The Inscience of Translation

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Abstract

Drawing on Henri Meschonnic's notion of an "inscient ethics," and putting "inscience" into dialogue with the old ideal of a "science" of translation, the article explores the collective socio-affective ecologies that organize and regulate social and professional norms and values of translation below the level of conscious awareness—as the true underlying structure not only of "subjectivity" (somatics) but also of "objectivity" ("desomatized science"). Two models are developed for this dual structuring, the first circular or cyclical, with "objectification/desomatization" down one side and "subjectification/somatization" up the other; the other based on Gregory Bateson's theorization of the double-bind, with both sides recursively intertwined. The circular model is developed in dialogue with Shoshana Felman; the double-bind model in dialogue with Juliane House's model of Translation Quality Assessment. Both point us further to a retheorization of socio-affective ecologies in terms of ecosis/icosis.

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1. Introduction

Having informed us that, "poetically, we do what we do before knowing what we do. And we must never do what we know," Henri Meschonnic (2007, p. 146) adds that "Il y a aussi une éthique insciente"—"There is also an inscient ethics" (Boulanger, 2011, p. 134). In French "inscient(e/s)" means "not knowing," and is often glossed "ignorant(e/s)." In English, however, possibly due to the morphological similarity of "inscience" to "insight," it has also come to mean "having inward knowledge": in-science as both non-science and inward science. Since Meschonnic specifically mentions "inscient ethics" in the context of the poem, and in particular of the *importance* for the poem of not knowing, presumably he means an inward ethical knowing that *seems* like not knowing, which is precisely how what I call icosis/ecosis[1] works: the collective normativization/plausibilization of group values as truths and realities works below the level of individual awareness, so that social regulation comes to feel like human nature, the way things are. We only get passing glimpses of what we "know" about the right way to interact with others as we interact with them, as our behavior kinesthetically rechannels the affective-becoming-conative pressures we have preconsciously felt coming *from* others back *to* others. We are entirely capable of acting normatively without becoming-cognitively "knowing" that we are doing so, let alone being able to articulate the communal norms that we are following—and that state of "knowing" what to do without "knowing" that we "know" it is aptly captured by Meschonnic's term inscience. The "inscience" of ecosis is the source of the notion that "the good" is an ethical universal; the "inscience" of icosis is the source of the notion that "the true" or "the real" is an ontic universal. Because we do not know how we know what we do not know that we know, we often preconsciously and therefore universalizingly attribute it to external sources: to an objectivist epistemology ("that's just the way things are," "that's just reality") or to God's Commandments (the good) or Creation (the true).

Interestingly, at one point Meschonnic quotes Osip Mandel'shtam (Harris & Link, 1979, p. 108) at some length:

> While organizing society, while raising it from chaos to the harmonious order of organic existence, we tend to forget that what must be organized first of all is the individual. The greatest enemy of society is the amorphous person, the unorganized individual. Our entire educational system, as it is understood by our young government led by the People's Commissariat of Education, consists essentially in the organization of the individual. Social education paves the way for the synthesis of man and society in the collective. The collective does not yet exist. It must still be born. Collectivism appeared before the collective, and if social education does not come to its aid we shall be in danger of collectivism without the collective. (quoted in Boulanger , 2011, p. 161)

Meschonnic's comment on this is that "the problem evoked by Mandelstam is the very problem of the permanent conflict between a realism of essences, of essentializations, and a nominalism of individuals, of works" (Boulanger, 2011, p. 162)—but this is a rather gross misunderstanding of Mandel'shtam, apparently conditioned by Meschonnic's underthinking of the realism/nominalism dispute: "If ethics makes the subject, ethics is necessarily nominalist: each individual is this collection of subjects" (Boulanger, 2011, p. 45). At first glance this sounds radically discursivist: a subject is a discursive fiction, so the ethics that makes the subject must be one too. Ethics is the verbal predication of subjects, which thus come to seem to "exist" only in and through language. "In this sense, as a being of language this subject is an inseparable mix of ethics and poetics" (Boulanger, 2011, p. 35). "The relationship to self, to thought, to others, comes and goes ceaselessly through language. So there is no ethics without ethics of language, if ethics is not an ethics of language, through the ceaseless shift from *I* to *you*, including the absent, *he*. Which coincides with Rimbaud's famous words: in every way 'I is someone else'" (Rimbaud, 2002, p. 366)" (Boulanger, 2011, p. 46).

If we push a little harder, however, this tidy "real" (ontic/objective) vs. "not real" (fictional/discursive/nominal) binary breaks down. If "ethics makes the subject," what exactly is the ethical encounter that does the making? According to Benveniste (1966, Meek, 1971) it is the mere *saying* of "you" by an "I," and Meschonnic seems to agree with that notion wholeheartedly; but he also talks about *transforming* the subject ethically, and grounds that ethical transformation in interactive *behavior*, in constitutive *performance*:

> Ethics, a question of behavior. Towards oneself and towards others. Ethics is what one does with oneself, and with others. It is taking action, and creating value. And value cannot be anything but the subject, which instantly can only mean two things, to make a subject of oneself, to recognize others as subjects. And there can only be a subject if the subject is the value of life. (Boulanger, 2011, p. 45)

"What one does with oneself, and with others" may include saying "I" of oneself and "you" to others, certainly, but it should be clear from this account that Meschonnic's understanding of the ethical encounter that generates subjects exceeds the radical nominalism that he reads into Benveniste. If the ethical encounter that creates subjects is a form of real-world (inter)action that creates value, and value *is* the subject, and "the subject is the value of life," what Meschonnic calls ethics is not just nominalist discursivity; it is the circulation of social value (approval vs. disapproval) through a community, more specifically the circulatory organization or regulation of social value toward the ecological end of becoming-good, which is to say becoming-normative—or *ecosis*.

And indeed the problem evoked by Mandel'shtam is actually not the problem of the conflict between realism/essentialism and "a nominalism of individuals, of works," so much as it is the problem of the conflict between the *inscient nominalism of the unorganized individual* (anything I say goes, whatever I happen to be feeling and saying at any given moment is not just who I am but what is true of the universe) and the *inscient*

ethics ("social education" or ecosis) of the becoming-collectivized individual. This latter, which Mandel'shtam favors, is close to Meschonnic's own riffings on ethics—but because those riffings are so inscient in Meschonnic, he mistheorizes the opposition in Mandel'shtam to be just an objectivization/ subjectivization tension. In fact, I suggest, the tendency in both thinkers is toward a theory of *collective* inscient (ecotic/icotic) objectivization/ subjectivization, rather than the *individual* inscient objectivization/ subjectivization that Meschonnic highlights here; because Meschonnic nowhere quite articulates a *socioecological* theory of translation, or what I call an icotics/ecotics of translation, however, he gets Mandel'shtam wrong, and misses a golden opportunity for his own thinking of ethics and politics both.

In what follows I take two passes through the social ecology (icosis/ecosis) of translation: (2) a circular model developed out of an engagement with the thought of Shoshana Felman, in which the objectivizing science of translation and the subjectivizing inscience of translation are powered around a virtuous cycle by icosis/ecosis; and (3) a double-bind model developed out of an engagement with the thought of Juliane House, in which the icotic/ecotic (inscient) "command-giver" complexly embeds each side of the earlier circle or cycle in the phenomenology of the opposite side.

2. A Circular Model

We might provisionally develop a working model for the inscience of translation out of Felman (1980/2003, p. 67):

> Now if the theory of the performance of the speaking body—of speech acts proper—lies in the realm of the performative, the theory of the scandal of this performance falls in the domain of psychoanalysis. The scandal consists in the fact that the act cannot *know what it is doing*, that the act (of language) subverts both consciousness and knowledge (of language). The "unconscious" is the discovery, not only of the radical divorce or breach between act and knowledge, between constative and performative, but also (and in this

lies the scandal of Austin's ultimate discovery) of their undecidability and their constant interference. Freud discovers not simply that the act subverts knowledge, but also that it is precisely from the *breach in knowledge* (the break in the constative) that the act takes its performative *power*: it is the very *knowledge that cannot know itself*, that, in man, *acts*. If subjectivity is henceforth a cognitive (constative) struggle to overcome a series of performative "infelicities", the problem of the analytic *cure* becomes the following: how can "statements" [*constats*] (a recrudescence of knowledge) be transformed *into acts*? How can cognitive recrudescence be transformed into performative profit? For psychoanalysis, like the performative, is above all a quest for happiness: a quest for the *felicity* of acts.

If "subjectivity is henceforth a cognitive (constative) struggle to overcome a series of performative 'infelicities'", then the subject is in effect not only kinesthetic-becoming-affective-becoming-conative-becoming-cognitive but performative-becoming-constative: the gradual and laborious reworking of inscient performative icoses as constative self-description, self-constitution, and ultimately self-abnegation, which is to say, as the ~~subjectivity~~ of desomatized science [2] . The progression might be formulated like this (start at the bottom with 1 and read upwards):

[16] The science of translation attains and articulates perfect knowledge (without misfires) through perfect objectivity (without human subjects or their human bodies)
[15] The body>subjectivity>misfire equation in (14) means that the elimination or repression of misfires in (12) requires the elimination or repression of the embodied translating/theorizing subject
[14] The association of misfires with body in (4) and the subject in (13) causes scientists of translation to attribute misfires to the translating/theorizing subject's body
[13] Scientists of translation associate the mental misfires in (9) with the subject in (6)

[12] The science in (11) comes to be seen as depending on the elimination (or else repression) of (2, 9) misfires
[11] The (re)thinking in (10) constitutes a science (of language, of translation, of the act of translation, and so on)
[10] The misfiring of constatives in (9) instigates a (3) (re)thinking/(re)organizing
[9] Because the statements in (8) are also speech acts, they too are susceptible to misfiring
[8] The knowledge that begins to emerge in (7) recrudesces as statements (constative utterances)
[7] The newly formed subject in (6) struggles to (re)organize (felicitous as well as infelicitous) action as knowledge
[6] The self-recognition in (5) generates subjectivity
[5] The splitting of felicitous mind off from infelicitous body in (4) makes self-recognition possible
[4] The (re)thinking in (3) constitutes a mind-body differentiation (mind as felicity conditions, separated off from body as the infelicity of misfires)
[3] The misfires in (2) instigate a (re)thinking
[2] The translator's actions in (1) fail, misfire (deviate from the source text)
[1] The translator acts insciently, performatively, without self-recognition as a subject or subjectivization of the source text

Think of this progression as an Aristotelian entelechy, which is to say one that does not inexorably move (let alone jump) to the *telos* or "end" that it has within: individual translators and translation scholars can also *not* progress past a certain point. It is entirely possible, for example, to (2) fail (1) insciently, and to keep doing so throughout one's entire career, and thereby never quite get around to the (re)thinking in (3). This would be the "translation practice" that keeps resisting or even rejecting the move toward (3 … n) "translation theory." Meschonnic arguably refuses to move past (7) or (8); I would personally tend to resist moving past (10). It is also possible to close one's eyes to the "lower" steps on the progression, and focus entirely on subjectivization without the body (say, 6-12), as Benveniste does, or on the idealization of speech acts out of the realm of the body and

the subject (say, 10-16), as Jerrold Katz does, drawing on the posthumous "Saussurean" tradition from the *Cours* to Chomsky[3].

We might also want to find a way to squeeze onto the progression the "ethics and politics of translation" (or what I have been calling ecosis/icosis) that for Meschonnic insciently condition the emergence of subjectivity out of periperformative interaction[4]—perhaps in the form of a series of negative numbers preceding it, leading up through (0) to the inscience of periperformativity in (1). But before we wholeheartedly embrace that unilinear math, glance back up at the Felman (1980/2003, p. 67) passage we've been unpacking, to her speculative suggestion that "the problem of the analytic *cure* becomes the following: how can 'statements' [*constats*] (a recrudescence of knowledge) be transformed *into acts*?" This would seem to entail a reverse progression, a constative-becoming-performative regression, perhaps something like this (start at the top, with 16′, and read downwards):

[16′] We found the science of translation on the notion that perfect knowledge (without misfires) can be attained and articulated through perfect objectivity (without subjects or bodies)

[15′] We theorize (and organize our thinking around) the ideal embodied translating subject (while still epistemologically repressing and methodologically suppressing the theorizing subject)

[14′] We imagine actions performed by the ideal embodied translating subject without misfires

[13′] We admit the existence of translator misfires, but idealize them as *types* (abstract categories)

[12′] We imagine idealized action as the (abstract) freedom to fail (the strategically foreclosed possibility of misfires)

[11′] We imagine a science of real translation, of translation as social practice—as the (Benvenistean/ constativized) performative

[10′] We attempt to build maximum complexity into the scientific model of translation, while not quite foregoing ideality, by fractalizing the categories of the performative and the constative

[9′] We recognize that even the most complex fractal modeling can never represent the full complexity of translation as social practice

[8′] We theorize the complexity of translation as social practice on two levels, the "scient" (constative/cognitive/conscious) and the "inscient" (performative/affective/ unconscious), but seek to smuggle (13′) scientific categorization into the latter as well

[7′] The unsettling possibility strikes us that, with all the theoretical (constative/ cognitive/conscious) control in the world, the translatorial unconscious might still *act* without the translating/theorizing subject's control

[6′] We imagine the (unconscious/ affective/performative) translating subject (as body) as an alter ego to the theorizing subject (as mind)

[5′] We reimagine the theorizing subject-as-mind as surreptitiously shaped (or infected) by the translating subject-as-body

[4′] The thought occurs to us that the translating subject-as-body may be the originator not just of action but of the theorizing subject-as-mind—but can it be *trusted*? (Can we really leave translatorial action in the senseless hands of body? Can the translator's fingers be trusted to do the translating?)

[3′] We realize that the body already acts, apparently trained by some force of which we know nothing, and in remarkably fluent ways—and prepare ourselves for a leap of faith

[2′] We begin to suspect that the force that trains the translator's body is something like "society," or "culture," but a collective that works below the conscious "radar"

[1′] The translator acts insciently, performatively, without self-recognition as a subject

Or we might want to run the regression and the progression side by side, and imagine them curved around into a cycle, with icosis/ecosis as the implicit Ground Zero at the bottom:

Desomatized science of translation [16] Desomatized science of translation
Eliminating the embodied subject [15]   [15′] Ideal embodied subject
Attributing subject error to the body [14]   [14′] Actions performed by ideal embodied subject without misfires
Attributing misfires to the subject [13]   [13′] Misfires as types
Eliminating constative misfires [12]   [12′] Idealized action as (abstract) freedom to fail
Constative science of translation [11]   [11′] Science of the translatorial performative
Constative (re)thinking [10]   [10′] Fractalizing performative and constative
Constative misfires [9]   [9′] Social reality too complex for modeling
Constative utterances [8]   [8′] The science of the unconscious
Knowledge-building [7]   [7′] Unconscious action
Subjectivity [6]   [6′] Subject-as-body as alter ego
Self-recognition [5]   [5′] Subject-as-body infects subject-as-mind
Mind-body differentiation [4]   [4′] Subject-as-body > subject-as-mind
(Re)thinking [3]   [3′] Fluent bodily action
Inscient/performative misfires [2]   [2′] Body trained by some collective force
Inscient performances [1]   [1′] Inscient performances
Ecosis/icosis [0] Ecosis/icosis

3. A Double-Bind Model (TQA)

The cyclical model sketched out in section 2 is perhaps more usefully complex than a single gradated progression would have been—than either side of the cycle, (1-16) or (16′-1′)—but it still does not engage the complexity of our engagement with the kinds of highly charged and controversial (and often repressed) propositions out of which it is built. For a more enmeshed engagement with those propositions, we might build a revised model out of Gregory Bateson's (1972/1985, pp. 206-208) theory of the double-bind, which for him was a kind of nightmarish Hegelian dialectic:

> *thesis*: do X
> *antithesis*: do not-X
> *synthesis*: find yourself unable to escape the dialectic

He gives an example of a young schizophrenic man who is visited in the hospital by his mother. When he is happy to see her and tries to hug her, she flinches, causing him to pull back; when she notices him pulling back, she chides him for being afraid to express his emotions; when he becomes confused at this, she accuses him of not loving his mother. Visiting hours are over shortly after this, and as soon as she is gone he assaults an orderly.

Here, clearly, both approaching her lovingly and pulling back in alarm at her flinch are wrong ("damned if I do and damned if I don't"—also known as the "go away closer" syndrome), and the accusation of not loving his mother effectively traps him in the destructive dialectic, where his only recourse seems to be self-destructive mental and physical violence.

As in previous explorations of this dialectic that I have published (Robinson, 1992, pp. 29-32, 51-53, 161-164; 2001, p. 170-179; 2008, p. 187-190), I want to expand Bateson's model slightly by fractalizing his "synthetic" third command that traps the addressee in the dialectic into a sequence of three commands (3-5):

> (1) Do X.
> (2) Do not-X.
> (3) Internalize the command to do both, and expect censure for failure.
> (4) Repress all this, and despise anyone who reminds you of it.
> (5) Idealize the command-giver.

Specifically, I propose to contextualize this model in a reading of Juliane House (1996, pp. 24, 29, 30) on Translation Quality Assessment (TQA), through the link she herself draws

between translation and the double-bind: "The fundamental characteristic of a translation is that it is a text that is doubly bound: on the one hand to its source text and on the other to the recipient's communicative conditions", "translation is constituted by a 'double-binding' relationship both to its source and to the communicative conditions of the receiving linguaculture", the overt/covert distinction "goes some way towards getting out of the double-bind," and so on. House seems to mean by the double-bind simply that the translation is tied or pulled in the usual two directions, without the kind of numbing or paralyzing dialectics that Bateson theorizes as the nightmarish ecosis of schizophrenia, and so is likely to find my unpacking of her translational double-bind in Batesonian terms supererogatory; my reading suggests that she is only able to maintain her Popperian idealization of TQA by (4) *repressing* the Batesonian conflicts.

In terms of the cyclical model in section 1, the cycle's "scient(ific)" half (1-16) is elaborated in (1), the "inscient(ific)" half (16′-1′) in (2); (3), (4), and (5) enmesh the two halves in mutually and recursively conflicted ways:

[1] Define translation quality (TQ) in objective terms.

- [a] Think of TQ as equivalence between an objectified source text (ST) and an objectified target text (TT).
- [b] Rethink equivalence so that the intertextual relation between the ST and the TT, which might be construed (but not by you) as only capable of being verified or falsified by actual people potentially variably comparing the TT with the ST, becomes a textual property of the TT alone.
- [c] Think of TQ as *naturally* an objective property of the TT—so naturally, in fact, that it does not require a reader or interpreter or scholarly analyst to establish it.
- [d] Don't think about the (1b) rethinking of (1a) equivalence as (1c) TQ. Don't even notice (1d).
- [e] Follow Juliane House (1977, 1996) in thinking of objective equivalence in terms of three different kinds of meaning (semantic, pragmatic, and textual or text-linguistic) and two different kinds of text function (ideational and interpersonal), but don't let her definition of the pragmatic aspect of equivalence as "the particular use of an expression on a specific occasion" (1996, p. 31), and as including the transformative effect of actual readers of the translation, distract you from understanding (1a) equivalence as (1c) a textual property of the TT. (And don't forget to forget about 1d.)
- [f] Above all, don't let House's (1996) observation that "the illocutionary force of an utterance may often be predicted from grammatical features, e.g. word order, mood of the verb, stress, intonation or the presence of performative verbs", followed by her warning that "in actual speech situations, it is, however, the context which clarifies the illocutionary force of an utterance", make you suspect that every time a different reader picks up a translation, or the translation is used for a different purpose, this constitutes a new "actual speech situation" necessitating a new clarification of the TT's (or a given TT passage's) illocutionary force.
- [g] In order to sustain the ~~possibility~~ fact that (1e) a text's pragmatic meaning exists in objective form, understand the TT "itself" to be (1f) an "actual speech situation," one that does not change in actual speech situations.
- [h] If it helps you to make (1g) this conceptual transition, imagine two different *phases* of the "*A*ctual *S*peech *S*ituation": ASS_1, in which someone actually says something to someone else in a specific real-world context, for example "I would argue that this TT is not quite equivalent to its ST", and ASS_2, the idealization of ASS_1 as (1b-c) a single stable objective text.
- [i] Intensify and ontologize the two-phase model in (1h) by imposing a replatonized ~~faux~~-Aristotelian entelechy on it (one in which the *telos* or end dualistically dominates the entire movement): treat ASS_1 as the mere *potentiality* of (1e) objective meaning-

and-function that is *actualized* as the ideal ASS_2.

[j] Following Plato (and the "Saussure" of the *Cours*), reverse-engineer ASS_1 as merely a bad imitation of ASS_2.

[k] Think of the TT not as ASS_1 (which would change it radically every time some new reader read it, or it was used in some new context for some new purpose, and would thus leave it open to the variability of 2a) but as ASS_2.

[l] Let (1j-k) put ~~TT=ASS₁~~ under erasure.

[m] Become only vaguely aware of, then gradually lose sight of, and ultimately forget entirely, the ~~real readers~~ or ~~interpreters~~ or ~~translation scholars~~ that might in ~~some possible real world~~ postmodern theory be required to read and construct the ~~TT=ASS₁~~ as equivalent to the ST.

[n] If it is too difficult to (1m) forget ~~TL readers~~ entirely, think of them as all basically alike. They're all humans, aren't they? How different can they be? And if there's no real difference in how they read or construct the $TT=ASS_2$, there's no need to reanalyze TQ in "every" "separate" ~~TT=ASS₁~~.

[o] Idealize the $TT=ASS_2$ in terms of a "pragmatic" "context of situation" that replaces (1m-n) ~~real readers~~ or ~~interpreters~~ with reader-*types* or interpreter-*types* that can be read as more or less stable "grammatical" features of the TT.

[p] Think of the (1o) pragmatically idealized $TT=ASS_2$ as containing its own "context of situation" around it, stably attached to it as a paratextual property, like a yard.

[q] Note with warm approval how, in (1f), House's description of ~~ASS₁~~ classified two of the embodied performative features of the interactive utterance, stress and intonation—cf. rhythm, pitch, timbre, volume, tone of voice, etc.—as textualized "grammatical features," and thus as honorary adumbrations of the transmogrification of ~~ASS₁~~ into ASS_2.

[r] Take this movement within ~~ASS₁~~ to be emblematic and predictive of (1)'s objectivist $ASS_1 > ASS_2$ ~~faux-~~ Aristotelian entelechy.

[s] Never consider the ~~possibility~~ ridiculous notion that (1h-i) objectivized meaning-and-function (ASS_2ification) might not be the only possible stabilization of a text.

[t] Don't glance ahead to (2k), let alone (2l). You don't need to know those things.

[u] Be forewarned that without the protective stabilizations provided by objectification, a text (even this one!) would collapse into the chaotic, anarchic ironies and playful aporias of postmodern thought.

[v] Remember that "anyone who is interested in a greater variety of texts, such as academic, literary, and other preservable texts, will not easily want to give up the hope that there is indeed what Popper (1976[: 180ff; see also Popper 1972/1979]) has called 'World Three', the world of what he called 'objective knowledge' [or, in a famous Popperian paraphrase that I place partly under fastidious erasure, 'knowledge ~~without a knowing subject~~'] that is embodied in theories, books, and texts—i.e., visible (and valuable) artifacts 'with a degree of autonomy from their authors and with special properties for controlling how they will be interpreted' (Olson, 1996, p. 9)—and how they will be translated, we might pertinently add. It is these properties of non-ephemeral written texts (different from speech) that represent and preserve our intellectual world, which should not be degraded or 'de-throned'" (House, 1996, p. 15).

[w] Understand "objective knowledge ~~without a knowing subject~~" in translational terms to mean the transformation of "objective SL meaning ~~without an SL reading subject~~" into "objective TL meaning ~~without a TL reading subject~~," and thus in the end "objective TT TQ ~~without either an SL>TL translating subject or a TL reading subject~~."

[x] Reassure yourself that the ST's "special properties for controlling" how it will be read (but not by ~~subjects~~, let alone ~~real readers~~) in the SL are not only objective properties in the ST, but control how they will be

carried over as objective properties into the TT as well, controlling how the ~~target reader~~ will read it.

[y] Worry that if these controlling properties are not carried over from the ST to the TT, not only will our intellectual world be "degraded or 'dethroned'"; empirical research into TQA will become impossible.

[z] Feel confident that the "intellectual world" that is thus preserved will be ~~one without intellectual subjects~~ a posthuman utopia.

[2] Define TQ in subjective terms.

[a] Think of TQ as purely a reader-construct, a phenomenology.

[b] Scoff at the idea that there could exist such a thing as (1v-z) "knowledge without a knowing subject."

[c] Know that knowing is an activity performed by subjects, full stop. "Knowledge" stored in books only exists when it is read, constructed as meaningful, and internalized as knowledge by subjects. If no one reads those books, the words written there are not only not knowledge; they aren't even words. As Saussure puts it, "there is not the least trace of *linguistic fact*, not the slightest possibility of gaining sight of or of defining a linguistic fact, without first adopting a point of view" (Sanders et al. 2006: 9).

[d] Deny the possibility of a (1z) posthuman utopia. Popper's World Three is on life support from World Two (human subjectivity). The instant the last human died, World Three would devolve into World One (physical objects).

[e] Consider it a truism that subjects are needed not only to *read* STs and TTs, and so to bring them to life; they are needed to *translate* STs into TTs, and so to create the (World Two) subjective conditions for the post hoc (World Three) objectification of meaning, translation, and translation quality.

[f] Think of the subjectivity of TQ as a freedom issue, and the (1) myth of objectivity as a thin disguise for authoritarianism. No one can dictate the quality of a given translation to you. You have a right to your opinion, and your opinion is theoretically just as valid as anyone else's.

[g] Do not reflect on the fact that objectivizations of TQ are regularly used in vetting the publishability, usability, or legality of translations.

[h] If you do reflect on (2g), think of it as a form of arbitrary tyranny that someone is given the power to transform what is essentially a subjective TQA into a TQA that is widely and erroneously believed to be objective.

[i] If the translation whose quality is being assessed is your own, chafe at what you should consider the faceless bureaucratic coerciveness of institutional determinations of its acceptability, of the revisions that are required for it to be acceptable, or of the consequences for you (no pay?) and the translation (no publication? extensive editing without a chance for you to weigh in on the edits?) if the revisions are not performed to the satisfaction of whatever random bureaucrat has been put in charge of such determinations.

[j] Don't notice that, surprisingly for a subjective construct, TQA often seems to have the calm persistent *thereness* of objectivity (as in 2g). There is often a high degree of agreement on the quality of a given translation. There is often a high degree of agreement on the qualities that a good translation must have.

[k] If (2j) somehow manages to force itself upon your consciousness, explain it as the mere mythic illusion of objectivity, maintained by social practices. The post-Kantian social-constructivism that explains this illusion is (2d) the World Two life support that maintains Popper's desperate attempt to believe in the existence of a World Three.

[l] Don't attribute (2j-k) to the whispering of a double-binding voice in your head.

[m] Don't read (1f-s).

[n] If you do happen to glance over (2m) those instructions, scoff at them as blatant absurdities.

[o] Ignore criticisms like "The aversion of propagators of this approach against any kind of objectivization, systematization and rule-hypothesizing in translation procedures leads to a distorted view of translation and a reduction of translation evaluation research to examining each individual translation act as an individual creative endeavour" (House, 1996, p. 3).

[p] Know that without the deceptive idealizations of (1f-s), House would have to admit that her own insistence on pragmatic equivalence would also require translation evaluation research to examine each individual interaction between a translator and a target reader as what ethnomethodologists call "a new first time" (Heritage, 1984, p. 124; see Robinson, 2006, p. 142).

[3] Internalize the command to do both, and expect censure for failure at either.

[a] Understand that (1) and (2) are *both* valuable and indeed indispensable approaches to the study of translation, and that it would be counterintuitive and ultimately destructive to reject either.

[b] Shy away from dogmatic hobby-horses. Too exclusive and territorial an adherence to a single narrow methodological or philosophical paradigm in translation studies is likely to sacrifice experiential realism and complexity to explanatory elegance.

[c] Feel instinctively that the high-flying philosophical antics of (2) without (1)'s solid grounding in common sense and actual translation practice would be mere empty verbiage and idle mind-games, and that the stable categories and hypostatizations and repressive erasures of (1) without (2)'s philosophical interrogations would be stale uncritical prejudice.

[d] If you mostly work within (2), find philosophically complex ways of defending equivalence (Pym 1993); if

you mostly work within (1), develop linguistic accommodations of philosophically complex ideas like Homi Bhabha's Third Space (House 2008).

[e] Feel instinctively that (1) and (2) are both rather excessive philosophical positions that are abstract and so alien to common sense and actual translation practice, and that the best place to spread out your practical and theoretical tools would be somewhere in the middle, avoiding both extremes. Let your determination to stick to that middle ground make you timid and risk-averse.

[f] Understand without being told that what is at stake here is not just your professional integrity as a translation scholar, but your worth as a human being. If you can successfully think of TQ as both semantic/pragmatic/text-linguistic equivalence and as a social construct within which equivalence is just one constructed translational ideal among many, you are not only a good translation scholar, but a good person.

[g] Understand without being told that you can't do both, and thus will never be either a good translation scholar or a good person.

[h] Expect to have your nose rubbed fiercely in your failures: you will be derided as a slave to a philosophically discredited premodern common sense if you obey (1), and as a slave to the latest intellectual fashions if you obey (2).

[i] Internalize the negative conception these conflicting commands mandate not only of you but of translation studies (TS) in general. Think of the translation scholar as inherently or naturally" trapped between the conflicting demands to be both empirical and imaginative, commonsensical and deconstructive.

[j] Fight the negative conception of TS that the impossibility of obeying both (1) and (2) mandates by working harder, and calling on other translation scholars to work harder as well, to obey both (1) and (2). If only scholars were both more commonsensically oriented toward equivalence as the

only true goal of TQ and more philosophically oriented toward the aporias that undermine the possibility of equivalence, people would respect you and your profession more. Let this transform (1-2-3) into a vicious circle from which there is no escape.

[k] To the extent that you lean more toward obeying (2), base your translation research on those realms in the translation field where too obsessive a focus on text-linguistics and objectivized language use is generally frowned upon, like the translation of Great Literature (Venuti, 1995, 1998), or ideologically charged journalistic texts (Baker, 2006).

[l] To the extent that you lean more toward obeying (1), base your translation research on those realms in the translation field where "naïve" or "old-fashioned" conceptions of textual equivalence are still highly valued, such as technical translation.

[m] To the extent that you begin to experience your leaning in (3k) as self-serving, protectionist, and therefore narrow and dogmatic (see 3b), develop philosophically sophisticated ways of studying technical translation (see Robinson 1998).

[n] To the extent that you begin to experience your leaning in (3l) as self-serving, protectionist, and therefore narrow and dogmatic (see 3b), develop objectivist/structuralist ways of studying literary or philosophical translation (see 1v-z).

[o] Realize that your workarounds in (3l) and (3m) are still too narrow and dogmatic, that you are still trapped in a paradigm, and will never be broad and inclusive enough to be a student of *translation*.

[4] Repress all this, and despise anyone who reminds you of it.

[a] Reassure yourself that there really is no conflict here at all. It's only when people start blowing a few peripheral examples way out of proportion and pretending that they have some significant bearing on the issue that it comes to seem as if the study of

translation is a hermeneutics steeped in irresolvable contradictions. If you ignore all those unnecessary nitpicky complications, the study of translation boils down to a very simple process, really: your commonsensical understanding of translation as the creation of an equivalent text in another language is exactly what translation is. Anyone who trumps up a double-bind out of all this is probably on summer vacation in Russia.

[b] Scoff at the notion that any one translation scholar should have to cover the entire field (1+2=3). We all do our bit. Each scholar makes his or her own small contribution to the field; just what the "whole truth" is about translation is up to future generations to decide.

[c] Remark indignantly that it is not a condemnable offense to be somewhat narrowly focused; it is human.

[d] Observe how easy it is for detractors to call a passionate commitment to a way of seeing things "dogmatic." Caring deeply about translation and translation research is not a crime.

[e] Resist any suggestion that we might need philosophers to tell us what objectivity and subjectivity mean, and whether there are any valid epistemological grounds for either. We all know well enough how to work with those concepts.

[5] Idealize the command-giver.

[a] Believe that there is no command-giver; there is simply a factual state of affairs. Don't even deny the existence of a command-giver; just never let the possibility arise.

[b] Tell yourself that there just *is* such a thing as objective knowledge—that printed and spoken texts just do have an objective structure and meaning, in serene isolation from "knowing subjects." It's not that you want it to be true, or that you need for it to be true in order for whole masses of other important values and beliefs that you hold dear to be valid, or that belief in objective knowledge without a knowing subject or TQ without a

translating or reading subject justifies your entire professional career as a researcher—let alone that I keep whispering in your ear that it's true. It just is true.

[c] Tell yourself that you don't have to justify your evaluation of a translation in any kind of public way, because there's no particular reason anyone else needs to agree with you on it. If you think it's good, it is, for you. If you think it's no good, it's no good, for you. Period. This is not a state of affairs anyone created, or told you about; it's just the way things are.

[d] To the extent that you reject all command-givers and believe in your own personal freedom to translate or study translation or evaluate other people's translations any way you please, don't recognize the origins of that belief in resistance to external or internalized guidance. Pay no attention to the element of defiance in your maverick sense of personal freedom. You do whatever you want and that's final!

[e] To the extent that you sense some minor guidance in this area—a sneaking suspicion that you didn't invent everything you believe about translation or objectivity or subjectivity or reality in general all on your own, based entirely on your own practical experience of professional translation—take the guiding force to be the collective reason of the best minds, based on empirical research. It's not that you were somehow mysteriously "swayed" (Robinson, 2011) to believe these things you believe; you were convinced, rationally.

[f] To the extent that you identify the command-giver as "society", or "socialization", or "ideology", or "hegemony", do not think of these commands as tyranny or authoritarian control; think of them as the ordinary professional discipline that makes orderly social life possible, even enjoyable. If there weren't rules, there would be chaos. If there were no social norms, no principles, no organization, no one would know how to act. Nothing would ever get done.

There would be no such thing as efficiency. Nothing would run smoothly.

[g] Rest assured that, whatever might conceivably be going on under the surface, whatever wet-n-wild philosophical spin might be put on the study of translation as you understand and practice it, it's all good, and you're all right. You've got absolutely nothing to worry about.

3. Concluding Remarks

The double-bind in section 2 is rather pugilistic, perhaps. When I have presented it— or its brothers and sisters in years past—to an audience, I have typically faced the kind of uneasy questions that a rattlesnake might be asked, if it were a translation theorist. The idea seems to be that I am mocking people, or slicing them open in some sort of verbal vivisection, and that the wrong kind of question might unleash my barely contained violence. Once, in Campinas, Brazil, I had an uproariously funny conversation with my hosts—Rosemary Arrojo and John Schmidt— over lunch, and then walked into a classroom with them to deliver a talk based on another double-bind, and somehow the hilarity at lunch followed us into the classroom, and the entire audience—mostly students—laughed with a kind of wild anarchistic glee all through my talk. But that was rare. Mostly, I think, my double-binds are taken to be in questionable taste, like foul language or bathroom humor.

In order to demonstrate my (not utterly ig)noble intentions, then, let me conclude this paper by asking: [Q1] who or what is the "command-giver," and [Q2] what is the communicative channel troped by the commands? For it seems patently obvious that (Q2) we are never *verbally* given such commands; to the extent that the double-bind in section 3 has any empirical validity at all, its conflicting commands are to be understood as somehow *implicit* in the kinds of translation jobs we are given, the norms we are expected to follow in completing those jobs, the way we are expected to talk about our work, and so on. Almost certainly what readers and audiences experience as the double-bind's pugilistic quality stems from the implication that, in doing our jobs as responsibly and conscientiously as we can, we are somehow

insciently carrying out really insulting commands of this sort—that (Q1) someone or some force is manipulating us, pulling our strings, as if we were ideological marionettes, and that the professional behavior that we ourselves take to be "natural" and even admirable is therefore somehow despicable.

To be sure, any kind of ideological analysis of behavior is likely to be perceived as insulting by those who believe fervently in each individual human being's free will, in their complete autonomy to make rational decisions in line with their own personal understanding of a situation. The premise that that rationalist assumption is itself conditioned collectively by "culture" or "society" may well be taken as an assault on deeply held beliefs. To the extent that *all* ideological analysis is (perceived by some as) pugilistic, then, it's no surprise that my double-binds have made audiences uneasy.

What I bring to ideological analysis, however, is the somatic theory that I have been developing since the mid-1980s: the notion that ideology is not primarily a propositional belief-structure so much as it is an affective-becoming-conative circulation, through every group, of ideosomatic pressures to conform to group norms[5]. To the extent that the affective-becoming-conative pressures then go on to become cognitive as well, they *can* emerge as propositional beliefs; but they don't always so emerge, and almost never rely for their power on propositionality. "Ideology" feels *true* and *real* (through icosis) and feels *good* and *just* (through ecosis) because the somatic (affective-becoming-conative) forces that organize it work mostly beneath the level of conscious awareness. (This also explains why the destruction of a belief-structure is typically so traumatic for believers).

The "inscience of translation" that I have been exploring here, in other words, "commands" us, "speaks" us, insciently through the somatics of human social interaction—which is, I suggest, also the somatics of social regulation. Translation "is" what we take it to be, in other words, because we are insciently/icotically "organized" (or "commanded") to take it that way—by ourselves. This is not a behaviorism, nor is it a conspiracy theory; it is a psychosocial theory of group dynamics.

This, I suggest, is how groups always organize and regulate themselves.

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Notes:

[1] I derive "icosis" from the Greek *eikos* "plausible," *ta eikota* "the plausibilities," and Aristotle's insistence in the *Rhetoric* that, given a choice between a true story that is implausible and a plausible story that is untrue, we will typically prefer the latter, because it conforms to our expectations. The idea in icotic theory is that persuasion is "plausibilized" as belief and belief is "plausibilized" (icotized) as reality or truth. I derive "ecosis" from the same Greek noun from which we derive economics and ecology, *oikos* "household, community"; apparently *eikos* and *oikos* were pronounced so similarly that ancient Greek writers often punned on the two. Ecosis, which also works icotically, through the circulation of affective-becoming-conative pressures through the group, is specifically the plausibilization of group norms as morals, rules, norms, values—or "God's Word." For the physiological channel through which these impulses circulate, see note 5.

[2] "Desomatized science" here is a loose paraphrase of Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* on the desomatization of the law:

> Wherever justice is practiced and maintained one sees a stronger power seeking a means of putting an end to the senseless raging of *ressentiment* among the weaker powers that stand under it (whether they be groups or individuals)—partly by taking the object of *ressentiment* out of the hands of revenge, partly by substituting for revenge the struggle against the enemies of peace and order, partly by devising and in some cases imposing settlements, partly by elevating certain equivalents for injuries into norms to which from then on *ressentiment* is once and for all directed. The most decisive act, however, that the supreme power performs and accomplishes against the predominance of grudges and rancor [*die Gegen- und Nachgefühle*, lit. "the against and towards feelings"]—it always takes this action as soon as it is in any way strong enough to do so—is the institution of *law*, the imperative declaration of what in general counts as permitted, as just, in its eyes, and what counts as forbidden, as unjust: once it has

> instituted the law, it treats violence and capricious acts on the part of individuals or entire groups as offenses against the law, as rebellion against the supreme power itself, and thus leads the feelings of its subjects away from the direct injury caused by such offenses; and in the long run it thus attains the reverse of that which is desired by all revenge that is fastened exclusively to the viewpoint of the person injured: from now on the eye is trained to an ever more *impersonal* evaluation of the deed, and this applies even to the eye of the injured person himself (although last of all, as remarked above). (II, p. 11; Kaufmann, 1968, pp. 511-512; Nietzsche, 1887/2011, p. 58)

Note here what this passage is *not* saying: it is not suggesting that the somatics of *ressentiment*, grudges, rancor, revenge, and injury is simply replaced with a disembodied code of law—with law as abstract sign system. Rather, the code is icotically *iterated* (or "itericotized") as disembodied, depersonalized, distanced, abstracted— "the eye is trained to an ever more *impersonal* evaluation of the deed"—and the itericosis proceeds somatically, "lead[ing] the feelings of its subjects away from the direct injury caused by such offenses". Nietzsche (1887/2011) here has *lenkt das Gefühl*, guides or steers or directs the feeling, governs or regulates the feeling: steers or regulates bodies somatically. It's no accident, in fact, that Nietzsche's strongest metaphors for this process are kinesthetic— "taking the object of *ressentiment* out of the hands of revenge", "leads the feelings of its subjects away from the direct injury caused by such offenses," "the eye is trained to an ever more *impersonal* evaluation of the deed"—or indeed that that last metaphor uses (re)vision to figure not (re)cognition but the iterative rechanneling of the somatics of the grudge, of rancor, of *ressentiment*. Our sense of sight, for two and a half millennia our richest source of metaphors for the spatializing movement of abstract thought, here points us metaphorically back toward *feeling*, toward an orientation of the body in action, toward the somatics of the speech act.

[3] See Felman (Porter, 1984/2003, pp. 9-11) for a summation of Émile Benveniste's (Meek, 1971, pp. 232-238) and Katz's (1977, pp. 184-185)

"corrective" readings of Austin that shows, in my terms from note 2, how the two "constative linguists" recuperate the desomatization of the speech act adumbrated by Nietzsche. For "constative linguistics," a term I borrowed from Felman (Porter, 1984/2003, p. 13), see Robinson (2003, 2006).

[4] Eve Sedgwick (2003, pp. 67-91) coins the term "periperformative" to draw attention to the role played in the performative encounter by witnesses, who "ratify" the performative—but also may refuse to ratify it, thus by default putting pressure on speech actors to perform the performative in a way that they (the witnesses) consider correct and proper. As she notes, too, the perlocutionary target of a performative utterance like a dare may feel periperformatively pressured by the crowd of witnesses to take the dare; but we don't have to give in to that pressure (Sedgwick, 2003, p. 70). We can renegotiate our (implicit, unstated) relationship with the crowd. We can "disinterpellate" by building a new alliance with them, based say on "wussiness." This expansion of the concept of performativity expands Austin's speech act into something like the interactive scene of social regulation that I am calling icosis/ecosis.

[5] This is what I have elsewhere called somatic mimesis:

- *Kinesthetic*: the first step is to mimic the target's body language. William Carpenter (1874) discovered that we tend to do this unconsciously in spoken conversation; the tendency has since come to be called the Carpenter Effect, and to be studied by sociologists (Friedman, 1979; Friedman et al., 1981; Friedman & Riggio, 1980; Hatfield et al., 1994) and social neurologists (Adolphs, 2002; Adolphs et al., 1994, 1998, 2000; Decety & Ickes, 2009; Ickes, 1997; Ickes & Aronson, 2003).
- *Affective*: having mimicked another person's body language kinesthetically, we tend to simulate the body states affectively, through the functioning of the mirror neuron system. This is the famous "contagion" of emotional states: the fact that we tend to feel depressed around depressed people, happy around happy people, and so on. (Perhaps the most famous contagion of all is not emotional but motor: the contagion of yawns.)
- *Conative*: because as mammals we are herd animals with a deep need to belong to groups, we feel evaluative affects like approval and disapproval as pressure to conform to group norms. "Conation" is motivation or inclination; here it is collective conation, or pressure, in which the group motivates or inclines each member to act in certain ways.

For fuller theorizations of my somatic model, see Robinson, 1991, 2003, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2013b.