Trans-lational spaces, translation in becoming: reflections after Antoine Berman[1]

Álvaro Faleiros*

Antoine Berman is undeniably one of the most important thinkers of translation of the second half of the twentieth century in the West. Though many of his important works date from the 1960s and 1970s, as Petry (2012) pertinently points out, this article will center on his first great essay, *The Experience of the Foreign*, published in 1984[2]. Berman, right at the beginning of this book, which established him in the field of translation studies, laid out the principles guiding his approach in a text entitled "La traduction au manifeste" (the manifestation of translation), first published in 1981 in Argentina with the title "El lugar de la traduction." Berman's aim was to lay the foundations for an autonomous discipline capable of "defining and situating itself and consequently to be communicated, shared, and taught" (BERMAN, 2002 [1984], p. 12).

The first task proposed for the constitution of this discipline consists precisely in the preparation of a history of translation (and also of an ethics and an analytic). According to Berman (2002 [1984], p. 12), "the construction of a history of translation is the first task of a *modern* theory of translation." Developing this history is "to patiently rediscover the infinitely complex and devious network in which translation is caught up in each period or in

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different settings. And it is to turn the historical knowledge acquired from
this activity into an opening of our *present*" (BERMAN, 2002 [1984], p. 14).

In preparing this history, one of the threads of the endless and
complex cultural fabric that particularly caught Berman's attention was the
historicity of the word *traduction* ("translation" as in rendering into another
language) and how it differs from *translation* ("trans-lation" as in motion or
transfer; which will be written hyphenated in this article to distinguish it
from its homonym). In the conclusion of *The Experience of the Foreign*, when
discussing the interaction between traductology, linguistics and the theory
of literature, Berman (2002 [1984], p. 327) states that "its starting point rests
on a few fundamental hypotheses," of which the first is that "even as it is a
particular   case   of   interlingual,   intercultural   and   interliterary
communication, translation is also the *model* for any process of this kind"
(ibidem). His intention to study translation as a field of knowledge *sui generis*
leads him to point out that "from Novalis to George Steiner and Michel
Serres, we have witnessed the edification of theories in which any kind of
'change' (of 'trans-lation') is interpreted as a translation" (ibidem).
Understanding the notions of *traduction* and *translation* is thus relevant in
addressing the development of Berman's thought. A few years later, in fact,
besides several references in other writings, two of his texts focused on the
subject: "Tradition-Translation-Traduction" (1988) and "De la translation à
la traduction" (2011 [1988]) – to which is added a posthumous third,
"Translatio studii *et pouvoir royal*" (1997)[3]. Berman reiterates in this texts "the
need for a historical-lexical reflection on translation or, more precisely, for
an *archeology* of translation in the sphere of Western culture" (BERMAN,
2011 [1988][4], p. 71).

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[3] These three texts form the basis of Berman's posthumous book *Jacques Amyot, traducteur français. Essai
sur les origines de la traduction en France*. Paris: Belin, 2012
[4] The quotes from this book in the original article in Portuguese were taken from the excellent Brazilian
translation by Marie-Helène Torres and Marlova Aseff.

Tradition | trans-lation

Berman's "Tradition-Translation-Traduction" aims to discuss three categories — translation, tradition and trans-lation — which he says had been, since 1984, the subject of seminars and studies at the International College of Philosophy. When he states that "reflecting on these categories would mean trying to clarify them — and to examine their connections — based on their *historicity*, and not stick to their current conceptual content," [5] Berman (1988, p. 85) makes clear his intention to emphasize the relationships between the three categories based on their historicity. And he adds that, in addressing this historicity, he is interested in understanding how these categories raise a series of issues, particularly with regard to philosophy. To this end, Berman first points to the fact that *translation*, *tradition* and *trans-lation* are words of Latin origin. If Rome was where the meaning still attributed to the last two words originated, i.e. *tradition* and *trans-lation*, this is not true for *translation*.

Referring to Hannah Arendt's considerations about authority and tradition, Berman (1988, p. 86) observes that "*traditio* is the transmission of the ancestors' actions and of the customs that engendered them." [6] Berman (1988, p. 87) draws on Arendt's understanding that the crucial historical fact is that Romans thought they needed founding fathers. The foundations inherited from these founders would thus be transmitted through *translatio*. This is a word encompassing a vast semantic field, as can be seen in the definition by historian Serge Lusignan (1986, p. 158-159):

> *translatio* can mean in Latin: the physical transport of objects, the movement of people, the transfer of rights or jurisdiction, the metaphorical transfer, the displacement of ideas and, finally, translation. *Translatio* can designate both physical displacement and symbolic transfer, it can connote both transport and the act of taking possession[7].

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[5] « s'interroger sur ces catégories signifiera tenter de les éclairer — et d'examiner leurs connexions — à partir de leur *historicité*, et non s'en tenir à leur actuel contenu conceptuel. »

[6] « La *traditio* est la transmission des actions des ancêtres et des coutumes qu'ils ont engendrées. »

[7] « *translatio* peut signifier en latin : le transport physique d'objets, le déplacement de personnes, le transfert de droit ou de juridiction, le transfert métaphorique, le déplacement d'idées et finalement la traduction. La *translatio* peut désigner aussi bien le déplacement physique que le transfert symbolique, elle peut connoter le transport tout autant que la prise de possession. »

According to Berman (1988, p. 87), the above list shows that *translatio* encompasses almost all the meanings related to *transference* and *transmission*. This linguistic phenomenon is essential in the development of the Latin culture itself. "Rome thus becomes a translative culture insofar as it borrows from another culture to 'expand,' in certain fields (philosophy, poetry, art), its own resources" (BERMAN, 1988, p. 87). Its wide range of meanings allows *translatio* to even encompass the "translating operation."

Notably, the Romans do not have a term for translation. Cicero, for example, uses *vertere, convertere, aliquid (latine) exprimere, ad verbum exprimere, (graece, latine) reddere, verbum pro verbo reddere ...* to refer to it. Even so, it clearly delimits the *place* and the *mode* of this operation, namely, the oratorical space of rhetoric and the transfer of meaning (BERMAN, 1988, p. 88). Delimiting this space and mode does not mean that its definition is not problematic, so much so that *translatio* also encompasses *imitation* and *adaptation*, without distinguishing between these two translative operations.

The intense articulation between *translatio* and *traditio*, the cornerstone of Latin cultures, acquires new contours in the middle of the 14th century with the development of the *translatio studii*. As Berman (1988, p. 90) points out, the aim of the *translatio studii* is to transfer knowledge from one culture to another. This process is both *topological* and *linguistic*. Berman observes that, for many medieval authors, Greece is the cradle of knowledge; from there it migrated to Rome, ready for new journeys to other modern European language-cultures that were developing at the time. This is how emerged the understanding of Western history as a long chain of trans-lations, seen as its *destiny*.

This process of knowledge transfer also has an important linguistic dimension. According to Berman (1988, p. 91), to understand this, we must first remember that during the Middle Ages Latin was not a *communication language* as is English today. It was a *communion language*: communion of knowledge among clerics, communion of the sacred with the faithful; there was no need to understand the language to "enter into communion," as when the purpose is communication. Berman also points out that the *language network* in which the "medieval 'translator' operated was, therefore, not identical to ours" (BERMAN, 2011 [1988], p. 79).

With the *translatio studii*, we move from the communion sphere to the communication sphere. That is when the so-called "vulgar languages," even if not stabilized, become *mediums* for trans-lation and communication. Berman argues that this requires modern languages to "de-naturalize" and provide "univocal designations" subject to logical rules. Thus conceived, the trans-lation's essence is the "circulation through standardized linguistic means of universal and invariant contents[8]" (BERMAN, 1988, p. 91). In this context, "translation" (not yet named as such) would be one of these forms of circulation, understood as a "pure *movement* of transference," as what should be "trans-lated" in this context is the *sententia*, that is, the meaning of the texts, and this "meaning" must be "clear."

The search for "clarity" imparts to *translatio* an "augmentative" nature. According to Berman (1988, p. 92), "in the Middle Ages, the increase in trans-lation took at least three forms." First, in order for the text to be *cler et entendable* (clear and understandable), the trans-lator would make several additions to it to clarify supposedly ambiguous passages. Second, the trans-lator would restructure the original, according to the principles of medieval *ordinatio*; for example, by adding titles and other indications of content. Finally, the translator would insert internal or external glosses.

Berman (1988, p. 93) further observes that modern translations also make use of similar procedures. Some examples are footnotes, the use of italics, preface postfaces and bilingual editions, which does not mean criticizing these additions, but rather "showing that all these 'communication aids' are part of the translation and give it its trans-lation status" (p. 93). It is not trivial to recognize that, both in the Middle Ages and today, translation can have a certain *character of trans-lation*. This character continues to unfold in relevant ramifications.

In *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne*, published in 1995, the French critic returns to the subject. Berman (1995, p. 18) points out that "the *transfer* of works itself belongs to a larger whole of *transfers* or circulations." This process, he further emphasizes, can take two opposite directions. On the one hand, it can go in the direction of *communication* (a term coined in the

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[8] « la circulation à travers des médiums langagiers normalisés de contenus universels et invariants. »

14th century by Nicole Oresme, one of the theorists of *translatio studii* and a key figure in the origin of French translation). On the other hand, in the direction of *migration*, or rather of transformation, with the mutation and cross-breeding that it implies. Berman also points to a third whole concerning translation — *traditionality*. In identifying these characteristics, Berman (ibidem) concludes that: "Western translation is traditional, translative and augmentative."

In another study, published posthumously, still concerning *the translatio studii*, Berman (1997, p. 196) further refines his understanding of the historical processes involved:

> Today *translatio studii* continues on a worldwide scale. Western knowledge transferred in the two Americas, China, Japan, etc., is going through and will continue to go through profound mutations. The vision of a "universal" Western knowledge that would impose its schemes and laws on all other cultures on the globe neglects the fact that, even in the absence of "resistance," any transfer of knowledge to another linguistic, cultural, historical field leads *ipso facto* to its mutation. Psychoanalytic thinking, to take a very current example, translated into French, English, Spanish, Arabic, etc., acquires in each translation a different physiognomy. Each time, the entire linguistic and conceptual apparatus is modified. This means that going from one language to another, for a given field of knowledge, is never a neutral transfer of "content," but a real disruption[9].

The above synthesis corroborates Sherry Simon's understanding (2001, p. 24) that, for Berman, the notion of *translation* is essential for the development of this historical awareness, "since Berman wants to show that each act of translation occurs within an envelope of interpretative levels, in a bundle of constraints and freedoms, a mediation that simultaneously includes conceptual, aesthetic and political determinants." It is not,

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[9] « De nos jours, la *translatio studii* se poursuit à l'échelle mondiale. Le savoir occidental, transféré dans les deux Amériques, en Chine, au Japon, etc., y subit et y subira encore de profondes mutations. La vision d'un savoir occidental «universel» qui imposerait ses schémas et ses lois à toutes les autres cultures du globe néglige le fait, non que ces cultures lui «résisteraient», mais que tout transfert d'un savoir dans une autre aire langagière, culturelle, historique amène *ipso facto* sa mutation. La pensée psychanalytique, pour prendre un exemple fort actuel, traduite en français, en anglais, en espagnol, en japonais, en arabe, etc., y prend à chaque fois une autre physionomie. À chaque fois, c'est tout l'appareil langagier et conceptuel de la psychanalyse qui se trouve modifié. Cela signifie que passer d'une langue à une autre, pour un savoir, n'est jamais un transfert neutre de « contenus », mais un véritable bouleversement. »

therefore, a minor concept in Berman's thinking. According to Simon, it is this notion of *translation* that would account for the interaction between translation and the literary milieu, as it would be a kind of "general theory of the passage of a work from one 'language-culture' to another." [10]

This general theory, however, perhaps even due to its fascinating breadth, is often confused with the very act of translating. Berman (2009 [1989]) is aware of this risk, identifying as one of the eleven tasks of traductology to "explore" what he calls "the edges of translation." Indeed, the field of translation touches other fields of knowledge, such as reading and the cultural, literary, artistic, scientific transfers, and it is not uncommon to one succumb there to the "temptation to build a 'generalist [theory of] translation' that would encompass the 'restricted translation' and the other 'trans-lation' modes. German Romanticism, Steiner, Serres… succumbed to this temptation" (BERMAN, 2009 [1989], p. 350). Traductology's, in this context, is not a lesser task, consisting, concludes Berman, "above all, in articulating all these fields of transformation, without confusing them."

Trans-lation | translation

As Berman reminds us (1988, p. 94), *traducere* and *traductio* did not mean in ancient Rome what is now called "translation." *Traductor* in Cicero is someone who makes the passage from the order of patricians to the order of plebeians. In "De la translation à la traduction," Berman (2011 [1988], p. 82) explores the theme further by pointing out that "the verb *traduire* already existed in the 15th century France, but only in the legal domain, where it remains until today, as when we say: 'Il a été traduit en justice' [He was brought to court]." Until the end of the 16th century, both *traducere* and

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[10] « Pour Berman… c'est la notion de « translation » qui rend compte de l'interaction entre la traduction et le milieu littéraire. La translation se veut une théorie générale du passage d'une œuvre d'une « langue-culture » à une autre, la manière dont elle est révélée, signalée, intégrée dans un corpus d'enseignement, et le processus des traductions et retraductions, ainsi que la séquence des commentaires critiques qui l'entoure. […] La notion de translation est essentielle à cette conscience historique, puisque Berman veut montrer que chaque acte de traduction est pris dans une enveloppe de niveaux interprétatifs, dans un faisceau de contraintes et de libertés, une médiation comprenant à la fois des déterminants conceptuels, esthétiques et politiques. »

traduire retained a physical meaning, unrelated to what is today conventionally called "translation."

To understand this movement, Berman (2011 [1988], p. 72) notes that the Renaissance witnessed a massive growth in the volume of translations, comparable only with the one experienced in the second half of the 20th century. For Berman (ibidem), "more profoundly, this growth corresponds to what we could call an *unlimitation* of the field of translation." If in the Middle Ages the Church defined the corpus that could be translated, in the Renaissance the field of translation gets wide open and text, genre and language no longer matter; everything becomes worthy of translation. One of the consequences was not only that everything started to be translated, but also that the muddled ambition of translating "everything" arises.

This unprecedented expansion completely changes the status of translation, which acquired authority even though it was the subject of much criticism. Most thinkers of the period started translating, turning their translations into the "*origin* and *horizon* of writing in the mother tongue" (p. 83). The modern meaning of *translation* emerges in this context. As Berman explains (p. 82):

> It was Leonardo Bruni who rendered into the Tuscan *tradotto* the past participle *traductum* used by a Latin author, Aulus Gellius. For the latter, though, *traductum* did not mean "translated," but "transported." In the passage where he uses this past participle, he mentions the transfer of an old Greek word to Latin, thus he refers to what we call a loan. That is, the opposite, in principle, of a translation.

What matters, above all, is to understand how Bruni's "translation error" originated a term that in a short time became predominant. The answer, according to Berman (1988, p. 94), is in the medieval history of the word *traductio*.

In the Middle Ages, the term *traductio* appears in theological works of Aristotelian inspiration. *Traductio* did not refer then to the translating activity, but to speculations about form and matter. *Traductio*, in this context, differs from both *informatio* and *eductio*. According to Berman (1988, p. 94), *informatio* (in-formation) is "the imposition of a form on matter," and *eductio*

is "to deduce a form existing in potential within matter." *Traductio*, in turn, is "the transfer or transmission of a form." Berman gives an example taken from Leibniz's *Theodicy*. In this work, the philosopher states that "as if the soul of children were engendered (*per traducem*) from the souls or souls of those from whom the body is engendered" (par. 86). Because the soul is a form, the form being, says Leibniz, "that which is a principle of action and is found in that which acts" (par. 87)[11]. He thus argues that, at the time, *traductio* is "the active transmission of a form, the form itself being the acting (*agissant*) principle of a being[12]."

Berman acknowledges that Leonardo Bruni was probably Leibniz's inspiration. In his treatise, when reflecting on the act of translating, Bruni (2006 [1420], p. 61) ponders:

> Like those who paint a portrait according to a model and reproduce the figure, the posture, the way of walking, the form of the entire body, and do not reflect on what they themselves would do, but on what the other did; likewise, in translation, the good translator will transform himself with all his mind, soul and determination into the original author of the text and will somehow transform it in an attempt to express the form, posture and texture of the discourse, the color and its diverse hues. This certainly produces an admirable effect.

This passage evidences the awareness that — as the copyist painter does not just copy the figure but rather the *posture*, the *form of the entire body* — since then translating is engendering a form from another form: metamorphosis. Berman's conclusion (1988, p. 94) right afterwards could not be more categorical: "*Traductio* is therefore the active transmission of a form, the form itself being the acting principle of a being […] Modern translation was born, and German romantics will say nothing different."[13]

This is an important distinction in which the role of the medieval *translatio* is to transfer meaning and that of the modern *traductio* is to transfer

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[11] « comme si l'âme des enfants était engendrée (*per traducem*) de l'âme ou des âmes de ceux dont le corps est engendré (§ 86). Car l'âme est une forme, la forme étant, dit Leibniz, ce qui est un principe de l'action, et se trouve dans celui qui agit (§ 87). »

[12] « transmission active d'une forme, la forme étant elle-même le principe agissant d'un être. »

[13] « La *traductio* est donc la transmission active d'une forme, la forme étant elle-même le principe agissant d'un être […] La traduction moderne est née, et les Romantiques allemands ne diront pas autre chose. »

form. Both paths imply transformations, whose scope depends on how that trans-lational or translational gesture engages tradition, mutation and expansion. In addition to the shift from a centrality of meaning to a centrality of form since the Renaissance, we see a reflection on the morphology of *traductio*.

The *ductio* suffix is of interest, as Berman (1988) points out, because of its high productiveness in the modern world. Referring to Yebra, the French critic observes that is not surprising that *ductio* (the act of conducting) is at the origin of at least nineteen Latin words. In its course through *traditio*, the suffix is even more productive in modern European languages, forming another 59 words in French, 77 in Spanish, 79 in Portuguese, 88 in Italian and 117 in English. Examples within this semantic family include important terms such as induction, deduction, reduction, seduction, production and reproduction. Commenting on these terms, Berman mentions Michel Serres (1974, p. 9), for whom:

> We only know things through the systems of transformation of the sets which include them. There are at least four of these systems. Deduction, in the logical-mathematical area; *induction*, in the experimental field; *production*, in the practical domains; and *translation* (*traduction*), within the sphere of texts. It is not completely enigmatic that they repeat the same word (apud BERMAN 2011 [1988], p. 83).

Unlike trans-lation, which would be "a more anonymous movement of passage," translation would be characterized as "an activity that has an agent." In this sense, all words formed from *ductio* would presuppose the existence of "agents" [BERMAN 2011 [1988], p. 84).

The discussion around "agency" is certainly not a lesser one. Barbara Cassin (2004, p. 26), for example, observes in her *Dictionary of Untranslatables* that the English *agency* can mean in French "action, agent, agency, act." She also points out that after appearing in English in the 17th century, the word was introduced into philosophy in the next century initially in a classically Aristotelian way, opposing action and passion, agent and patient. Agency would designate: a) the action in the physical sense; b) what modifies action in contrast to being the object of action; c) what modifies the agent in contrast

to the patient. And at the same time, because of its uses in English, *agency* (usually translated into Portuguese as *agência*) allows thinking of action no longer as a category opposed to passion, but as a "disposition" to action — being *disposed* to ... desires and affections.

Agency is also a productive concept in translation studies. Tuija Kinnunen and Kaisa Koskinen published in 2010 *Translators'Agency*, in which they address this issue. For the authors, agency, one of the key concepts in modern social sciences, has been conceptualized in numerous ways. In their book, Kinnunen and Koskinen (2010, p. 6) propose understanding agency as "willingness and ability to act." This definition, formulated collectively by the participants of the symposium that originated the book, includes, on the one hand, the internal, individual "willingness," which is linked to consciousness, intentionality and reflectivity together with the ethical issues that it involves. On the other hand, it includes "ability," which refers to more collective instances of power and negotiation, often asymmetrical. The choice depends on the "status" or "position" of the translator in the field and in relation to the translation. The definition of agency is therefore individual *and* collective, ethical *and* political. There would also be a tendency to understand agency and structure as a mutually dependent pair, in which agency *maintains* structure and structure *constrains* agency (p. 7). Agency thus understood would be less a property and more "a relational effect of social interaction." Its real reach is therefore effectively perceived only when employed in a particular material context.

Sherry Simon recognizes that Berman adopts a perspective situated in a specific context. Unlike Toury, who focuses on "norms," Berman, already in *La traduction et la lettre ou l'auberge du lointain* (1985), would not dissociate detailed analysis from global understanding (SIMON, 2001, p. 23). The articulation between these different dimensions presupposes an understanding of what constitutes the "place of translation." It remains to be seen to what extent agency conceived in this way reverberates or not in Berman's works.

The place of translation

This is the title of Berman's article published in 1981 in *Revista Sitio*, Buenos
Aires, which will be later published again as introduction to his monumental
The Experience of the Foreign. As we said at the beginning of this article,
Berman conceived this study to establish translation as an autonomous
practice, whose aim "is to know what translation must mean in our cultural
setting today" (1981, p. 124)[14]. In addition to the first task, which is the
"construction of a history of translation," particularly regarding the way in
which the practice of translation is articulated in relation to literature,
languages and intercultural exchanges, Berman emphasizes two other tasks:
developing an ethics and an analytic of translation.

Aware of the influence of French ideological, historical and cultural
issues on his own discourse on translation, Berman elaborates an ethics that
responds to the questions posed by French "ethnocentric" translations,
which, in turn, are also affected by the silence on translation's role in the
history of literature and philosophy. This more "positive" ethical approach
in breaking the walls of the ideological ghetto in which translation is
enclosed presupposes, for Berman, a negative *ethics*[15], that is:

> a theory of those ideological and literary values that tend to turn translation
> away from its pure aim. The theory of non-ethnocentric translation is also
> a theory of ethnocentric translation, which is to say of *bad translation*. A bad
> translation I call the translation which, generally under the guise of
> transmissibility, carries out a systematic negation of the strangeness of the
> foreign work (p. 126).

An *analytic* complements this negative ethics. According to Berman
(1981, p. 126), "the translator has to 'subject himself to analysis,' to scrutinize,
to localize the systems of deformation that threaten his practice and operate
unconsciously on the level of his linguistic and literary choices."

At the end of the essay, Berman (p. 127) adds to history, ethics and
analytic a fourth axis: *transtextuality*. In the first published version, instead
of "transtextuality" the term is "intertextuality." In any case, in both texts,
the outcome is practically the same: "a truly literary work is always

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[14] The original article in Portuguese adopts in this topic the Spanish version, the first one of this founding
text of Berman's thought, due to its rather evocative title.

[15] For a better understanding of "Berman's ethics," its scope and limits, see Barbara Godard (2001).

developed against the horizon of translation." The horizon of translation and of its studies proclaimed here corresponds, in broad terms, to a great part of Berman's intellectual project related to translation.

Indeed, we can recognize in the set of Berman's texts on translation and its horizon a development of these axes. In *L'épreuve de l'étranger* (1984) and later in *Jacques Amyot traducteur français* (1990-1991), the theme is the *history* of German and French conceptions of translation. *La traduction et la lettre ou l'auberge du lointain* (1985), in turn, is the book that presents the negative analytic (deformation); *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* (1995) aims to develop a criticism; and *L'Age de la traduction – "La Tâche du traducteur" de Walter Benjamin, un commentaire* (2008), the elaboration of a commentary.

"Critique, commentaire et traduction (Quelques réflexions from Benjamin et de Blanchot)" is the title of an article by Berman published in 1986 in which he explains how an *analytic* develops into *criticism* and *commentary*. Berman (1986, p. 88) begins by asking himself whether it is possible to examine at the same time the criticism, the commentary and the translation. To this end, he first addresses the relationship between the three as follows:

> It seems that the approach that brings them together is based on purely formal homologies: all three are "metatexts" whose purpose is to "communicate;" criticism and commentary would seek to communicate the "meaning" of the works, while translation would convey the "meaning" to other linguistic areas. From this kinship of essence would emerge the possibility of a reversible definition: translation is a criticism of the works (it is Pound's *criticism by translation*); criticism and commentary are also acts of translation. This is the circle that brings together the three metatexts in the same enclosed space, and which revolves around the concept of reformulation: all reformulation is translation, and vice versa.
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> There is yet another point of view which seems to bring them together: any work is susceptible of an infinite number of criticisms, commentaries and translations. Their proliferation would know no end. Incompletion is therefore a characteristic of all three metatexts.

> All of these considerations have their share of truth. For my part, I will start
> from this proposition: commentary, criticism and translation are three
> *destinies* of the works[16].

We can easily imagine that, like his reflections on the
relationships between "tradition, translation and commentary,"
Berman is interested in differentiating "criticism, commentary and
translation" to better articulate them. Among the distinctions he
points out there is, on the one hand, commentary and translation as
traditionalizing practices centered on the *letter* and hence focused on
significance and detail. On the other hand, criticism as an essentially
modern operation focused on the *meaning and the whole*, which
involves not the study of the detail but the use of quotation, making
this type of criticism, in general, disregard translation as a signifying
space. Berman (1986, p. 89), however, does not deny any of these
destinies. On the contrary, he seeks to make a "criticism of criticism
based on the exposition of the traditionality of commentary and
translation."[17]

Although, beyond criticism, the French author states that
"translation centered on the letter and translation centered on the
meaning are two separated possibilities for the act of translating" [18]
(1986, p. 105), he remains interested in affirming the specificity of

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[16] « Il semblerait que l'approche qui les réunit soit fondée sur des homologies purement formelles : tous
trois sont des « métatextes » dont la finalité est de « communiquer » : critique et commentaire
chercheraient à communiquer le « sens » des œuvres, tandis que la traduction transmettrait ce « sens »
dans d'autres aires langagières que les leurs. De cette parenté d'essence surgirait la possibilité d'une
définition réversible : la traduction est critique des œuvres (c'est le *criticism by translation* de Pound),
critique et commentaire sont, aussi bien, des actes de traduction. Tel est le cercle qui rassemble dans le
même espace clos les trois métatextes, et qui tourne autour du concept de reformulation : toute
reformulation est traduction, et vice-versa.
Il est encore un autre point de vue qui paraît les rapprocher : toute œuvre est susceptible d'une infinité
de critiques, de commentaires et de traductions. Leur prolifération ne saurait connaître aucun point
d'arrêt. L'*inachèvement* est donc une caractéristique des trois métatextes.
Toutes ces considérations possèdent leur part de vérité. Je partirai quant à moi de cette proposition :
commentaire, critique et traduction sont trois *destins* des œuvres. »
[17] « 'critique' de la critique fondée sur l'explicitation de la traditionnalité du commentaire et de la
traduction. »
[18] « traduction axée sur la lettre et traduction axée sur le sens se séparent comme *les deux possibles du
traduire*. »

"restricted translation" and its proximity to commentary, as the following passage shows:

> First, any commentary on a foreign text is necessarily a translation, as Heidegger shows. There is no (this is a corollary) commentary on a translated text that could be made without reference to the original; because no translation, however literal, would preserve enough the original letter to allow its text to be commented. But the commentary on a foreign text is only translation insofar as it translates that text part by part, as it progresses. In itself, it is not just translation: it is at once more and less. Nevertheless, this translation work paves the way for translation itself: Heidegger's commentary on Parmenides allows for Jean Beaufret's translation. While critical analysis hinders translation, commentary allows it. That is not all: it makes up for what we can call (as in Freud's expression) the "defect of translation." That is, where a translation *stops* (and every translation stops at some point) and the commentary begins.[19]

The critic Berman (1986, p. 106), however, does not limit his understanding to this distinction. In order to re-articulate, after pointing out the differences, he observes that "all delimitation is violence" and that his objective was only "to mark the bounds (*bornes*) of the critical discourse that, even today, crushes the translation and the commentary, in order to restore the identity of these two forms."[20] Berman wants to engage in a *reflection* based on the *experience* of translating and commenting.

For this reflection to succeed translation must become *criticism and commentary* on itself, and not be experienced as a "practice" governed by a "theory." At the end of the century, these two concepts are not innocent, as there is only "practice" in the *technological* space of modernity. Yet translation

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[19] « D'abord, tout commentaire d'un texte étranger est nécessairement traduction, comme le montre Heidegger. Il n'est pas (c'est un corollaire) de commentaire d'un texte traduit qui s'accomplirait sans référence à l'original ; parce qu'aucune traduction, fût-ce la plus littérale, ne préserve assez la lettre originaire pour que son texte soit commentable. Mais le commentaire d'un texte étranger n'est traduction que dans la mesure où il ce texte partie par partie, au fur et à mesure de sa progression. En lui-même, il n'est pas que traduction : plus et moins à la fois. Néanmoins, ce travail traductif ouvre la voie à la traduction proprement dite : le commentaire de Parménide par Heidegger permet la traduction de Jean Beaufret. Alors que l'analyse critique fait obstacle au traduire, le commentaire le permet. Ce n'est pas tout: il supplée à ce que l'on peut appeler (en reprenant une expression de Freud) le « défaut de traduction».

[20] « Ce long parcours pourra sembler très « critique » pour la critique. Toute délimitation est violence : il s'agissait de marquer les *bornes* du discours critique, qui, aujourd'hui encore, écrase la traduction et le commentaire, et d'inaugurer une réflexion nous restituant l'identité de ces deux formes. »

is — and must remain — one of the pillars of traditionality; which is only possible by preserving its experience through reflection. Indeed, *"reflection" is the concept that unites criticism, commentary and translation*. All this would not matter if it was not about our relationship to the works, and even more deeply about the relationship between the works and the *being-in-the-world anchored in traditionality*[21].

Returning to the initial question regarding tradition/translation/translation, a question which should be addressed in order to better understand Berman's thought but now from another angle: that of language-culture.

Translation of the place: translation | traduction | Übersetzung

Berman often makes use in his writings of the words *translation* (in English), *traduction* (in French) and *Übersetzung* (in German) to explain the precise way in which he, an European and a French with knowledge of Latin America, situates himself and his own reflections in the field. As mentioned above, there is no conceptual path without mutation and comparing how these transformational processes occur in different cultures opens interesting routes for understanding the constitution of specific *ethos*. In Berman's words (2011 [1988], p. 85), "the language network in which we always find the set of terms designating the act of translating in each major Western language can reveal to us how a culture thinks about this act and determines at the same time its nature and its place."

Berman explores this scheme on some occasions. In "De la Translation à la Traduction" (2011 [1988]), for example, he begins by showing that *Webster's* identifies four basic meanings for the English word *translation*, namely: 1) the act of translating and its result; 2) material transportation; 3) transformation, or transmutation, or conversion; 4) the

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[21] « Pour que cette réflexion puisse s'épanouir, il faut que la traduction devienne *critique et commentaire d'elle-même,* non qu'elle se vive comme une « pratique » régie par une « théorie ». En cette fin de siècle, ces deux concepts ne sont pas innocents. Car il n'est de « pratique » que dans l'espace *technologique* de la modernité. Or la traduction est — et doit rester — l'un des piliers de la traditionnalité. Cela n'est possible qu'en préservant son expérience dans une réflexion. De fait, *la « réflexion » est le concept qui unit critique, commentaire et traduction.* Tout cela importerait peu s'il ne s'agissait de notre rapport aux œuvres, et plus profondément du rapport des œuvres à *l'être-au-monde ancré dans la traditionnalité.* »

transfer of rights. Then, he compares them to those in the *Le Robert* dictionary, which only provides two meanings in French for *traduction*: 1) the act of translating; 2) its result, the rendering. Berman (2011 [1988], p. 84) elaborates further on this point: "Eliminated by *translation*, the word *translation* has certainly survived [...] in French, too, but has lost all connection with the translation activity." And in refining the comparison, he adds: "The semantic field of *translation* [in English] is not only richer than that of *traduction* and more linked to the Latin *translatio*: thanks to the polysemy of this term, the English language can integrate the translation operation into the larger field of transformations" (BERMAN, 2011 [1988], p. 85). This distinction leads him to affirm later: "More precisely, the English language *does not translate*, it *trans-lates*, that is, it circulates "contents" of a translinguistic nature" (p. 87).

The comparison is expanded by introducing what appears to be the third and final "major Western language" — German. Unlike the previous languages, in the German language, the "translation" would be an "operation by which, in a double movement, something foreign is placed beyond itself [...], in the translating language, and something of its own is deported, or rather, deports itself" (p. 88). This triangulation proposed by Berman (2011 [1988], p. 89) allows him to conclude with respect to the French word *traduction*:

> More delimited (even limited) than *translation* [in English] and *Übersetzung*, *translation* [in French] focuses – in accordance with what this word originally says – on the *action* of translating: in fact, this action, like all those of *duction* compounds, is transformative in essence. It is not surprising then that French culture has created the most "free" form of translation in Western history: the "unfaithful beauty." If the German language conceives of "translation" as a reciprocal play between the own and the foreign, if the English language conceives of it as a circulation of meanings without any reference to the near and the foreign, the French language sees in the act of translating the adaptive acclimatization of the foreign.

Despite mentioning only one dictionary for each of the three "major Western languages," Berman categorically affirms the existence of different translating characters (identities?) for each language-culture. He returns to

this understanding, with some nuances, in *Jacques Amyot, traducteur français. Essai sur les origines de la traduction en France* (2012). The heart of Berman's argument is that the translation in France *originates* in Jacques Amyot. Berman (2102, p. 19) explains that *origin* is not necessarily the same thing as *beginning*. The origin would come *after* the beginning, when some great translation would outline a specific *figure of the translating act*.

These great translations become mandatory references for later translations. And if, in themselves, they are not necessarily "models," their *mode* of translation becomes a model that, like any model, can be accepted, rejected, discussed, sweetened, but still remain inevitable. Once founded, the tradition-of-translation governs every translating act, whether or not the translators are aware of it. In this sense, the origin is absolutely fundamental. The great translation imposes its authority and delimits what, in a cultural sphere, is the meaning and the concrete forms of translating (BERMAN, 2012, p.19).

In the case of France, according to Berman (2012, p. 8), the latent model for this *figure of the translating act* is Jacques Amyot's works, because in them "translation is already a free adaptation, but this trait (which he inherits from his century) is compensated by a scrupulous philological fidelity." Amyot is thus responsible for a double origin. From the first trait derives the *Belles Infidèles*, a classic French translation mode that prevailed during the 17th and 18th centuries; from the second, more philological, comes the more "literary translations based on orality and popular speech." Berman (2012, p.21) ascribe the works of Galland, Chateaubriand, Paul-Louis Courier and Armand Robin to this second trend. The names of Meschonnic and of Berman himself can probably be added to the list, because, as Barbara Godard (2001, p. 66) points out, Berman's notion of translation-of-the-letter would derive from Meschonnic's idea of "rhythm as ethics" and of a translation made "rhythm by rhythm, repetition by repetition."

This debate is part of a broader reflection on a "post-Amyot" history of translation in France. In the final chapter of his book on the subject, Berman compares this history with Rome's and Germany's in the following terms: "from the literary, critical and philological sphere

of *Bildung* arises impetuously *the third historical figure of Western translation*, after the trans-lating figure born in Rome, developed in the Middle Ages and preserved in the Anglo-Saxon world, and the translating figure represented by the *Unfaithful Beauties*" (BERMAN, 2012, p. 236). For Germans, the function and purpose of translation would differ from the French classic and dominant approach, because, on the one hand, translation appears for them as one of the ways of constituting a national culture and, on the other hand, "far from being appropriative, it opens radically that culture to the Foreign, while still scrupulously restoring the *formal figure* of the originals. Translating is not adapting, adapting content, but to reproduce forms" (p. 236).

The consequences that Berman deduces from this understanding are considerable. Perhaps the most important of them is that the Germans would have taken translation out of the "rhetorical and imitative space that it had in Rome and the Renaissance, to place it in another space, that of hermeneutics and philology" (BERMAN, 2012, p. 237). Berman, in a sense, returns to his Experience of the Foreign by reiterating:

> … with Schleiermacher and Schlegel, translating fundamentally changes its meaning and place. It becomes a critical act: it is Ezra Pound's criticism by translation. As a critical act, it becomes essentially reflective, and it is no coincidence that in this period the first texts of "reflection" on translation are written and even, with Schleiermacher's *On the Different Methods of Translating*, the first Western theoretical text on translation. […] Of this "revolution," which changes the place of translation, we are the heirs. Whether this new place (the critical, hermeneutic and philological place) is the ultimate place for translation is another story (BERMAN, 2012, p. 237-238).

Berman (2012, p. 239), still in the book's final chapter, resumes his argument concerning the double origin of translation in France to add that even if in the 20th century several translators have adopted, each in their own way, something from the hermeneutic-philological model, most of these translations are fragmentary, and there are few complete translations. Indeed, for Berman (2012, p. 239), French translation in the 1980s "seems to

be torn between the classic model of the Unfaithful Beauties, the Anglo-Saxon model of translation and the German *Übersetzung*."

These observations make it possible to better situate Berman's work over the years. I dare argue that, more than defining categorically the mode of translation adopted by each language-culture, the three "models" would serve to map how translational spaces have been constituted in large European linguistic areas. The tripartite models described here — *traditio-translatio-traductio* | criticism-commentary-translation | mutation-communication-tradition | translation-*traduction-Übersetzung* — would therefore be more schematic than assertive in purpose, even though in his works Berman is sometimes seduced by a slightly more prescriptive stance. As Barbara Godard (2001, p. 71) observes, in *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* Berman even judges certain translations of the Londoner poet as "pernicious." Berman's criticism, for Godard, seems to be contrasting ethnocentric translation and ethical translation, hypertextual translation and poetic translation, in such a way that he would take "the abstract and universal form with force of law," as the following passage could indicate:

> However, if the modes of translation are always culturally individualized, and hence it would not be possible to have a "universal model" of translation, *the act of translating as such* remains determined by something supra-cultural, supra-linguistic, if not supra-historic. There is an *Idea* of translation, an *Idea* in the Platonic sense, to which any work-of-translation can refer. This Idea, like any true Idea, is not even a norm in a concept, and it does not conform to any definition. But it is the *correspondence* to this Idea that guarantees the truth of a translation, beyond any apparent adequacy or inadequacy.
>
> Traditionally, the truth of a translation is signified by the notion of *fidelity*: the "true" translation is the "faithful" translation. There, as in many other dimensions of human existence, there is an absolute correlation between truth and fidelity.
>
> It is possible, as the translator Jacques Peletier used to do in the 16th century, to speak of a "law" of translation. This law, like any law, can be transgressed, as evidenced by the no less profound link that since its origins connects the act of translating to lie and treason. (BERMAN, 2012, p. 24)

It seemed necessary to present the long quote above because it reveals the complexity of a certain abstract dimension of Berman's notion of the translating act. Indeed, Berman strains the individualized modes of translating, somewhat like Max Weber and his ideal type, with his *Idea* of translation. Godard (2001, p. 68), after Meschonnic, calls this straining "philosophical confusion." There are in fact shifts, but these, I think, operate more as a productive tension than as a supposed "confusion" between different approaches. Another *metaphysics* is added to the epistemological (functional-historical) dimension, reminding us that there is often a self-awareness on the part of each subject of what would be the "true" translation of a work. The occasional emphasis on the "truth of translation" (usually placed between quotation marks by Berman himself), as a complement to the fine historical observations he so often makes, could point in a hasty reading to a decontextualized appropriation of his "systematics of deformation." This approach, so often found in the work of young researchers, if not understood in its historicity, as an effort to criticize the ethnocentric bias predominant in France, and if not informed by a situated conception of *letter* and *rhythm*, can lead to strange simplifications.

Translation | trans-lation

In the preceding pages, I have called attention to how Berman, in a double movement, distinguishes and articulates the notions of trans-lation and translation. Berman recognizes that *translatio* could mean, in Latin, from the physical transport of objects, to the movement of people, the transfer of rights or jurisdiction, the metaphorical transfer, the displacement of ideas and finally translation. He also notes that this process of *translatio* is both *topological* and *linguistic*, and that, for many medieval authors, this topography starts at the Hellenic origin of knowledge, migrating to Rome and reaching modern European language-cultures. And thus emerges the understanding of Western history as a long chain of trans-lations, seen as its *destiny*. In this chain of transmissions, the role of "translation" (not yet named as such) would be to "trans-late," in this context, the *sententia*, that is, the meaning of the texts. Situating translation among these forms of

circulation, and understanding it as the space where the transfers occur, also leads Berman to the generalization that Western translation would be "*traditionalizing, trans-lative* and *augmentative.*" Berman even adds that both in the Middle Ages and today, translation can have a certain *character of trans-lation.*

The study of Nicole Oresme's works, who Berman (2012, p. 22) calls in his genealogy of affiliations the ancestor (a*ncêtre*) of French translation's father, Jacques Amyot, allowed him to emphasize in *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* that the translation of a work is part of a broader set of translations or circulations. At this point, "translation" and "trans-lation" still converge and the process can take two opposite directions: toward either *communication* or *migration*. These linguistic crossings, always following the topology of tradition, are thus shaped as a kind of "general theory of passage" that allows Berman to show that each act of translation occurs within an envelope of interpretative levels, in a bundle of constraints and freedoms; in a space of mediations that simultaneously includes conceptual, aesthetic and political determinants.

The rich potential of this general theory of passage, constituted through a historical-philological epistemology, is diminished when Berman (2012, p. 240) states categorically that: "the modes of translation in non-literary or even para-literary areas can be effortlessly linked to a strictly translative model (of the transfer of meaning)." Berman mobilizes here the archetypal categories he derived from the comparison between the etymologies of three major European languages. This understanding, however, is again counterbalanced by a historical awareness. Berman (2012, p. 241) argues next that:

> In fact, in the 20th century, several translating modes, originating in different cultural and linguistic spheres, coexist, cross-breed and collide: the map of translation and its modes is larger and more complex than that of the 16th century and even of the 19th century.
>
> Among these modes, we favored [the English] *translation* and *Übersetzung*, as they are certainly larger and supra-national modes; but there is also Перевод [perevod], the Italian *traduzione* and even the Brazilian *traduçao* (sic), each with their own characteristics.

Translation | trans-lation | transcreation

One of Berman's intellectual exercises is to visit dictionaries and then deduce a kind of archeology of the word translation. In Brazilian Portuguese, as in French, the *Houaiss Dictionary* lists two meanings for *translation*: 1) the act of translating; 2) its result, the rendering.

The interesting thing is that, unlike the French, according to *Houaiss*, we have, in short, the following meanings for *trans-lation*: 1. act, process or effect of trans-lating; 2. METAPHOR; 3. TRANSLATION; 4. movement of a system in which all its components move along parallel paths; 5. transmission of rights or possessions from one person to another. Brazilian Portuguese, even in a cursory examination, offers a much broader spectrum of possible relations between *translation* and *trans-lation*, with *translation* as one possible meaning of *trans-lation*.

It is worth noting that, according to *Houaiss*, the meanings of *trans-lation* are first topological, then linguistic, temporal, legal, etc. Namely, (1) to transfer (also reflexive) to another place; (2) to transplant; (3) to transpose to another language, translate; (4) to reschedule for another occasion, postpone; (5) to transfer the responsibility for something to someone; (6) (reflexive) to show change; change, transform; (7) to copy; (8) to register a deed in the notary's book; (9) to give metaphorical meaning to something.

What was in Berman's mind when he included the "Brazilian *traducao* (sic)" in his list of minor translation modes? Was he suggesting an articulation between the definitions of *translation* and *trans-lation* in Portuguese? A possible answer is found in the conclusion of *The Experience of the Foreign* when Berman (2002 [1984], p. 321) relates linguistics and translation and argues:

> translation can never constitute a mere branch of linguistics, philology, criticism (as the Romantics believed), or hermeneutics: Whether it be of philosophy, religion, literature, poetry, etc., translation constitutes a dimension *sui generis*. A dimension which produces a certain *knowledge*. But this experience (and the knowledge it provides) may in return be illumined and partially transformed by other experiences, other practices, a different knowledge. And it is obvious that linguistics, in the twentieth century, can enrich the translating consciousness; and vice versa, for that matter. Jakobson's linguistics interrogates poets; it might also interrogate

translators. And this is, in effect, the reciprocal game proposed by Haroldo de Campos in Brasil.

Ezra Pound's translations and his reflection on poetry, criticism, and translation are of fundamental importance here, and it would be interesting to confront the theory of *criticism by translation* with the Romantic theories of translation by criticism. Pound's reflections, like those of Meschonnic, *Po&sie*, and *Change*, attempt to define what may be, in the twentieth century, a theory and practice of *poetic translation*.

This is an important point. Berman (2012, p. 7), in his *Jacques Amyot, traducteur français. Essai sur les origines de la traduction en France*, initially points out that the *French translation model* is part of the same movement that established the model of the French prose, which he problematizes. In Brazil, the *model of translation* seems to correspond more precisely to the establishment of a *model of poetry*. It is no coincidence that Haroldo de Campos is usually remembered when a Brazilian approach to translation is mentioned outside Brazil[22].

Although the *Brazilian translation* is not a focus of great interest to Berman, his mentioning of it in the conclusion of two of his most important books highlights its relevance in the field. The place attributed by Berman to the so-called Brazilian translation, therefore, should not be disregarded: on the one hand, following Jakobson's works, he situates it in a space where linguistics and translation intersect; on the other hand, he sees it from the perspective of Ezra Pound's criticism by translation and the critical-translation of German Romantics. One of the particularities of Brazilian translation, however, would be the fact that Haroldo de Campos does not call this type of translation practice *translation*, but rather *transcreation*.

If we look into the *Houaiss'* definition of translation, we see that Haroldo de Campos would consider it pertinent, since the Idea of translation

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[22] Paul Valéry's "The Situation of Baudelaire" is an important reference here. At the beginning of his text on Baudelaire's importance to modern poetry, Valéry notes that his significance is undoubtedly due to the translation of his works around the world, just as the originality of his poetry is largely due to his, I dare say translational, relationship with Edgar Poe. Valéry's text leads us to recognize this capacity to transfer meanings as a parameter to assess the place and significance of a work. For further developments of a translational-based approach inspired by Valéry see Álvaro Faleiros and Roberto Zular, "Situação de Valéry traduzido no Brasil," *Remate de Males*, 2018.

proposed by Berman seems to reverberate there. The complication here is that, in associating the translation of the form (isomorphism, paramorphism) with *transcreation*, Haroldo de Campos ends up linking the word *translation* to the semantic translation which, in Berman's scheme, would perhaps be closer to the Latin *translatio* (and to the translation of the *sententia*) or the Anglo-American *translation*.

There is, however, another group of Brazilian thinkers who, using the same *model-of-translation/model-of-poetry*, have adopted another *mode* for exploring the relationship between translation and linguistics. All of them — José Paulo Paes, Mário Laranjeira and Paulo Henriques Britto — although in different ways, have appropriated Jakobson's creative transposition. All three seek to distance themselves from transcreation. Perhaps it is possible to understand the textual approach[23] of these thinkers-translators as an effort to produce a more traditionalizing *translation-commentary* rather than a *translation-criticism* (transcreation) in the modern sense as practiced by Haroldo de Campos. These translators-commentators are interested in bringing poetic translation, of course while respecting its particularities, closer to the Idea of a *signifying* translation, as they all seem to embrace a conception of translation as translation of a *form*, even taking into account the variations in the place given to semantic and cultural aspects.

These thinkers-translators also differ in their relationship with tradition. Mário Laranjeira operates more directly within academia, having developed his reflections around the theories of *significance* (after Kristeva, Delas & Filliolet, Meschonnic and Riffaterre). As a thinker in the field of French studies, Laranjeira also has a more traditionalizing approach in choosing authors, basically studying the canonical authors of each linguistic field.

José Paulo Paes and Haroldo de Campos are much more open. Both are poets and have translated from various languages, sometimes indirectly, based on a rudimentary knowledge of distant languages or even in partnership with scholars specialized in those languages. Haroldo de Campos, as we have seen, built a very solid work and today is the main

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[23] See Álvaro Faleiros. « Approches textuelles pour la traduction du poème au Brésil ». *TTR*, v.XIX, 2006.

author people refer to when talking about a Brazilian theory of translation. Paulo Henriques Britto, the youngest of the thinkers-translators mentioned here, is not very far from Haroldo de Campos and José Paulo Paes due to the importance of his poetic work, while differing from those two (mainly Haroldo de Campos) in aiming more for a *translation-commentary* than a *translation-criticism*. His more pragmatic approach is also due to the prominent role he plays as one of the main commercial translators of English literary prose in Brazil.

At the moment, as far as it was possible to find out, none of these thinkers-translators or their commentators have attempted to understand them using the Berman's categories that, in my view, have showed themselves capable of illuminating the origins of the Brazilian *model-of-translation*. The understanding of these thinkers-translators, I believe, would gain in substance if we approach the translations they made and their works on translation from what I will now call *trans-lational space*.

I am interested, above all, in the "general theory of passage" which, as Sherry Simon pointed out, aims to show that any act of translation involves interwoven interpretive levels, as well as constraints and freedoms in a space of multiple mediations, which simultaneously includes conceptual, aesthetic and political determinants. If we observe the multiple meanings of the word *trans-lation* in Portuguese, we find *translation* there, together with metaphor. If we look at the Portuguese verb *to trans-late* (*transladar*), its meanings include transports, transpositions, transplants, translations, transmutations, transgressions and copies. Taking *trans-lation* as a starting point, therefore, allows us to think about translation and the translating act as the pivot of a constellation of different interpretative levels ethically, poetically and politically situated and to understand this field as a translational space. In this sense, the following passage of Berman (1995, p.17) is especially dear to me:

> The critic must shed light on the reasons for the translation's failure (here we join, in a certain way, our socio-semio-critics, but without their concepts and their discourse type) and prepare *the space for a retranslation* without acting as an advice giver. This space is itself caught in a larger space, that of *trans-lation* of a foreign work into a language culture. This trans-lation

> [*translation*] does not only occur with translation [*traduction*] alone. It also occurs through criticism and many forms of textual (or even nontextual) transformations that are not strictly translation related. *All of them taken together constitute the trans-lation of an ouvre*. There is a dialectic between the *trans-lation* that does not involve translations and translations per se.

The observation of a translating act or the space where the retranslation game is played seems to demand from the critic the awareness of what is happening in this wider space. I believe, however, it is reductionistic to imagine that the relations between non-translational trans-lations and translations within the trans-lational space are necessarily dialectical. There is no synthesis of the thinking of Mário Laranjeira, Paulo Henriques Britto and Haroldo de Campos. The tensions remain, and they give rise to different *modes* of conceiving translation. Thinking about translation projects and translation horizons is thus fundamental for the development of translation analytics, criticisms and comments, the systematics of which will be understood according to the historicity of the translator's models, the work and the critic.

In another study[24], I examined the relations between the poetics of translation of Paulo Henriques Britto and Haroldo de Campos seeking to nuance them according to the work to be translated and the affections involved. A classic is not translated as a contemporary is translated; translators do not allow themselves the same freedoms they usually enjoy when self-translating, translating according to their own poetics or translating on demand. We can say that the translator-critic (transcreator) Haroldo de Campos makes himself a translator-commentator in facing Leopardi, and that the translator-commentator Paulo Henriques Britto, when self-translating, operates as a transcreator. The translating act seems, therefore, to be better understood if articulated in its trans-lational space. In this context, the agency (of the *ductio*) is precisely the relational effect of the interactions taking place: its actual reach must be assessed within a specific situation.

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[24] "A voz e o silêncio em Paulo Henriques Britto e Haroldo de Campos tradutores". *Literatura e Sociedade* (19), 117-130, 2015.

Finally, in revisiting Berman's archeology of translation, with its epistemological and metaphysical tensions, we apprehend the theoretical power of some conceptual triads. The most productive ones seem to be tradition-trans-lation-translation, *traduction-translation-Übersetzung* and translation-criticism-commentary. Based on these triads and the double functioning (linguistic and topological) of *translatio*, it would be possible to outline a Brazilian *model-of-translation* whose translational space is crossed by the *model-of-poetry* and inhabited by the Idea of a constant tension between translation and transcreation. This model, informed by the Jakobson's semiotics (but not only), would have Haroldo de Campos as "father;" and the transformative and transcreative character of his poetics and the ethics it entails, tensioned by textual approaches, demands a continuous historicization. This historicization, in turn, presupposes a space of (re)retranslation as one of the active pivots of the translational space; a space that, because of is inconclusiveness, presupposes a translation always in becoming.

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Abstract

Antoine Berman, one of the exponents of translation studies in the 20th century, describes translation history as one of the first tasks for the field. One of his first tasks was to make an archeology of the word *traductio* comparing it with other related terms (*translatio* and *traditio*), as well as with its etymology in French, English and German. The purpose of this article is to present a reflection based on these uses and to point to possible developments of this history in order to think about the possible relations between translatio and translation in Brazil.

Keywords: Antoine Berman; *Traductio; Translatio*; Transcreation; Haroldo de Campos.

Resumo

Antoine Berman, um dos expoentes dos estudos da tradução do século XX, colocou como uma das primeiras tarefas para o campo a escrita de uma história da tradução. Nesse sentido, um de seus primeiros objetivos foi fazer uma arqueologia da palavra *traductio* comparando-a com outros termos afins (*translatio* e *traditio*), assim como com sua etimologia em francês, inglês e alemão. O intuito deste artigo é apresentar reflexão a partir desses usos e apontar para possíveis desdobramentos dessa história para se pensar as possíveis relações entre translação e tradução no Brasil

Palavras-chave: Antoine Berman; *Traductio; Translatio*; Transcriação; Haroldo de Campos.