

by SCOTT MALBY

## Miss Translation

1. For some time I have been interested in the art of translation regarding the development of a poetic critique that denies the supremacy of its own construction and in that denial both challenges and reaffirms the supremacy of the specific work of art itself. Is it really possible to demonstrate by example when it comes to translation? Is there any other way? Remember that a translation is always a product of something else. Only by actual immersion in the translative creative process can one come to any kind of adequate understanding regarding what is being talked about here. The truth may be that only the new can be created because of the problems inherent in the creative act as it pertains to human consciousness.

2. In the Jungian scum pond of creative expression anything is possible and everything is a question of translation. The water is both murky and deep. It is filled with fascinating viruses of which three shall be identified. For the sake of this explication we can label them as History, Identity and Meaning.

3. These viruses are transmitted by way of an active archetypal process that moves from the original artist through the work being translated and finally to the perceiver. This triadic contamination is also perceived as a hierarchy in the viruses and carriers themselves.

4. The sickness manifests itself as a search for both value and significance under the guise of a faithful translation. Immunity is neither possible nor desirable. The cure is intuitively understood by most of us as being worse than the disease because the only effective vaccine would be a lethal dose of non-translation which though desired by some, can be viewed as both a denial and anti-choice that transcends the anarchy of the problem under consideration. Can the only responsible conclusion to the quandary of translation be that is impossible to achieve?

5. The point is not to seek a cure for the problem but to learn how to benefit from the \*high\* the pathogens engender as a consequence or side effect of the

disease. In a sense both language and art may be viewed as a product of aberrations, the unintended consequence of consciousness. All art is a form of translation or process by which the intermediary manifests itself. The intermediary of course is represented by the triadic process mentioned earlier.

6. What makes this issue fundamentally difficult is that the disease of creative consciousness is aware and continually re-contaminating both itself and what it comes into contact with. This quirky and unintended consequence is here defined as individuality. Can individuality be negated or subordinated during the act of translation?

7. So far no philosophy or theory has been able to develop an adequate filter. There have been many attempts. These attempts are usually suffixed by political, artistic or literary \*isms\*. New Criticism, Marxism, Nationalism, Communism, National Socialism, Realism and Surrealism are just a few of the many examples, each further compounding the disease in their own unique way. Their primary characteristic is a symbolic castration or \*surrender of will\* leading to a denial of the very transformational process and contradictions that make the problem so important in the first place.

8. Art may be viewed not as a vehicle regarding the search for beauty and truth but the bio-chemical manifestation or discharge of a pathogenic condition which is both obsessive and insane at the same time, propagating itself faster than we can reason through it, making all translation fundamentally impossible.

9. Is translation possible or isn't it? Here's the rub for how can one commit to either there is or there isn't when there can't even be a definitive yes or know. A sentence is jailed time. Time evolves, it never is. If such is the case there is no reason to pursue the argument further. All we have to do is return to the beginning again. Thus, an in-exhaustive loop of self-reflection is established that serves as the bedrock for further art criticism caught in the process of this translation becoming an art form in itself.

**Sting of the Be; Beyond the Postmodern Aesthetic**  
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\*If looking for guidance and you're unable to find it, you may be looking in the wrong place.\* - Paolo Honorificas

\*I knocked and the door opened, but I found I'd been knocking from the inside.\*  
- Jalaluddin Rumi

1. Significant Art begins and ends in the form of an Inner Dialog. If Significant Art were a color it would be found hibernating in the depths of an unnamed translucent pigment; fantastical, mythic and heathen.
2. Significant Art is a conversation carried on when the ghost of yourself witnesses itself caught in the act of attempting to give directions to a destination that can't be reached. And what of significance?
3. Significance is an elusive bitch balancing her front paws on your chest while baring her fangs in your face. An iridescent wolf panting in your ear. Tumbling after bones of light. She knocks the air out of you. After an encounter with her you itch for days.
4. Reaching for Artistic Significance is not an intellectual act. It is not an emotional act. It is not a physical act. It's all of these combined and much more. It has social as well as individual dimensions. It involves the creative, positive side of ourselves. It is both conservative and liberal. The killer curse of our negative abilities is a well known cosmic joke. What most restricts us are the destructive qualities rising out of unchallenged authority.
5. We compartmentalize. We define. We separate from the whole. We bake the dough of restrictive definitions and techniques like a pizza in the oven of our minds then throw that postmodern soufflé like a Frisbee into the mouth of the universe, expecting it to return to us carried by a host of fawning, subservient angels. The reality is that life is part Goya. It could care less. It eats people alive.

6. The Inner Dialog is that conversation that mediates. It whispers to you that what you're doing or experiencing is worthwhile.

7. It mediates between the simulacrum of a disheveled Humanitas trapped in a crosswalk staring up at an eighteen wheeler plastered with signs on global warming, extinction, environmental degradation and genocide. That cosmic leviathan of retribution is careening toward us. It's of our own making. There is little room to escape.

8. That jet stream that is the Inner Dialog is all about alternatives. Great gulps of air. It was not discovered by Homo sapiens. It helped to make Homo sapiens up. It allows for altering the focus of awareness.

9. The Inner Dialog flies at the speed of thought. It offers us a ringside seat. In it is a hallway leading back to the womb where cells communicate with other cells and when we finally erupt into birth, our Inner Dialog continues to fly through turbulence. Every child is born with wings but too often its genius is surgically removed.

10. As we grow the Inner Dialog gains altitude. As we master new skills it provides mental accommodations in which to practice those skills. We are imperfect and finite, flying by the seat of our pants, caught up in the process of processing itself, seeking a balance and equilibrium that doesn't exist. Often, the Inner Dialog can seem like a dynamic of burps, of fits and starts. Deepak Chopra said, \*There are no accidents...there is only some purpose that we haven't yet understood.\*

11. The Inner Dialog is a constant physical, emotional and intellectual dance through the air of all poetic possibilities, like gliding through an auditorium whose shape is constantly changing as if responding to the rhythm of the dance itself.

12. The Inner Dialog is both intuitive and symbolic. It can be perceived as influenced by and generating useable symbols such as color, meaning, form, sound and language. The propensity toward the symbolic as a form of interaction is innate. It exists prior to acculturation. Humanities predisposition

toward symbolic language is genetic. Art is that act of transformation transforming space, creating symbolic juxtapositions through the medium of the Inner Dialog. There, even Capitalism is welcomed as it continually transforms itself into something else.

13. The Inner Dialog is universal. It is found in individuals from every culture and economic levels. We need never fear regarding the value and continued importance of poetry and art in the life of a society. As it relates to art, the difficulty comes in attempting to describe artistic significance sufficient to define its culturally transcendent characteristics without crashing or burning up in the flames we ignite.

14. What differentiates a successful work of art from an unsuccessful one? Is Shakespeare untranslatable? Are critics valuable? Are Neruda and Eliot mutually contradictory and exclusive? Are their techniques and approaches contradictory or are their visions already imbedded in each of us before birth? And what of Picasso? What was his first language of choice?

15. On the social and political level, have we succeeded in messing everything up so irretrievably that no remedy is available?

16. Observe an untrained person involved in an Inner Dialog. They talk to themselves. There, the language of the mind and the language of the body reflect many of the important characteristics of creative art. You will find rhythm, concrete particularizations, pace, meaning, emotion, emphasis, reasoning and often, forms of rhyme. In every doodle there is a poem suggesting the possibility of a deeper other. In every poem there is an oil painting attempting to redefine space. In every corporate clone of a clown there is an authentic person struggling to come out of their parasitical Globalist shell.

17. The artist is in each of us. We use the language of symbols to transliterate. We represent or paint in the characters of an archetypal alphabet of signification. More than technique is involved. Each worthwhile vision, painting or poem is a seeing, an experiencing, a communicating out of and back into the ears and eyes of a morphing presence, a shadow known as the Inner Dialog.

18. Significant Art emerges from an unexpected crisis of faith. A particular, inarticulate need for expression anchors itself in the incoherence of the random seeking structure and order. It changes our experience and when it enters our consciousness it is no longer dependent on its vehicle. It becomes part of us. We view it as a fresh and satisfying symbol of the universal condition pertaining to us in some particular and immediate way. It satisfies or terrifies us. It transliterates truth. It becomes part of and joins in the conversation pertaining to our own individual Inner Dialog.

19. Is it possible to have the skill and not the vision? To have a destination in mind but no flight plan? Is exceptional art always a failure in one way or another? Is great art a lucky accident? A freak? Abnormal and unique? How do we differentiate between the average and the superlative?

20. Through contact with and an understanding of the Inner Dialog these questions can be resolved on an individual level. Alexander Pope, William Blake, Dante, Monet and Einstein represent a poetic dichotomy and yet each were superlative artists of vision no temperamental vagaries of historical fashion can obscure. One can train oneself to Inner Dialog in such a way that a meaningful vision regarding artistic excellence can arise. Being in harmony with the Inner Dialog itself does not guarantee the creation of significant art. It's how you enter the dialog with it and what it does to you that counts. It's like training for a marathon that never ends.

21. The academic institutionalization of art through degrees guarantees an overabundance of competent instructors but in no way insures an increase in the excellence of the product produced. Nor does it facilitate the Inner Dialog experience. Why?

Consider Fats Waller's perceptive retort, \*Man, if you got to ask you'll never know.\*

22. The Inner Dialog is not about averages. It's not even primarily intellectual. It doesn't make a distinction between painter, inventor, director. It doesn't measure the azimuth of artistic accomplishment by degrees. It is singular and

unique and though it may lead to self-destructiveness or numerous dead ends, it ultimately represents an affirmation of life as a singular encountering entity rather than the institutionalization of any particular propaganda, theory or school.

23. All exceptional artists monitor the Inner Dialog. It has little to do with money or fame. The Inner Dialog and its paradoxes make way for the New. The Inner Dialog is not a thing in itself nor merely a necessary conduit allowing personal and artistic achievement to flow. Is there a phone number to call it up? Can we buy some? Is it available at a local health food store? No. It comes to us when certain conditions are met.

24. It is necessary to recognize it exists. It is necessary to have faith. There is no rigid formula.

25. It is necessary to free ourselves and it of extraneous encumbrances.

26. It is a timeless space but occupies no space at all. It is the fourth dimension. We must give to it the benefit of our doubts.

27. It flows in and out of consciousness. It must destroy before it can build.

28. Recognize in it the portal of creative focus recognizing that all art is three dimensional. It is that entity that provides the link to everything else. It is the way out of the maze of our own errors.

29. It absorbs us into itself so that we become a work of art ourselves. It offers us the chance to generate thinking different from everyone else.

30. It is the cusp of creativity and can only be described by analogy. Chagall knew what was necessary, \*You must feel the microbes of the universe in your belly....It can be manure or urine, no matter what, but you must feel it in your belly.\*

31. You know when you are joined. You sink into it even as you rise up from it. It is growth enhancing. It reintegrates all concepts of time into an agenda of

timelessness.

32. It is not a level though there are levels involved. It is not concentration, consciousness or interior reasoning but provides for them all.

33. When it comes to the creation of Significant Art the Inner Dialog is a 'to be continued' sign on the door of our psyche. And, to be sure, it is wise, deferring its meaning to the end. As Keats quipped in a letter, \*The excellence of every art is in its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate, from their being in close relationship with Beauty and Truth.\*

34. Hey! The questions of Beauty and Truth are back folks! The fact is they never left. We trashed them in favor of the angst of the postmodernist carnival of frenzy.