strike the author's authority, for daring to ridicule Poles as a nation. The whole ideological basis for this idea is defeated by the fact that the ridiculed characters are in fact speaking Dostoyevsky's own tongue.

What does in fact wreck the perversely symmetrical linguistic division in Wireński's translation is the linguistic culture, by which we mean the form of personal address "pan / sir", which in the original has a comic effect: it's not only the Poles who use this form, but also Dmitri, who is trying to politely adjust to Polish customs and speech, a form used by the author himself (*пан на диване*, *пан с трубкой* – FD, 503-521). Having used this form, Wireński manages to subvert and complicate the characters' linguistic identities. The translator additionally emphasises this ironic tone in his narration through the use of speech marks with his "sir" – Wat and Podgórzec only indicate ironic usage of this word and form at the start of the scene. Pomorski in turn adds more of the original's humorous tone and makes use of the older, even more elevated forms of address, such as *wasindziej*, *mościpan*, *pan szlachta* (AP, 504-505).

The language used by the Poles in Dostoyevsky's novel is not steady and consistent in quality – the proportions between the Polish and Russian elements change in relation to the situation and the audience. The narrator himself at some point draws our attention to the suspect, formulaic use of Russian. Adam Pomorski has produced the most literal translation of this commentary:

> You sir have never seen Polish ladies with your own eyes and yet you tell some fanciful tales – the sir with his smoking pipe thus addressed Maksimov.
>
> Sir with the pipe spoke rather acceptable Russian, any way, much better than he was letting on. Russian words, if he used them at all, were misused with a Polish slant. (AP, 508)

The narrator's observation is clear in the context of the original, in which the character speaks most often in Polish, meanwhile the words addressed at Maksimov are a mixture of Russian and Polish (FD, 508). In Pomorski's translation this should either be treated as a general observation, unconnected with the utterance preceding it, or else accept the aforementioned hinted at suggestion that in this translation Polish "pretends" to be Russian. Because previously the protagonist spoke in awkward sentences, sounding odd, his sudden switch to proper and correct Polish is "pretending" to be the language of the original. In such a case what becomes apparent is translation as convention, as a certain kind of strategy for presenting the original text, which also happens to wreck the reader's illusion in interacting directly with the original text.

This vague agreement is indicated differently in Wat's version:

> "You sir have never seen Polish ladies with your own eyes and yet you tell some fanciful tales.", the sir with his smoking pipe thus addressed Maksimov.
>
> In fact he had a good grasp of Russian, in any way much better than he pretended to have… Though he mixed up Russian words with Polish equivalents and in addition mixed them with Polish (AW II, 111)

Although here the protagonist also speaks in proper Polish, the narrator denies "reality" in the text and offers the readers this assumption, or even the faith in that which the translator is unable to render. The point of the narrator's intercession is to draw the readers' attention to the fact that they are reading a translation by pointing out its limitations (in this case: the untranslatability of this unique mix of Russian and Polish tongues).

In addition to comments about the above quote, it is worth noting the exceptional appropriacy of the phrase used by Wat (uniquely Polish): to "wield a tongue". In the context of the scene under discussion, it perfectly reflects the way in which the protagonist uses a foreign language, exploiting and modifying it in accordance with the objective he wishes to achieve. He "maims" the tongue when he wants to stress his own Otherness and mark the distance he feels exists between him and the Russians. And yet when stronger emotions make themselves felt (in this case, outrage), the protagonist shapes his response with greater care and correctness in order for it to be more persuasive. It seems all the more surprising for me that the expression *to wield a tongue* is the only thing Zbigniew Podgórzec altered in Wat's translation (ZP II, 105). A key element in the way the Polish protagonist is crafted is his self-awareness when it comes to using language to alter his appearance. This element is lost in the Wacław Wireński version, in which the protagonist is forced to continue speaking in a language beyond both the other characters and the readers also:

> – Pan polskoj pani nie widzieł i mówi to, co być nie mogło – zwrócił się do Maksymowa pan z fajką. (WW, 270)
> Mówił po rosyjsku znacznie przyzwoiciej, niż udawał. Mimo to wszystkie słowa skandalicznie przekręcał.
>
> "Sir has not seen Polonye Dames and yet says that which cannot have come to pass", the gent with the pipe turned to say to Maximov.
> He spoke Russian far more decently than he pretended. Even so he managed to terribly twist and maim each word.

In this version the narration has an auctorial character; because the narrator's attention is not really applicable to the reality presented in this scene we should assume that it reveals knowledge neither reader nor other characters have access to.

Another example of the lack of stability and clarity in the way the protagonist uses his Polish is when Grushyenka agrees to Dimitri joining their company. In the Pomorski translation Sir Mus(s)iałowicz[10] answers her using relatively correct Polish (hence the reader should assume it is "Russhish"), hence stressing the respect he feels for his old beloved: "My ruler's wish is my law!" (AP, 505). The same protagonist speaks in a similarly flowery fashion in the translation by Barbara Beaupré: "My queen's will is for me an order!" (BB IV, 105-106). And yet in this case, considering the total cohesion of the language in the translation, this utterance doesn't communicate the duplicity in what is said, only the gentlemanly spirit in which it is said, something which is also questionable in other translations. Let's take the example of the translation by Aleksander Wat: "My queen's wish is for me an order!" (AW II, 109) – he once again introduces some Russian aspects to his otherwise correct Polish, thereby betraying the fact that he has not at all taken onboard Grushyenka's earlier comment about the word *królewa*. Translations formed in this fashion go on to smuggle before the scene's finale a suggestion regarding the real attitude Mus(s)iałowicz has towards Grushyenka. Zbigniew Podgórzec "corrected" Wat's translation, insisting the protagonist improve: "My queen's wish is my law!" (ZP II, 102). This translation leads us to conclude that the protagonist has total control over his own emotions and language, capable of achieving the desired effect on his listeners. In this particular example, Wacław Wireński also applies the consistent strategy of "inverting" languages: "Co przykażet moja caryca – to ustawa!" [What orders yet mine tsarina – my legislation!] (WW, 268). It is worth noting however that only Wireński and Wodziński left the original label applied to Grushyenka – *tsarina*. In Wireński's version, this utterance cannot be interpreted in the light of the previous dialogue, corrected by the female protagonist, though we can sense a hint of irony in it. In the context of the "politicised" attitude, the Pole has in relation to the other characters, calling Grushyenka his *tsarina* give his words a complex aspect of submission and subservience.

[10]There are two variants of the way the surname is written in Polish translations as listed in this article, whereas Adam Pomorski is the only translator who has retained its original sound: Mussiałowicz. In his footnotes Pomorski holds that previous translators unnecessarily corrected Dostoyevsky's doubled up consonant and that it signifies the character's belonging to the nobles of Poland's eastern borderlands. Thus the translator draws our attention to the social and literary aspect the scene should be interpreted in; he holds that the Poles who appear in it are *characters who happen to be typical for so-called anti-nihilistic novels, in which the blossoming of Russia coincided with the atrocities of the January uprising* (AP, 603). In this way the translator tries to in some part justify, or at least explain to his readers, the negative way Poles are presented in the defined literary convention.

The exchange between Grushyenka and Mus(s)iałowicz causes considerable consternation when it comes to translation. The girl pays close attention to the words her beloved utters, asking for explanations, doing everything she can to understand a person she loved years and years ago, even when the problem relates to the most basic problems in communication. Demanding a translation/explanation, Grushyenka tries to get at the truth of that which used to bind and now still binds her to the Pole, checking how familiar he remains to her, and how he has become a stranger, trying to find a common tongue which used to be based upon the feelings between them.

When Dimitri invites the Poles to play a game of cards, they at first appear reluctant to accept the idea:

> – Późno, panie! – niechętnie odezwał się pan z kanapy.
> – To prawda – przytaknął pan Wróblewski.
> – „Późno"? Co to jest „późno"? – nie zrozumiała polskiego słowa Gruszeńka.
> – „Późno" znaczy *pozdno*, proszę pani, *pozdno, czas pozdnij* (późna godzina) – przetłumaczył pan z kanapy. (AP, 514)

"Late it is, sir!", the fellow from the sofa said reluctantly.

> "True enough", Sir Wróblewski nodded.
> "Late? What is this "Late?", Grushyenka asked, not understanding the Polish word.
> "Late" means *pozdno*, dear madam, *pozdno, czas pozdnij* (late hour) – the man on the sofa translated. (AP, 514)

In the above translation Adam Pomorski exhibits the pre-agreed form chosen for the translation (though speaking Polish, Grushyenka doesn't understand Polish words). And yet from this moment on the translator begins to partly introduce the device of linguistic "inversion" in the sense it is used by Wacław Wireński. This inversion however is neither complete nor thorough. In relation to the original we see the translator essentially repeats Dostoyevsky's gesture, at times translating in parentheses the words spoken by his Polish protagonists.[11] And so the elements in parentheses are not a different form of footnoting by the translator, but a precise recording of the author's presence functioning in the text as more of a translator. It is, of course, not possible to spot this without knowing the original, even though the trick played by Pomorski is in line with the text's logic. The protagonist switches between languages in order to explain concepts which are unclear to those of a different nationality. The translator thus highlights a problem which appears on the margins of the dialogue: what does it in fact mean to "translate"?

[11]This device is also used twice over in the translation by Cezary Wodziński, although in his version it has a completely different effect – here all the protagonists speak in a consistently correct form of the Polish tongue. It therefore seems to me that in this version it is meant not just to suggest the subjectivity of the translation, but above all to achieve a comic effect based on the polysemy of some of the words shared between Polish and Russian. It might be that in this way the translator is trying to subtly suggest that the linguistic bond between the two nations is superficial.

In his translation Wacław Wireński utilised the identical mechanism of a "translation within a translation":

> – Pozdno, panie – jakby od niechcenia odezwał się pan na sofie.
> – Pozdno, cóż to jest? – spytała Grusza.
> – To znaczy późno, pani, późno, czas późny – wyjaśnił pan na sofie. (WW, 274)

> "Latesh, sir", the man on the sofa said with apparent reluctance.
> "Latesh, what is that?", Grusha asked.
> "It means late, m'am, late, the time is late", the man on the sofa explained. (WW, 274)

And yet because the translator swapped languages used by the protagonists, explanations in parentheses were no longer needed. The process of translation presented in the dialogue is analogous to that which the translator of the original language performed himself, and doesn't require any additional footnotes.

Aleksander Wat applied a different tactic to those used by Wireński and Pomorski, choosing to partly explain/translate and partly leave unsaid:

> – Późno, panie! – jakby niechętnie odezwał się „pan" z kanapy.
> – To prawda – potwierdził pan Wróblewski.
> Ponieważ powiedzieli to po polsku, więc Gruszeńka, nie zrozumiawszy ich, zapytała pana z fajką. (AW II, 117)

> "It is late, sir!", the 'sir' on the sofa said with apparent reluctance.
> "That is true", 'sir' Wróblewski confirmed.
> Because they said this in Polish, Gurshyenka, failing to understand them, asked the gent with the pipe. (AW II, 117)

The above quoted translation can lead us to the conclusion that Wat decided to stop at signalling that the conversation is a subjective matter and that as a result he decided against attempting the translation in the text itself. Zbigniew Podgórzec, assuming the same, adopted a similar tactic to Wat, and yet attempted to deliver a complete translation of the conversation:

> – Późno, panie! - jakby niechętnie odezwał się pan z kanapy.
> – To prawda – potwierdził pan Wróblewski.
> – Poźno? Co to takiego, późno? – zapytała Gruszeńka.
> – Późno to późno, pani. Późna godzina – wyjaśnił pan z kanapy. (ZP II, 110)

> "It is late sir!", the gent on the sofa said with some reluctance.
> "That is true", 'sir' Wróblewski confirmed.
> "Late? What is this late?", Grushyenka asked.
> "Late is late, madam. A late hour", the gent on the sofa explained. (ZP II, 110)

Podgórzec's translation is a complete translation, meaning not just a translation of the original but a translation within the original. As a result, we can see how essential in this dialogue is additional commentary, be it from the author himself (preserved in the translation, as in the case of Pomorski's version), or from the translator. Without causing complications in the translation within the text, the dialogue between Grushya and the Pole seems almost absurd. In the translation by Podgórzec, there is no information about the fact that Grushya's relates to linguistic confusion (and doesn't after all arise out of the text, which is wholly constructed in Polish), nor about what the facts of the translation are, as crafted by the Pole. In such a literal interpretation, as presented by Podgórzec, the answer given by "the gent on the sofa" sounds rather icy and in this way completely falsifies the dynamic between the characters.

Meanwhile the communication problems between Mus(s)iałowicz and Grushyenka perfectly reflect not only the protagonists themselves at any given moment, but also their shared narrative. During her conversation with her beloved, Grushyenka begins to realise that the Pole has forgotten about her the same as he forgot his Russian. She now knows he has become a stranger to her, and their inability to find a common tongue is merely a symptom of their feelings fading. Disappointment and bitterness culminate at the moment when Mus(s)iałowicz once again makes her name sound more Polish:

> – Pani Agrypino, dotknięty jestem do żywego! – zaczął podniesionym głosem, ale Gruszeńka nagle straciła resztę cierpliwości, jak gdyby trafił w najboleśniejsze miejsce.
> – Po rosyjsku gadaj, po rosyjsku, nie waż się wtrącić ani jednego słowa polskiego! – wykrzyknęła.
> – Dawniej mówiłeś po rosyjsku, czyżbyś zapomniał przez te pięć lat! – Była czerwona z gniewu.
> – Pani Agrypino…
> – Jestem Agrafiena, jestem Gruszeńka, gadaj po rosyjsku, albo słuchać nie chcę. Pan nadął się z poczucia obrażonego honoru i łamaną ruszczyzną prędko i z namaszczeniem przemówił:
> – Pani Agrafieno, ja przyjechał zapomnieć stare i przebaczyć, zapomnieć, co dzisiaj było…
> (AW II, 122; ZP II, 114-115)

> "Lady Agrypina, I am touched to the very core!", he began speaking in a raised voice, but Grushyenka suddenly lost all of her patience, as if he had touched her most sensitive spot.
> "Speak Russian, Russian you hear, and not a single Polish word out of you!", she screamed. "You used to speak Russian once upon a time, did it take you just five years to forget everything?!", She raged on, red with fury.
> "Lady Agrypina…"
> "I am Agrafiena, I am Grushyenka, talk Russian, else I don't want to listen."
> The 'sir' swelled with hurt feelings at being so dishonoured, with rusty Russian quickly and chaotically spoke:
> "Lady Agrafieno, I came to forget the old and forgive, forget what happened today."

Grushyenka resists having her name be made more Polish, her outrage directed against attempts to subjugate her is a rebellion against the use of language to dominate her. Mus(s)iałowicz wants to see in Agrypina a "Polish dame", one of those he so boasted about in front of his Russian companions. Grushyenka reminds him of her actual name, thereby reminding

him of her true identity and origins. This is the interpretation clearly pointed to by Zbigniew Podgórzec in his lengthy commentary on the name *Agrypina*:

Agrypina is a name taken from the Greek, meaning a person born feet first. The name belonged to a saint who died in the name of her faith in Rome around 262 AD. In Russia this name is popular in its native folk form – Agrafiena (diminutive Grushya, Grushyenka).

It appears that the translator intentionally highlighted the contrast between the Polish and the Russian sound of the girl's name, seeing as it conceals class and cultural contexts. In defending her name, Grushya also reclaims her right to be angry and vengeful, forcing the Pole to use her language. Their linguistic battles transform into a struggle to control the situation, which keeps on heading towards the status of scandal. In the versions quoted (those by Wat and Podgórzec), the Pole reluctantly and only partially follows Grushyenka's instructions. In turn, in Pomorski's translation his efforts at compromise are stressed by having the Russian words printed in italics:

> – Pani Agrypino, jestem dotknięty do żywego! – zakrzyknął, Gruszeńka jednak straciła resztkę cierpliwości, jakby uraził ją w najboleśniejsze miejsce
> – Po rosyjsku, mów po rosyjsku, żebym ani jednego polskiego słowa nie słyszała! – huknęła na niego. – Dawniej przecież mówiłeś po rosyjsku, co, przez pięć lat zapomniałeś? – poczerwieniała z gniewu.
> – Pani Agrypino…
> – Jestem Agrafiena, jestem Gruszeńka, mów po rosyjsku, albo słuchać nie chcę!
> – Pan zasapał z poczucia honoru i kalecząc mowę rosyjską, przemówił szybko i napuszenie:
> – Pani Agrafieno, ja przyjechał zabyć *staroje* i przebaczyć go, zabyć, co było przed *siegodnia*… (AP, 519)

> "Lady Agrypina, I am touched to the very core!", he began speaking in a raised voice, but Grushyenka suddenly lost all of her patience, as if he had touched her most sensitive spot.
> "Speak Russian, Russian you hear, and not a single Polish word out of you!", she screamed. "You used to speak Russian once upon a time, did it take you just five years to forget everything?!", She raged on, red with fury.
> "Lady Agrypina…"
> "I am Agrafiena, I am Grushyenka, talk Russian, else I don't want to listen!"
> "The 'sir' swelled with hurt feelings at being so dishonoured, with rusty Russian quickly and chaotically spoke:
> "Lady Agrafina, I came here to…"

Interestingly enough, the exchange of words on the topic of the girl's name was not missed in Barbara Beaupré's translation, which up until then removed all traces of national differences, resolutely erasing linguistic differences between the characters.

> – Panno Agrypino – zaczął – jestem do żywego dotknięty. – Ale Grusza przerwała mu niecierpliwie.
> – Daj mi pan spokój z Agrypiną. – Nazywam się Agrafia, albo lepiej jeszcze Grusza. – Proszę nie przekręcać mego imienia.
> – Proszę pamiętać, pani Agrafio, że przybyłem tu z zamiarem zapomnienia o przeszłości, gotów byłem wszystko przebaczyć, wszystko darować. (BB IV, 114)

> "Lady Agrypina", he began speaking. "I am truly shaken", But Grushya interrupted him impatiently.
> "Stop with all your Agrypinas. My name is Agrafia, or else best Grushya. Please do not twist my name around."
> "Please remember miss Agrafia that I came here to forget the past, ready to forgive everything, to let everything go."

Even if we pass over all the painful questions of a political nature, the problem of renaming was clearly important to the translator, and her reaction meant to emphasise her emotional, stubborn character. In turn, the very fact of the Pole twisting his beloved's name around clearly shows his attitude towards his early love. In this way, the translation shows the dramatic moment in which illusions are shattered and love dies, without making reference to cultural contexts of the source text, nor to the author's other interjections. Retaining mostly the original transformation in the relations between the lovers, the translator remains mute on the things which could upset Polish readers.

Wacław Wireński, in translating this piece of dialogue, chose a more measured solution: Grushyenka doesn't make reference to the language and nationality of her former lover, instead demanding her respect her native tongue (and her person too):

> – Pani Agrypina, jestem do żywego dotkniętym! – zaczął, lecz Grusza straciła nagle cierpliwość.
> /– Miss Agrypina, I am deeply moved! -he began, but Grushya suddenly lost her temper.
> – Po rosyjsku gadaj, po rosyjsku i żebym jednego przekręconego słowa nie słyszała! Przecież przedtem mówiłeś, jak się należy; czyżbyś przez te pięć lat zapomniał? – zaczerwieniła się z gniewu. /–Talk Russian, Russian hear, and I don't want to hear one word twisted out of shape! You used to speak it, the way it ought to be spoken; has it taken just five years for you to forget? – she said, turning bright red with anger.
> – Pani Agrypina…
> – Jestem Agrafiena, Grusza – gadaj jak się należy, albo słuchać nie chcę.
> – Pani Agrafiena, ja przyjechał zapomnieć stare i przebaczyć, zapomnieć, co było do chwili dnia dzisiejszego… (WW, 276)

> Miss Agrypina, I am deeply moved!", he began, but Grushya suddenly lost her temper.
> "Speak Russian, Russian you hear, and I don't want to hear one word twisted out of shape! You used to speak it, the way it ought to be spoken; has it taken just five years for you to forget?", she said, turning bright red with anger.
> "Miss Agrypina…„
> "I am Agrafiena, Grushya. Speak the way you ought to, else I won't listen."
> "Miss Agrafiena, I came here to forget the old and to forgive, forget all that came before this very day…" (WW, 276)

In Wireński's translation, the stress is on the linguistic inappropriacy, on words being maimed and twisted out of shape, a problem greater than simple inter-linguistic translations. This also involves the greater likelihood of intentional linguistic deformation, which is equally damaging, just as bad as names being twisted out of shape.

To end our analyses of the problematics captured in the language of translation in terms of the relationships between the protagonists, source culture and target audience, as well as that between the author and the translators, I would like to return to a symbolic and most often commented scene from the book – that of the toasts being raised. When Mitia, having raised a toast to Poland, suggests they toast Russia, his idea is keenly received by more (Russian) characters, while Maksimow adds:

> – (...) za Rosję naszą starą, kochaną / To our old, beloved Russia (AW II, 116; ZP II, 109)
>
> – (...) i ja za Rosję, starą babunię... / and I too toast Russia, that old granny... (WW, 273)
>
> (...) za Rassiejuszkę, starą babuleńkę / for Rushienka, the old precious granny [p.] (AP, 513)

Adam Pomorski's translation stands out compared with the other translations due to the use of two unique devices. First of all, in his text *Rosja* has been replaced with the Russian diminutive *Rassiejuszkę*, and at the same time, set apart and made rather "odd". The word conceals a subtle suggestion that all the characters in this particular scene are in some way "alien" to Polish readers and this alienness is not a quality related solely to villainous characters, in this case, Poles. In this way, the translator seems to counter clear cut black&white divisions between own and others, complicating international and inter-linguistic relations established by the author of the original. I have tried to show that Pomorski often reminds his readers that they are not dealing with the original, but with a very unique sort of text that is a literary translation.

The second key decision made by the translator was to add to this fragment the following footnote: "A parody of the ending of a novel by Ivan Goncharov (1812-1891) *Urwisko / Escarpment*, in which proving stronger than familial longings is the call of that 'other, colossal character, that other grand 'granny' – Russia'." It is worth noting that this is not an original comment from Pomorski, but a translation from one of the Russian language editions of the novel.[12] And yet both in the original as well as the translation this footnote serves a similar purpose: it adds an extra dimension to this scene, as a result, no longer allowing it to remain simply a *shallow satire* at the expense of Poles; it is enhanced through an additional literary context, which enlightens the readers that Dostoyevsky was capable of ridiculing not only other nations, but also theatrical patriotism he noticed among his fellow Russians. In his "para-translation" comments, Adam Pomorski often notes that he is against attaching to Dostoyevsky the label of "enemy of the Poles". The translation of *The Brothers Karamazov* turns out to be a place where the translator can express their position, choosing and translating/explaining a given comment added to the original text. Pomorski the translator doesn't enter into a polemical debate with his author, but with the traditional form of reading this novel in

[12]Footnote referring to Goncharov's work I found in the novel *Братья Карамазовы* published in 1993. Interestingly enough the same version was likely used by Z. Podgórzec, and yet he chose and translated different footnotes to those chosen by A. Pomorski. F. Dostojewski, *Brat'ia Karamazovy*, Elista 1993.

the target culture. In this way, he stresses the meaning of translation as an element of a multifaceted reception of the foreign work[13].

translated by Mark Kazmierski

[13]In place of the notion of "translation series/series of translations" I use the one suggested by M.Kwara, as broader and more accurately representing the diverse ways foreign works are received in any given culture. M. Skwara, *Polskie serie recepcyjne wierszy Walta Whitmana. Monografia wraz z antologią przekładów / Polish series of receptions of the poems by Walt Whitman. Monography with anthology of trasnlations*, Kraków 2014.

KEYWORDS

series of translations

HISTORY OF TRANSLATION

Abstract:
The article presents a comparative interpretation of translations of one of the most controversial (among Polish readers) fragment taken from Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. The paper presents translators with a particular challenge, ideologically and linguistically. In all for these cases, translators see the target culture and themselves as representatives, as aliens. This review aims to show the way different translators approached the task, with greater or lesser success, in spite of critical attitudes being expressed towards Poland and its people.

RUSSIAN LITERATURE

DOSTOWVSKY

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