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***The Death of Virgil* and *The Sleepwalkers*: The Democratic-Pacifist Mission of Translation**

When Hermann Broch began the work of completing and publishing his first major literary work, the trilogy *Die Schlafwandler*, in the early 1930s, French and English were the two languages into which he wanted his work to be translated. A businessman by training, Broch was always writing his publishers with ideas for expanding his audience – a fact that led to suggestions on the languages, packaging and advertising of the trilogy and which often drove his editors and publishers, Daniel Brody and Georg Friedrich Meyer, to reprimand his efforts on such matters (Broch and Brody 1971, 31–32; 34).¹ Translation was also a part of his literary landscape in Central Europe and in Vienna; it informed his decision to publish *Die Schlafwandler* with the Rhein Verlag, the publisher of the German translation of *Ulysses* (KW 9/1, 92).² As the German-language market and audience shrank with the Nazi censorship of literature and the impact of forced exile, genocide, and war, translation became a means of economic survival for Broch. As a practitioner of the modernist novel, Broch positioned his German-language novels and his reflections on translation within an international literary and political context, as did the English-language translators of his major works *Die Schlafwandler* and *Der Tod des Vergil*, Edwin and Willa Muir and Jean Starr Untermeyer. In the post-war context of institutional and international peace building, translation and its relationship to nation and national culture became a topic that extended into a global context, and the field of translation became a professional and academic endeavor.

This article explores the translation of Broch's major interwar and post-war novels into English at this transitional moment of the twentieth century.³ It begins with an overview of Broch and his translators' work before exploring the ways in which this work laid the foundation for conversations on and explorations of innovation in modernism. It then turns to the ways in which the four authors –

1 Correspondence between Broch and Brody as well as Georg Friedrich Meyer is cited from *Briefwechsel 1930–1951* edited by Bertold Hack and Marietta Kleiß in 1971.

2 Hermann Broch's works are cited from the *Kommentierte Werkausgabe* published by Suhrkamp Verlag between 1974 and 1981 in Frankfurt am Main and edited by Paul Michael Lützeler; citations are labeled KW followed by volume and page numbers.

3 For more on the published translations of Broch's works in English, see Bartram et al. (2019, 237–256).

Broch, Edwin and Willa Muir, and Untermeyer – formulated ideas on translation and translation theory. For Broch and the Muirs, work on *Die Schlafwandler* was an endeavor in linguistic exploration and literary experimentation in the early 1930s, a modernist task. In the 1940s and later, however, this aesthetic task no longer seemed adequate in a post-Holocaust and post-war setting. With the work on *Der Tod des Vergil* and reflections on translation experiences into the 1960s, Broch, the Muirs, and Untermeyer turned to the political and ethical responsibility at stake in translation. Thus, these authors and their work on translation are embedded in the optimistic context of modernism, but through the risks and complexities of translation, they later place translation within a post-WWII political context of democracy. Bringing these two elements to existing scholarship shifts our attention away from these narratives of translation as conflicted or idealized experiences of understanding and empathy. They become a part of a larger global interest in literary translation as experimentation and creative production.

1 Broch and his Translators

As George Steiner (1992 [1975], 336) notes in his seminal work on hermeneutic translation *After Babel*, Broch was “extraordinarily fortunate” in his translators. In 1931, the Scottish couple Edwin and Willa Muir, the self-proclaimed “sort of translation factory” of German-language literature at the time, began work translating *Die Schlafwandler* (Muir 1968, 217). The job became the foundation of a friendship, as Broch continued his extensive correspondence with the couple, particularly Willa, even after the publication of *The Sleepwalkers*. The Muirs translated Broch’s next novel *Die Unbekannte Größe* [*An Unknown Quantity*] as well as a play and short stories. The friendship deepened and in 1938, thanks to their support, Broch was able to stay with them in St. Andrews, Scotland, on the way to exile in the US. The connection between the three broke off in the 1940s, however, and Broch was left to find a new translator for his *Tod des Vergil*.⁴ While in residence at the writers’ and artists’ colony Yaddo Springs in Saratoga, NY, in 1939, Broch met Jean Starr Untermeyer, who shared her translations of German poetry

4 The issue of the Muir’s rejection of Broch’s *Vergil* was of discussion in *The Times Literary Supplement* after a title page review of his collected works in 1963 suggested that they did not like the novel (Wilkins and Kaiser 1963, 210; Untermeyer 1963, 373). The Muirs were no longer translating German-language literature at the time *Der Tod des Vergil* was published in 1945 and had slowed down their pace of translation by 1940. In his *An Autobiography*, Edwin writes of a slowdown in translation due to the war (E. Muir 1968 [1954], 244), while Willa claims in *Belonging* that she did not care for *Vergil* and was too tired to translate it (W. Muir 1968, 200).

with him (Untermeyer 1965, 233). Impressed by those translations, Broch asked her to translate the elegies from his manuscript and so began their five-year-long translation process that ended in the simultaneous publication of *Der Tod des Vergil* and *The Death of Virgil* in 1945.

Both translation experiences were representative of a close and productive working relationship between author and translator. In both cases, the translators were working on their translation as the novel was being finished. To keep abreast of the changes and to maintain equivalences between the original and the translation, Broch sent meticulous information about changes he made to the manuscript. The translators were able to ask him about challenging sections of translation or request clarification on idiomatic phrases. This is best documented in the correspondence with the Muirs, whose letters from Scotland established their close working relationship. For example, Willa Muir began the correspondence with Broch with a question about the word “Götzzitat” (KW 13/1, 134). The Muirs, whose work in translation was based in an interest in contemporary German-language literature, did not recognize the reference to Goethe on the first page of *Esch oder die Anarchie*. Broch’s response is evasive, for he does not want to use improper language to describe a crass comment, so he points Willa to the right place in Goethe’s collected works. As humorous as this propriety is today, the exchange was also indicative of the interpretive comments he made when communicating with his Scottish colleagues, for he ends his letter with a quick: “gar so wichtig ist die Stelle nicht” (KW 13/1, 133). The topics of correspondence between the Muirs and Broch range widely from conversations about specific passages to detailed changes to the manuscript and included discussions about the theoretical foundation of the novels. All of this correspondence emphasizes Broch and his authority as author.

Broch’s authorial control became even more exacting when he worked with Untermeyer on *The Death of Virgil*, in part because he had had more experience with translation at the start of their project but also due to the complex personal relationship between Untermeyer and Broch. As she describes in her memoir *Private Collection* (Untermeyer 1965), and John Hargraves (2003) elaborates in his study of her *Nachlass*, Untermeyer and Broch were caught in a love affair that ended and yet transferred over into a fraught working relationship. The five-year translation process included arguments over their personal relationship to one another, challenges to each author’s health and well-being, and at times, base accusations with the intent to punish one another. Indeed, Hargraves prefaces his study of the conflicted relationship with a warning to translators wishing they could work with authors: “the case of Broch and Untermeyer represents a cautionary tale as to the vaunted advantages of working with a living poet” (2003, 217). While the two exchanged barbs over their intellectual and artistic capacities, they also spent hours going through the manuscript together to make sure that

the details of the translation were just right (KW 13/2, 335–36; Untermeyer 1965, 235).

The primacy of Broch as author and the importance of authorial intent is but one common assumption of translation that these relationships affirm. The Muirs and Untermeyer both valued the works they were translating. Willa makes that clear in her first letter to Broch referring to his “masterly work” (KW 13/1 134), and Untermeyer emphasizes the significance in comments such as “so important of a book” (1965, 234). For Broch, this support buoys him through intense work and writing processes. While Edwin haughtily maintained translation was “a secondary art” (Muir and Muir 1959, 93), Willa and Untermeyer emphasize the broader cultural and literary exchange as both intuitive and scientific. Upon the conclusion of the translations, Broch does not seem to agree with Edwin, however, for he is clear in his praise of both translations as literary accomplishments. *The Sleepwalkers*, he notes, should be translated back into German for it to be a good book (KW 13/1, 174), and he praises Untermeyer’s *Virgil* as a “piece of art” (KW 13/2, 446).

Both translation experiences were exceptional. Broch’s translators were published authors and poets before they chose to translate Broch’s works. Edwin was an established critic and had written his first novel *The Marionette* in 1927, while Willa’s first novel *Imagined Corners* appeared in 1931 when they began translating *Die Schlafwandler*. Edwin used his English literary connections and was able to publish their translation of Broch’s philosophical essay “The Disintegration of Values” in T.S. Eliot’s *Criterion* in 1932, the same year *The Sleepwalkers* was published (E. Muir 1932, 664–675). Willa was the linguist of the couple and spearheaded the management of their translation work, even translated works on her own.⁵ It was Edwin, though, and not Willa who published on Broch’s trilogy to broaden the audience of English-language modernism. The prominence of his work leads many scholars to assume that Edwin was the intellectual of the couple (Woods 2014, 45–46). Indeed, in *Criterion*, Willa was credited incorrectly for the translation as “Christina Muir” (E. Muir 1932, 675). As Michelle Woods explains in her study of the Muirs as translators of Kafka, Willa only later and only in her private journal became defensive and insistent upon her role as primary translator despite “the whole current of patriarchal society” (Woods 2014, 46). Her public persona extolled the work of her husband, to whom even her memoir, *Belonging*, was dedicated.

⁵ In her 1953 journal entry of 20 August, Willa noted that she really was the translator, and Edwin took credit because it was socially acceptable to do so (qtd. in Woods 2014, 44). Appendix I in *Dangerous Writing* by Carmen Luz Fuentes-Vásquez includes a complete list of translations by Willa Muir (2013, 255–258).

Like Willa, Untermeyer was married to a poet, Louis Untermeyer, whose reputation was larger than her own, despite her impressive volume of published work. When she began working on the translation of Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil*, she had just published *Love and Need*, her fifth volume of poetry, and concluded a residency as Ford Madox Ford Chair of Creative Literature at Olivet in Michigan. Despite these accomplishments, she and Willa shared the experience that women were rarely considered prominent poets, authors, and critics in the first half of the twentieth century. Even the contemporary biography of Untermeyer at *Poetry Foundation* stresses her social literary connections before enumerating her body of work, an approach that she herself takes in her memoirs *Private Collection*. Unlike the Muirs, Untermeyer was not an established translator. Instead, Untermeyer had come to literature and translation after giving up a career in music, a background that was particularly important for her work on *The Death of Virgil*, her translation of *Schubert, The Man* by Oscar Bie (1928), and likely also for her later volume of poetry translated from German, French, and Hebrew *Re-Creations* (1970). This musical background informs, for instance, her criticism of Broch's *Vergil* manuscript, when she tells Broch that he should write in less Wagnerian a fashion (Hargraves 2003, 222).

2 Broch and International Modernism: Translation and Exchange

Untermeyer and the Muirs were not passive conduits of Broch's works into English. Broch's work with them on literary translation offered a place in an international community of authors and literary critics, a community of which Broch wanted to be a part as a student and practitioner of the modern novel. Even before working with the Muirs, Broch saw his *Schlafwandler* within the contemporary literary landscapes that produced the novels he so admired, such as *The Counterfeiters*, *Manhattan Transfer*, and his most admired book *Ulysses*. Central to his Viennese surroundings at the time were translation and multilingualism, as Michaela Wolf (2015) shows in her *The Habsburg Monarchy's Many-Languaged Soul: Translating and Interpreting, 1848–1918*. Wolf studies the languages of the monarchy, with a particular emphasis on Italian, and traces the modes of formal and informal translation within it. Broch's network of literary connections and journal work in the 1920s extended into many parts of the former monarchy, including Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He also read many works in translation, and in them he found experimentation with language and the foreign in the search for new forms.

The Muirs, too, were contributors and critics of innovation and experimentation in the language and literature of Modernism, and immediately Broch's letter exchange with Willa exhibits the verve with which both were dedicated to exploring the potential of the novel form. In May 1931, Broch urges Willa to be patient for *Huguenau*, which he hopes will impress "in technischer und stilistischer Beziehung" (KW 13/1, 133). In her second letter to Broch, Willa compares Broch to Joyce, and in response, Broch writes at length about Joyce's revolutionary novel. For Broch, the similarity lies in the "Möglichkeit neuer Ausdrucksformen" (KW 13/1, 140). That Willa and Edwin are peers is not just evidenced by Broch's extensive letters on the theory of the novel but also in their work to promote Broch as a new author. Edwin was fascinated by the psychological and historical narratives of Broch's *Schlafwandler* and soon committed to introducing them to an English-speaking audience of modernist literature. After publishing the translation of the disintegration essay in *Criterion*, he writes an article titled "Hermann Broch" for the New York-based *Bookman*. Here, he stresses Broch's significance to modernism, describing *Die Schlafwandler*: "it is, moreover, quite new in conception and method; and it resolves many of the problems with which the more advanced novelists, during these last two decades of experimentalism, have been struggling" (E. Muir 1932, 664). Edwin's four-page article places Broch in good company, referring to major Modernists such as Eliot, Huxley, Kafka, and Proust. The excitement Broch feels at finding both excellent translators and soul mates in the pursuit of the modern novel drives the correspondence and friendship.

The exchange of ideas was significant for the Muirs. *The Sleepwalkers* and the other novels they translated are exemplary of the import of multilingualism, translation, and linguistic experimentation. Catriona MacLeod traces the ways in which Willa in particular used translation as a form of play with vernacular English as well as German. She concludes: "the Muirs approach literary English through and by means of translation from a foreign tongue" (2018, 56). The German-language novels they translated, amongst them those of Kafka and Feuchtwanger, also offered the literary couple an alternative to the British and English-language dominated modernism located in London. For Edwin, this engagement with German-language modernism transformed his own writing, as Ritchie Robertson shows in his article "Goethe, Broch, and the Novels of Edwin Muir" (1983). Here, Robertson traces the influences of Edwin's intense interpretive experience with *Die Schlafwandler* in *Poor Tom*, which appeared in 1932 (1983, 152–156). While Robertson notes that Edwin's narrative voice creates "a stylistic unity which *Huguenau* intentionally lacks," he sees it as "a departure from the conventional novel form" with *Die Schlafwandler* as its inspiration (1983, 155). The extent of the influence of translation on the Muirs and their literary voice and framework extends beyond the novel and into their understanding of modernism as an international move-

ment. In their work on the Muirs, Elizabeth Huberman (1989; 1990) and Scott Lyall (2019) also show the various ways in which the Muirs used language and translation to explore new forms and innovate Scottish modernism on their terms, avoiding the radical Scottish nativism of contemporaries like Hugh MacDiarmid or Lewis Grassie Gibbon.

In his “Translation Studies and Modernism”, a contribution to *A Handbook of Modernism Studies*, Steven G. Yao notes that Modernist translation and multilingualism sought cultural renewal, linguistic and literary innovation (new rhythms and forms), the definition or expansion of cultural borders, and a revolution in the act of reading (2013, 215–217). Yao analyzes the ways in which translation appears in modernist literature, listing the translation work and the use of foreign languages by authors such as Mina Loy, Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, James Joyce, John Dos Passos, and Ford Madox Ford. Translation and the use of foreign languages in modernism, Yao explains, was a practice that modernists used as “each sought solutions to the various problems and issues that have come to be understood as central thematic concerns of modernism in its continental and transatlantic formations” (2013, 212). Translation tested the literary and cultural limits of language, as in the work of T.S. Eliot’s *Criterion*, or reflected the multilingualism of Europe and the US, and here Yao refers to German-language literature with the example of the inclusion of French in Thomas Mann’s *Zauberberg* (Yao 2013, 217). Yao locates his conception of translation, multilingualism, and modernism in a predominantly English-language context, both in its emphasis on authors who wrote primarily in English and in its assumptions about the dominance of a single national language.

As Broch knew through the work of his son, Armand Broch de Rothermann, for the Viennese International Literary Agency in the 1920s, translation was a part of the business of literature in Central Europe (KW 13/1, 209). The impact of translation in modernism is, however, not as extensively explored in the German-language novel. In Robert Musil’s *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften*, Agatha’s reading of traditional Schlegel translations of Shakespeare at her father’s funeral (1988, 35) becomes the starting point for Andreas Poltermann to explore the role of translation in modernism through the theory of the novel (Bakhtin) and theories of translation (Schleiermacher, Benjamin, and others). He argues that this scene emphasizes translation as a form of experimentation with language. While Poltermann’s starting point is Musil’s novel, he stresses: “die ‘Sprache der Übersetzung’ [scheint] aber auch ein Modell zu sein für die ‘Sprache des modernen Romans’” (1988, 37).

Neither explicit references to translation nor the use of foreign language appear in *Die Schlafwandler* and *Der Tod des Vergil*. Characters do not speak another language, like in Mann’s *Zauberberg* or read translated texts as in Musil’s *Der*

Mann ohne Eigenschaften. For instance, the Alsatian Huguenau in *Die Schlafwandler* does not slip into French. Broch's classical and contemporary characters speak standard German, even if they are speakers of other languages or dialects historically or geographically. Nevertheless, translation experience was an essential complement to Broch's work on his novels. The work with the Muirs led to Broch's translation of poems by Edwin Muir, which in turn was followed by a small publication history of translations of English poetry into German. In 1936 and 1946 respectively, Broch published his translation of T.S. Eliot's poems "Morning at the Window" and "Preludes I, II" in *das silberboot* (KW 13/1, 396). Alice Kahler contextualizes and presents Broch's translation work, which she counts as seven poems in total (1980, 207). The playfulness of translation and poetry is perhaps most evident in Broch's exchanges with Erich Kahler's mother, Antoinette von Kahler, characterized and to some extent reprinted in Nicola J. Shilliam's cover note to her ribbon collection for *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* (2013, 141–152) and described in detail in Jeffrey Berlin's "Hermann Broch and Antoinette von Kahler: Friendship, Correspondence, Poetry" (1994, 39–76). While their written notes to one another showcase their play with German, "Mama Kahler", as Broch called her, was also central to his exposure to Greek and Latin (Shilliam 2013, 151). Even Untermeyer experienced and contributed to these exchanges. As she notes in *Private Collection*, she translated verse from "Mamma", as she calls her, about her well-prepared *Salzburger Nockerl* (Untermeyer 1965, 243). Translation, experimentation, and poetry were all part of Broch's literary exploration.

Untrained in classical philology, Broch often turned to the Kahler family with whom he lived at One Evelyn Place in Princeton, and to his friend and historian Erich Kahler, to discuss the nuances of passages from Virgil's works (Kahler 1980, 215; Lützel 2021, 205–206). Broch relied on translated classical texts for *Vergil* to raise contemporary issues through classical themes. Still, the lack of English and Latin, even a word here or there, is quite striking in *Vergil*, particularly given the pervasiveness of foreign language use in the work of authors Broch admired like Joyce, whose *Finnegan's Wake* includes words from over sixty languages. Yet, Broch created language. As Untermeyer describes in retrospect, Broch always had to be translated: "This, let me add was the gist of what he wrote, for his letters and even his conversation had to be translated. They were in what he himself called 'a kind of English,' a mixture of both languages" (1965, 237). In Untermeyer's description, one finds Broch has a new language; one that is created out of necessity and through translation and linguistic experimentation.

3 Politics of Language and Translation

Broch did not make poetic decisions without reflection, and his choice to write *Der Tod des Vergil* in German meant more to him than a choice of linguistic comfort or expertise. For many years, however, he was unconvinced that an English translation was possible. Nonetheless, he recognized that an English *Virgil* was a necessary part of his professional survival in exile (Untermeyer 1965, 238), and he knew a German *Vergil* had a cultural import that extended beyond the boundaries of personal fluency. Long questioning the role of art in the contemporary world, Broch spent many years devoted to political engagement and the social science of mass hysteria in exile, but he never rejected literature entirely, despite often lamenting the ineffectiveness of literature. *Vergil* needed to be finished, he noted repeatedly. In a letter dated 14 January 1940 to his *Schlafwandler* publisher and friend, Daniel Brody, Broch addresses the power of writing *Vergil* in German:

Ich glaube mit Recht sagen zu dürfen, daß der *Vergil* ein Werk ist, welches unbedingt der deutschen Sprache erhalten werden muß, u. Z. umsomehr als es von einem Juden stammt. Hier ist entgegen allem Antisemitismus, der Beweis für die Bereicherung eigentlichen Deutschtums von jüdischer Seite wieder erbracht worden – das erste Mal geschah dies durch Kafka —, und wenn man ein wenig pathetisch das Wort “Kulturtat” verwenden will, so sei es hier gestattet: das Buch ist Kulturtat, es ist eine alte Dichtung, und die Herausgabe wird gleichfalls Kulturtat sein. (Broch and Brody 1971, 412; 723–24)

Here, Broch reveals a belief in the cultural impact of literature. His literary work, penned in the German language, becomes an act against antisemitism. Stressing that even a Jew and one living in a country away from his native language can create an innovative work of German cultural and linguistic heritage, Broch challenges the notion of national heritage propagated by the Nazis; it is not birth or soil that makes a German but the use of the language and through language a continued, revolutionary participation in German culture.

Willa Muir did not agree with Broch that language use and innovation can disrupt national, political constructions of Germanness. In her contribution to “Translating from the German”, the Muirs’ essay in two parts, Willa equates national language with national politics. In a post-Holocaust world, Willa sees the German language as an articulation of its speakers’ fanatic power; German speakers exercise control over the meaning of sentences with the withholding of verbs (Muir and Muir 1959, 95). Austrian German, however, is not the language of fascism or “classical German”, for Austrian is “a less rigid, less clotted, more supple German” (Muir and Muir 1959, 96). For Willa, the challenge of translating from the German is the challenge of translating the language of fascism: “But to turn classical Ger-

man into sound democratic English – there is the difficulty” (Muir and Muir 1959, 96).

Willa sees a political conflict in translation of German where Broch sees political impact. For Broch, language is not the source of politics, and German is not the language of fascism. Instead, his comment to Brody shows that he positions his writing as a reflection of the power of language to subvert political assumptions and militaristic expansion; his innovative German language and literature defies attempts to silence and eradicate German-speaking Jews.

After the end of World War II, Broch returns to the issue of language, translation, nation, and politics. In 1946, after the publication of *Der Tod des Vergil* and *The Death of Virgil*, Broch wrote a lecture on translation for Untermeyer to give at the German Club of Yale University. The lecture, published posthumously in *Dichten und Erkennen* and again in Paul Michael Lützeler’s *Kommentierte Werkausgabe* remains his most substantive piece on language and translation in a post-WWII world. The lecture grounds translation in a philosophy of language, but early in the lecture, Broch interrupts his philosophical reflections with a political idea: the mission of a translator is a democratic-pacifist one (“Und gerade der Übersetzer in seiner eminent demokratisch-pazifistischen Mission”, KW 9/2, 61). Once paired, the concepts of democracy and pacifism do not reappear in Broch’s “Bemerkungen”.

Given the period in which Broch pens his lecture, the comment likely refers in part to the professional context of translation. Already early in his US exile, Broch understood the growing need for translation into English for the purpose of fighting fascism and building international democracy. As he wrote to his son, foreign language skills were not needed in the US in literature as they once were in inter-war Vienna, but instead in politics: “Wenn Sprachen heute irgendwo in Amerika gebraucht werden, so in Washington” (KW 13/2 95). Indeed, Broch de Rothermann ended up using his language skills in war and in international peace building, first as a part of his work for the Office of Strategic Services and then as an interpreter with the United Nations (Rizzo 2003, 180). Broch de Rothermann’s career – one begun not with professional training but with language experience – occurred at a time when academic and professional training in translation and interpretation rose to meet international political peace-keeping needs (Wilss 1999, 46). This push to institutionalize translation and interpretation met a growing movement in supranational structures for “better communication, more democratic behaviour and greater transparency and accountability” which led “many supranational organizations [to] adopt policies of multilingualism”, as Fernand de Varennes notes in his study “Language policy at the supranational level” (2012, 149). Thus, Broch’s democratic-pacifist mission of translation was taking place across Europe and the US.

4 Of Monsters and Miracles: English-German Translation in a Post-WWII Era

Broch's "Bemerkungen", however, is about the task and philosophical approach of the translator, and as the lecture continues, translation is not one of practical purpose but of a literary nature. Broch's philosophy of language begins with what he calls the "doubled mystery of language". The first is the mystery of human nature ("Mysterium der Menschennatur") (KW 9/2, 61). There are two structures which make languages both possible and translatable: a necessary unity of structure ("Struktur-Einheitlichkeit") and the unity of content and form whose purpose ("Zweck") is to express something specific (KW 9/2, 62). These have the human as their "tertium comparationis" (KW 9/2, 61). The common foundation for translation is the human spirit ("Menschengeist") (KW 9/2, 62). Human spirit itself is invisible. Language, Broch explains, is the way in which humans make their spirit visible: "Der Menschengeist als solcher ist nichts Sichtbares; sein Dasein wird erst an seinen Äußerungen wahrnehmbar [...]" (KW 9/2, 62). Broch continues to explain the mystery of the unified structure of language ("Struktur-Einheitlichkeit") as apparently random ("willkürlich") in terms of the freedom to combine sounds but nonetheless determined by the natural development of a given language ("Symbolsprache") (KW 9/2, 63). Translation, it would follow, is both a recognition of and respect for the mystery of the human spirit.

Broch's insistence that the translator's mission is both democratic and pacifist thus begins with this explanation of language as communication. Language is a shared form of communication that is built upon a shared ability of all humans. A good translation must respect both source and target languages as an expression of the human spirit. Any attempt to disregard the human spirit expressed in language by the translator constitutes an undemocratic and violent act that attacks human nature itself. Indeed, about ten years earlier, when translating the poetry of Edwin Muir, Broch fears that he does just that:

[D]iese sinnüberfüllten, bedeutungs-überfüllten Gedichte, in ihrem vollen Sinn und voller Bedeutung überhaupt nur assoziativ zu erfassen, für den Nicht-Engländer also noch viel weniger (und für einen so schlechten Engländer, wie ich es bin, noch viel viel weniger) sind der Gefahr einer Vergewaltigung in jeglicher Übersetzung ungeheuer ausgeliefert und ich fürchte daher sehr, diesem Sinn große Gewalt angetan zu haben. (KW 13/1, 199)

Broch stresses the imminent danger of violence contained in the act of translation; the violation of the meaning contained in these poems. In this, Broch understands the power of the translator at the same time as he notes the immense risk of translation.

In “Translating from the German” both Willa and Edwin address the challenge of the translator as one of identifying the tipping point at which change must occur, yet not allow the original to be violated. Willa acknowledges that translation changes a work, for “the very shape of thought has to be changed in translation” (Muir and Muir 1959, 94), but Edwin echoes Broch from years prior: “one must change the order of the words, and to do that with a great prose work is to commit an irremediable yet unavoidable injury against it” (Muir and Muir 1959, 93). The translator both recognizes the inevitable change that must take place in translation, while navigating the extent of that change. Translation is a task of recognizing the difference between necessary transformation and violation of thought.

In these reflections on the nature of translation, there remains an emphasis on the original and its unique quality that cannot be faithfully translated. Yet, the risk involved is not without consequences for the translator. Edwin adds: “A German translator of [Henry] James would be forced to contort his own language, and perhaps himself”, a condition that he admits that he and his wife faced: “The late Hermann Broch’s fine trilogy, *The Sleepwalkers*, almost reduced my wife and myself to that pass” (Muir and Muir 1959, 94). Untermeyer is much more dramatic. The work creating *The Death of Virgil*, as she describes it, “began with a sentence, but it turned into a life sentence” (1965, 234). This incarceration in the name of a work of art by another had consequences for her own work: “It took nearly ten years for me to rid myself of this possession, to get back into my own skin and begin to do my own work” (Untermeyer 1965, 245).

For Broch, however, the translator does not contort him or herself, but instead creates contorted figures or “monsters of syntax”, as he notes in his “Bemerkungen” (KW 9/1, 73). *The Death of Virgil*, he believes, avoids the monster of syntax. His concern, however, turns from form to content and myth. Here he continues to refer to other monstrous figures and fantastical forms in an analysis of the German language of the poem “Abendlied” by Matthias Claudius. Broch describes the fairy tale heritage of the poem as forests, elves, and dragons to proclaim: “Wohl in jedem deutschen Sprachkunstwerk ist etwas von alldem vorhanden, und der Übersetzer hat es mitzuerfassen, wenn er den Geist der deutschen Sprache erfassen will” (KW 9/1, 85). “Abendlied” allows Broch to elaborate on a notion of national culture without assuming that a language produces a certain type of politics or culture. He thus can evade Willa’s mistake while asserting nonetheless that German is both structured differently than other languages and expresses a spirit different from other cultures.

This part of Broch’s lecture goes largely ignored in George Steiner’s three-page analysis of *The Death of Virgil* and *Der Tod des Vergil* in his *After Babel*, which continues to be the most prominent close analysis of Broch’s “Bemerkungen” (1992, 336–337). For Steiner, the significance of this example of translation is the way

in which *The Death of Virgil* becomes an interlinear and complementary work to be read with *Der Tod des Vergil*. He proposes that the novel and its translation are about the risks of language and of translation – the very limits of understanding (Steiner 1992, 337). Steiner weaves a narrative of “symbiosis” from the relationship between the translators and into the translation itself, figuring the risks of translation as abstract. Citing only one passage from the 500-page tome, Steiner stresses that language and the movement toward and away from silence is the focus of the complete novel (1992, 338). The “Untermeyer-Broch” product, or translation, is dependent upon and a necessary addendum to the original: “There is from the bilingual weave of *The Death of Virgil* (1945) no necessary return to either English or any German text except Broch’s own” (Steiner 1992, 338). With this lofty analysis, Steiner elevates *Vergil/Virgil* into a language beyond language. Certainly, Broch would have been pleased; it is the fulfilment of his own theory of language and translation.

Untermeyer knows Broch’s lecture well when she writes her own. Indeed, five years of collaborative translation are presented to her in Broch’s articulation of his theory and philosophy of translation, once again proclaiming his authority over the work and the process. This hierarchical relationship is the focus of Sherry Simon’s *Gender in Translation*, a work which covers a broad range of feminist issues in translation. For Simon, Untermeyer’s relationship to Broch is an example of “the emotional dynamics” of translation relationships “where the unequal positions of writer and translator are intensified by their gendered identities” (1996, 67). Simon sees Untermeyer’s “neglected intellectual and literary work” as Untermeyer portrays it in *Private Collection*. By raising the idea of translation as a cultural task in Untermeyer’s comments, Simon asserts the value of Untermeyer’s works without looking at the mechanics of Untermeyer’s own construction of translation.

It begins with the fact that Untermeyer refuses to read Broch’s theory as her own and insists that her completed translation is perhaps not a miracle but a monster (Untermeyer 1965, 268). Published in her *Private Collection*, her lecture “Is Translation an Art or a Science?” is as much a response to Broch as it is a description of her own approach to translation. She begins by affirming her own experience as valid and states quite simply and directly that she has no theory of translation (Untermeyer 1965, 249). Indeed, she argues, to claim to have one would be to construct a fallacy. Instead, she uses the word “einfühlen” to describe her experience translating (Untermeyer 1965, 254). With this moment, Untermeyer shifts the hierarchies of creativity.

Although she is clear to distinguish her work from Broch’s, she does not refrain from echoing Broch’s ideas, for she respects his concern for language and his *Vergil*. Untermeyer walks the tightrope of translation. She does not falter in asserting the power of Broch’s work throughout her description of the experience of

its translation. Indeed, she maintains the image of his genius in her memoir, and her lecture emphasizes the power of his intellect repeatedly and his significance for the German language: “In our time the German pantheon was represented chiefly by Kafka, Mann, and Broch” (Untermeyer 1965, 276). In her explanation of her identification with Broch, whom she refers to as Broch-Virgil, she recognizes the structures and tones of the novel as innovative and genius (Untermeyer 1965, 253). She also repeatedly draws connections between *Vergil* and the canon of English-language literature, showing her English-language audience that Broch’s work is a part of world literature. She builds comparisons to Walt Whitman and T.S. Eliot into the text of her chapter (Untermeyer 1965, 258, 276). Translation, she implies, reveals literary connections among works across languages. As translator, she has not just conveyed a work of literature for a new audience, but she has also lifted the work’s significance for the human spirit beyond language. She has fulfilled Broch’s expectations with this lecture, just as Steiner does about a decade later.

Untermeyer builds up the seriousness of her subject matter – the power of a literary genius to create a literary spirit of the time – in her crafting of the lecture. Her lecture, and her characterization of translation itself, provides a subtle yet assertive approach to translation as a powerful act of creation. Her reflections in *Private Collection* and the documents of the translation experience create a rhythm of back and forth, a push and pull – both a fraught one that certainly justifies Hargraves’ warning to the translator wishing to work with the author and an idealistic one that results in Steiner’s “bilingual weave”. She revises Broch’s attempts in letters, in his lecture, in his work with her on the translation, to maintain authorial control.

The seriousness of this is undercut before the chapter “Midwife to a Masterpiece” in *Private Collection* concludes and begins with her recollection of a friend’s comment on her translation. She describes a scene in the translation work with the Austrian psychoanalyst Dr. Hanns Sachs:

He would look at me enigmatically and say: “When I read the German I am convinced it can never be translated. When you read me what you have done, I find it absolutely perfect. Yet I have the same feeling as the rustic who stood in the zoo before the cage of the giraffe and said: ‘There just ain’t no sech animal.’” (Untermeyer 1965, 268)

The scene has elements of realism. Sachs was a friend of Untermeyer and Broch; he did, indeed, hear and read sections of *Virgil* and *Vergil* in advance of their publication, as did many others. The extensive process of writing both *Vergil* and *Virgil* included many readings, rough translations, re-translations, and test audiences. Both Broch and Untermeyer included friends and colleagues over the course of

the five years to help in the creation and refinement of these two novels. Sachs' clever expression about the (im)possibility of translation also stands in for the many voices who thought Untermeyer had accomplished the inconceivable with her translation; even Broch himself, who had thought an English translation unfeasible.

With "he would look at me", however, Untermeyer turns the possible event into a recurring one and reveals the poetic construction of this anecdote. Both colorful and intentionally playful, the image of the country zoo visitor standing before the giraffe pushes Untermeyer to an alternative conclusion to her paper or "an affectionate joke on the author of the evening, Hermann Broch" (Untermeyer 1965, 268). She reads Broch's extensive description of the cultural heritage of Claudius' language in "Abendlied" as a type of joke as well: "I myself thought his pedantic enterprise read like a parody on the new critics, at the same time remaining an ingenious analysis" (Untermeyer 1965, 268). In this sentence, Untermeyer pokes fun at Broch ("pedantic"), turns this negative characteristic into a skill ("parody"), and ends with praise ("ingenious"), only to present her excellent translation of "Evensong". This pattern of exposing Broch's intensity through humor and praise is characteristic of the essay, even the chapter, in *Private Collection*. It is the same pattern visible in her signature of *The Death of Virgil*; she mirrors and parodies Broch's own dates of authorship at the end of his *Schlafwandler*: "Translation begun November, 1940, / finished October 1944. / J.S.U." (Broch 1995 [1945], 482). She takes responsibility for the translation, and she asserts it as a creative act of her own.

With *The Sleepwalkers* and *The Death of Virgil* the work of English-language translation on Broch's major works spans two decades of change in translation history. Over the course of translation, Broch himself moves from an Austrian cultural context and a European project with Edwin and Willa Muir in which translation is a literary endeavor to a post-WWII US context in which democracy and pacifism take a front seat in translation as international peace building becomes a global focus. For the Muirs, translation was a part of transforming modernism from a local or national context into a European one. For Broch, translation provided a community of writers and thinkers that allowed him to explore new forms of expression and clarify his own ideas on the revolutionary novel form. As the 1940s and 50s progressed, politics entered the work of these translators and authors and with it a discussion of the risks of translation. Through a re-reading of Broch's essay on translation and Untermeyer's response to it, Broch's notion of translation as an expression of the human spirit takes on a new dimension. Untermeyer at once affirms Broch's theory and wrests the unilateral power of creativity from Broch as author. Her work presents English-language translation as it was over

the course of Broch's literary career – a collaborative, democratic act of expanding linguistic and national boundaries.

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