The Romantic Turn in Bible Translation

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Abstract: The paper presents an overview of the history of Bible translation in the "Romantic" tradition of Buber and Rosenzweig. The tradition has its roots in the Romantic turn in translation of early nineteenth-century Germany, but three other forces also shaped the translation ideas and practices of this tradition: general linguistic ideologies of the nineteenth century; the philosophical climate of the Interbellum period in Germany; and the hermeneutic and exegetical heritage of the rabbinic tradition. The paper also looks at Europe and the USA after the Second World War to study the ways in which Bible translators dealt with the heritage of Buber and Rosenzweig, applying and transforming the tradition in new contexts. The paper concludes by placing the history of "Romantic" Bibles in two broader contexts: first in the context of the history of Bible translation, contrasting "Romantic" foreignness with its Reformation counterpart; second, in the context of general translation studies, contrasting the history of foreignness in Bible translation with the history of foreignness in the translation of other texts from antiquity such as the *Iliad*.

Introduction

This paper presents an overview of the history of the "Romantic" tradition in Bible translation.[1] The tradition originated in Germany in the first half of the twentieth century, with two Jewish philosophers, Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, but found fertile soil in Europe and America, among Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic translators. The history of this tradition is relevant to the field of Bible translation because of the way it put the theme of otherness and foreignness on the agenda. Its construction of biblical otherness played a crucial role in the postwar polemic surrounding Nida's dynamic equivalence and continues to inform modern Bible translations.

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The term Romantic has been used in relation to (elements of) this tradition by scholars both outside the tradition (e.g. Britt 2000, van der Louw 2006) and within the tradition itself (e.g. Fox 1995, x). Contemporary German critics of Buber and Rosenzweig like Kracauer (1926, 180) used the term *völkische Romantik* in a strongly negative way (van der Louw 2006, 15). They associated the way Buber and Rosenzweig constructed Hebrew otherness and identity with the way Romantic German nationalistic discourse constructed the notion of the German *Volk* ("people," "ethnic group").

Although the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition has its roots in the Romantic turn in translation of early nineteenth-century Germany, there are at least three other ideological, philosophical, and theological forces that were not Romantic at all and that crucially shaped the translation ideas and practices of this tradition: general linguistic ideologies of nineteenth-century Germany; the philosophical climate of the Interbellum period in Germany; and the hermeneutic and exegetical heritage of the rabbinic tradition. The label "Romantic" therefore has limited value. The reason I maintained the term is that the early nineteenth-century Romantic turn in translation forms the starting point for the history of Bible translation in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition.

One could also question the wisdom of subsuming Bible translations from very different times, places, and historical contexts under one label (whatever the label). There are good reasons to do so in this case. First of all, the translators in question, although they do not use the label "Romantic," explicitly place themselves, in prefaces and introductions, in what they see as a coherent tradition of Bible translation that started with Buber and Rosenzweig. The roots of the tradition in nineteenth-century Germany are generally ignored in those prefaces and introductions and its roots in Jewish tradition are emphasized, for reasons discussed below. Second, the translators in this tradition all employ, in varying ways, the same set of translation strategies and principles that is characteristic of Bible translation in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition (concordance, exoticizing lexical register, colometric format, name translations, transliteration, translating at root and stem level, implicitation of conjunctions, literal translations of conventional metaphors).

The German Romantic turn in translation is the topic of the first part of the paper. The second part describes the three other ideological and philosophical roots of the tradition. The third section of the paper looks at Europe and the USA after the Second World War to study the ways in which Bible translators dealt with the heritage of Buber and Rosenzweig, applying and transforming the tradition in new contexts. The fourth section concludes the paper by placing the history of "Romantic" Bibles in two broader contexts, first in the context of the history of Bible translation, contrasting "Romantic" foreignness with its Reformation counterpart; second, in the context of general translation studies, contrasting the history of foreignness in Bible translation with the history of foreignness in the translation of other texts from antiquity such as the Iliad.

Venuti (1995) was my main source for the early nineteenth-century Romantic turn in translation and for the translation history of nonbiblical texts in the seventeenth–nineteenth centuries, and van der Louw (2006) for the links between Buber–Rosenzweig and the Romantic period and for the contrast between Reformation and Romantic literalism. Gordon (2003) was my main source for the links between Buber–Rosenzweig and the philosophical climate of the Interbellum, and especially Heidegger.

The Romantic Turn in Translation

The starting point of Romantic reflection on translation in early nineteenth-century Germany is a distinction between two types of texts that required two radically different translation approaches from a Romantic perspective: translation of texts with business and informative purposes versus translation of "higher" texts of literature and scholarship that reflect the individuality of the writer, his *Gemüt*, and the individuality of his language, its *Sprachgeist*, or "language spirit." This emphasis on individuality is a core theme of the Romantic era and it pervades its reflection on translation as it saturates other domains, for example the theology and hermeneutics of Schleiermacher (van der Louw 2006, 6). The following statements from Schleiermacher contain the notions of "higher" texts and of the dual individuality of writer and language:

> Daher nun will jede freie und höhere Rede auf zweifache Weise gefaßt sein, teils aus dem Geiste der Sprache, aus deren Elementen sie zusammengesetzt

ist, als eine durch diese Geist gebundene und bedingte, aus ihm in dem Redenden lebendig erzeugte Darstellung; sie will auf der andern Seite gefaßt sein aus dem Gemüt des Redenden als eine Tat, als nur aus seinem Wesen gerade so hervorgegangen und erklärbar. (Schleiermacher 1838, 215)

This passage has been translated by Lefevere as follows:

Therefore each free and higher speech needs to be understood twice, once out of the spirit of the language of whose elements it is composed, as a living representation bound and defined by that spirit and conceived out of it in the speaker, and once out of the speaker's emotions, as his action, as produced and explicable only out of his own being. (Lefevere 1977, 71)

The passage is notoriously difficult to render into English. The German term *Gemüt*, rendered by "emotions" in Lefevere's version is actually broader than "emotions." In the context of Schleiermacher's reflection on translation, it refers to the individuality, the unique self, of the writer which, through the act of writing, permeates his writing. Both the unique individual personality of the writer and the spirit of his language cannot be separated from, and form a unity with, the text to be translated.

Where according to Romantic views the translation of business texts should aim at clearly rendering the message of the text in an understandable and normal style, using fluent language, without special concern for the individuality of the writer or his language, the Romantic goals for the translation of "higher" texts are the opposite and strongly antifluent: the aim is to let the sensitive, educated reader *experience* and *encounter* the individuality of the original writer, his *Gemüt*, and at the same time the individuality of the original language, its unique *Sprachgeist*. The task of the translator is to bring the reader as close as possible to what makes this individual uniquely different and to what makes his language different and unique, even if this means that the German language has to be bent "*zu einer fremden Änlichkeit*" (Schleiermacher 1883, 277, quoted by Venuti (1995, 85), who also gives Lefevere's English translation—"bent towards a foreign likeness"). The Romantic ideal was, in the words of Goethe, as rendered by Lefevere (1977, 39), a translation that "requires that we should go across to what is foreign, and adapt ourselves to its conditions, its use of language, its peculiarities."

According to Venuti (1995), this Romantic emphasis on foreignization is a break with the fluency tradition in translation of texts from antiquity into French and English in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The German Romantic opposition to these established translation practices of England and especially France should also be seen as part of a wider, nationalistic resistance to the cultural hegemony of other countries (Venuti 1995; van der Louw 2006).

Most of the foreignness visible in the translation practices of Romantic translators is caused by interference from source languages and source texts, the result of closely following lexical and stylistic patterns of sources, but some nineteenth-century Romantic translators also deliberately added foreignness, without being forced to do so by their sources, to create an experience of otherness and a foreign atmosphere in the *Gemüt* of the reader. Newman's foreignizing translation of Homer into English of 1853 is a good example. Newman deliberately uses archaic, rare, or otherwise eccentric words to create an atmosphere of foreignness, ancientness, and otherness (see Venuti 1995, 103, and especially, for example, *callant* "young man," *bulkin* "calf," Scottish words such as *skirl* "cry shrilly," *syne* "since"). Buber and Rosenzweig, and many of their followers, routinely used rare and very marked words to create alterity, also where the Hebrew used words from neutral and unmarked registers (van der Louw 2006; see the next section for his examples).

The Schleiermacher quote above shows a second break with the past in the Romantic way Schleiermacher writes about language: he breaks with the classical representational view of language (Berman 1984; Venuti 1995; van der Louw 2006) where *verba* "words" represent *res* "things" and languages have different *verba* to represent the same *res*. Instead, he adopts an expressive view of language, as a specific, subjective horizon of understanding, as intertwined with unique cultural practices, conceptualizations, and norms of a certain people.

The Romantic Turn in Bible Translation

It took these Romantic translation approaches and constructions of otherness more than a century to hit the field of Bible translation with full force. And when these ideas reached Bible

translation, they were understood and transformed by the ideological and philosophical frameworks of the Interbellum period in Germany where Martin Buber (1878–1965) and Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929) worked on their translation of the Hebrew Bible, *Die Schrift*. After the death of Rosenzweig in 1929, Buber continued the work alone, completing his last version between 1954 and 1962.

Buber, who was born in Austria, studied philosophy from 1897 to 1909 in Leipzig and other places in Germany, where he absorbed the philosophies of nineteenth-century Germany (Schmidt 1995; Askani 1997). Both men, born and raised in Jewish families, had a lifelong and very intense intellectual interaction with the philosophical heritage of the German nineteenth century and with the contemporary philosophy of the Interbellum, especially Heidegger (Gordon 2003). It should therefore not come as a surprise that their views of the translation of the Hebrew Bible are incomprehensible without taking their German philosophical and ideological background into account. However, in postwar Europe and America, after the horrors of the Holocaust but also because of developments in theology that led to a renewed interest in the Bible as a Jewish collection of books, Buber and Rosenzweig were first and foremost seen as Jews, and their translation as a Jewish translation which obscured their deep roots in nineteenth-century German philosophy.

Four influences crucially shaped the translation philosophy and practices of Buber and Rosenzweig: first, German Romantic views of translation; second, generally accepted linguistic ideologies of nineteenth-century Germany that lasted well into the twentieth century; third, the philosophical climate of the German Interbellum period; and fourth, the Jewish heritage of Buber and Rosenzweig.

Buber–Rosenzweig and Romantic views of translation.

According to van der Louw (2006, 14), perhaps the most important link between German Romantic ideas on translation and Buber–Rosenzweig is the notion of a translation as deeply and directly felt experience of the individual otherness of the original writer and of the individual otherness of the language, its unique *Sprachgeist*. Like the early nineteenth-century Romantic translators, Buber and Rosenzweig assume an expressive rather than representational theory of language, language as a horizon of

understanding of a *Volk*, inseparable from the worldview of its speakers, just as the text a writer produces is inseparable from the inner world of the writer it expresses. The term *Sprachgeist* features importantly in the reflections of Buber and Rosenzweig (Reichert 1996), and to do justice to the *fremdes Sprachgeist* ("foreign language-spirit") of Hebrew and the individual otherness of the foreign biblical writers, they frequently bent the German language "*zu einer fremden Änlichkeit*" ("towards a foreign likeness"), to use the Romantic turn of phrase, pushing the German language to its limits, with a mix of brand new, neologistic German invented by Buber and Rosenzweig (e.g. *königen*, *darnahen*, and *Nahung*), and very archaic, rarified German.

Just as Newman uses rare, archaic, and eccentric English words to create a Homeric or Ancient Greek atmosphere and to facilitate a connection with totally different worlds of antiquity, Buber and Rosenzweig use words from very marked German registers to facilitate the experience of otherness, even where the Hebrew words in the source texts were unmarked and belonged to neutral registers. Van der Louw (2006, 14) gives examples such as the frequent Hebrew word *wajjomer*, neutral in register, which Buber and Rosenzweig rendered rather solemnly with *er sprach* "he spoke," and never with the more neutral *er sagte* "he said." When Lot bakes bread for his guests in Genesis 19:3, an old German form of the verb is used (*buk*) in *Die Schrift* rather than the unmarked German form *backte*. In Genesis 19:12, Buber and Rosenzweig do not use the unmarked, neutral German term *Schwiegersöhne* for sons-in-law, but the rare *Eidame* (van der Louw 2006, 14).

Buber–Rosenzweig and general linguistic ideologies of nineteenth-century Germany.

Regarding general assumptions on language that were prevalent in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Germany, there are two with special significance in the works of Buber and Rosenzweig—the primacy of diachrony, and unity assumptions.

Language was primarily viewed and understood from a diachronic perspective in nineteenth-century Germany. Languages were compared in order to reconstruct the *Ur* language from which they all descended. Linguists studied the roots of words from a historical and comparative perspective. The meaning of a word

was not so much located in its synchronic networks with other words and in the various contexts of usage but rather in the etymology of the root of the word. Both the theoretical discourse and the actual translation practices of Buber and Rosenzweig are saturated with this diachronic perspective. Rosenzweig writes about the etymological *Tiefsinn der Worte* (the deep meaning of words) and uses the metaphor of a mine shaft: we have to descend into the deepest shafts of recurrent Hebrew roots in the Bible where, deep beneath the surface, the *Ur* meanings are hidden, using such German terms as the *Wurzelschicht der Worte* "the shaft of the root of words" (van der Louw 2006, 4). For example, Buber and Rosenzweig translate חלץ (qal "to draw off," "to withdraw from"; niphal "to be delivered") with *herausreissen* "to pull out," based on a (contested) etymology.

This leads to a focus on Hebrew root consonants as a fundamental level of translation. Below we will see that this focus on recurrent roots also has to do with other notions such as *Gesprochenheit*, and with traditional Jewish hermeneutics. To see how this plays out in translation decisions, take the translation of the Hebrew consonant root קרב: in Leviticus 1: 2, where Buber und Rosenzweig created new German words (***Nahung***="near-ing"; ***dar-nahen***="to near there") to reflect the *Tiefsinn* of the repeated root קרב "near"), and translated as follows: "Ein Mensch, wenn er von euch IHM eine Nahung darnaht [...]." Everett Fox (1995), in the tradition of Buber–Rosenzweig, also translates at root level: "When (one) among you brings near a near-offering for YHWH." The more fluent translation of the Jewish Publication Society (1926) gives "When any of you presents an offering [...]."

Buber and Rosenzweig, like nearly everyone else with their education and background, not only inherited ideas about the primacy of diachrony, the focus on roots, and an etymologizing approach to language, but they also absorbed the notion of *Einheit* "unity" that occurred very prominently in nineteenth-century linguistic ideologies. Foley (2005, 157) defines linguistic ideology as "that cluster of beliefs that a particular speech community holds about the form and function of language." As an influential example of such a linguistic ideology, Foley mentions the emergence of ideas about language in the context of German Romanticism and nationalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries:

> These beliefs were clearly articulated by the German Romantic philosopher Herder, who argued for an essential correlation between the language of a community and their mind or spirit (German *Geist*). This was part of a wider German nationalist project of the 18th and 19th centuries, to forge a unified German nation-state from numerous principalities and kingdoms of central Europe that were German speaking and this led to a triple equation: the culture of a people is essentially correlated with the language they speak and in turn should ideally correspond to a nation-state. (Foley 2005, 157)

Every people or *Volk,* homogeneously and "purely" construed in an essentialistic manner, had its own distinctive *Geist,* a spirit expressed in and reflected by their language or *Sprache*. The German *Volk* had a German *Geist,* obviously, and their very own *Sprachgeist*. The same was true of the ancient Hebrew language, and it was the task of the translator to try to preserve the unity of the Hebrew language form and Hebrew worldview. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the ancient Hebrew *Geist* was generally supposed to be primordial, concrete, and holistic rather than abstract and analytic. Because of the unity of *Geist* and *Sprache* scholars of those days looked for evidence of this concreteness and holism in the ancient Hebrew language. Pedersen (1926, 113), for example, saw the so-called construct state of Hebrew nouns in genitival constructions as evidence for this concreteness and holism, with possessor and possessed being one (see Baayen 1990, 13). The idea of Hebrew concreteness is still very much alive in recent translations of the Bible in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition, and crucially affects the way body-based metaphors are translated (see the example of Oussoren (2004) in the section "Romantic Bibles after the Second World War").

Buber-Rosenzweig and German Interbellum philosophy. Although born in the nineteenth century and exposed to nineteenth-century philosophies and ideologies when educated as philosophers (Schmidt 1995), Buber and Rosenzweig related to that heritage in the terms and frameworks of their own time. When they worked together on their translation and wrote lengthy philosophical treatises on translation, language, religion, identity, and many other topics, it was the time of the Interbellum in Germany. The trauma of the lost First World War had eroded many absolute truths and

certainties of earlier generations, in religion and philosophy. Heidegger gave expression to this Interbellum climate with a philosophy that left no longer left any room for absolute truths beyond time and place. The starting point and foundation of any philosophy could only be the temporal existence in the historical here-and-now of the individual, the *Dasein*, an existential ontology that broke with nineteenth-century absolute metaphysical foundations of philosophy in an anti-idealistic and relativistic climate (Gordon 2003). Van der Louw (2006, 5) also points to the connections between Buber and Heidegger, for example in the emphasis on the existential function of language, but also in a shared focus on roots and etymology.

Buber and Rosenzweig translated the tetragrammaton JHWH with personal pronouns in small capitals (ICH, DU, IHM). This was a daring and completely novel translation that broke with all traditions, but it was also a translation that violated one of their own core principles—the oral–aural dimension—because the repetition of the Name could not be heard in their translation. To understand this very peculiar feature, it is important to realize that a number of elements come together in this translation decision (van der Louw 2006): core themes of Romantic translation ideals (experiencing the other in the translation), general nineteenth-century approaches to language and meaning (etymology, *Ur* meaning located in roots), and Interbellum existential ontology (experiencing the Name in your individual *Dasein* "being-there," and connecting the Name to your own existence in the temporality of here and now). First, Buber–Rosenzweig analyzed "God-with-us in our existence" as the etymological *Tiefsinn* of JHWH. Then they looked hard to find a rendering that made the listener (listening reader) existentially experience that deep meaning, hidden below the surface in the root: "Es galt, eine Wiedergabe zu finden, die in dem hörenden Leser ein jener aus den Namen zuströmenden Gewissheit verwandtes Gefühl erzeugt, das Bei-ihnen-, Bei-uns-sein Gottes nicht begrifflich aussagt, sondern gegenwartlich verleiht."[2] Gordon, in his review of the translation of the tetragrammaton and of a

[2] "It was pertinent to find a rendering that evokes in the listening reader a feeling akin to the certainty that flows out of the Name, a rendering that does not spell out the 'with-you,' 'with-us-being of God' conceptually but evokes its presence." Translation mine.

number of other translation decisions, concludes that "these translation choices rehearse a similar philosophic polemic. They assert the superiority of a worldly ontology while criticizing the attempt to seize upon a realm of ideas beyond time and the world" (Gordon 2003, 266).

This break with nineteenth-century German idealism and with its grounding of philosophy in transcendental absolute notions and this adoption of the relative perspective of the individual in the temporal, physical existence, in the here-and-now, reminds us that Buber and Rosenzweig dealt selectively with the Interbellum, the heritage of nineteenth-century Germany, as children of their time. Another significant break with the nineteenth century is their antidiachronic approach to biblical texts. Whereas they are still diachronic and focused on etymology and *Ur* meanings of roots in their analysis of *words*, when it comes to *texts* Buber and Rosenzweig break with the diachronic, historical–critical heritage of nineteenth-century Germany that analyzed Hebrew biblical texts in their historical growth, as composite, inconsistent texts that contained pieces of different traditions and origins. The composite nature and inconsistencies are not so much denied by Buber and Rosenzweig, but they approach biblical texts as literary units, as shaped by a coherent final redaction. Biblical texts are approached in ahistorical fashion, as autonomous, self-referential worlds-of-words to which close reading techniques should be applied to find the hidden meaning of the texts, detached from the historical contexts in which these Hebrew texts originally functioned.

Buber–Rosenzweig and the rabbis.

Buber and Rosenzweig connected the heritage of nineteenth-century Germany as they understood it in the philosophical climate of Interbellum Germany with theological thoughts about the *Einheit* of the Hebrew Scriptures and about the unity of the Hebrew canon and traditional rabbinic readings that creatively linked Hebrew roots, words, and phrases in very different parts of the Hebrew Bible. Buber and Rosenzweig believed that the Hebrew Bible was a unity, one Book, the result of an *Einheitsbewusstsein* "awareness of unity" (Buber 1964, 1113) that was already operative in Scripture itself before it was canonized (Schravesande 2009, 262–263).

Beneath the surface of the different Hebrew sacred writings there was one divine Voice. But how could disillusioned and skeptical modern Germans experience this Voice, listen to it, in their concrete individual existence here and now, in their *Dasein*? Buber believed that in all humans, Jews and others, there was an openness for the Voice that could be heard by modern people when Scripture was called out and God would enter the existence, the temporality of individuals, through their ears (van der Louw 2006, 4).

This brings us to the notion of *Gesprochenheit* "spokenness," the oral–aural *Urwort* dimension of Buber and Rosenzweig. According to Everett Fox (1995, x), "Buber and Rosenzweig based their approach on the Romantic nineteenth-century notion that the Bible was essentially oral literature written down." This is indeed different from postwar notions of spokenness of Scripture in (Neo-)Romantic Bible translations that view the Bible as written literature but written to be read aloud, to be listened to. For Buber and Rosenzweig, the ultimate reality of the Hebrew Bible does not reside in the written form; rather, the written form is the prison from which the spoken *Ur*-reality must be freed. This liberation takes place when people start to listen to the Voice that breathes and speaks in the fundamentally oral Hebrew Bible. This is why colometric structuring of the texts is so crucial. Buber and Rosenzweig divided the Hebrew text into colons, units that could be spoken in one *Atemzug* "draw of breath," and that they saw as breath units and meaning units at the same time (Buber 1964, 1176–1177). Colometric structuring is a distinctive characteristic of all translations in the tradition of Buber and Rosenzweig. However, not all translations use sound criteria (pause, breath, musical notations, the *nota distinctivi* and *conjunctivi* of the Masoretes). Instead, syntactic criteria are also used to find the colons.

This fragmentation of the translated text into small breath units is no threat to the underlying Voice or unitary *Botschaft* "message" because the *Einheitsbewusstsein* "awareness of unity" operative in Scripture creates an intertextual web of audible linkages between these breath units, by repetition of words and roots, not just within one literary unit, say a psalm or a book, but also across the whole canon (Buber 1964, 1177). These *Leitworte*, or repeated leading words and roots, are a dialogic encounter within Scriptures themselves: words in totally different books en-

counter each other and in doing so create meaning. The listener, in turn, hears the repetitions, ponders on their links, and by doing so becomes partner in, and is drawn into, the inner Scriptural dialogue. He or she then listens to the Voice, the underlying unity in the Hebrew Bible, in a real and direct encounter where the Voice speaks to the listener in his or her existence, then-and-there. The *Leitwort* analysis of Buber–Rosenzweig, in other words, combines literary aspects with theological motives, the unity of Scriptures, and the unity of canon and rabbinic reading traditions. But also philosophical themes of the Interbellum (the *Leitworte* speak existentially to the listeners) and Romantic themes of direct experience (the *Leitworte* speak directly to the listener who thus experiences the Voice) are part of the *Leitwort* approach. No wonder that the *Leitworte* became the cornerstone of the Romantic tradition in Bible translation.

Romantic Bibles after the Second World War.

Buber and Rosenzweig found many followers in Europe and America. Their ideas were applied in many Bible translations and in very different national, theological, and cultural contexts. It is a living tradition that still inspires new translations all over the world.

Europe, after the Second World War, had to come to terms with the Holocaust and the destruction of Jewish communities in their midst. At the same time, Christian theologians rediscovered the Jewish nature of the Bible, including the New Testament, and the rich heritage of rabbinic exegesis and hermeneutics. This tendency to rediscover the Jewish nature of the Bible had its roots before the war, but gained momentum after the war. The Jewish aspect of the Buber and Rosenzweig tradition is emphasized in all postwar literature and it is a recurrent theme in prefaces to translations. At the same time there is an almost total silence on their German philosophical and ideological background.

It was not just the rediscovery of the Bible as a Jewish collection of writings and of the richness of rabbinic reading traditions that created a favorable climate for the reception of Buber and Rosenzweig. The emphasis on *Leitworte*, and more generally on the oral–aural dimension, pointed to the Bible as literature. This literary aspect had a strong appeal, especially since it seemed to

offer an alternative, or a complement to, the historical–critical approach. The endeavor of Buber and Rosenzweig to let the translation speak directly and existentially to listening readers—modern, skeptical, and disillusioned after two horrible world wars—also had its appeal, providing ancient words with new meaningfulness. The positive reception of Buber–Rosenzweig in postwar Europe is in remarkable contrast to the negative, or at best mixed, reception of their translation in the Interbellum (van der Louw 2006, 3; Rosenwald 1994, 141–165).

Two types of Bible translations can be distinguished within the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition in postwar Europe and America: the first type is radical in its application of the inherited principles and translation strategies (e.g. Chouraqui in France, Oussoren in the Netherlands); and the second type selectively applies these principles and strategies, adapting the tradition for new contexts and new purposes (e.g. Everett Fox in the USA, *Societas Hebraica* translations in the Netherlands). The second type is still recognizable as fruit of the tradition initiated by Buber and Rosenzweig because, first, they explicitly place themselves in that tradition in the paratexts of their translations and, second, they share a number of properties with the more radical translations, namely the emphasis on the oral–aural dimension, colometric text divisions, translations at root level, verbally consistent or concordant translation of *Leitworte*, a striking tendency of elimination of Hebrew and Greek conjunctions in translation (van der Louw 2006, 13), and "folk etymological" name translations.

The translation by Everett Fox (1995), a moderate and pragmatic American follower of Buber and Rosenzweig, exemplifies these shared properties. The translation starts in the preface with a quote from Buber and mentions Buber and Rosenzweig as sources of inspiration. But the preface also explains that the translation deals selectively with that inheritance: it emphasizes the literary and sound dimensions. The translation divides the text into colons, translates Hebrew names according to the folk etymological associations that the sound of the name had in the ears of ancient Hebrews (e.g. Yaakov/Heel-Holder, Yisrael/God-Fighter), translates at root level (e.g. Leviticus 1: 2 "When (one) among you brings near a near-offering for YHWH"), translates away Hebrew connectives (see example below in the section "Romantic and Refor-

mation Literalism"), and is very sensitive to repeated *Leitworte* (see example of *jad* "hand," below in this section).

The fact that radical and moderate translations share these features does not mean that there are no differences in the approach to these shared features. Of course, it is hard to separate the literary from the other aspects in this tradition (Benjamin 2007), but it seems possible to say that moderate postwar translators in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition tend to emphasize the literary aspect and literary motivations, taking smaller literary units into account. They base their translation decisions less on theological or philosophical views of the Bible as a whole, and sometimes explicitly mention literary approaches in the preface (e.g. Robert Alter) as an inspirational source alongside Buber and Rosenzweig.

The differences between moderate and radical postwar Romantic Bibles are found in the following areas. In terms of the translational approach to word meanings, radical translations maintain the nineteenth-century idea of root meanings, where the sense of a word that was historically basic tends to prevail in the translation whereas moderate translations are more sensitive to the synchronic meanings of words in different contexts. For example, the moderate Everett Fox translates שָׂפָה in Exodus 2: 3 with *shore* (of the Nile), the contextual sense, but the Dutch translator Oussoren translates this with *lip* "lip" according to its root meaning (*de lip van de Stroom* "the lip of the Stream," see Dubbink 2008, 1659).

In terms of lexical register, radical translations have an exoticizing, eccentric register (neologisms, archaisms, rare words) whereas moderate translations have a much less exotic, much more neutral register. To illustrate the etymologizing and eccentric lexical register of postwar radical translations we will consider some examples from the French translation by Chouraqui (1974). He translates Genesis 1:1 with "Entête Elohîms créait les ciels et la terre." *Entête* is an etymologizing translation based on the etymological relation between רֵאשִׁית and ר׳אשׁ "head." It is rather eccentric French, and other versions have *au commencement*. Chapter 1 of Revelation in the version of Chouraqui is another good example of exoticising lexical choices:

> 1 Découvrement de Iéshoua', le messie: Elohîms le lui donne pour montrer à ses serviteurs ce qui doit arriver vite.

Il le signifie en l'envoyant par son messager à son serviteur Iohanan.

2 Il témoigne du logos d'Elohîms
et du témoignage de Iéshoua' le messie, de ce qu'il a vu

4 [...] grâce et paix [...] des sept souffles qui sont en faces de son trône

8 Moi, je suis l'aleph et le tav, dit IHVH Elohîms, l'Étant et le Venant, Elohîms Sebaots

Chouraqui uses transliterations from the Greek (verse 2, *logos*) and inserts Hebrew words where the source text has Greek words (verse 8, *aleph, tav, IHVH,* Elohîms, Sebaots). The radical emphasis on the Jewish background of the New Testament leads to an equation of Jewishness and Hebrew, without much regard for the Jewish–Greek and LXX background. *Découvrement* in verse 1 is an etymologizing translation of ἀποκαάλυψις, used here in the metaphorical sense of "revelation," but translated according to its etymological *Ur* meaning by Chouraqui. The combined effect of these lexical choices is a strong foreignization.

Another striking characteristic of a number of postwar radical translations is the translation of Hebrew imperfect and Greek aorist verbs in narrative contexts with present tenses, to give an effect of direct experience, where moderate translations have the more traditional past tense renderings. Notice for example the present tense translation of the Greek aorist verbs in verses 1 and 2 of Revelation 1 in Chouraqui's version quoted above in this section. In Genesis 1: 4 (and elsewhere), Chouraqui uses the present tense ("Elohîms voit la lumière: quel bien!") where more moderate translators such as Everett Fox use past tenses to render the Hebrew imperfects in such contexts ("God saw the light: that it was good.").

The difference between moderate postwar translations and radical translations also clearly shows in the approach to conventionalized biblical body metaphors such as *panim (lifne)* that synchronically often have the abstract meaning of a preposition rather than the more concrete, physical meaning. Following Buber and Rosenzweig, radical translators translate these lexical metaphors throughout the canon with words denoting body parts (such as *face*), to reflect the *Ur* worldview ascribed to the ancient Hebrews

and to do justice to the perceived unity of Scripture based on that one concrete, physical, nondichotomous Hebrew worldview ascribed to both the Old and the New Testament. For example, in Numbers 27: 22, Chouraqui translates לִפְנֵי twice with *faces* ("Il le fait se tenir faces à El'azar, le desservant, et faces à toute la communauté") where moderate translators such as Everett Fox translate with *before* ("he had him stand before El'azar the priest, and before the entire community").

The Dutch radical translator Oussoren motivates this consistent etymologizing translation of *panim/lifne* with archaic Dutch terms for face (*aanschijn*, *aangezicht*) on the basis of the "Hebrew worldview" in an interview published by Dubbink and van Willigenburg :

> De dingen en de natuur hebben in het Hebreeuws een lijf, een aanschijn. Dat is niet alleen maar een Hebreeuwse zegswijze, het drukt ook een visie uit op de wereld [...] Alles heeft een gelaat, een *ponem*. De dingen kijken je als het ware aan en doen een beroep op je. Je wordt aangezien, aangekeken en daarmee tot iets geroepen. (Dubbink and van Willigenburg 2007, 10)[3]

Moderate Bibles only translate such conventional metaphors as *panim* with *face* in selected passages where they see literary motivations at work in small text units, not as a default strategy based on motivations of etymology or Hebrew worldview. For example, the moderate translator Everett Fox translates Genesis 32:21–22, where Jacob has to "face" Esau and face is a literary *Leitwort*, as follows:

> I will wipe (the anger) from his face
> With the gift that goes ahead of my face;
> Afterward, when I see his face,
> Perhaps he will lift up my face
> The gift crossed over ahead of his face

[3] "Things and nature have a body in Hebrew, a face. That is not just a Hebrew way of saying things, it also expresses a worldview [...] All things have a face, a *ponem*. Things look at you, you might say, and appeal to you. You are being looked at, watched, and so you are called to something." Translation mine.

Conclusion and discussion

This part concludes the paper by placing the history of Bibles in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition in two broader contexts: first in the context of the history of Bible translation, contrasting Reformation alterity with its Romantic counterpart; second, taking the perspective of translation studies, in the context of the history of the translation of nonbiblical texts from antiquity, contrasting the different histories of "foreignness" in the translation of biblical texts compared to other texts from antiquity.

Romantic and Reformation Literalism.

Postwar translators and theologians who felt attracted to the tradition of Buber and Rosenzweig emphasized the importance of literalism, based on ideas of the Bible as literature, and based on the unity of form and meaning, of language and culture (*Sprachgeist*). This theme of literalism was reinforced when the ideas of Nida and other advocates of meaning-based, communicative, and dynamic Bible translations began to spread in America and Europe. Nida's ideas came under attack from two sides, from people who took traditional literal Reformation Bibles as their translation models, the authorized versions of the various Western languages, and on the other hand from people in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition of foreignizing literalism. This polemical postwar context also explains why people in the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition sometimes claimed that their approach basically continued Reformation literalism. For example, Breukelman, the most influential advocate of Buber and Rosenzweig in the Netherlands, writes that the seventeenth-century Dutch authorized version is "een zeventiende eeuwse Nederlandse Buber-Rosenzweig" (Breukelman and Hemelsoet 1985, 12).[4] In fact, Romantic and Reformation literalism are very different (van der Louw 2006), and it is in comparing the two that we get a much sharper picture of the nature of the Romantic tradition. The translational differences, not surprisingly, have their basis in the totally different theological, philosophical, and ideological environments of both traditions.

[4] "a seventeenth-century Dutch Buber–Rosenzweig." Translation mine.

The literalism of Reformation Bibles focuses on the level of words (Hof 2009). And in their approach to words, the diachronic and etymologizing bias of the nineteenth century is absent. Units below the word level—roots and stems—are not significant units of translation, unlike in Romantic Bibles. In fact, translating repeated key *roots* (*Leitwortstil* at root and stem level) often makes it impossible to translate repeated key *words* with the same words (*Leitwortstil* at word level). For example, the Dutch translator Oussoren translates the repeated root αγγέλ in Mark 1 with words containing the root *aankondig* "announce," for example in verse 1 εὐαγγελίου becomes *aankondiging* "announcement," ἄγγελόν in verse 2 *aankondiger* "announcer," and the ἄγγελοι in verse 13 become *aankondig-engelen* "announce-angels." But in other passages in the gospel of Mark, where the root αγγέλ is not repeated, Oussoren translates *euanggelion* with "evangelie." Reformation translators would have been shocked to find words like *euanggelion* and *anggeloi* translated in varying ways rather than with one and the same word.

Notice that translating repeated roots does not just destroy word level concordance but also forces translators to create new words and word combinations and leads to novel uses of existing words (*aankondig-engelen* and *aankondiger* are neologisms in Dutch). This abundant use of neologisms is characteristic of the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition and contributes to the exotic lexical register (especially in combination with archaisms). Neologisms make the text sound foreign and strange, an advantage when you want to stress otherness, but a disadvantage for Reformation translators with their emphasis on perspicuity.

Reformation Bibles (especially Calvinistic Bibles) have reversed priorities from Romantic Bibles as far as literalism goes (van der Louw 2006), and these reversed priorities have been described as follows. For Romantic literalism this is the priority list: 1) root and word concordance (stereotyping); 2) maintaining word order; 3) maintaining parts of speech; and 4) maintaining the number of words (quantitative alignment). For Reformation literalism the priorities are: 1) quantitative alignment; 2) maintaining parts of speech; 3) maintaining word order; and 4) word concordance (especially of theologically crucial words), where root concordance is not relevant at all (see van der Louw 2006).

The importance of word-level equivalence made quantitative alignment of words a central principle in Reformation Bibles. In fact, the Word of God amounted very much to the (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) *words* of God. And words in translation that did not correspond to Hebrew or Greek words were undesired because of verses such as Revelation 22: 18–19 (King James Version):

18* For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

That is why the following Rule of Translation was added to the translation principles section of the Synod of Dordrecht (1618–1619) that guided the Dutch authorized version, the Statenvertaling (1637):

II. Dat zij, om den zin van den tekst, die niet ten volle uitgedrukt is, te vervullen, zoo weinig woorden daarbij doen als mogelijk is, en deze in den tekst met eene andere letter, en tusschen haakjes besluiten, opdat ze van de woorden van den tekst mogen onderscheiden worden.[5]

The principle of quantitative alignment forces Reformation translators to translate all conjunctions and connectives in Hebrew and Greek. Consider for example Genesis 1:2–3 in the King James Version:

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Buber and Rosenzweig omit these conjunctions on a grand scale in their translation, for example:

[5] "That they, to complete the meaning of the text, that has not been expressed fully, add as few words as possible, and print these with a different letter and between brackets that they are distinguished from the words of the text." Translation mine.

2 Die Erde aber war Irrsal und Wirrsal.
Finsternis über Urwirbels Antlitz.
Braus Gottes schwingend über dem Anlitz der Wasser.
3 Gott sprach: Licht werde!

Everett Fox likewise omits the connective elements:

2 When the earth was wild and waste,
Darkness over the face of Ocean,
Rushing-spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters,
3 God said: Let there be light!

This implicitation of Hebrew and Greek conjunctions in translations of the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition is not limited to Genesis 1 but occurs in all text types and, together with colometric formatting, causes a kind of "poetification" of the Bible (van der Louw 2006), a tendency to neutralize source genres and to translate biblical texts in a kind of uniform poetic style. Reformation translators saw the Hebrew and Greek conjunctions and connectives as inspired words of God, not to be omitted. They are much more literal in this respect than the Bibles of the Buber–Rosenzweig tradition.

Foreignization is not a desirable aim but an unintended side effect in Reformation Bibles (because of the combination of *inspiratio* and *perspicuitas* hermeneutics, de Vries 2003). Reformation Bibles added marginal notes to translations to mitigate foreignness and did not insert foreignness when not forced to do so by source patterns, unlike Romantic Bibles that may add foreignness to create an experience of otherness, for example Buber's translation of perfectly normal Hebrew words from a neutral register with rare, strange, and eccentric German words (see the examples given above such as *wajjomer* rendered as *er sprach* rather than *er sagte* "he said," *buk* "baked," an old German form of the verb rather than the unmarked German form *backte*, not *Schwiegersöhne* for sons-in-law but the rare word *Eidame*, and so on).

Romantic literalism employs novel transliteration of "untranslatable" Hebrew and Greek words as a regular translation strategy, but this is avoided by Reformation literalism. Reformation Bibles refrain from that translation strategy because it clashes with

their perspicuity hermeneutics (the idea being that God not only speaks in his Word, or *inspiratio*, but that He speaks in principle clearly, or *perspicuitas*). In Leviticus 14:13, Everett Fox translates as follows:

> Then he is to slay the lamb in the place where one slays the *hattat*-offering and the offering-up, in a holy place, for like the *hattat*-offering, the *asham*-offering is the priest's, it is a holiest holy portion.

The King James Version has:

> And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy.

In Leviticus 13:44, Everett Fox has "he is a man with *tzaraat*, he is *tamei*," and the King James Version has "he is a leprous man, he is unclean." Above we saw other examples such as the use of logos in Revelation 1:2 by Chouraqui ("Il témoigne du logos d'Elohîms").

The fundamental difference between Reformation foreignness and Romantic foreignness resides in the fact that the foreignness of Reformation Bibles is the unintended result of inspiration beliefs, the Bible being viewed as inspired by the Holy Spirit, word by word, forcing translators to be very literal at the word level. The principle of the perspicuity of Scriptures and the ideal of lay hermeneutics formed a counterforce, mitigating the effects of the *inspiratio* doctrine on the translation. But when *inspiratio* and *perspicuitas* clash, it is inspiration that prevails in the translation decisions. They tried to translate as clearly as possible within the (narrow) boundaries set by the holy inspiration doctrine. Adding "unnecessary" foreignness as Romantic translators often do, for example by employing a difficult and eccentric lexical register to create a sense of alterity in the reader, is therefore alien to Reformation literalism.

Homer and the Bible: separate histories of foreignness.

According to Venuti (2008), the German Romantic emphasis on foreignization was a break with the fluency tradition in translation of texts from antiquity into French and English in seventeenth

and eighteenth centuries. It is important to note that, as a general rule, this fluency tradition did not extend to the Bible in the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. Although the works of Homer, Ovid, and the Bible are all texts from antiquity, Bible translation history followed very different paths in those centuries compared to the history of translation of other texts from antiquity such as Homer or Ovid. Venuti (2008) emphasizes the dominance of domestication in early modern and modern translation history, and for him people like Schleiermacher and Newman were dissidents, counter voices. But the kind of far-reaching domestication that Venuti observes in the translation of classical texts in English and French was as a general rule unacceptable in that period in Bible translations until Nida's dynamic equivalence.

Of course, this does not mean that the history of Bible translation before Nida never saw relatively free translations of the Bible that deviated from the literal norm of most religious communities. The eighteenth century, for example, saw a number of such free translations of the Bible but these are exceptional—they were criticized by contemporaries for their free character, they had not been commissioned by church or state authorities, did not have a liturgical skopos but were made by individual scholars as study Bibles to complement, but not replace, authorized versions. Examples are relatively free Bible translations of enlightened scholars in the eighteenth century, often with notes, to enlighten a broad public and linked to new ideas of historical-critical scholarship, for example Harwood's extremely domesticating English of 1768 and van Hamelsveld's Dutch translation of 1796 (van Eijnatten 2003).

If anything, literalism was the norm in Bible translation, with the authorized versions as translation models, especially for Bibles intended for use in liturgical contexts. Luther's translation, often said to be communicative and free, in fact squarely falls within the parameters of Reformation literalism (van der Louw 2006). Luther got his undeserved reputation for fluency because of one quote that is always repeated and because his theology occasionally got the better of him, and this led to infamous translations such as the addition of *allein* "only" in Romans 3:28. Van der Louw (2006, 1) points out that the often repeated statement by Luther that one should consult housewives, children, and common people talking in marketplaces and translate accordingly, disagrees both with

his translation practice and his other statements, where he explains why he translated in the high written style of the chancelleries (van der Louw 2006, 1).

The most important reason why Luther was ascribed a fluent and naturalizing translation approach is probably the same reason why adherents of Romantic literalism such as Breukelman (see above) claimed that their approach was followed by the translators of the Reformation: both literalists and antiliteralists looked for authorities in the Bible translation past to back them up. Defenders of Nida's dynamic equivalence certainly needed authorities of the Reformation to back up their position in the polemics of the day and the one Luther quote about the language of the markets and the streets did the job to paint Luther as dynamic equivalent *avant la lettre*.

In fact, Nida and Schleiermacher shared the role of dissidents, of counter voices, each in their own contexts. Schleiermacher and other German Romantic thinkers came up against a dominant norm of fluency in the translation of classical texts, and Nida fought for the right to translate fluently in a world where Bibles were expected to be literal, to be foreign, and to be far removed from everyday language.

The doom of domestication.

The history of foreignness in the translation of the Bible is deeply ironic because the harder and the more consciously translators tried either to domesticate the Bible and reduce its foreignness or to exoticize it and enhance its foreignness, the more their efforts yielded opposite results.

Consciously communicating the otherness of the Bible in a translation requires that the translator first of all identify what the very otherness or foreignness actually is and where it resides, it requires a theorization and locating of the otherness of the Bible. But of course this understanding and theorizing of the Hebrew or Greek otherness and individuality can only be done in domestic terms. This is the "doom" of domestication: even when translators try to convey the otherness of the Bible in translation, they understand this alterity in the terms of their own time and background and they communicate this otherness in terms that their contemporary audiences can relate to.

Buber and Rosenzweig are a good example of how theorizing alterity can only be done in domestic terms and how this forms a back door through which domestication sneaks back into the house of the translation that it was forced to leave through the front door. Buber and Rosenzweig understood and constructed the otherness of the Hebrew Bible and Hebrew language in the domestic frameworks of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Germany (for example, a diachronic view of language, root etymology, *Sprachgeist*, Romantic orality theory, essentialistic constructions of ancient Hebrew *Geist* as holistic, concrete, nondichotomous) that they had absorbed during their academic education. The irony of *Die Schrift* is that the very passages meant to evoke Hebraic otherness in fact strongly evoke Germany, in the sense that they evoke how nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German intellectuals constructed Hebraic alterity. It was this layer of inscription of domestic German ideologies in the translation that was perceived by contemporaries of Buber and Rosenzweig such as Kracauer when he talked about *völkische Romantik* (see above). Precisely because the foreignness in Reformation Bibles such as the Dutch *Statenvertaling* was the result of inspiration doctrines and not the result of consciously trying to convey a theorized alterity in the translation, the foreignness of Reformation Bibles is more "innocent" and lacks the strong domestic scent left behind by the "ideologized" alterity of Romantic translations of the Bible.

The same irony is visible in the history of the conscious and methodical domesticating of the Bible in translation. Domesticating translations try to suppress foreignness but the result is a very sharp contrast between the fluent text of the Bible translation and the "weirdness" of the persons, events, attitudes, and cultural practices denoted by the fluent text (de Jong 2012). This contrast evokes and enhances the experience of foreignness in the reader. This is an effect comparable to cross-dressing macho men: the female clothing and make up, however perfect and natural, emphasize rather than hide the underlying irrepressible masculinity.

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