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There Is No Such Thing as a Monolingual Text!

New Tools for Literary Scholarship

When we do scholarship in ‘literary multilingualism’, we mostly detect multiple languages in texts, and then interpret their occurrence with regard to their cultural, social, political implications, and to the experiences they transport, or at least connote, such as migration, being part of a (linguistic) minority, etc. This is consequential, as linguistic diversity, in any context, does not only indicate cultural wealth, with each language opening up a whole world of its own, but also brings about exclusion, as everyone’s capability to ‘master’ different languages is limited. Therefore, the study of literary multilingualism is eventually always tied to questions of accessibility, equality, and cultural diversity. I would like to call the ways in which literary texts relate to these questions their politico-cultural dimension: literary Multilingualism teaches us that texts can be attributed political agency in the realm of culture.

In this paper, I will concentrate on the basic operation of *reading* literary multilingualism, i. e., on the detection of languages (more precisely: of more than one language) in texts. This operation may seem trivial and therefore rather uninteresting. However, a closer investigation of what linguistic diversity in (literary) texts can possibly be, will uncover that literary multilingualism comes in various forms – and that it is important to find means to distinguish these forms. That is why I propose to develop a ‘toolbox’ for the analysis and the subsequent politico-cultural interpretation of literary multilingualism. I would like to call this toolbox ‘multilingual philology’.¹

¹ For a more detailed description of this concept see Till Dembeck: Für eine Philologie der Mehrsprachigkeit. Zur Einführung. In: Till Dembeck, Georg Mein (eds.): Philologie und Mehrsprachigkeit. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag 2014, 9–38; Till Dembeck: Multilingual Philology and ‘Monolingual’ *Faust*: Theoretical Perspectives and a Reading of Goethe’s Drama. In: German Studies Review 41.3 (2018) (forthcoming). The forthcoming compendium: Dembeck, Till/Rolf Parr (eds.): Literatur und Mehrsprachigkeit. Ein Handbuch. Tübingen: Narr 2017, offers an extended overview of what this article calls the ‘toolbox’ of multilingual philology.

1. Introduction: Multilingual Philology vs. Linguistics of Multilingualism

Sometimes, literary multilingualism comes in disguise. In fact, this is quite often the case. There is a rich tradition of simulating ‘foreign’ languages, for example, in the representation of speech: sometimes, protagonists make regular use of ‘foreign’ salutations which need no translation in themselves, but tell us that ‘in reality’ the person who habitually says “bonjour” is speaking French and not English. Sometimes, the imitation of a ‘foreign accent’ suggests the presence of a ‘foreign language’ in a person’s mind. Sometimes, the use of a dialect vs. standard language indicates that ‘in reality’ two different, i. e., mutually unintelligible languages are used: in novels by the German 19th century author Karl May, set in the American West, sometimes the German protagonists speak in dialect, whilst they address their American companions in standard German – and we are to understand that standard German, in this context, represents English. Sometimes, linguistic differences can even be indicated by different meters, as it is the case in Shakespeare’s comedies, where blank verse indicates an aristocratic sociolect, or in Grillparzer’s *Das goldene Vlies*, where blank verse is spoken by the Greek protagonists, whilst the ‘barbarian’ Colchians do not manage to ‘tame’ their language to this regular form.² In all these cases, what linguistic research in multilingualism would call code-switching, is represented by a poetic trick, so to say.

With respect to this (rather trivial) phenomenon, it is obvious that it is not sufficient to think of literary multilingualism as the manifest occurrence of at least two, mutually unintelligible languages in a text, even though this case is certainly the most interesting in its politico-cultural implications and with regard to questions of accessibility, mutual understanding, etc.³ A more inclusive definition has been proposed by Rainier Grutman who defines “hétérolinguisme” as “la présence *dans un*

² Dirk Weissmann: When Austrian Classical Tragedy Goes Intercultural. On the Metrical Simulation of Linguistic Otherness in Franz Grillparzer’s *The Golden Fleece* (1820), presentation at the University of Luxembourg, 9 September 2016.

³ For such a definition see Werner Helmich: *Ästhetik der Mehrsprachigkeit. Zum Sprachwechsel in der neueren romanischen und deutschen Literatur*. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag 2016, 21.

texte d'idiomes étrangers, sous quelque forme que ce soit, aussi bien que de variétés (sociales, régionales ou chronologique) de la langue principale" [the presence *in one text* of both foreign idioms, in whatever form, and (socially, regionally or chronologically defined) varieties of the main language].⁴ Grutman thereby combines the first definition with a Bachtinian notion of polyphony. However, the case of Grillparzer's *Das goldne Vlies* would be lost for scholarship in literary multilingualism even with this wide definition. Evidently, there are situations that demand to include even metrical and other seemingly purely aesthetic or rhetoric patterns into the picture.

To get more clarity, it is necessary to reflect upon the methodological difference between linguistics and literary scholarship. In both literary studies and sociolinguistics, the argument has been brought forward that, contrary to the unspoken conviction of many people, it is not the norm, neither for persons, nor for (literary) texts, to be monolingual, and that linguistic diversity does not typically come into being when 'native speakers' or texts of/in different languages are juxtaposed.⁵ I would suggest, from a philological point of view, to formulate even more radically: *There is no such thing as a monolingual text!*

This assertion must excite contradiction – and therefore, it has to be explained in more detail. Eventually, this is a question of perspective. You might, for example, think, that you are currently reading a text written in English, even though you have already encountered some German and French words. You might have sensed a certain

⁴ Rainier Grutman: *Des langues qui résonnent. L'hétérolinguisme au XIX^e siècle québécois*. Montréal: Les Editions Fides 1997, 37.

⁵ See, e. g., Siffree Makoni, Alastair Pennycook: *Disinventing and (Re)Constituting Languages*. In: *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 2.3 (2005), 137–156; Naoki Sakai: *How do we count a language? Translation and discontinuity*. In: *Translational Studies* 2.1 (2009), 71–88; Jan Blommaert: *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010; Thomas P. Bonfiglio: *Mother Tongues and Nations: The Invention of the Native Speaker*. New York: de Gruyter 2010. For similar arguments from the side of literary scholarship see Yasemin Yildiz: *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition*. New York: Fordham University Press 2012; David Martyn: *Es gab keine Mehrsprachigkeit bevor es nicht Einsprachigkeit gab: Ansätze zu einer Archäologie der Sprachigkeit* (Herder, Luther, Tawada). In: Till Dembeck, Georg Mein (eds.) (footnote 1), 39–51; Myriam Suchet: *L'imaginaire hétérologue. Ce que nous apprennent les textes à la croisée des langues*. Paris: Classiques Garnier 2014; David Gramling: *The Invention of Monolingualism*. New York: Bloomsbury 2016.

‘accent’ in my non-native English. But of course, you might say, that a native speaker restricting him- or herself to his or her mother tongue, would have been able to avoid such impurities. Such a native speaker would have been able to eliminate both (grammatical) mistakes and unidiomatic phrasing, and the text thereby produced would have been truly monolingual, measured by today’s standards of the English language. This argument, however, is valid only as long as one argues from a point of view that presupposes a system of such standards. But it is also possible to look at any text written in ‘pure’ English as the combination of elements and structures, which historically stem from various linguistic contexts. And one may argue that, in principle, speakers are always granted ‘licences’ to a certain degree of impurity – with ‘mistakes’ qualifying as more or less legitimate rhetorical means to adapt to the needs of a given situation.⁶ From this point of view, the application of means from various linguistic contexts and the deviation from linguistic standards are systematically foreseen; in diversifying our means to establish significance, they surpass the limits of ‘pure’, i. e., radically monolingual speech.

From a linguistic point of view, of course, it does not make sense to call this potential variety of language use ‘multilingualism’. But as literal scholars, we should be particularly interested in any form of diversity to be observed in literary texts, which means that we should never conclude too early that a text is monolingual, based on the rules of a given system of linguistic standards. From a philological point of view, e. g., using English words of Romance origin may be significant as opposed to the use of English words of Anglo-Saxon origin, and thus, the historical multilingualism of English may be of importance even for the interpretation of a contemporary literary text. I would therefore like to reformulate my hypothesis and redefine it as a methodological presupposition: *any text can be read with regard to the variety of linguistic means of expressions which are used*. This is the basic operation of what I would like to call multilingual philology.

⁶ See for this argument David Martyn: “”. In: Jürgen Fohrmann (ed.): Rhetorik. Figuration und Performanz. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler 2004, 397–419.

This means that literary scholars, when exploring multilingualism, must not do what linguists can do when they explore multilingualism: they must not isolate one level of the linguistic structure. Literary scholarship has inherited many fundamental methodological and epistemological presuppositions from antique rhetorics as opposed to grammar.⁷ Rhetorics is always interested in the individual case, in the individual situation – just as literary scholars, as philologists, are interested in the singular text.⁸ Grammarians are, as are (most) linguists, first of all interested in regularities, and the singular case does not count against statistical evidence. But if you are interested in the individual case, then singular irregularities, including linguistic impurity, are particularly interesting. From this point of view, the use of two ‘distinct’ languages (even if it is an infringement of grammatical *puritas*) can be seen as equal to, say, the use of a rhetorical figure or a trope – as a means to be of effect in a particular situation. This implies that the philological assessment of literary multilingualism must always try to get a picture of the whole network of devices a text uses in order to regulate its intrinsic linguistic variety.

Once more: there are very good reasons to be interested in literary multilingualism defined as the use of at least two mutually unintelligible idioms in one text. Such a definition guarantees that we will be able to ask questions of comprehension, of accessibility, and of cultural politics – I will come back to this at the very end of this paper. But if we are interested in literary multilingualism in this sense, we are still bound, as literary scholars, to acknowledge (all) other levels of variety in language use that can be detected in the text. In other words, the investigation of literary multilingualism must apply the analytical toolbox of multilingual philology that is designed to uncover manifest and latent forms of such linguistic diversity in (literary) texts.

In the following, I will outline, which specific tools one might take from this toolbox, trying, at the same time, to exemplify the usefulness of these tools in very short

⁷ See Robert Stockhammer: *Grammatik: Wissen und Macht in der Geschichte einer sprachlichen Institution*. Berlin: Suhrkamp 2014.

⁸ See Peter Szondi: *Hölderlin-Studien: Mit einem Traktat über philologische Erkenntnis*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1967.

readings of texts from different periods and languages, with one reading being a little more extensive than the others. In a final step, I will demonstrate how the use of this toolbox will enable us to investigate (subversive or affirmative) politico-cultural strategies to be found in literary uses of language difference.

2. Literary Language Switching/Mixing

The observation that multilingual speech can be represented differently in literary texts provides first hints to the different aspects of analysis that might be important. Of course, one can always use the methods developed by linguistics to analyse, for example, how code-switching functions in literary representations – this has, in fact, recently become a topic also in linguistic research itself.⁹ I would, however, take a different approach and first of all ask for the different levels of the linguistic structure that can be used to implement language differences in a (literary) text.

I have already mentioned the example of Karl May: here, multilingual speech is represented by the difference between a standard variety and a dialect. We can learn from this, that multilingual philology must always include what one might call the ‘intrinsic’ multilingualism of any ‘single’ language into the picture (again: think of Bachtinian polyphony). We have, furthermore, seen that different metric systems can represent different languages, or at least, different levels of competence in one language.

The interpretation of such representations of multilingual speech in literary texts is far from being trivial: Grutman has demonstrated that the use of Russian and French, i. e. two highly standardized and mutually unintelligible national languages, in Lev Tolstoy’s novels, does not at all follow the principle of what Meir Sternberg calls

⁹ See Mark Sebba, Shahrzad Mahootian, Carla Jonsson (eds.): *Language Mixing and Code-Switching in Writing: Approaches to Mixed-Language Written Discourse*. New York, London: Routledge 2012; Penelope Gardner-Chloros, Daniel Weston: *Code-switching and multilingualism in literature*. In: *Language and Literature* 24.3 (2015), 182–193, and other articles in the same issue.

“vehicular matching”¹⁰: the text does not give Russian where the protagonists speak Russian, and French, where they speak French. Rather, French can also be rendered in Russian, which is mostly the case when more intimate situations are recounted.¹¹ Also the use of French in Thomas Mann’s *Der Zauberberg* (to mention also the second very famous example for a literary representation of code-switching) is motivated by a rather complex communicational context within the diegesis and must be correlated to the overall psychological and social structures the novel unfolds; and it must, of course, be taken into account that there is a considerable difference in terms of eloquence between Hans Castorp’s and Clawdia Chauchat’s French – the two speak, in fact, two quite different French languages.

Similarly, the use of dialects and/or sociolects, different registers of speech, jargons, and accents requires that we pay close attention to the modes through which they are represented: as in many cases, there is no fixed orthography for dialect, the particular orthography that is used may always already be significant in itself. It would therefore be more accurate, in the case of Karl May, to speak of an imitation or evocation of Saxon dialect. The French accent represented in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Minna von Barnhelm* is rather a caricature, and the same holds true for Balzac’s attempt to imitate a German accent by simply interchanging voiced and unvoiced consonants.¹² In both cases, the way in which ‘foreign’ speech is represented, of course, has specific connotations – as has the rendering of Colchian speech in free verse as opposed to blank verse in Grillparzer. Feridun Zaimoglu’s famous imitation of the slang of Turkish-German youths in *Kanak Sprak* which is admittedly a “Nachdichtung”,¹³ i. e., a re-creation, or a literary construction, of a mode of speaking attributed to these youths, can do without almost any Turkish elements and establishes its tone by using

¹⁰ Meir Sternberg: Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis. In: *Poetics Today* 2.4 (1981), 221–239, here 223.

¹¹ Rainier Grutman: Les motivations de hétérolinguisme: réalisme, composition, esthétique. In: Furio Brugnolo/Vincenzo Orioles (eds.): *Eteroglossia e plurilinguismo letterario II. Plurilinguismo e letteratura*. Rome: Il Calamao 2002, 329–349, here 337–341.

¹² Helmich (footnote 3), 70.

¹³ Feridun Zaimoglu: *Kanak Sprak*. Koppstoff. Die gesammelten Mißtöne vom Rande der Gesellschaft. Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch 2011 [Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1995/1998]), 19.

Northern German dialects and/or sociolects, reminiscences of German Romantic poetic language, “Hip-Hop-English”, as Yasemin Yildiz calls it,¹⁴ and Yiddish.

Finally, one can often detect changes within the speech of individual protagonists: in Goethe’s *Faust*, Helen of Troy learns how to rhyme, and it is clearly indicated that this, for her, means acquiring a new (modern!) language, which she then uses constantly in her conversations with Faust;¹⁵ Xiaolu Guo’s novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* as a whole demonstrates the progress the narrator, a Chinese learner of English, makes, by the advancing level of the narration’s proficiency.¹⁶ And many literary texts feature speakers who master (many) different languages; for example, the scholar constantly switching back and forth between Latin and the vernacular, is a quite common figure in Early Modern comedies.¹⁷

Switching between different idioms, on all these different levels, is by far not restricted to the representation of speech in literary text. On the contrary, multilingualism of the narrative voice (if there is one), or, more generally speaking, switching of languages in literary texts that is not correlated to different represented speakers, is very common. Also in this context, linguistic differences on all structural levels are involved: the famous ‘Oxen of the Sun’ chapter of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* – a novel which features many different languages, and also many different varieties of English – in its progress imitates the evolution of English literary languages (mostly through parodies of particular authors) and ends in a very modern (and, at least to non-native speakers, almost incomprehensible) jargon.

On this rather general level, one can, at least tentatively, distinguish, on the one hand, the operation of *switching* between languages, and, on the other hand, language

¹⁴ Yildiz (footnote 5), 186.

¹⁵ See Dembeck, forthcoming (footnote 1).

¹⁶ See Rebecca Walkowitz’ keynote lecture at the conference “Inverted Runes: New Perspectives on Literary Translingualism”, Uppsala 4/5 September 2015.

¹⁷ See, for Shakespeare, Irina Dumitrescu: Literary Multilingualism in Everyday Life. The Case of Early Modern *Vulgaria*. In: Till Dembeck/Anne Uhrmacher (eds.): *Das literarische Leben der Mehrsprachigkeit. Methodische Erkundungen*. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, 2016, 95–111; for Andreas Gryphius see Alexander Nebrig: *Sprachmischung und Hochmut. Zur Ethik der barbarolexis* in Andreas Gryphius’ *Horribilicribrifax Teutsch*. In: *Komparatistik Online. Komparatistische Internet-Zeitschrift* H.2 (2014) URL: <http://www.komparatistik-online.de> (December 5, 2016).

mixing, with the first allowing for a segmentary differentiation of the involved idioms, whilst the second integrates the different languages to such a degree that does not allow for such segregation. These two forms, at times, merge into one another, as, for example, in the humoristic integration of vernacular words into Latin in Early Modern maccaronic poetry, which necessitated the change of these words' endings according to Latin declination or conjugation.¹⁸ Effects of language mixing can, once more, be observed on all levels of the linguistic structure: in poems by Ernst Jandl and Oskar Pastior, the mixing of different European languages, e. g., of English and German, is driven to a point where it is hard to decide according to which orthography individual words should be pronounced – they have thereby lost their affiliation to one, distinct idiom and become multilingual in themselves.¹⁹ In such cases, the value of individual graphemes (or phonemes, respectively) is altered by the juxtaposition of material from different languages – with effects also on the level of morphology. The level of syntax is not spared from such alterations. David Martyn has shown for Martin Luther's *Table Talk* that German/Latin code-switching at times leads to the use of Latin syntax in the German parts of his speech.²⁰ The same can be said of what one usually calls 'literal translation' – a mode of translation, which is most distinctive if phraseology is involved. In recent German literature, this is prominently the case in texts by Emine Sevgi Özdamar, which transfer idiomatic phrases from Turkish into German without changing the collocations and thus make the German 'sound' like Turkish.

In extreme cases, language mixing can lead to a point where it is difficult to determine if a text has something like a 'main' language. This happens, for example, in Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. It would be hard to argue that English really is the main language of the text, as this idiom, which provides, so to speak the 'raw material' for the biggest part of the words and maybe also of the grammatical structure, is so much altered by the excessive use of its different varieties of puns, which for a substantial part are multilingual in themselves, that it certainly becomes a different language. And even to

¹⁸ See, e. g., Herrmann Wiegand: Makkaronische Dichtung. In: Harald Fricke (ed.): Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft, vol. II. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2000, 527–530.

¹⁹ Till Dembeck: Was ist hier defekt? Sprachdifferenz und Laut in Gedichten Ernst Jandls und Oskar Pastiors. In: Britta Herrmann (ed.): Dichtung für die Ohren. Zur Poetik und Ästhetik des Tonalen in der Literatur der Moderne. Berlin: Vorwerk 8 2015, 167–189.

²⁰ Martyn (footnote 5).

call it ‘a’ different language (‘Wakanese’) would not be correct, as this language constantly changes. The list of language abbreviations in Roland McHugh’s *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* counts abbreviations for more than 60 languages which have been found somehow and somewhere in the text – mostly tucked into words from other languages (mostly English).²¹ On the whole, the text thereby enormously expands the scope of its connotations – with the effect that one can read in it more than one story at the same time.

Joyce clearly subjects his writing to rather strictly applied constraints – and it is these constraints that alter his language. One might, however, even think of constraints that work on the level of ‘one language only’ as the source of literary multilingualism. This is the case in George Perec’s famous novel *La disparition* which, as an extended lipogram, uses only words that do not contain the letter ‘e’ (the most frequent letter in French) and thereby establishes a ‘new’ language within French.

All in all, multilingual philology, as a tool for literary analysis, must consider the following levels:

- a) the level of different, mutually unintelligible idioms, which themselves may have a rather different status in ‘their’ linguistic context – one can, at least in theory, mix a standardised national language like Russian with a Swiss dialect (Tolstoy, Th. Mann, Joyce),
- b) the level of sociolects, dialects, registers, historical idioms etc. (Hugo, May, Zaimoglu), and
- c) the level of metrical, rhetoric, aesthetic constraints a text subjects itself to (Grillparzer, Perec).

In all these cases, it is important to look at potential interferences on the level of

- a) grammar, i. e., phonology, morphology, and syntax (Luther),
- b) phraseology (Özdamar), and
- c) orthography (Pastior, Jandl).

²¹ Roland McHugh: *Annotations to Finnegans Wake*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 42016, xxviii–xxx.

Only a comprehensive account of the interplay of all these factors can make us aware of the full degree of multilingualism inherent in a literary text.

3. Heterolingual Quotation: An Example

A specific case of literary language mixing or switching is heterolingual quotation, i. e., the quotation of material which might not be comprehensible to someone who understands the rest (or most) of the quoting text, and which therefore makes it necessary to decide whether to translate or not. Heterolingual quotation is specific and different, say, from representations of protagonists' speech which, tacitly, is 'translated' into the language of representation, because it establishes a relation to another text, another context, and therefore to specific other means of establishing significance. This concreteness of heterolingual quotation makes it the ideal occasion to link literary texts to multiple politico-cultural context. This is mainly because heterolingual quotation refers not only to the quoted text itself, but can evoke whole literary and cultural traditions.

If Dante, for example, juxtaposes the artificially designed Tuscan dialect he writes in with quotes from Latin or Occitan, he positions himself with regard to two literary traditions which are, however, different in their status, with Latin being the language of classic literature and of scholarship, and Occitan being the language of 'modern' troubadour lyrics.²² The history of heterolingual quotation is very rich, but little explored. Authors like Montaigne and Rabelais certainly earn a central place in it, but this is not the place to go into depth.²³ Instead, I will present just one example which can demonstrate what is at stake when multilingual philology covers heterolingual quotation. This will lead me to some more general remarks of translation as a means of literary multilingualism.

²² See Thomas Klinkert: Dante Alighieri und die Mehrsprachigkeit. In: *Komparatistik Online*. Komparatistische Internet-Zeitschrift 2014, H. 2; URL: <http://www.komparatistik-online.de> (December 5, 2016).

²³ See, e. g., Antoine Compagnon: *La seconde main ou le travail de la citation*. Paris: Seuil 1979.

My example is T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), which makes elaborate use of language mixing – not the least as it juxtaposes different varieties of English and divers techniques of verse making. I will consider only the very end of the poem which features heterolingual quotations from Dante, the *Pervigilium Veneris* from late antiquity, Gerard de Nerval, Thomas Kyd, and, finally the Upanishads:²⁴

I sat upon the shore
Fishing, with the arid plain behind me
Shall I at least set my lands in order?
London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down
Poi s'ascese nel foco che gli affina *Dante*
Quando fiam ceu chelidon – O swallow swallow *Perv. Veneris*
Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie *G. de Nerval*
These fragments I have shored against my ruins
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe. *Th. Kyd*
Datta. Dayadhvam. Dâmyata.
*Shantih shantih shantih*²⁵ *Upanishads*

The context of these quotations hints at the underlying politico-cultural programme: the speaker, in order to “set (his) lands in order”, has “shored” these “fragments”, quotations, “against (his) ruins” – and the aim of this operation seems to be some kind of cultural renewal with the help of tradition, out of a state of destruction. This reading is affirmed by the original contexts of the quotations, which, more or less explicitly, describe poetic renewals out of hopeless situations. If these conjectures are correct, then the heterolingual quotations are supposed to jointly establish a new, more vivid poetic structure.

One could, of course, reconstruct this rather general poetic programme in much more detail if one integrated it into the politico-cultural ‘networks’ it inscribed itself into in

²⁴ For a more developed reading of the poem in terms of multilingual philology, see Till Dembeck: No pasaran – Lyrik, Kulturpolitik und Sprachdifferenz bei T. S. Eliot, Paul Celan und Rolf Dieter Brinkmann. In: *arcadia* 48.1 (2013), 1–41, here 5–15.

²⁵ T. S. Eliot: *The Waste Land*. Authoritative Text. Contexts. Criticism. Ed. Michael North. New York/London: W. W. Norton & Company 2001, v. 423–433.

1922. For the time being, it must suffice to relate it to the particular way in which the ‘foreign’ languages are formally integrated into the English of the text. One could argue that the single quotations in the text are to be read as representing not only their particular sources, but the whole of the literary traditions they originated in. This assumption is affirmed by the fact that Eliot has carefully selected examples of canonical literary traditions – thereby also juxtaposing very different, classic techniques of verse making, based on very different prosodic regularities. One effect of this juxtaposition is that the reader is tempted to mix these prosodic principles, e. g., by subjecting the Italian verse to patterns of accentuation, as it would be characteristic of English verses. Thereby, the proximity of different techniques of verse making affects the way the individual quotes are integrated into the metric texture of the ‘hosting’ poem. In the case of the Latin verse, a prosodic ambiguity is even inherent to the quotation itself – in a double sense: the text stems from a period when accentual and quantitative verse making overlapped, and it contains a Greek word, “chelidon”, which can be accentuated according to Greek or to Latin rules, which leads to two different patterns (*χελιδών* vs. *chelídon*).

All in all, this constellation establishes a new technique of verse making, which lets the cited literary traditions interact and envisions their synthesis. The fulfilment of the poem’s politico-cultural programme is thereby anticipated on the level of form. Of course, this anticipatory fulfilment has its drawbacks: the transformative synthesis of the different prosodic patterns is far from being straightforward, and especially the Greek word at the centre of the Latin/English verse introduces an ambivalence which makes it evident that the different languages are far from being completely appropriated by the English of the poem, but remain resistant. In a way, this is also consequential, as the cited traditions have to maintain a relation to their diverse origins in order to bear significance.

On the whole, the quotations in Eliot’s poem follow a strategy of incomplete appropriation: the quotes are integrated into the English text, but the original languages are granted manifest presence. Future scholarship in heterolingual quotation will have to systematically explore the different degrees to which original

languages are presented, i. e., in how far they are translated and which means of translation are used. In this context, but also on a more general level, multilingual philology can learn a lot from translation studies.

4. The Case of Homophonic Translation

A mode of translation that grants a particularly distinct presence to the original language in the target language is homophonic translation, i. e., translation by the sound. Homophonic translation is a quite ubiquitous phenomenon, not only in literature. It is a popular practise of dealing with incomprehensible language – think of the typical *malentendu* of a song in a foreign language –, and as such, has appeared in comedies from Plautus to modernity. For proper names, homophonic translation is, in fact, the standard procedure to introduce ‘foreign’ words into a language. When in Rome, ‘Hamburg’ (/ˈhambʊək/) becomes ‘Amburgo’ (/amˈburgo/).²⁶ In many literary texts set in ‘exotic’ environments, this kind of homophonic translation will be the only manifest traces of the language(s) that are ‘in reality’ spoken within the diegesis. Such ‘small’ incidents of homophonic translation in literary texts must not be neglected by multilingual philology and, particularly, by scholarship in heterolingual quotation.

A more particular case of literary multilingualism occurs, when homophonic translation is used as a device to create whole texts, which, to my knowledge, regularly happens since the 1950ies. I have explored the specificity of this ‘genre’ of literary multilingualism elsewhere.²⁷ Suffice it here to say, then, that ‘translation by the sound’ almost never occurs in ‘pure’ form, which is simply due to the fact that there will almost never be a full equivalent of the original terms in the target language. Homophonic translation mostly works on the basis of similarities, i. e., it

²⁶ This is indeed almost as close as you can get to the German pronunciation of the word within the framework of Italian phonetics: The German ‘h’ is dropped, as it does not have an equivalent in Italian; the stress moves from the first to the second syllable, according the general rules of Italian accentuation; and the German /v/ is replaced by /r/ – which is maybe not so much a homophonic translation than an effect of the German spelling.

²⁷ Till Dembeck: Oberflächenübersetzung: The Poetics and Cultural Politics of Homophonic Translation. In: Critical Multilingualism Studies 3.1 (2015), 7–25.

must try to find equivalents that are more or less phonetically close to the originals – and this implies that there are considerable degrees of freedom in the choices to be made. Authors who have engaged in projects of homophonic translation have strategically explored the margins that are left open by the fuzzy principle of phonetic similarity: Oskar Pastior, in his homophonic translation of Baudelaire’s famous poem “Harmonie du soir”, systematically translates the identically repeated verses of the original differently. For example, the verse “Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!” is rendered first as “das falsche mehl kolchis auf langohr musverzicht und”, and then as “das falsche mehl auf kolchis langustös verzichtend”.²⁸ In other words: homophonic translation systematically re-configures the phonetic structure of the original within the phonemic framework of the target language, and there is a considerable margin of deliberation as to the specificity of this configuration. The potential scope of these re-configurations of the original is in fact so wide that it allows also for homophonic translations within one and the same language. In this case (as, for example, in Felix Philipp Ingold’s *Fremdsprache. Gedichte aus dem Deutschen*), homophonic translation more or less equals a continuous and consistent use of puns. This is a parallel to the thorough application, in *Finnegans Wake*, of multilingual puns – and it is certainly not by chance that Joyce’ work continuously reflects upon the difference of sense and sound.

5. Genre Specific Forms of Literary Multilingualism

My rather short and superficial analysis of Eliot’s *The Waste Land* does not only imply an argument on heterolingual quotation, but also on lyric poetry. If we have learned, when looking at different ways of presenting multilingual speech in literary texts, that differences in meter can represent different languages, Eliot’s poem teaches us, that the analysis of verse calls our attention to differences in prosody and to the verse making techniques that may be characteristic of different languages. On a more

²⁸ Charles Baudelaire: Die Blumen des Bösen. Les Fleurs du Mal. Trans. and ed. Friedhelm Kemp. München: dtv 2011 [1857], 98 f.; Oskar Pastior: Speckturm. 12 x 5 Intonationen zu Gedichten von Charles Baudelaire. Ed. Klaus Ramm. Basel: Urs Engeler Editor 2007, 12.

general level, this also implies that there are genre-specific forms of literary multilingualism which multilingual philology must not ignore.

The case of verse is specific, as the patterns we use in order to constitute verse can be converted very differently into concrete linguistic structures: a three-footed iambic verse in classic Latin is constituted differently than a three-footed iambic verse in English – the Latin consists of long and short, the English of accented and non-accented syllables. One could already consider the transfer of patterns from one language to the other a phenomenon of language mixing – similarly to ‘literal translation’. In this sense, e. g., Latin hexameters can be considered a mixture of Latin and Greek, Middle High German rhyme a mixture of Middle High German and Old French, etc. This argument might be a bit far-fetched, but the least one can say is that the use of a ‘foreign’ form of verse making potentially relates the text to the linguistic context from which this form is taken. Lyric poetry regularly ‘quotes’ particular poetic forms – and languages can be at least invoked by such quotations of form.

The case of Eliot shows, how the use of verse material from other languages implicates, as it is also a quotation of form, potential interferences between the prosodic features of the languages involved. As far as I can see, the effects of such interferences have not yet been thoroughly investigated. In other genres, multilingual features to be observed are most probably less specific than in verse. One might argue that in drama, in so far as it is oriented towards actual performance, the indication of linguistic difference by costume (i. e., exotic outfits), props, settings (‘foreign’ landscapes), and music can be considered a potential facet of the text itself. In narrative, linguistic differences can be a means of story-telling – as it is the case in the ‘Oxen of the Sun’ chapter of Joyce’s *Ulysses*, or in Guo’s *Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*. In *Finnegans Wake*, as seen, the thorough use of multilingual puns allows for an unspecific pluralisation of storylines. Rather innovative forms of literary multilingualism eventually evolve with the advent of sound recording and film – and one might argue if this is still *literary* multilingualism: sound recording allows for the accurate reproduction of any dialect or accent, and thereby enriches the potential of the radio play and the audio book in comparison to the written text. Film

adds to this the possibility to integrate ‘foreign’ writing, both on the level of the diegesis (e. g., street signs or shop windows in a different language than that which is spoken) and in extradiegetic writing (e. g., language mixing in the opening titles, in the credits or in subtitles).

6. Politico-cultural Interpretation

This short *tour d’horizon* of the very diverse structures of literary multilingualism demonstrates, on the one hand, that there is a lot to be taken into account if one endeavours to investigate the linguistic diversity of an individual text, even if most texts will make use of a very small fraction of the devices I have described above. On the other hand, a schematic analysis of linguistic diversity cannot be the ultimate goal of multilingual philology. Quite on the contrary, the main interest of investigating literary multilingualism is the assessment of the cultural, social, and political implications of linguistic diversity in literary texts.

My suggestion how to integrate the analytical potential of the toolbox of multilingual philology into this more general project is twofold: firstly, I advocate a rather flexible approach when it comes to relating the phenomena to be detected on different structural levels of text, to different historical contexts, literary traditions, semantic formation, and political strategies. The rather open, anti-schematic approach of Actor-Network-Theory might provide useful guidelines here: only if one does not isolate the different levels of observation from one another, but allows relations between different, seemingly disjunct phenomena to be acknowledged as parts of interacting networks, the full relevance of literary multilingualism will become detectable.²⁹

Secondly, I believe that we must take the literary text seriously as a politico-cultural agent. This claim, again, echoes Actor-Network-Theory in that it ascribes ‘agency’ to the artefact called literary text. I think that literary texts can indeed develop such an

²⁹ Bruno Latour: *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005.

agency in that they have the potential to alter the way we attribute significance to things: literary texts explore alternatives to describe the world with the means of languages; they therefore make things meaningful in different ways, and thereby they produce significance. Now culture, if it is permissible to use a term that is subject to so much controversy, in such a clear-cut manner, is nothing but the name for the mechanisms through which society attributes significance – and cultural differences are differences in the ways this attribution is accomplished.³⁰ It is evident that languages produce significance in very different ways – and therefore literary multilingualism is always already entangled in the ‘management’ of cultural differences. And in so far as literary text relate to and interfere with societal policies concerning the attribution of significance, as they can be reconstructed, e. g., through the investigation of historical language politics and the historical semantics of linguistic diversity, they are politico-cultural agents themselves. To extend this line of argument is the foremost objective of multilingual philology. This is why its toolbox might be of interest for literary scholarship in general.

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³⁰ Till Dembeck: Reading Ornament: Remarks on Philology and Culture. In: *Orbis Litterarum* 68.5 (2013), 367–394.

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