

Self-Translating Songs: How à l'aise Are You?

by

Jessica L. Holtby

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

TRANSLATION STUDIES

Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies
University of Alberta

© Jessica L. Holtby, 2017

Abstract

Producing song translations that are singable introduces issues that are not relevant to every genre of translation. As a type of constrained translation, song translation requires that the translator respect limits such as rhyme and rhythm and, in doing so, understand that the content must shift at times. This study examines some of these semantic shifts and the impact of using strict terms to define what qualifies as a translation. Additionally, this study explores self-translation and the issues that surround it, particularly concerning equivalence in song translation. Through an examination of six song translations—three of my translations of songs by other songwriters and three of my own self-translations—this study gives rare insight into the process of the self-translation of songs, and establishes that self-translation, especially of songs, cannot be held to the same standards as other types of translation in terms of faithfulness and equivalence but should, perhaps, be considered its own genre.

Dedication

For Amma

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Anne Malena, for her unwavering support and encouragement over the last few years. Her passion, patience, and guidance are the reasons for which I have succeeded in completing this thesis.

I am deeply grateful to the family and friends who have supported me throughout this endeavour. I especially wish to thank my parents for passing on to their children their love of language, music, and education, my partner, Robert, for being a steadfast source of support and inspiration, and my siblings for constantly challenging me musically and for allowing me to try out my translation ideas on their songs.

I also wish to thank Kristin Savage, Ariane Mahrÿke Lemire, and Ann Josée Thibeault for their insightful edits of my song, “Rues de Vauvert.” Kristin, thank you for your years of support and also for editing “Un peu de ci.” Ariane and Josée, thank you for teaching me so much about writing and singing in French. And, of course, I extend my thanks to Jesse Cunningham for co-writing “Un peu de ci” and being an incredibly gifted and inspiring collaborator for all these years.

Lastly, I wish to thank the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Tom Priestly and Dr. Lynn Penrod, for their valuable feedback and support.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Song Translation	3
1.1 The paradigm of purpose	3
1.2 Form vs. meaning	5
1.3 Rhyme, rhythm, and melody	8
1.4 Translating central lyrics	14
1.5 Translatability and faithfulness	16
1.6 Essence and emotion	21
Chapter Two: Self-Translation	23
2.1 The unique case of self-translation	23
2.2 Authorship and ownership	25
2.3 Blurring the lines between source text and target text	29
2.4 A self-translation by any other name...	35
2.5 Non-native speakers and the role of the editor in self-translation	37
2.6 Final remarks	39
Chapter Three: Song Translations and Commentaries	40
3.1 Song translations	41
3.1.1 San Salvador	41
3.1.2 Babylon	53
3.1.3 La ballade des gens heureux	61
3.1.4 Final remarks	66
3.2 Self-translations	67
3.2.1 The Sea	67
3.2.2 Streets of Vauvert	79
3.2.3 Un peu de ci	90
3.2.4 Final Remarks	94
Conclusion	95
Works Cited	98
Appendix A: Translations of “San Salvador” by K. Alexander and J. Holtby	103

Introduction

In Gallician, the days go on
The seasons come and go
Winter springs up, summer falls
And mighty winds, they blow

If we were to translate these lines into French, what would be lost? What should we prioritize: the rhyme, the rhythm, the sound patterns, or maybe the mention of all four seasons in proper sequence and in a meaningful way? Could the line “Winter springs up, summer falls,” in all its simplicity and concise meaning, be transferred to any other language?

The excerpt above comes from a song of mine called “Gallician,” based on the village in France where I spent a year. This was one of the first songs that came to mind when I began entertaining the idea of translating songs into French. After all, it had been written in a French context, culturally and geographically. So how about “les saisons passent l’un à l’autre,” or “au fil des ans et des saisons”? Does either of these suggestions adequately preserve the semantic and musical integrity of the original lyrics? And if not, does this mean that the song is, or these lines are, *untranslatable*? If we choose to translate, what must we prioritize? Which elements must be transmitted and which elements can be modified, replaced, or dropped altogether?

The history of Translation Studies is lightly peppered with discussions of song translation, but there is room to expand on previously established theories and to explore the nuances that arise from such things as differences in genre or rhythm. Equally frustrating in the field is the rather elusive concept of self-translation (the translation of one’s own work), which defies one’s beliefs about authorship, authority of the author, inspiration, and the very existence of a source text. Can song translations and self-

translations be approached, received, and critiqued in the same manner as other types of translations? Or do we need a separate set of rules to govern these two sub-genres?

This thesis will explore the concepts of song translation and self-translation, consider the challenges and privileges afforded uniquely to these two sub-genres, and provide an in-depth commentary on a body of my work—six songs that I have translated between English and French. The songs will be presented as follows: 1. “San Salvador,” by Patrick Modiano and Hughes de Courson; 2. “Babylon,” by Bethany Bucknor; 3. “La ballade des gens heureux,” by Gérard Lenorman and Pierre Delanoë; 4. “The Sea,” by Jessica Holtby; 5. “Streets of Vauvert,” by Jessica Holtby; and 6. “Un peu de ci,” by Jesse Cunningham and Jessica Holtby.

My experience as a bilingual singer/songwriter combined with my experience in translation has allowed me to approach this topic from a unique angle. It is my hope that, despite the ambiguity and subjectivity that accompany self-translation and song translation, I will contribute valuable personal insight to the field through research that is guided by the following questions:

1. Are there any quantifiable rules that would predict a song’s translatability?
2. Are loose, abstract, or non-linear connections between parts of the source and target texts strokes of genius or strokes of luck?
3. How far can we take things in the name of subjectivity?
4. How greatly, if at all, do the processes and results differ between translations of songs by external translators and by self-translators?
5. Should we define the “original” differently according to the type of text in question?

I hope that the following discussion and translations will help begin to answer these questions.

Chapter One: Song Translation

1.1 The paradigm of purpose

In song translation, the idea of *purpose* is paramount. As a type of *constrained translation* (Titford 113), meaning that it has constraints such as rhyme and rhythm imposed on it (Mayoral et al. 363), song translation must be treated differently than other genres of text. Much like poetry, songs balance form and meaning in order to deliver content in a manner that is aurally pleasing and respectful of any relevant metrical requirements. Considering the fact that certain features—poetic language, rhyme, rhythm, and other literary devices—are characteristic of songs across genres, languages, and cultures, it can be argued that presenting content through such means is the primary purpose of a song. While other genres can vary in purpose (for instance, a literary text might aim to challenge one’s thinking, or maybe to recount certain events), songs have a superseding purpose: to appeal to our sense of hearing. Were this not true, there would be a great deal more instances of subversion when it comes to fundamentals like musical keys and rhythm. Determining the purpose, or function, of a work and of a translation is fundamental. Here, we can discuss Hans J. Vermeer’s *skopos* theory. According to this theory, the *skopos* is the purpose or aim of a text. This purpose can refer to the translation process, its result, or its mode. Vermeer asserts that translation is an action, and that every action can potentially be explained by its purpose. Why, for instance, does one choose to act in one manner while having the option of acting in another? Whether

conscious or not, there is a purpose (or rationale, or function) behind every action. This is the *skopos* of the action (Vermeer 191-193). Although a blanket submission to *function* is not necessarily conducive to the overall practice of translation, the consideration of function in song translation is quite helpful. A translator simply will not be successful should she approach song translation in the same manner that she approaches other genres. In song translation, content shifts are virtually inevitable. While certain passages might align perfectly, there will come a time that content must be shuffled around or even altered in order to produce a singable song translation.

When considering the *skopos* of a work, it is important to determine the type of text at hand. As translating is rewriting a source text, determining a purpose, or function, should begin with the source text. Katharina Reiss recommends differentiating between three text types: the informative type, which communicates content; the expressive type, which communicates “artistically organized” content; and the operative type, which communicates content “with a persuasive character” (163). Songs are predominantly expressive, though lyrics may, indeed, be informative or operative. In the case of a work being of multiple text types, Reiss argues that it must be decided what the overarching type is in order to make translation decisions that build cohesiveness:

If [...] artistically structured contents in a text of the expressive type have to be conveyed and if, during this process, the artistic organization might be harmed by the retention of the same content elements, then the rule applies for expressive texts that the contents may be changed. (169)

In short, Reiss maintains that once the text type is decided upon, it should be supported by elements of the text. Now of course, changes to contents should be made conservatively. But in a genre that is so constrained by musical factors (rhyme and rhythm, for instance), recalling a text’s overarching function is a useful strategy that

helps ground the translator and gives her the approval she needs to shift content in order to produce a singable translation.

1.2 Form vs. meaning

In any song translation, there are two forces between which the translator will, inevitably, feel torn: form and meaning. This tension has been described with reference to *logocentrism* and *musicocentrism* (Cintrão 817). Logocentrism means that a priority is placed on the words, the content. Musicocentrism means that the focus turns to the musicality of the song. As with most dyads, musicocentrism and logocentrism should be viewed as two poles of a continuum, with every combination of the two occurring in between. A translator can, in one line, be more logocentric and, in the next line, be more musicocentric. In the end, a central part of song translation involves striking a balance between faithfulness to the music and faithfulness to the message. Perhaps the translator deems one line of meaning absolutely central to the song, but simply cannot find a way to fit the message into the required rhythm or rhyme scheme. It follows that the translator might make a choice that is merely an adequate musical representation of the original but a near-perfect semantic equivalent. Or, conversely, if there is a musical phrase that is central to the song and needs to be preserved, the translator could be justified in making changes to the text in that phrase as required. But any choices that the translator makes should serve the overall purpose and integrity of the song. For instance, internal rhyme and assonance can be among the subtlest features of song, yet their removal risks diminishing a song's euphony. The translator might, therefore, need to make a choice as to whether to preserve internal rhyme, then make subsequent decisions necessitated by

this initial one (for example, whether to modify a metaphor in order to recreate internal rhyme). It should be mentioned while speaking of literary devices such as internal rhyme that while it is often neither feasible nor necessary to replicate every usage of literary tools, the general frequency of such devices should be similar. Before moving on from these notes on rhyme, it should be mentioned that rhyme in song is relatively flexible: rhymes are often more approximated than definite. For example, while in a spoken piece, the French words “vague” and “ballade” may not register to listeners as rhyming words, the setting of these words to a melody and the deliberate emphasis of certain morphemes can transform two similar sounding words such as these into rhymes (for example, as we will see later in “La ballade des gens heureux,” emphasizing the /a/ sound and pronouncing the word-final schwa in both words turns “vague” and “ballade” into rhyming words in song).

So what else can we do to ensure that we have fulfilled both the form piece and the meaning piece? One interesting strategy is to reproduce the phonetic values of the source text. In her article “Translating ‘Under the Sign of Invention’: Gilberto Gil’s Song Lyric Translation,” Heloísa Pezza Cintrão explains how Brazilian translator Gilberto Gil makes frequent use of this strategy in his work translating the music of popular artists, including Bob Marley and Stevie Wonder. Gil had this to say of his approach:

This is a resource I like to use in song translations, mainly in emblematic songs, when the sonority of key-terms has already become universal: everybody listens to that sound internally; the sound of the words is deeply infused in the memory of that song. (Qtd. in Cintrão 822)

As Gil states, this strategy is most beneficial for those translating internationally known songs, or in any cases where it is expected that listeners would have access to both the original and the translation. It is possible that listeners would unconsciously accept the

translation more readily thanks to this strategy, just as literary devices such as assonance may go unnoticed at the level of consciousness, yet may render the song more pleasing to the ear. In his translation of Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry," Gil came up with the hook, "Não, não chore mais" ("*Don't cry anymore*") (Cintrão 820). The phonetic similarity between "No" and "Não" as well as the consistency in metre—with the translation having the same syllable count as the original line—were priceless and likely contributed to the song's being embraced by a Brazilian audience.

Some of Gil's other strategies seem to support the use of domestication. For example, in Stevie Wonder's song "I Just Called to Say I Love You," the lyrics walk listeners through an entire year of seasons, either by explicitly naming the season or by making reference to an event or holiday that is widely representative (at least in the United States) of the season. In his translation, Gil entirely replaces certain American or North American holidays that are not popular in Brazil with Brazilian holidays that would immediately evoke in Brazilian listeners similar feelings to those evoked in Americans by the mention of American holidays (Cintrão 824-825). As Cintrão comments, "[i]t indicates that applying a cultural filter [...] was an important translation procedure used by Gil, and that it was applied not only to one or two translation units, but to an entire semantic field" (825).

Another useful strategy for approaching song translation is the 'pentathlon principle,' proposed by Peter Low in his article, "Singable Translations of Songs." Low offers the following metaphor to outline the song translator's task:

Olympic pentathletes must compete in five events, and optimize their scoring overall - they must not omit to train for javelin and discus, and they must hold some energy in reserve for the 1,500 metres. So they sometimes choose to come second or third in one event, keeping their eyes on the whole day's challenge.

According to this metaphor, the translator of a song has five events to compete in - five criteria to satisfy - and must aim for the best aggregate. (92)

The five criteria that Low argues the translator must balance are singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm, and rhyme (92). As Low made clear through his sports metaphor, the balancing of these criteria does not mean that each is always given the same weight. Song by song, and even line by line, the translator must balance these elements according to the needs at hand, constantly recalibrating and reprioritizing. For instance, Low argues that the most important factor is singability (92). A priority placed on singability means that other criteria might need to be sacrificed on occasion. As an example, the sense of a line might need to be altered in order for that line to be singable (logocentrism versus musicocentrism).

Lastly, an important reality to keep in mind is that content selection in songwriting is often preconditioned by the musical requirements at hand. By this, I mean that a songwriter might choose “rain” instead of “weather” in a line for reasons pertaining to rhyme or rhythm. This preconditioning of content selection is evidence that meaning itself is multifaceted. And viewing meaning this way—as something that can be expressed in a myriad of ways without necessarily causing it to be diluted—makes singable song translations more attainable.

1.3 Rhyme, rhythm, and melody

Balancing rhyme and rhythm and ensuring that the melody is accurately transferred into the target language are some of the most challenging steps in song translation. Concerning this balance, André Lefevere made the following comment:

If the rhyming translator is lucky enough to end his line with fairly acceptable rhyme words and without having to indulge too much in the various subterfuges he finds at his disposal, his problem is only half-solved. Ending the line is one thing, filling it with the right number of stresses is another. (52)

In prose, sentence length can be significantly modified to suit the needs of the translator. Needless to say, in song, if a phrase is too short or too long, it risks leaving unwanted “empty space” in the song or, contrarily, not fitting into the section of the song it is required to occupy based on the original. According to Lefevere, “[t]he distortion of a line’s meaning is the ultimate and worst subterfuge the rhyming translator is forced to use if he is to preserve his rhyme” (51). He warns that “the rhyming translator enters into a double bondage” (49)—metre and rhyme. Although the translator has the option of manipulating the metre and rhyme (for example, changing the number of stresses in a line, or changing the rhyme scheme), this strategy does not automatically simplify the process of reconciling content with metre and rhyme. Whether it complicates or diminishes this “bondage,” song translation adds two more elements to the mix: the music (with the exception of a cappella songs) and the melody. Whereas in poetry, mainly metered poetry, words generally have a preset length, in song, vowel length can be significantly extended (or shortened) to achieve the desired metre. A common feature of songs in general is their constant manipulation of word length, whether through the songwriting or the interpretation by the singer. Alteration of word length is an equally valuable tool in translation as it often expands the translator’s options for fulfilling metrical requirements. For example, translating “aujourd’hui” (three syllables) to English would likely yield “today” (two syllables), leaving us a syllable short. It is possible that the translator could elongate either the first or the second syllable in “today” so that it fits the melody.

As music is generally always present in song, from beginning to end, lyrics can choose where to place themselves and need not fill every crevice. Thus, a phrase that has five syllables can be set to music in such a way that the syllables cover a 10-count line, for example. In poetry, this is not really a viable option, as listeners or readers would sooner interpret the absence of words as dramatic effect than as the counting of silence as part of the metre. Silence between beats risks diminishing the rhythmic effect because beats are measurable, and silences, while measurable, are not (apart from musical rests) universally definable. That is, it is not a universal fact that silence in a poem is, for instance, two seconds in duration. But musical accompaniment provides a bit of a cushion. So if the translator finds herself a beat short, she could possibly spread out the words or syllables and have the music fill the empty space. She could, depending on the rhythm, and always submitting to the requirement that a song sound natural, translate a 10-count line into a seven-count line, and leave three unassigned counts, relying on the accompaniment to fill the remaining counts. This strategy is mainly practical when it comes to freer, ‘looser’ melodies, as opposed to strict rhythms in which syllables tend to have a predictable length, in which case this approach would create a jarring and unnatural effect. Again, as opposed to poetry, where an unassigned count would produce a bizarre silence or would be interpreted as dramatic effect, song translation gives us a bit more room to play, thanks to the presence of the backing music (again, excluding a cappella pieces or renditions).

Another strategy is altering the speed at which a syllable, or a set of syllables, is delivered. If, to give a simplistic example, “mère” were translated into English as “mother,” the translator could examine the number of syllables allotted to this word and

make the necessary rhythmic conversion. If “mère” occupied one quarter note, then the translator could, hypothetically, convert the quarter note into two eighth notes in order to provide room for the two-syllable equivalent “mother” to be slotted.

One last widely used strategy that is worth mentioning is taking advantage of the flexibility that exists in certain languages to decide how to pronounce a word and whether to pronounce or omit a morpheme or even a syllable. An example of this is the word-final *e* in French, which may or may not be pronounced in song. While in spoken French, excepting certain dialects like those found in some regions of the south of France, a word-final *e* is generally silent, in song, it is commonly pronounced. There seem to be three main factors that govern the inclusion or exclusion of the word-final *e*. First, it may be necessitated by the subsequent word for clarity of pronunciation, like in Fred Pellerin’s “Au commencement du monde,” where, in the line “De l’innocence aux dernières rides,” the last *e* in “dernières” is pronounced so as to differentiate between the word-final *r* and word-initial *r* and facilitate clearer pronunciation of “rides.”

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the lyrics: "On est au commencement du monde la peur au ventre et les mains vide La li-ber-". The second staff contains the lyrics: "té jus-qu'à la honte de l'inn-o-cence Aux der-niè-res rides". Both staves feature several triplet markings (indicated by a bracket with the number '3') over groups of three notes. The melody is primarily composed of quarter and eighth notes, with some rests.

In this instance, the melody established in measures 1 to 3 is altered when the note values in measure five change to accommodate the added syllable at the end of “dernières.” This melodic alteration supports the belief that the word-final *e* is sung in order to facilitate

clear pronunciation of the line. A second reason for pronouncing a word-final *e* is to fill an unoccupied beat in order to achieve a certain rhythm. The third reason is to fulfill the requirement of naturalness. Though I, a non-native French speaker, will not claim to understand this fully, and do grant that it is, perhaps, sometimes simply an issue of personal preference on the part of the songwriter, it seems clear to me that certain words in certain musical contexts simply sound more natural if the word-final schwa is pronounced.

These second and third reasons are demonstrated in Edith Piaf’s famous song, “La vie en rose.” If we simply read the line, “Il me l’a dit, l’a juré pour la vie,” we would count 10 syllables. But in song, there are 11, with the eleventh coming from a pronunciation of the *e* in “vie.” The pronunciation of the silent *e* creates not only an eleventh syllable but also a stylistic effect in French. It sounds more natural than it would to simply prolong the /i/ sound in “vie” during the last two notes of the melodic line. For the purposes of this discussion, let us suppose that we had translated the line into English as, “He told me this, promised me this for life.” In such a case, we would end up with ten syllables, and without the option of pronouncing a word-final *e*. Here, the translation could be left as above, but the *singer* would need to compensate for the missing syllable through her oral interpretation. In this instance, she could resort to elongating a syllable, as discussed earlier. The singer could take the last word, “life,” and extend the vowel, /aj/, to meet the melodic requirements established by the original:

Il me l'a dit l'a ju - ré pour la vi - e
 He told me this pro - mised me this for li- - -ife

As demonstrated above, in the absence of a pronounced word-final *e* in English, the translator can resort to strategies such as syllabic elongation to achieve the necessary rhythm.

In discussing rhythm, I should also mention word stress, which adds yet another layer to the complicated process of song translation. Even if the translator has achieved a brilliant rendering of a line, she would still need to ensure that the word stress sounds natural once the line is set to music. The importance of this depends largely on how a given language prioritizes word stress. English, for instance, places a relatively high importance on word stress, as compared to, say, French. Ronnie Apter and Mark Herman explain as much in their book, *Translating for Singing: Theory, Art and Craft of Translating Lyrics*:

Spoken French, by contrast [to English], is a language with almost no word stress and fewer points of sentence stress than English; almost all spoken French syllables are pronounced with the same force.

However, music itself is a stressed ‘language’. In the typical four beat measure, the first beat receives the primary stress, the third beat receives a lighter secondary stress, and beats two and four are unstressed. (184)

In a language that is less stressed, musical stress would, then, trump word stress, as musical stress is the most evident to listeners. But, then, is it more difficult to translate into stressed languages like English because of the need to reconcile word stress and musical stress? This question will become particularly relevant later on in the commentary on my translation of “San Salvador.”

To conclude this section, I will state that the best recourse when encountering difficulties pertaining to melody may be to make small alterations to the melody. These minute changes do not need to be destructive to the original; in fact, they honour the

original by rendering the translation all the more natural sounding. Furthermore, the reality is that singers constantly alter melodies anyway; this is merely an aspect of musical interpretation. That said, the translator should always aim to replicate the important parts of the melody; there may be more leeway with the less dominant parts. For example, if there is a musical phrase that recurs throughout the song, it should be replicated in the translation as closely as possible in every instance. Any changes made should be minor so as to preserve the overall integrity of the melody. This is not to dilute the notion of musical interpretation mentioned above; it is, rather, because the writer of the original clearly deemed a repeating phrase a) important enough to be repeated, and b) catchy enough to be repeated.

1.4 Translating central lyrics

My background as a song composer and translator has given me a fair bit of perspective with regard to the challenges and strategies involved in song translation. In my experience, one commonality shared by song composition and song translation is the challenge of crafting centralized lyrics. By centralized lyrics, I mean lyrics that are emphasized through repetition, amplification, prominent placement, and so on. The clearest example is a song's *hook*, "a repeated part of a song or piece of music that is particularly pleasing and easy to remember" (Cambridge Dictionary). In many songs, particularly those that fall under the umbrella of popular music, the entire song zones in on the hook. It is the centre of the song. And like a centerpiece on a dining table, a hook is impossible not to notice. That hooks are usually designed to be repeated and catchy often poses a challenge for translators. Now, not only does the translator need to balance

sense, rhyme, rhythm, naturalness, and singability, but she also needs to make it sound catchy! This added variable renders a successful translation—whether we take success to mean a singable translation or one that is accepted by a wide audience—an even more elusive feat. In this way, song translation is the one scenario where Justin Bieber’s “And I was like baby, baby, baby oh / Like baby, baby, baby no / Like baby, baby, baby oh / I thought you’d always be mine” and Leonard Cohen’s “Tell me again / When I’m clean and I’m sober / Tell me again / When I’ve seen through the horror / Tell me again / Tell me over and over / Tell me you want me then” could be equally complex.

In a quest to translate centralized lyrics, the translator must often complete a process of crafting and re-crafting. I am reluctant to refer to this process as drafting and redrafting as one would for translations of other genres. In the translation of prose, for instance, a translator typically completes a rough draft of the translation, before going through and refining each sentence. The first draft might very well serve as a base or a main structure and all subsequent drafts might improve upon the whole text, correct certain phrases, and render the translation more cohesive and idiomatic. With song and a lot of poetic translation, however, this base text does not always exist. Let us imagine that a translator must translate a four-line chorus with an ABAB rhyme scheme. In this case, it is not a matter of completing a draft and then refining it; instead, the translator must oftentimes start from scratch if she makes any changes at all. If she realizes, for instance, that the first rhyme in the ABAB scheme does not adequately represent the original content or maybe that it simply does not sound as natural as it could, she might decide to modify it. But doing so might obligate her to develop a whole new rhyme scheme. This will be demonstrated later on in the translations, especially in “Babylone” and “La mer.”

1.5 Translatability and faithfulness

Turning now to translatability, I would begin by noting that songs vary immensely in terms of how easily they transfer into other languages. Translating certain songs from and to certain languages might yield near-literal translations, while with other songs, it may be necessary to make a far greater number of alterations in order to transfer the song to the new context. For this reason, it is particularly important in song translation to envision a continuum, with literal translations on one end and adaptations on the other. At the end of the day, most songs are translatable; it may, at times, be necessary for the translator to move closer to an adaptation, but solutions of some kind are always possible.

Because of the constant need to manipulate meaning to serve form in song or poetic translation, Roman Jakobson maintains that poetry is untranslatable, and that “[o]nly creative transposition is possible” (434). Again, though, this depends both on what we consider a faithful translation and on the *skopos* of the source and target texts. Reiss believes that “faithfulness is a multifaceted issue, since equivalence itself is a polyfaceted concept” (Cintrão 816). In Reiss’s words, “[...] a text does not only have a content, not just a “sense” or a content-in-situation [...]; it also comprises form and effect” (Qtd. in Cintrão 816). Therefore, would it not follow that a translation that balances form and *effect* while shifting the content a fair amount is a successful translation?

In their book *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere discuss the progress that theorists have made in their discussion of equivalence. The pair recalls that a few decades ago, theorists were asking

whether translations were possible, but that nowadays, it is recognized that that question was asked in vain, considering the fact that literary translation *has* been performed for thousands of years (3). In other words, there is no use in calling something untranslatable if it is already being translated. Bassnett and Lefevere comment that equivalence is a relative concept that must be approached and strived for only while in submission to factors like text type, text function, and the goals of the initiator of the translation (3). They also celebrate the fact that translators and theorists are releasing the field from dyadic thinking, as evidenced by the following excerpt:

It is because the Bible no longer exerts such powerful influence as a sacred text in the West to the extent it once did, that thinking about translation has been able to move away from the increasingly sterile ‘faithful/free’ opposition, and that it has been able to redefine equivalence, which is no longer seen as the mechanical matching of words in dictionaries, but rather as a strategic choice made by translators. What has changed is that one type of faithfulness (the one commonly connected with equivalence) is no longer imposed on translators. Rather, they are free to opt for the kind of faithfulness that will ensure, in their opinion, that a given text is received by the target audience in optimal conditions. (3)

In place of a simple “faithful/free” designation, Peter Low proposes three main categories of song translations in his 2013 article, “When Songs Cross Language Borders: Translations, Adaptations and ‘replacement texts’ ”: 1. A translation, “a TT [target text] where all significant details of meaning have been transferred”; 2. An adaptation, “a derivative text where significant details of meaning have not been transferred which easily could have been” (237); and 3. A replacement text, an “entirely new text which is devised to be sung to an existing tune” (231). While I recognize the danger of diluting the concept of interlingual translation, I would argue that excluding adaptations and even replacement texts, depending on how we define them, may be too strong a move. As experts in Translation Studies, why wouldn’t translation theorists wish

to discuss something as relevant to their field as adaptations? Adaptations might not warrant the line-by-line comparison that closer translations do, but they at least deserve to be discussed. After all, given the expressive nature of song, isn't it possible that there are elements that are transferred to the target context even during adaptation, despite the overall lack of semantic connection? These transferred elements could be semantic in nature, or they could be components that contribute to the effect of the work. Édith Piaf provides us with excellent examples of both the former and the latter.

Piaf's song, "La vie en rose," co-written in 1945 with Louis Guglielmi, was translated, most notably, by Mack David in 1950. David's translation was then made famous by Louis Armstrong. Despite the fact that the English version is, generally, considered by the average listener to be a translation, it has very little in common semantically with the original, to such a degree that a line-by-line comparison of the two versions would seem futile. That said, there is one line in the English song that struck me when I heard it. I discussed this topic at length in my 2015 article, but for the sake of space, I will simply point out the relevant lines in each version.

Piaf's version:

- 4 Il me dit des mots d'amour
- 5 Des mots de tous les jours
- 6 Et ça m'fait quelque chose

David's version:

- 12 Everyday words seem to turn
- 13 Into love songs

Barring a line-by-line analysis of what Low would consider a replacement text, it is easy to miss this connection between the versions. However, I believe that David found a brilliant path, a non-linear connection, between the source text and the target text in the

form of these few lines. “Everyday words seem to turn / Into love songs” is undeniably derivative of lines 4 and 5 in the original (or, arguably, lines 4 through 6, as there may be a semantic link between “ça m’fait quelque chose” and “seem”—namely, romance’s mysterious ability to turn the mundane into the passionate), despite these lines appearing in completely different parts of the song. Regardless of whether David felt that these lines were so important that they needed to be transferred in some form, or that they are lines for which he just happened to think of a translation, the clear semantic connection challenges the category of ‘replacement text’. Can a song with an indisputable semantic link to its source text still be ineligible of consideration within the realm of Translation Studies? And that is saying nothing of the possibility that the essence, the emotion, the *feel* of the original was transferred through translation.

For another example of adaptations and replacement texts being relevant to the field, let us consider Piaf’s 1950 song “L’Hymne à l’amour,” co-written with Marguerite Monnot and dedicated to Piaf’s deceased lover. This song was translated into English on two main occasions: Geoffrey Parsons wrote the version “If You Love Me (Really Love Me)” a couple of years after Piaf co-wrote the original; and Eddie Constantine, Piaf’s protégé, created “Hymn to Love” a few years after that. Interestingly enough, Piaf performed both of these English versions. In fact, on one occasion, she introduced her performance of the former by saying, “A song that I wrote, ‘If You Love Me (Really Love Me).’ ” As I discussed in my 2015 article, both versions diverge significantly from the original. “Hymn to Love,” despite its direct translation of the source text’s title, actually shares few similarities with Piaf’s original. “If You Love Me (Really Love Me),” though completely different in name, is a closer representation of the original content. So,

we know that Constantine and Piaf knew each other personally and, since Piaf sang Parsons's version, I think we can safely assume that they had some level of contact as well. And for Piaf to perform both versions, she clearly connected on some level with both of them, despite their differences from each other and from her original. If an artist feels enough of a connection to what Low would call an "adaptation" to perform it herself, should we be so bold as to exclude that version from our discussion? Of course, there can be major differences between close translations and adaptations. However, it is not impossible that substantial components of a song are still present in even the wildest of adaptations. My point is that we, as translation theorists, cannot put ourselves above discussing such works. As in the field of Linguistics, where linguists, ideally, take a descriptive stance and let their research and conversations be led by the current linguistic climate, so we as translation theorists should let ourselves be led by the current climate, one in which translations that represent different facets of faithfulness should at least be discussed. If we decide, as an unassuming, monolingual, target language listener might, that similarity between titles of the source and target texts is an indicator that we, indeed, have a translation, then we would end up valuing "Hymn to Love" over "If You Love Me (Really Love Me)," despite it being clear from the lyrics that the latter is more semantically representative of the original. But if we look past the song's title and if we accept that changing meaning to some extent is a natural part of song translation, then we arrive at a practical starting place for evaluating and performing song translation (Holtby 143-144). Let us take song translation to entail the transferring of a song into another language with the goal of producing a singable, natural sounding translation that prioritizes musicality while attempting to deliver the semantic content, the emotion, and

the essence of the source text where possible. Any further details should, then, be addressed in subsequent microanalyses. I concede, however, that using *translation* as a ‘catch-all’ term is problematic, and that there is, perhaps, an argument to be made for separating song translation from other genres.

1.6 Essence and emotion

It should be noted that Piaf had a decent grasp on the English language. And she performed both English versions of “L’Hymne à l’amour.” So she must have been well aware of the divergences at the level of meaning between her song and the two translations. For her to announce to an English audience that she wrote “If You Love Me (Really Love Me),” she must have been fairly comfortable with the translation. It must have been adequately representative of the original, in her perspective. In my experience, artists are particularly sensitive, and I know that I would quickly detach myself from anything that I did not feel represented me accurately. So looking beyond the dissimilarity in semantic content, I believe that there was a transferring of essence between Piaf’s song and the translations that she recognized and experienced to the point where she could perform the English versions without betraying herself.

Included in the song translations below is a song called “Babylon,” written by Bethany Bucknor (née Holtby), who happens to be my sister. When I discussed this study with Bucknor, she wrote me the following: “I suppose any piece of poetry would be difficult to translate. To communicate the same emotion in another language would be a challenge,” (Bethany Bucknor, personal communication, December 3, 2014). For a translator, this is an interesting perspective. Form, meaning, content, euphony, essence—

these are all terms typical to the discussion of song translation. *Emotion* is something else altogether, and introduces several (possibly unanswerable) questions: How can the translator be sure that she has picked up on the same emotions that the author intended to impart? How can the translator be sure to effectively communicate these emotions in the target language? What is the success rate of delivery of emotion in writing and translation? To what extent does music play a role in the conveyance of emotion? Through the description of the translation processes described later in this study, I hope to at least offer some insight into these questions. It is my opinion that emotion is the most important element and should be the translator's top priority. But what happens when the priority is so subjective? How does one handle this priority when everyone understands, experiences, and expresses emotion so differently? In "The Task of the Translator," Walter Benjamin asserts the following:

Fidelity in the translation of individual words can almost never fully reproduce the meaning they have in the original. For sense in its poetic significance is not limited to meaning, but derives from the connotations conveyed by the word chosen to express it. We say of words that they have emotional connotations. (80)

So, emotion should, most certainly, be added to our list of criteria when translating a song. After all, can a song translation be successful without capturing the emotion, the *feel*, of the original? The seventeenth century scholar and translator Anne Dacier would say no:

We daily hear many vocal performers, who are skilled in the knowledge of musick, sing the notes of the tunes that are set before them, with the greatest exactness, without committing the least fault, and yet the whole is one entire fault; because being dull and having no genius, they enter not into the spirit of the composition with those flourishes and graces, which are as it were the soul of the tune: whereas we see others, who being more sprightly, and of a happier genius, sing the same tunes with the animation intended by the composer, and retain all their original beauty, while the melody appears almost another thing, though in itself it is the very same. This, if I mistake not, is the difference between good and

bad translations; the one, by a low and servile adherence, gives the letter, the other, by a free and noble imitation, displays the spirit without departing from the letter, and makes quite a new thing of that, which was already known. (Qtd. in Bayly 77-78)

The distinction that Dacier draws between “good and bad translations” should be at the foundation of every song translator’s thinking. Umberto Eco also warns that adhering strictly to the text can sometimes result in an irreparable loss (57). He adds, “In such cases, if we wish to obtain the same effect that the text was designed to provide, we have to rewrite” (57). Particularly when dealing with expressive texts, the translator’s utmost concern should be the effect. Not only should a target text include the same content as the source text and sound natural in the target context, but it should also have the same effect on its audience and exude the same essence and emotion that were imparted through the source text. Of course, the transfer of essence and emotion is far more difficult to measure than other variables such as rhyme or even meaning. Furthermore, I am unsure how we should break down the responsibility for conveying emotion; to what extent are the lyrics, the melody, and the musical accompaniment each responsible for carrying emotion? I hope to address this question in the translation commentaries in chapter three.

Chapter Two: Self-Translation

2.1 The unique case of self-translation

Somewhere on the fringe of translation theory is this not quite containable concept of translating one’s own work. Perhaps a lesser-explored area of Translation Studies, self-translation presents new issues and possibilities not necessarily characteristic of translations by the usual, external translators. In fact, self-translation

diverges from translation to the point that some theorists believe that the two are incomparable (Whyte 64-71). But are these streams of translation really so different?

At first thought, self-translation seems fairly straightforward: the theories of Translation Studies are applied by the author, rather than by an external translator. In fact, self-translation may appear even simpler than other translation, as it eliminates the risk of the translator interpreting a text in a way that differs from that which the author had intended. In reality, however, self-translation may involve *additional* risks. For instance, what happens if the author, in translating her own work, changes a metaphor here, or the name of a location there, or adds a detail that did not exist in the original text? How many changes can the author make before the translation is disputed, becomes invalid, or must be considered to be a separate work? Moreover, what happens if the author, in translating the work, is moved to elaborate on ideas that were expressed in the original? Is this now a translation, an adaptation, or a new work? To go even further, what if the author, now feeling satisfied that her ideas have been fully expressed in the translation, wishes to build upon those or other ideas in the original?

We agree that translators are tasked with rendering a text, an “original,” into a foreign language and that this task requires that the “original” undergo a new creative process in order to be transferred into the foreign language. The translator’s creative process is starkly different from the author’s. By this, I in no way mean that translation is simpler; the distinction comes, rather, in that translators are creative while pinned beneath a looking glass and bound within certain confines, whereas authors are able to apply their creativity with a much higher degree of liberty. Barring any instances of censorship, the author has the ultimate authority over her work; the translator is scrutinized and held

responsible for any discrepancies between the original and the translation. But when the translator *is* the author, should such accountability be demanded? Or should the self-translator be permitted to make changes at will, even when these changes alter the very integrity of the original? And who defines this integrity? Does the reader have a role in assessing the integrity of an original or its translation? Why does self-translation get to break the rules? And what rights do the recipients of a work, of a translation, and of a self-translation have?

2.2 Authorship and ownership

At the root of the questions set out immediately above are issues of authorship, authority, and the relationship between the text and the translator. The manner in which the self-translator interacts with the text is strikingly different from the manner in which the external translator does. The external translator gets to know the text intimately; the self-translator relives it.

In her article “Self-translation as Broken Narrativity: Towards an Understanding of the Self’s Multilingual Dialogue,” Aurelia Klimkiewicz discusses authorship and the author’s right to make changes. Throughout the article, she contrasts self-translation with translation by an external translator, presenting self-translation as the continuation of a writer’s initial process of inspiration that began when she was writing the source text. According to Klimkiewicz, if the target text comes from the same source and reawakens the author’s inspiration, then it can be argued that self-translation cannot be considered or critiqued in the same way as translation by an external translator (191-195). After all, should it not be the author of the original who has the final word as to whether a

translation is *faithful*? And in the case of self-translation, the translator and the author exist in the same person. What is unclear is this: to whom would the self-translator be held accountable for questionable renderings of passages? The original is the author's work; the translation is the author's work. With both works flowing from the same creative faculties, it seems natural that the self-translator would drift back and forth between translating, rewriting, and reimagining her text. As Klimkiewicz puts it, "self-translation [is] a multidirectional and multilingual dialogue with the self, creating a dense space of hidden passages, transfers and disconnections," and "deconstruct[ing] the full range of Translation Studies' core concepts (author and translator, original and target text, equivalence, the target reader)" (189-190). So, since the author knows the work more intimately than anyone else, can we even suggest that the author is betraying her own work through self-translation? On the contrary, is it not more of a betrayal, when transferring one's own work into a different language, to deny oneself the right to restructure, rephrase, and reform ideas, which, though they may not have appeared in the same form in the "original," the author and creator of the work wishes to communicate? Authors who translate their own works might not even begin the process with the intention of making significant alterations to either the source or the target text. But as the 'original' came out of them in a creative manner, so this manner extends to the self-translation process. Although many readers like to compare self-translations to their originals for similarity, as they would with other translations, this practice may be pointless. At the very least, our expectations as readers of self-translations need to be managed.

Notwithstanding my strong belief that self-translation should be freed from irrelevant standards, the perspective of readers ought to be considered here. During a translation conference held on St. Jerome's Day at the University of Alberta, a few of my colleagues and I hosted a roundtable discussion on Czech writer Milan Kundera. At one point, I related Kundera's feeling betrayed by his translators with my own fierce sense of ownership over my work. But then a colleague shared his own experience of feeling betrayed as a reader, by an author. He recalled with fondness falling in love with a novel several years prior. Then, recently, he had heard that the author had re-released the novel. Excited, he bought the new version and sat down to read it. He, however, was quickly disappointed. He said that changes had been made to key elements of the novel, and that overall, what he got was a diluted version of a memorable original. He felt *betrayed*. And he asked a compelling question: "At what point does a work cease to belong to the author and belong to the public?" (Jeff Longard, personal communication, September 30, 2015). Hearing these comments from a consumer of literature stopped me in my tracks. I wondered, had I been self-centered to expect to maintain eternal ownership of my works and the right to change them at will? Should an author expect to relinquish a work, and can the public ever expect to *own* a work? As I pondered these questions, the following recollection came to mind:

I wrote a lot of trivial songs in my youth. Every summer, the café I worked at throughout high school would host a weekly outdoor live music night, and I would usually perform. Some nights had themes. So when it was coming up to Cowboy Night, the girl raised on jazz in a no-country-music household decided to write a facetious country song. It was called "Red Silk Pajamas" and told the tale of a woman who woke

up one morning to find that her partner had taken everything they owned and had left her. In the chorus, I sang the lines, “The only thing he left me, one thing he couldn’t get / Were the red silk pajamas I was wearin’ when he left.” It was a humorous, melodramatic love-gone-wrong song, and the lyrics were quite innocent. One of my high school teachers, also a local musician, loved the song. He offered me a small sum for the performing rights, and I eagerly accepted. Months later, he told me that he had written a sequel to the song: “Red Silk Pajamas: The Other Side of the Story.” He he had recruited a local female country singer to sing my song at various shows, at which point he would follow with his sequel. He gave me a copy of his lyrics, and I read in horror the account of an unfaithful man who abandoned his wife to run off with...her mother. The end of the chorus read, “Your mama looks better in nothin’ than you ever did in red.” Now present-day me is not bothered much by this, but 17-year-old daughter-of-a-preacher-man me felt wildly offended, even betrayed. Come to think of it, I still cringe a little when I imagine those two songs being performed one after the other in my hometown, with myself credited as one of the songwriters. I felt that the new version took all of the innocence out of mine. Mine was a playful poke at those country clichés, the story of a woman mourning the end of her relationship, not of a man betraying his wife, laughing in her face, and running off with his mother-in-law.

As a teenager, I was thus forced to accept the fact that once a work is released to the public, the public does, to a certain degree, own the work. By this, I mean that the public can interpret the work as they choose, and even create their own versions or sequels based on the original. A great example of this is fan fiction: “stories involving popular fictional characters that are written by fans and often posted on the Internet”

(Merriam-Webster). But the comments of my colleague raised another set of questions: to what extent should an author be controlled or limited by her original work? And to what extent should the author be controlled or limited by her audience's expectations?

There are no easy answers to these questions, and it seems to be a struggle to get a consensus. So it remains my opinion that an author should be free to re-release any kind of version or new edition that she chooses. For our own good, and for the good of artistic freedom, we must reframe the concept of a work and respect its fluidity. It is our human nature to want to classify and control. Many of us may feel resistant to the idea of a work that constantly reshapes itself, if only for the fact that it is hard to predict or contain. In this way, it is entirely understandable why self-translation is met with resistance and criticism. As researchers, we seek to uncover rules, patterns, and explanations. But perhaps self-translation should be critiqued only to the point that creative writing is, as self-translation is sometimes more akin to creative writing than it is to translation.

We may always struggle to define the concept of self-translation. So, for now, I will state that I like to consider a self-translation to be a version of a work; it cannot necessarily be analyzed as an interlingual translation, but I trust that the self-translator has effectively transferred the important elements—whether those be content, rhythm, essence, or emotion—into the target context. And to me, that spells success.

2.3 Blurring the lines between source text and target text

While translation normally dichotomizes the source text and the target text, self-translation tends to blur the lines between the two and often renders the *original* a fluid and uncontained concept. As Vilas Sarang puts it, “We observe the demarcation between

text and translation blurring” (34). When a writer returns to her original text, she often—and ideally—relives it. It is possible that this return to the core or essence of the original will lead to a rephrasing or even a reconsideration of certain elements. After all, what author, artist, or composer looks at her work and says definitively and without doubt that the work is complete? As an artist, I, myself, believe that the feeling of “doneness” is fleeting at best. Self-translation is, then, in a way, at once an author’s dream and downfall: the chance to reconsider and, perhaps, improve one’s work. In fact, practical factors like publishing contracts and deadlines may be the only reason why the public ever has access to a great deal of artists’ work; although a work may never quite be “done,” the need to slot it into the linear concept of time imposed on the author may force a sense of closure. But self-translation reopens the box and begins to challenge this linearity. The writer of the work may wish to perfect, to embellish, to explain, or even to correct. Furthermore, it cannot be said enough that the writer is re-experiencing the work; this can, and ideally does, lead her to re-access the inspiration that led to the source text being written in the first place. In a way, the source of inspiration is the *original*; both the source text and target text are offshoots of the same plant (as opposed to translation by an external translator, where inspiration leads to the source text, which, in turn, leads to the target text). The interconnectedness between inspiration, source texts, and target texts does, indeed, create “a multidirectional and multilingual dialogue with the self” (Klimkiewicz 189). During the process of self-translation, inspiration may be reawakened, and new thoughts and ideas may come to mind. In fact, I would say that inspiration *must* be reawakened. It is beneficial that the author succeed in re-accessing the initial source of inspiration in order that she might remain faithful to that inspiration.

There may be no better example of non-linearity in translation than that of Czech writer Milan Kundera. Throughout his career, Kundera toggled between favoured versions of his texts, regardless of their dates of publication, never wholly satisfied with the representation of his work, nor of himself, in foreign languages. He often felt betrayed by his translators, to the point that he began to insert himself into the translations as much as his language competence would allow. In the preface to her book *Translating Milan Kundera*, Michelle Woods reports that “in the mid 1980s, Kundera revised all the French translations of the novels written in Czech and declared these, rather than the Czech versions, to be the definitive and authentic versions of the novels. The translations in other words became the originals” (ix). While it may be extreme to toy with time to the degree of declaring a translation to be the original, one must appreciate Kundera’s resolve to maintain control of his works and of their reception and interpretation in other languages. Could we ever fault the creator of a work for being concerned with the accurate representation of that work? As his knowledge of French and English expanded, Kundera became even more involved in the translation of his works. And although some of his actions were rather unsavory (failing to credit translators, “borrowing” translations of specific passages by external translators and including them in his self-translations), the case of Kundera reveals an important truth about the authority of the author: it is a stark reality that the author has the final say. As another example, when translating his novel *Žert (The Joke)*, Kundera goes as far as omitting passages depending on who the target audience was. In the words of Miriam Margala, “[H]e himself does not produce a faithful translation while demanding near literal faithfulness from other translators” (36-37). Margala continues:

As any translator knows, the semantic content of a work necessarily shifts when translated; it is literally moved into another frame of reference. Inevitably, there will be losses but also gains in the process. Kundera, on the one hand, rejects this shift. On the other hand, however, he quickly learns that an absolute faithfulness in translation is unattainable as his own translated texts prove. (38)

Indeed, it is only through Kundera's personal experience with self-translation that he seems to have come to realize the challenges inherent to translation. And although there may be many translators and readers alike who are frustrated by the liberties that Kundera allows himself, ensuring that the author has the final say is a necessary evil and a safeguard for artistic integrity. Kundera says as much in *Testaments Betrayed*: "For a translator, the supreme authority should be the *author's personal style*...But most translators obey another authority: that of the *conventional version* of 'good French' (or good German, good English, etc.)" (44). It's like in the field of Linguistics, where grammaticality is defined as an utterance that a native speaker would say. Kundera, I argue, is the native speaker (and, alas, the only native speaker) of his artistic language. Consequently, just as a non-native speaker of English may be dismayed that her perfectly crafted phrase carries the same authority as does the improper, prescriptively perplexing turn of speech of a native speaker, so the translator with her brilliant solutions to Kundera's texts may be irritated that her skill and creativity dwell solely in the shadow of Kundera's whim.

I should like to state that the self-translator works both interlingually and intralingually, translating between languages, but also re-expressing ideas in her creative language in both cases. The self-translator knows the essence of her work better than anyone. It seems, then, to logically follow that, should the self-translator make changes when moving between source and target text, it is simply in order to best deliver the

essence of the work. It is, in a way, reframing and rephrasing the original inspiration. And in this regard, I sympathize with Kundera.

Some theorists have framed self-translation as a dual-version system. Susan Bassnett describes self-translation as involving “a product template,” “suggesting that rather than there having been a single source text from which translations have been made, there has been a product template which is then modified in accordance with the expectations and conventions of the target audience” (16). Personally, I have always viewed self-translation as a dual-version system. In my experience with self-translation, there tends to be a great deal of discrepancy between versions. In fact, were someone to translate one of my works, she might very well come up with solutions that are far more faithful to the original than the solutions I, myself, would invent. Yet whose translation would be more faithful is a difficult question. I believe that further research in this area would be valuable to the field; comparing self-translations and translations by external translators of the same works might provide important insight into the notions of faithfulness, essence, and the attitudes of the translator and self-translator (for instance, can the translator and self-translator reach an accord?).

Self-translations might also be seen as two parts of a set, with each version filling the gaps in the other, while still standing on its own. The self-translator might find herself explaining lines in the target text that were not explained in the source text. She might, conversely, end up with a line in the target text that is more vague than its source text counterpart. Even if each version of a song is complete on its own and expresses the intended content, emotion, and essence, perhaps there is a fuller message or a greater degree of completeness when the songs are considered as a set. The two-parts-of-a-set

theory disrupts the power balance between the source text and the target text, even more than it was already disrupted by the mere idea of self-translation. There may now be a give-and-take relationship between the versions. In addition to filling the gaps between versions, the two-version-set idea also explains why semantic changes might occur at a more frequent rate in self-translation than in translation by an external translator. In any piece of literature, the writer makes choices as to what content to include. There is a process of sculpting sentences, of doing away with unneeded linguistic items, and of making choices as to how best to express an idea. This inevitably means that there were things that were not said that could have been said, a metaphor that could have been used to express the same idea that a totally different metaphor was used to express. These facets of meaning are of particular interest in self-translation. The self-translator might choose to focus on a different facet of meaning if it serves the work's rhyme, rhythm, naturalness, singability, sense, or essence, then pick a new facet in the translation.

The issue of faithfulness and equivalence between original texts and self-translations should be rounded off with two previously discussed ideas: first, Kundera's belief that a translation must reflect the writer's personal style; and second, the essence of a work. There is, evidently, a struggle that the writer who self-translates faces. It is a bit like how when you were little, you would tease your brother constantly, but the minute someone else teased him, you would leap across the cafeteria table to his defense. No one could tease him but you. No one can distort your writing but you. I am, in a way, making fun of myself here, too. If someone were to translate one of my songs into a language I could understand, I can say with 99% certainty that I would find something *wrong* with their translation. But with my own translations of my own songs, there is nothing *wrong*,

per se—there are changes that I made, as necessitated by a) the metre, b) the rhyme, c) the singability, d) inspiration, e) my feelings. Even further, I know what I wish to communicate and what I would be willing to sacrifice; an external translator’s priorities may differ from my own. For instance, a translator might decide to alter a metaphor in order to recreate a complex rhyme scheme. Perhaps this would be a brilliant solution to a difficult task. But what if that one metaphor had been my inspiration to write the entire source text? This brings us back to a discussion of the author’s *intention*, which is a vastly complicated place to be.

It is this web of double standards and this skirting of the rules that turn self-translation into a questionable classification. So to start, perhaps redefining, or *un-defining*, the source text and the target text might lead us to a more positive framework for self-translation. If we can accept that a work and a self-translation are two expressions of the same source of inspiration, then we will be better prepared to embrace and respect self-translation for what it is, rather than continuing to criticize it for what it is not.

2.4 A self-translation by any other name...

Nancy Huston, a bilingual author and translator, was criticized after receiving the Canadian Governor General’s Award for Fiction in French for a novel that she self-translated to French from English. Critics were upset that a translation had received a French literature award. In the end, Huston kept the award by demonstrating that the work was an adaptation. To me, it is odd that a critic would suddenly be satisfied the moment a writer called her work an adaptation rather than a self-translation. But this emphasizes Bassnett’s argument that the classification of “self-translation” needs to be

reassessed or eliminated. To the dismay of many, it does not seem uncommon for self-translators not to acknowledge the existence of an original and a translation. But why should they? I would argue that demanding that an author who self-translated a work give credit to her own “original” is a bit like demanding that an author publish a list of each source of inspiration for the work. Expecting that a self-translation be recognized as such is problematic for a number of reasons. First, it sets unrealistic expectations. To the average, monolingual person, the term “translation” likely conjures up the image of a word-for-word transfer of text from the source language to the target language. And, considering the increased changes that are likely to occur in a self-translation as opposed to a translation by an external translator, compelling the author to label the new work as a translation would lead readers to anticipate a greater level of similarity with the source text than is reasonable. Secondly, the original/self-translation distinction seems rather purposeless, like more of an interesting fact about the text than a pertinent piece of information. If we accept that in self-translation, there is a great amount of fluidity between the “original” and the “translation,” then we eliminate the need to make this binary distinction. I do, however, concede that there may be times when it is important that readers have the full context, including the information about the existence of a source text, in order to understand the text; for example, if the self-translator leans towards foreignization rather than domestication (Venuti 19-20), it may be useful or necessary for readers to have the option of referencing the source text for a fuller understanding. But to say that an author should disclose the “full story” about a work, namely, that it was “translated” from an “original,” is, at once, to force the author’s work into unhelpful binary categories (original and translation) and to demand a type of

transparency that is not routinely required of writers—that is, an account of the writer’s source of inspiration.

2.5 Non-native speakers and the role of the editor in self-translation

I would be remiss if I did not address the issue of self-translating into a language other than one’s mother tongue. English is my heart language. French is my head language. English is my creative language, the language in which ideas leave my lips in the shape of metaphors and rhyme. In French, words sooner leave my lips in clumsy combinations, which I then try to convert into delicate phrases. Translating one’s own work into a learned language requires the help of an editor; at least for me it does. This means inviting an *editor*, someone who makes suggestions and changes to improve the text, into your songwriting process. And, once again, many questions arise. What should the relationship be between translator and editor? What is the editor’s role in the equation? Should your editor point out your use of a double negative? And will she be satisfied with your explanation that the double negative was employed to achieve a specific language register, or a certain cultural effect? And will you accept her insistence upon the inherent awkwardness of that specific use of the double negative, despite her reassuring you that she understands your artistic intent?

Imagine that you are getting ready for a party and you have no mirror. Imagine doing your hair and makeup, and getting dressed all without being able to see your reflection. You ask your friend, “How do I look?” and she, of course, responds from the context of her own experience and biases. What if your friend thinks that your blue eye shadow looks terrible with your red dress, and tells you to change it? And what if, had

you had a mirror, you would have seen the whole look for yourself and decided that you love the two colours together? Translating into a language that you speak imperfectly is much like getting ready without a mirror. The editor's feedback comes from a context different from yours. In English, I know what can be manipulated grammatically and musically and still sound natural. But in French, I rely on an editor. It is, therefore, an editor's task to be as conservative as possible in making corrections. And this seems a grueling job, as the editor must edit from within constraints that are different from other forms of editing. I suppose this is the same as editing any text by a non-native speaker. How much should you let slide and how much should you edit away? The task, however, seems greater when it comes to self-translation because we add the element of fluid source and target texts and a translation process that may deviate from the norm.

That said, I believe that it is an editor's principal duty to monitor the naturalness of the target text. In my experience as a songwriter, a competency that is most difficult to master is creating naturalness in a second language. Of course, I can insert alliteration, rhyme, and even assonance. But after a decade of studying French, I continue to be challenged by the task of consistently producing natural sounding texts. From the hours I have spent in translation classes—both French-to-English and English-to-French—it seems to me that it takes a superior linguistic competence to measure up to the naturalness that a native speaker can produce so effortlessly. Thus, the greatest feedback I have ever received from editors pertains to the naturalness—or, usually, the lack thereof—in my French songs. An editor can quickly detect passages that are jarring in her native tongue, passages that I might easily miss. To me, the value of this sort of feedback

is immeasurable, even more so than that of grammatical topics, which might not be as off-putting to an audience as a lack of naturalness would be.

Inviting an editor into the inner workings of your translation is a crucial step. But choosing an editor who is creative and open-minded, who has an ear for the musicality of language, and who understands the uncontainable nature of self-translation is equally important.

2.6 Final remarks

To end this section, I echo Dacier, and say that a translator's downfall is translating the words while failing to capture the spirit of the work (77-78). Most of the above arguments boil down to that very point. Kundera's feelings of betrayal at the hands of his translators are, thus, understandable; he is an expert in the essence of his work and is in a position of utmost authority to ensure that that essence has been transmitted through the target language. It seems, then, that self-translators are at once the most faithful and unfaithful translators imaginable—they are faithful not to an original, but to an essence or, to go even further, to their inspiration and creativity, which, ultimately, produce the works we enjoy.

I hope that the ideas discussed above will be further clarified and that new thoughts will emerge as I move into the following discussion of translations that I have completed in the capacities of external translator and self-translator.

Chapter Three: Song Translations and Commentaries

In translation, particularly in literary translation, I believe that it is crucial that the translator be comfortable, at ease, with the text. Only from a place of comfort and familiarity can one internalize the text, transport it into another language and culture, and there, recreate it. Something is given to you that you must protect and let grow. You, the vessel, must later deliver that new, preferably intact and beautiful, being into a new world. It is, perhaps, for that reason that there seems to be a stylistic connection between the songs that I included in this study. The songs all fall into a folk-pop-jazz mixture, a mixture that happens to embody the music that I have been making for a decade.

Though similar in genre, the following six songs differ considerably in terms of their translations and translation processes. I have separated the songs into two parts: the first part comprises three of my translations of songs by other songwriters (two translated from French to English and one translated from English to French); the second part is comprised of three self-translations (all translated between English and French through what will prove to be a more multidirectional process). For each song, a short description is provided, after which the translation is presented in the left-hand column with the original lyrics on the right (except for “Un peu de ci,” which is presented in a single column, for reasons that will be made clear). Following each set of song lyrics is a commentary where I describe my train of thought and discuss specific lines, certain themes, and overall challenges that gave me pause during the translation process.

3.1 Song translations

While striving for faithfulness in song translation, one must remember the importance of producing a translation that is singable and that retains the essence of the original. In translating the following songs, I strived to fulfill both of these criteria.

3.1.1 *San Salvador*

“San Salvador” is a French song written in the 1960s by Nobel Prize-winning writer Patrick Modiano and Hughes de Courson. The lyrics address an individual who recalls with a somber nostalgia a place called San Salvador, where he or she, presumably, lived or spent a significant amount of time.

San Salvador

Translated by Jessica Holtby

- 1 During the night
- 2 Winter has come again
- 3 And today all the streets
- 4 Are filled with wilted trees
- 5 As you listen to rain
- 6 And you think of that place
- 7 Oh the place you call San Salvador

- 8 You still remember
- 9 When you close your eyes
- 10 The strange place you would wait
- 11 For the dawn to arise
- 12 Where perfumes in the sky
- 13 Danced with blue butterflies
- 14 Oh could it have been San Salvador?

- 15 San Salvador
- 16 You say over again
- 17 As if words could revive
- 18 What you see in your mind
- 19 All the twilights of lilac
- 20 And ships at the port

San Salvador

By Patrick Modiano and Hughes de Courson

- Pendant la nuit
- L'hiver est revenu
- Dans les rues aujourd'hui
- Tous les arbres sont morts
- En écoutant la pluie
- Tu penses à ce pays
- Dont le nom était San Salvador

- Tu te souviens
- Quand tu fermes les yeux
- D'un étrange jardin
- D'où montait le matin
- Des milliers de parfums
- Et des papillons bleus
- C'était peut-être San Salvador

- San Salvador
- Tu répètes ce mot
- Comme si tu voulais
- Retrouver le reflet
- Des crépuscules mauves
- Et de galions du port

21 All returning with treasures untold	Qui revenaient de l'île au trésor
22 You can no longer	Tu ne sais plus
23 Think how to return	Comment y retourner
24 If it ever existed	Qui sait si ce pays
25 Then who can confirm	A jamais existé
26 Could it be in a dream	Si c'était dans tes rêves
27 Or another lifetime	Ou dans une autre vie
28 That you knew this place, San Salvador	Que tu as connu San Salvador
29 San Salvador	San Salvador
30 Oh the wind, how it blows	Le vent souffle aux carreaux
31 In the sound of the rain	Dans le bruit de la pluie
32 You can hear the echo	Tu entends un écho
33 As a song that was lost	Une chanson perdue
34 Comes to you from a place	Qui te vient d'un pays
35 That you may not see ever again	Que tu ne reverras jamais plus

The most significant challenge in translating “San Salvador” was the precise and unwavering metre: throughout the song, with the exception of the last word in each verse, every syllable (including the French word-final *e*, when pronounced) receives one quarter note. This meticulously constructed rhythm does not leave much room for deviation in translation, nor in musical interpretation. Aside from this challenge, most other issues and comments can be discussed individually as follows.

In lines 1 to 2, I chose to translate “L’hiver est revenu” as “Winter has come again.” While some might point to the use of the present perfect “has come” as unusual in this context in the English language, I deem it justifiable on two levels. First, lines 1 and 2 set a scene wherein winter has returned suddenly and now the addressee finds him or herself in gloomier circumstances than before. While the simple past, “came,” would perhaps be more typical in this context in English, the present perfect compliments the adverb “today” to communicate that the wintery scene is not a past occurrence, but is the addressee’s present reality. Secondly, the present perfect also helps achieve the necessary

rhyme and metre. As mentioned above, this song maintains a strict metre; use of the simple past would have required that an additional syllable be added to the line, while natural syllable stress throughout the line would still need to be respected. For instance, had I elected to use the simple past, I would have ended up with a line like, “Winter came again.” I would then need to concoct a sixth syllable, producing, maybe, a result such as, “Wintertime came again,” or “Winter came back again.” The former diminishes the power of Winter as a force. The latter is acceptable but the stress placed on “came” in this line sounds slightly unnatural to me. Two-syllable synonyms like *return* could be considered, but would eliminate the option of including *again*, as “return again” would be redundant. So the present perfect “has come again” satisfies requirements at the levels of metre and meaning.

A few changes occurred in lines 3 and 4, where I translated “Dans les rues aujourd’hui / Tous les arbres sont morts” with “And today all the streets / Are filled with wilted trees.” First, let us consider Low’s requirement that a song translation be natural. To me, there did not seem to be a natural way to directly translate “morts” into English. Moreover, if naturalness is our goal, then neglecting to rhyme “streets” with “trees” would have been a missed opportunity. In order to keep these rhyming words in the line-final positions, I needed to have the description of the trees come before the actual noun. Thus, “wilted” seemed a favourable choice: the two syllables helped satisfy the rhythmic requirements, the /w/ created alliteration (“with wilted”), and the /i/ sound contributed to the assonance in the phrase, “filled with wilted trees.”

Skipping to line 6, one notes the use of “place” to represent “pays.” This translation stemmed from my efforts to create a rhyme similar to that found in the source

text: “En écoutant la pluie / Tu penses à ce pays.” These lines, thus, became, “As you listen to rain / And you think of that place.” Turning now to meaning, there is insufficient evidence in the source text, not to mention in history or geography, to conclude that the songwriters used “pays” to mean “country” rather than, say, “land.” Furthermore, as discussed in chapter one, it seems that a songwriter’s content choice is often preconditioned by the musical requirements at hand. And, in this line, the songwriters found a nice end rhyme in “pays” to go along with “pluie” from the previous line. It seems that the musicality of “pays” in this context may have preconditioned its selection during the songwriting process. If not for the rhyme scheme, perhaps another word would have been used; there is no strong indication that it was critical that San Salvador be represented as a country in this line. Following this logic, a near equivalent that replicates the same level of musicality in the target text should be acceptable.

To wrap up the first verse, I do not feel that the insertion of “Oh” in line 7 of the translation needs much explanation. Suffice it to say that an extra syllable was necessary and that the word “oh” is rather ubiquitous in English music, particularly in songs of a poetic nature.

Moving to line 8, I believe that the most accurate and musically pleasing translation of “Tu te souviens” is “You remember.” The issue came with the word stress in the word “remember” (re-MEM-ber); English emphasizes the second syllable, so a direct translation of the first line simply would not work, as adherence to the song’s rhythm would require that we stress the word as follows: re-mem-BER. For that reason, I chose to add “still” before “remember”; this extra word shifts “remember” to a more natural position in terms of stress and does not alter meaning significantly enough to be

reconsidered. In fact, “still” adds to the song’s themes of memory and time passed. “You still remember” merely reaffirms that the addressee’s recalling so vividly the details of San Salvador is marked, or distinctive, in some way; “still” throws in a hint of strangeness to the addressee’s detailed memories, and this strangeness echoes the melancholic tone of the original song. And finally, when it comes to metre, the translation “You still remember” solves another issue. Thanks to the pronounced word-final *e* in the word “fermes” in line 9 of the source text, “Quand tu fermes les yeux,” occupies six counts; the English equivalent, “When you close your eyes,” makes up five. So we could expect to be one syllable short in the translation of line 9. But fortunately, the five beats in the translation “You still remember” spill over from line 8 to line 9 and provide the missing beat:

Tu te souviens / Quand tu fermes les yeux
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You still remember / When you close your eyes
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Lines 10 and 11 show a bit more looseness in translation. Were we to go the route of direct translation, we would wind up with, “A strange garden” and, in doing so, would be short two syllables, since “étrange” not only has an additional syllable, but also has a word-final *e*, which is pronounced in this line. Instead, I chose to generalize the concept of a “garden” and represent it through its larger category: a *place*. While this might be a controversial decision, I feel it is one that is justifiable when examined through a musicocentric lens. With the alliteration in “étrange jardin” lost in translation, the line’s musicality may be diminished. By translating line 10 as, “The strange place you would wait”, I add not only alliteration (“would wait”) but also assonance (“strange place”). The use of “place” can also be justified grammatically. With so few syllables available to

communicate the necessary content, any translation other than “place” would actually pose a grammatical dilemma. If I chose, as I did, to end the line with “you would wait,” then any translation other than “place” (“garden” or “field,” for example) would necessitate the relative pronoun “where.” In English, one can correctly say, “the place you would wait,” but never “the garden you would wait.” And while the “where” could easily be inserted after “place” if we were to contract “you would” to “you’d,” using “garden” instead of “place” would result in an extra syllable in that line, if we chose—which we should—to retain the “strange” description:

D’un étrange jardin

1 2 3 4 5 6

The strange garden where you’d wait

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

While “place” does not necessarily add to the verse’s imagery, there is enough description in the verse to support itself. Admittedly, I took some creative license in inserting the addressee into the scene, despite the source text not specifying that a person had actually been there in the “étrange jardin.” I think it is safe to assume that the addressee would have to have been in the strange garden in order to remember it so clearly. Therefore, placing the addressee in the strange garden in the translation is not a huge stretch. This particular line shows how difficult the balancing of form and meaning can sometimes be. There was content that absolutely needed to be communicated, but I undoubtedly took a musicocentric approach and, as a result, I feel that the content was adequately expressed while still adhering to the line’s naturalness and strict rhythm.

Line 12 required an alteration in order that the metre be satisfied. “A thousand perfumes,” while it sounds beautiful, would leave the line two beats short. For that reason, I transformed the phrase into a grammatical continuation of lines 10 to 11 by

adding the relative pronoun *where*: “Where perfumes in the sky.” Although “in the sky” does not appear in the original text, it is a safe addition because of the fact that the perfumes would most definitely have been in the air, and it is a beneficial addition because of the fact that it contributes to the rhyme scheme: “eyes,” “arise,” “sky,” “butterflies.” The latter point is of particular importance because of the frequency of rhyme, or near rhyme, found in that verse in the source text, where lines 8, 10, 11, and 12 all end with a front nasal vowel: “souviens,” “jardin,” “matin,” and “parfum.” Also of note is the insertion of “Danced with” in line 13. Admittedly, my decision to add the relative pronoun “Where” to line 12 forced my hand when it came to line 13. First, the introduction of a relative clause (“Where perfumes in the sky”) created the need for a verb. At the same time, although “blue butterflies” has the same syllable count as “papillons bleus,” the indefinite article “des” is what helps the original line complete its metre. Our general avoidance of indefinite articles in English means that two syllables would remain vacant in the translation, the other being the spot occupied by the superfluous “Et” at the beginning of line 13 of the original text. The purposelessness of “Et” is made clear through an examination of the poetic nature of lines 12 and 13, where, as is very common in music, a description is thrown out there with no grammatical link to the rest of the text: “Des milliers de parfums / Et des papillons bleus.” With nothing grammatically tying these lines to those before them, one could rightly conclude that “Et” serves no purpose at the level of meaning; its purpose, then, must be musical (for example, pushing the rest of the line into a metrically logical placement). If its purpose is musical, then a musicocentric translation is justifiable. With these thoughts in mind, I settled on, “Danced with blue butterflies.” Here, I have the verb that is needed in the

relative clause, and I satisfy the metre. Moreover, as an added bonus, “perfumes” and “blue” line up perfectly to create a lovely internal rhyme.

When translating line 14, I wondered if it was significant to change the affirmation in the original to a question in the translation. I could have translated line 14 as, “Oh perhaps it was San Salvador.” This is where music and content must be weighed against each other and a balance found. It was a more musicocentric decision to change it to “Oh could it have been San Salvador?” as this translation avoids the harsh /p/ and /s/ sounds that might have threatened the musicality of the line. Instead, we have a more melodious string of soft consonants and vowels. In addition to a softer line, this translation also gives us a subtle, internal near rhyme with “it” and “been.”

There is a significant amount of interconnectivity between the lines of the third verse (lines 15-21). While other verses include more fragmented ideas or separable lines, the third verse truly needs to be translated as a semantic unit. The speaker, essentially, says, “San Salvador, you repeat this word as if you are hoping to find the reflection of the mauve twilights and ships at the port that are returning from Treasure Island.” Basically, it is one big, lyrical, run-on sentence. Here we must recreate not just individual ideas, but a string of ideas. The result for me, with punctuation added in this discussion for clarity, was as follows: “ ‘San Salvador’ you say over again, as if words could revive what you see in your mind: all the twilights of lilac and ships at the port, all returning with treasures untold.” As you can see, the run-on sentence feel was recreated. Also, the rhyme from lines 17 and 18 (“voulais” and “reflet”) was transferred to the target text (“revive” and “mind”). The next challenge came in line 21 with “l’île au trésor.” Retaining “Treasure Island” would, undoubtedly, alter the rhythm in some way. The fact

that the first syllable in each word (TREA-sure IS-land) is stressed means that the only place the words would fit naturally would be if three beats came before them and two beats came after, as demonstrated here:

_____ Trea - sure Is - land _____
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

There did not seem to be a solution that would relay the necessary content—the ships returning—while retaining the allusion to Robert Louis Stevenson’s book, all within the context of the rhythm and the inflexible word stress. So, alas, I forwent a top score in one pentathlon event to improve my score in the naturalness category (and I hope that Peter Low would approve). I looked for a replacement to represent Treasure Island. Though “returning with treasures untold” strays significantly, it still represents the glory of ships returning home having made a grand discovery. Furthermore, I was able to retain a subtle, near rhyme that appears at the end of each verse: “San Salvador / San Salvador / treasures untold / San Salvador” (source text: “San Salvador / San Salvador / de l’île au trésor / San Salvador”). Admittedly, “All,” which appears in lines 19 and 21, is repetitive. “Returning with treasures untold” would have sufficed were it not for the need to fill one last beat in line 21. Truthfully, this redundancy was a difficult sacrifice to make, but it seemed the only practical recourse. The word “All” helped shift the other content into place to ensure natural word stress and maintain the integrity of the rhythm.

Lines 22 to 25 posed a significant challenge and provide a clear example of the idea that song translations do not allow the translator to complete a draft translation the same way that she could when working with a text of a different genre. The rhyme scheme and the density of content in lines 22 to 25 required a process not of drafting and redrafting, but one of starting from scratch over and over. After various attempts, I

finished with, “You can no longer / Think how to return / If it ever existed / Then who can confirm.” Here, the rhyme from the original lines 23 and 25 is recreated, and the meaning of the original lines is fully conveyed. I would, however, like to introduce into the discussion the translation of “San Salvador” completed by my colleague, Katherine Alexander. For lines 22 through 25, Alexander came up with the following: “How to return / you no longer recall / Who can say if it ever / existed at all?” Here, Alexander flawlessly replicated the rhythm and the syllable count, and created a beautiful rhyme scheme and a very natural set of lines. In these ways, her translation of lines 22 to 25 far outdid my own.

In the song’s final verse, it was virtually impossible to include all of the components of the original: “the wind,” “blow,” and “windowpanes.” Here, something simply had to give. In my translation, I chose to favour the wind and the blowing of the wind while dropping the imagery of the windowpanes. This choice may not be favourable to everyone. For instance, Alexander took a different approach and dropped the overt mention of the wind while retaining the wind’s blowing and the windowpanes. Let us compare translations (See Appendix A for full versions):

Holtby:

San Salvador
 Oh the wind, how it blows
 In the sound of the rain
 You can hear the echo
 As a song that was lost
 Comes to you from a place
 That you may not see ever again

Alexander:

San Salvador
 blows through cracked windowpanes
 you can hear an echo
 through the sound of the rain
 a long-lost refrain
 comes to you from a land
 that you’ll never see ever again

Original text:

San Salvador
 Le vent souffle aux carreaux
 Dans le bruit de la pluie
 Tu entends un écho
 Une chanson perdue
 Qui te vient d’un pays
 Que tu ne reverras jamais plus

Alexander found a brilliant solution to avoid the translation sounding redundant in English: “vent” would naturally become “wind” and “carreaux” would naturally become “windowpanes.” So a translator could end up with, “San Salvador, the wind blows

against the windowpanes.” The combination of “wind” and “windowpanes” in this context in English doesn’t sound clever or deliberate—it sounds awkward and repetitive. So I admire Alexander’s representation of the wind through “San Salvador.” She characterizes San Salvador as the source of the wind and, thus, eliminates the need for the sort of repetition mentioned above. Her description of San Salvador blowing through cracked windowpanes is not only an adequate translation at the semantic level, but also a beautifully poetic rendition. I consider her decision to embellish the description of the windowpanes by adding the adjective “cracked” to be an approvable liberty. It seems to fit well with another theme of the song: something has been broken, something has been lost. One problem that seems to persist is the word “echo.” In both translations, “echo” is a bit clumsy. In a language with as much word stress as English, it is difficult to slot “echo,” a word with the first syllable stressed, into a 3/4 time signature in anywhere other than counts 1 and 2. Both Alexander and I ended up with “echo” beginning on the third count and spilling into the next measure. While “écho” in the source text is placed in precisely that position, in English it is not ideal, and perhaps is even slightly jarring to a musically inclined listener. Aside from finding a substitution for the term “echo,” there really are not many solutions. One might have, perhaps, tried the following:

San Salvador
Blows the wind through the panes
And the echo you hear
In the sound of the rain
Is the song that was lost
Coming forth from a place
That you will not see ever again

This solution, in addition to solving most of the problems of word stress, actually offers a pleasing rhyme scheme that involves the words “panes,” “rain,” “place,” and “again.”

In the final line of the translation, I translated a future simple with the modal verb “may.” While this, perhaps, diminishes the sad certainty of the subject’s permanent separation from his or her beloved San Salvador, I deemed it a necessary choice, musically speaking. To achieve the required syllable count (that is, nine syllables), there were not many options. “That you will never see again” gives us only eight counts. “That you will not see ever again” does not sound completely natural, as “will” in the first count sounds a bit forced; “may” is a softer and more melodious choice.

Also in this last verse of the source text is another instance of “pays.” Again, I chose “place” as a translation. I considered “land” as a possible translation, but did not want to lose the rhyme built by “rain,” “place,” and “may.” Additionally, this usage brings the total of times “place” is used to four. Each occurrence involves a different context and description. Therefore, there is, arguably, enough descriptiveness associated with “place” throughout the song that its usage in the final line is not subtractive overall.

In the end, this song presented several challenges that concerned metre; solutions were not always as tidy as I would like (for example, the use of “And” in line 6, or the repetition of “All” in lines 19 and 21), but the essence and overall integrity of the song were certainly preserved through this translation. Concerning rhyme, the general frequency of rhyme was transferred to the target text. And, as discussed in chapter one, this general frequency should be the goal in song translation. In the source text, each verse or each chorus has a different rhyme scheme, with no rhyme scheme repeating itself from verse to verse or chorus to chorus. This variance in rhyme scheme was carried over to the target text.

3.1.2 *Babylon*

Written by my sister Bethany Bucknor, “Babylon” describes the doomed friendship or relationship between two people. A young woman is enthralled by this interesting, adventurous man, who leads her to places that she has never seen. But in the end, she knows that she must sever ties.

Babylone

Translated by Jessica Holtby

1 Il est venu, il a appelé
2 N’importe qui entendrait
3 Juste un homme, raconte-moi ton histoire
4 Dans ta voix, dans tes yeux
5 Assis près du feu
6 Dans la fumée, dans le noir
7 C’est clair

8 C’était pas très facile
9 Ni pas trop délicat
10 Monter plus haut
11 C’est tomber beaucoup plus bas

12 À Babylone j’élève ma voix
13 Il m’faut un peu de temps, attends-moi
14 À Babylone j’élève ma voix
15 Il m’faut un peu de temps, attends-moi

16 Tes paroles, comme le vent
17 Ne m’emporte jamais
18 Raconte-moi, raconte-moi, raconte-moi
19 Tu me parles d’une terre
20 Que la lune fait briller
21 On courrait, danserait, à jamais

22 Quand tu pleures
23 Tes larmes sont tout ce que je vois
24 Les flammes m’ont brûlée
25 Pour que j’aie rien que toi

26 À Babylone j’élève ma voix
27 Il m’faut un peu de temps, attends-moi

Babylon

By Bethany Bucknor

He came, he called
For all who would hear
Just a man, tell me where you’ve been
In your voice, in your eyes
When you stood by the fire
Through the smoke, through the dark
It’s clear

It wasn’t that easy
It wasn’t too hard
The higher you climb
Oh the harder you’ll fall

If Babylon would be so kind
To wait for me, I need a little time
If Babylon would be so kind
To wait for me, I need a little time

All your words, like the wind
Don’t you blow me away
Tell me more, tell me more, tell me more
So you say there’s a place
Where the moon makes you bright
We could run, we could dance for days

I can’t look away
From your face when you cry
The flames burned me down
To the glow in your eye

If Babylon would be so kind
To wait for me, I need a little time

28	À Babylone j'élève ma voix	If Babylon would be so kind
29	Il m'faut un peu de temps, attends-moi	To wait for me, I need a little time
30	J'ai couru après toi	I ran like a child
31	Traversant la forêt	Through the trees where you'd gone
32	J'ai appelé ton nom	I called out your name
33	Te disant de continuer	Up ahead to go on
34	Je n'peux pas respirer	I can't catch my breath
35	Quand on court sans arrêt	When we're running this long
36	Je t'aime, la lune	I love you the moon
37	Mais j'ai besoin de soleil	But the sun keeps me warm
38	À Babylone j'élève ma voix	If Babylon would be so kind
39	Il m'faut un peu de temps, attends-moi	To wait for me, I need a little time
40	À Babylone j'élève ma voix	If Babylon would be so kind
41	Il m'faut un peu de temps, attends-moi	To wait for me, I need a little time
42	La musique, je te prie, baisse-la	Turn the music down
43	La musique, je te prie, baisse-la	Turn the music down
44	La musique, je te prie, baisse-la	Turn the music down
45	Ô	Oh

To begin, I should note that the verb *to stand* is often difficult to translate into French. After trying out many possible solutions for line 5, “When you stood by the fire,” I chose to change the verb and have the addressee sit by the fire rather than stand. The resulting translation, “Assis près du feu,” contains one less syllable than the original line fewer syllables than the original line. To compensate, I elongated the vowel in “près” and, to some degree, in “Assis.” To me, this solution produced a more natural sounding line than a translation like “debout près du feu” would.

Favouring musicality over meaning might sound like a cop-out. But considering the skopos of songs as established in chapter one—to present content in an aurally pleasing manner—musicality is the natural priority. There were many cases, though, where this purpose was difficult to achieve in this song. Even with strategies like the manipulation of word length in song being available to the translator, there are times that

a close translation simply produces too many syllables to fit into the metre. For an example, let us look to line 6: “Through the smoke, through the dark.” If translated as closely as possible, this line would become, “à travers la fumée, à travers le noir.” This phrase is both awkward and lengthy when set to the music. Furthermore, the melody of the verse contains two main stressed syllables. In both the original and the translation, it only makes sense to match these stressed syllables with “smoke” and “dark” (“fumée” and “noir”). One space-saving solution could be to eliminate the repetition of “à travers”: “À travers la fumée et le noir.” Although this frees up space in the line overall, the main issue in this case is the first half of the line: there simply is not sufficient space melodically to sing “à travers la fumée.” Another solution could be to reverse the sentence’s elements, placing the shorter word at the beginning of the phrase, where space is tight. Combining both of the aforementioned strategies would produce the following text: “À travers le noir et la fumée.” This word order renders the line more singable, but now the issue becomes less musicocentric and more logocentric. The semantic connection in the original between “the fire” in one line and “the smoke” at the beginning of the next line ought to be transferred into the target language. Moreover, the word “through” is often difficult to translate into French. In English it has several uses. While *through* in English could mean “even in” or “because of,” the context of the verse suggests that here it means “even in.” Therefore, “In the smoke, in the fire” does not subtract from the meaning. Although this back-translation sounds less natural, in French it fits well with the melody. Also, I was pleased to reproduce the repetition: “Through [...] through” changed to “Dans [...] dans.”

In lines 8 to 11, I encountered these dyads: “It wasn’t that easy, it wasn’t too hard” as well as “The higher you climb / Oh the harder you’ll fall.” It is important to consider how crucial it is to keep these exact opposites intact, particularly since keeping them would limit my choices for translation and would not guarantee a natural sounding line. In the end, I selected “facile” and “délicat” for “easy” and “hard.” In doing so, I was able to recreate the rhyme between lines 9 and 11. In lines 10 and 11, there came another issue: the proverb-like phrase, “The higher you climb / Oh the harder you’ll fall.” Ultimately, the translation should sound similarly proverbial. But there are other elements in this line that must also be considered. The cause-and-effect relationship between climbing higher and falling harder should be given thought; it should be stressed that the action leads to the consequence. In the source text, this inevitability is established through the use of “you’ll,” as opposed to “you may,” for example. By using this future tense, the author communicates that the said result is certain. Finally, the original text uses the second person “you,” but the proverb-like feel of the phrase suggests that this pronoun is being used in the impersonal sense. In modern English, it is generally acceptable to use the second-person pronoun in impersonal statements, while in French, the pronoun “on” would be required. To solve these issues, I tried rearranging the syntax before translating. This strategy allows the translator to rewrite a phrase into multiple versions in order to see which version lends itself best to translation. Using this approach, “The higher you climb / Oh the harder you’ll fall” could become, “high climbing leads to hard falling” or “climbing high causes serious falls.” While playing with the syntax, I decided that the correlation between height and danger was important and elected to use an infinitive-plus-infinitive structure in French, resulting in, “Monter plus haut, c’est

tomber beaucoup plus bas.” In doing so, I hoped to relay the proverbial nature of the phrase, the inevitable cause-and-effect relationship between the verbs, and the correlation between height and danger (that is, that danger increases in proportion to height). This strategy also solved the issue of the second-person singular pronoun, as the translation no longer required a pronoun at all. I should note, however, a couple of losses that occurred through this translation: the repetition in “hard...harder,” and the alliteration in “higher...harder.” As always, sacrifices are difficult to make, but, in my opinion, the importance of recreating the end rhyme, the proverbial tone, and the clear dyads through translation outweighed the importance of repetition and alliteration in these instances.

Undoubtedly the most time-consuming part of the translation process was the chorus. Line 12, in particular, posed a significant challenge: “If Babylon would be so kind.” The idiomatic expression, “would be so kind as to,” does have equivalents in French, but none seemed to pair well with the music, as every option contained too many syllables (for example, “Si Babylone avait l’amabilité”). Here, again, I restructured the syntax of the chorus in several ways before deciding on which might be translated most effectively while conveying the vulnerability of the speaker: “If you could find it in your heart, Babylon”; “Be good to me, Babylon”; “Oh Babylon, hear my plea”; “To Babylon I lift my voice.” It is the latter upon which I decided, which led to the following translation:

À Babylone j’élève ma voix
Il m’faut un peu de temps, attends-moi

Although the idiom in the original is more of a humble request than an overt plea, the lyrics as a whole and, particularly, the chorus, build a notion of desperation, of confusion to the point that all that the speaker has the strength to do is release a humble request.

These lines are successful in that they keep the word “Babylon” in the same position as in the original (as seen in the case of Gilberto Gil’s translations of popular songs, this can be a valuable strategy, particularly if the original song is recognizable by the target audience), they achieve the end rhyme, and they communicate the desperation and vulnerability that the speaker was experiencing.

Lines 22 and 23 presented a significant challenge. First, “I can’t look away” could carry very different connotations. It could suggest that the speaker feels guilty for turning her back, or that the speaker is enraptured by the man’s face. I believe that my translation effectively eliminates this problem while still capturing the intensity of the moment: “Quand tu pleures / Tes larmes sont tout ce que je vois.” Lines 24 and 25 were equally challenging as they contain such figurative language. The message I gleaned from this phrase in the original is that the speaker has been broken down and confused through interactions with the man to the point that she has retained very little of herself; she can no longer see anything but him. There is also an obvious element of manipulation and control. Fittingly, then, my translation is, “Les flammes m’ont brûlée pour que j’aie rien que toi.”

When it came to the bridge (lines 30 to 37), the first constraint was that of the rhyme, or near rhyme, at the end of every other line, which followed the pattern of ABCBDBEB. Also, a first-person singular subject and verb appeared in the first position of every other line (lines ACDE in the rhyme scheme). Therefore, the option of rearranging the syntax in order to achieve a rhyme in the translation may not be a wise choice, as the repetition of the syntactic structure, and thus perhaps the poetic effect, would be lost. Any attempt to invert the lines (for example, translating lines 34 and 35 as

“Quand on court si longtemps, je m’essouffle...” or “Quand on court si longtemps, je ne peux pas reprendre mon souffle”) would diminish the parallelism in this bridge. For these reasons, I chose to alter the lyrics slightly, while attempting to preserve the most crucial elements of meaning, in order to achieve both the first-person singular in front position and the end rhyme:

<u>J</u> 'ai couru après toi	<u>I</u> ran like a child
Traversant la forêt	Through the trees where you'd <u>gone</u>
<u>J</u> 'ai appelé ton nom	<u>I</u> called out your name
Te disant de continuer	Up ahead to go <u>on</u>
<u>Je</u> n'peux pas respirer	<u>I</u> can't catch my breath
Quand on court sans arrêt	When we're running this <u>long</u>
<u>Je</u> t'aime, la lune	<u>I</u> love you the moon
Mais j'ai besoin de soleil	But the sun keeps me <u>warm</u>

At the end of the song, “Turn the music down” (line 42) is a simple, concise, and symbolic imperative that works well in English. There did not seem to be a clear, perfect translation for this in French: “Baisse la musique,” “Mets la musique moins fort,” “La musique, baisse-la.” These are all adequate translations, but not one seemed to fit the requirements of meaning, form and musicality all at once. I chose to translate this final line as “La musique, je te prie, baisse-la.” While this translation makes several small changes to the line’s melody, there is the musical space *to* make those changes and the assonance created (“musique,” “prie”) adds a nice, musical touch that, hopefully, counteracts the discrepancy in melody.

A recurring challenge in this song was the use of phrasal verbs in the original: “blow (me) away” (line 17), “look away” (line 22), “burned (me) down” (line 24), “called out” (line 32), “go on” (line 33), “keeps (me) warm” (line 37). Phrasal verbs do not have obvious equivalents in French and, therefore, there was no universal strategy for

dealing with them. Of particular difficulty was “blow me away” (line 17), where two elements needed to be considered. The expression comes after “like the wind” and, thus, has an association with the wind that should be transferred into the target language. Secondly, *to blow someone away* usually means to impress someone a great deal. I toiled over this line and eventually asked my sister about it. To the dismay of my inner grammarian, she explained that by “Don’t you blow me away,” she had meant “Don’t you blow me off” or “Don’t send me away from where you are” (I do wonder whether this counts as an approvable liberty taken by a language user—particularly a writer—or if an editor would suggest that this be changed, especially if the writer were a non-native English speaker). With this new explanation in mind, I translated lines 16 and 17 as “Tes paroles, comme le vent / Ne m’emporte jamais.” This translation retains the connection between the addressee’s words being like the wind and the addressee himself being like the wind (capable of blowing someone off/away).

In this translation, strategies affecting the melody were employed far more frequently than in “San Salvador.” For example, the five beats in line 34 of the original (“I can’t catch my breath”) became six beats in the translation (“Je peux pas respirer”). The reason that these strategies work well and do not harm the integrity of the song is that, unlike in “San Salvador” where nearly every syllable equaled one quarter note, “Babylon” contains a lot of variation in syllable length, so altering syllable length slightly is not as detectible by listeners.

3.1.3 La ballade des gens heureux

The next translation to be discussed is that of Gérard Lenorman and Pierre Delanoë's "La ballade des gens heureux," a popular French tune from the 1970s. As is clear from the title, the song has a cheerful, uplifting tone as it moves through eight verses addressing individuals to whom the speaker wishes to sing "La ballade des gens heureux."

A Song for the Happy

Translated by Jessica Holtby

1 This old world is like a star
2 And like a star, you're shining too
3 I came to sing to all the happy
4 Happy people, this song's for you
5 I came to sing to all the happy
6 Happy people, this song's for you

7 You don't have a crown or a title
8 But you talk to God as if you do
9 I came to sing to all the happy
10 Happy people, this song's for you
11 I came to sing to all the happy
12 Happy people, this song's for you

13 Hey reporter, here is a headline
14 I know in the end you'll do what you do
15 But here's a line that's pretty catchy
16 "Happy people, this song's for you"
17 Here's a line that's pretty catchy
18 "Happy people, this song's for you"

19 In your garden outside the city
20 Where the trees you plant all bloom
21 I came to sing to all the happy
22 Happy people, this song's for you
23 I came to sing to all the happy
24 Happy people, this song's for you

25 As you watch your baby sleeping
26 Yes he looks a bit like you

La ballade des gens heureux

By Gérard Lenorman

Notre vieille Terre est une étoile
Où toi aussi et tu brilles un peu
Je viens te chanter la ballade
La ballade des gens heureux
Je viens te chanter la ballade
La ballade des gens heureux

Tu n'a pas de titre ni de grade
Mais tu dis "tu" quand tu parles à Dieu
Je viens te chanter la ballade
La ballade des gens heureux
Je viens te chanter la ballade
La ballade des gens heureux

Journaliste pour ta première page
Tu peux écrire tout ce que tu veux
Je t'offre un titre formidable
La ballade des gens heureux
Je t'offre un titre formidable
La ballade des gens heureux

Toi qui a planté un arbre
Dans ton petit jardin de banlieue
Je viens te chanter la ballade
La ballade des gens heureux
Je viens te chanter la ballade
La ballade des gens heureux

Il s'endort et tu le regardes
C'est ton enfant il te ressemble un peu

27 We came to sing to all the happy	On vient lui chanter la ballade
28 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
29 We came to sing to all the happy	On vient lui chanter la ballade
30 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
31 You're the star that shines above us	Toi la star du haut de ta vague
32 Come on down where there's a better view	Descends vers nous, tu verras mieux
33 We came to sing to all the happy	On vient te chanter la ballade
34 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
35 We came to sing to all the happy	On vient te chanter la ballade
36 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
37 All the cheaters and all the players	Roi de la drague et de la rigolade
38 All the gamblers and the old men too	Rouleur flambeur ou gentil petit vieux
39 We came to sing to all the happy	On vient te chanter la ballade
40 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
41 We came to sing to all the happy	On vient te chanter la ballade
42 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
43 Like a choir in a cathedral	Comme un chœur dans une cathédrale
44 Like a bird doing what it can do	Comme un oiseau qui fait ce qu'il peut
45 Now you've sung to all the happy	Tu viens de chanter la ballade
46 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux
47 Now you've sung to all the happy	Tu viens de chanter la ballade
48 Happy people, this song's for you	La ballade des gens heureux

Immediately evident in reading this translation is the fact that the ABAB rhyme scheme was not transferred over to the target text. As we know, content is often selected by songwriters to fit the form. So oftentimes in translation, something has to be sacrificed. I chose to give up the A rhyme and simply retain the B rhyme (ABCB), since a) the B rhyme is more discernable to listeners, b) the same B rhyme is repeated in every verse, and c) it is also found in the song's hook ("La ballade des gens heureux"). Another point that should be mentioned right away is the difference in syllable counts between my translation and the original. While the syllable count in the original ranges from eight to 11 syllables per line—with the majority of lines having nine syllables—it seems that most of the lines in my translation are one syllable short (the syllable counts of the

English lines vary from seven to 10). Although this is purely coincidental, I can safely say that the slight variation in syllable counts in the original did, likely, give me license to vary the syllable count in translation. It may, also, very well be that the word-final schwa, which is used so frequently in the original, led to more syllables in the song than I could come up with in English.

Moving to lines 3 and 4, I will note once more that hooks can present a host of issues, as we saw with “Babylon.” In “La ballade des gens heureux,” the hook is even more important due to the fact that every other end rhyme throughout the song is built upon it. So not only must the translator find an accurate way to translate the hook, but she must also develop a hook for which she can easily find rhymes to fill the rest of the verses. Once again, writing and rewriting becomes a critical part of the song translator’s process, because every minute decision made with regards to the hook risks affecting the rest of the song. For this reason, I settled on “I came to sing to all the happy / Happy people, this song’s for you.” Admittedly, this changes the content. In the original, the speaker sings the song of the happy people; in the translation, the speaker sings *to* the happy people. While this shift is significant, I feel that there is still a strong semantic link between versions. In the original, the speaker walks around identifying people to whom he sings “La ballade des gens heureux,” or the “happy people’s song.” My translation shifts “La ballade” from a song that the happy people already knew or possessed to one that the happy people hear and join in on. I do not believe that this change affects the song’s essence; the image of the speaker—a troubadour of sorts—parading through town, gathering happy people and joining with them in a joyful song was transferred into the English.

Line 8 presented an issue in that modern English does not have multiple second-person singular pronouns. So I risked losing the meaning that the addressee speaks to God in an informal or intimate manner. My first attempt at translating lines 7 and 8 produced the following:

You don't have a crown or a title

But when you pray to God, you say "tu"

In the end, I decided that this instance of foreignization might be too jarring to monolingual English listeners and that the meaning of these lines would not be effectively communicated. I changed line 8 to "But you talk to God as if you do." Here, the notion that the addressee speaks more informally or intimately to God than would be expected given his or her rank comes across in the target language.

Skipping to lines 19 and 20, one notes that the content has been inverted (the content from line 20 moves to line 19 and vice versa). From the original lines, I sensed that the addressee felt hope and joy in his or her gardening activities and in his or her home. I decided that adding "bloom" in line 20 would help communicate this hope and joy while, of course, fulfilling the rhyme requirement. Furthermore, the addition of "bloom" contributes to the imagery of this verse ("tree," "plant," "garden").

In the next verse, I was a bit hesitant to rhyme "you" and "you," but decided to bite the bullet for a few reasons. First, the original song is incredibly repetitive. So rhyming "you" and "you" once is likely not a noticeable offense in a song where the hook is sung 16 times.

There are some things that work in French that don't work in English. As translators, we seek out and take advantage of things that work in the target language and

accept that some things that work in the source language might need to be shifted or a facet of them lost. For instance, in the last verse, the hook switches from “Je viens te chanter la ballade / La ballade des gens heureux” to “Tu viens de chanter la ballade / La ballade des gens heureux.” The songwriter took advantage of the various functions of the French verb *venir* to make a subtle switch from communicating the singer’s intention—coming with the expressed purpose of singing “La ballade”—to summing up what the antecedent of “Tu” in the final verse just accomplished. But what is the solution in a translation? Choosing to translate the line as “You came and sang to all the happy” means that “to sing,” which was maintained throughout the rest of the song, changes in tense and, more importantly, in musical quality, to “sang.” One could choose to say, “You came to sing to all the happy.” There, we retain the “came to sing” in every verse. We must, however, decide whether this changes the message too drastically. “You came to sing” means that the person—the addressee to whom the speaker is singing—came with the explicit purpose of singing; from examining the original, it does not seem like this is the songwriter’s intended message. To me, the song conjures up an image of the singer of “La ballade des gens heureux” visiting various groups of people, who then join him in his song. That would mean that the “Tu” in the last verse did not come with the intent to sing, but, rather, heard the leader singing “La ballade” and then joined him on his tour. To avoid this incorrect message that the “Tu” had intended to sing, I chose to translate the line as “Now you’ve sung to all the happy.” Unfortunately, the wordplay on “venir de” is lost. I feel, however, that the importance of placing “Tu” in the line (rather than simply translating the line as before: “I came to sing to all the happy”) should not be

ignored. “Now you’ve sung to all the happy” gives us a similar sense of closure, of completion, as “Tu viens de chanter la ballade” does.

3.1.4 Final remarks

As I hope was demonstrated through the translations and discussions above, the translator must approach translation in such a way that adheres to the conventions of the song at hand. In “San Salvador,” the principal convention was consistent metre. Therefore, I made changes as necessary but drew the line at changes that affected the metre. “San Salvador” is highly poetic, has little consistent rhyme scheme, and does not have a hook, which gave me more flexibility to manipulate content in order to force it into the required metre. In “Babylon,” the metre was far more flexible and the melody left room for much more interpretation. I was, thus, able to make small alterations to the melody in order to accommodate the English lyrics. A challenge did arise with the hook, but a solution was found that kept the dominant word, “Babylon,” in a prominent position while still relaying the message and emotion of the original. Lastly, in “La ballade des gens heureux,” the clearest convention was the rhyme: the second line in each verse rhymed with the hook. And while the first line in each verse sounded similar to the first line of the hook, the B rhyme was significantly more pronounced. So choosing to drop the A rhymes in order to facilitate the B rhymes was a logical choice.

3.2 Self-translations

I will now attempt to describe the process of self-translation as I have experienced it. The following three songs are some of my originals and illustrate many of the points discussed in chapter two.

3.2.1 *The Sea*

This song is about toxic love, or toxic friendship, and its ensuing tragedies. In this song, the speaker faces shame and persecution for being honest and upright. She realizes that her past lover will never examine his own heart and will always be right in his own eyes. She flees the persecution that has come from the addressee's desperate attempts to vindicate himself, and finds shelter in a faraway place. There, she realizes that there is very little hope that her past lover will ever grow or reach his potential.

La Mer

Translated by Jessica Holtby

1 Je m'suis écriée
2 La mer m'a écoutée
3 T'as porté ta plainte
4 J'ai rien contesté
5 Voyant
6 Que je tenais la clé de ta honte
7 Mais voyant
8 Que le procès cherchait qu'une méchante
9 Ô
10 Je m'suis écriée
11 La mer m'a écoutée

12 J'ai vu un rivage
13 Caché de l'orage
14 Un phare si faible
15 Éclairant les vagues
16 Voyant
17 Que le vent voulait pas que je vive

The Sea

By Jessica Holtby

I called out to sea
It called back to me
You read your complaint
I entered my plea
I knew
Knew that I had discovered it all
But the truth
Is only ever as good as the law
Oh
I called out to sea
It called back to me

I'd heard of a shore
Away from the storm
The lighthouse was faint
The waves pushed me forth
I knew
That the wind had a secret to keep

18	Mais souvent	Oh but you'd
19	Tu me disais, Un jour je serai libre	Always told me, One day I'll be free
20	Ô	Oh
21	J'ai vu un rivage	I'd heard of a shore
22	Caché de l'orage	Away from the storm
23	J'ai touché la terre	I washed up on land
24	J'ai humé son air	And lay in the sand
25	Le noir répétait	The stars sang so sweet
26	Le chant de la mer	The moon stroked my hand
27	Croyant	I knew
28	Que le feu allait pas me trahir	That I'd someday be warmed by the fire
29	Mais la raison	But the truth
30	Disparaît dans les flammes du désir	Disappears in the flames of desire
31	Ô	Oh
32	J'ai touché la terre	I washed up on land
33	J'ai humé son air	And lay in the sand
34	Espérant	I knew
35	Que le vent allait gracier les braises	That my treasure had burned in the flame
36	Du moment	When the wind
37	Qu'en ma condamnation je l'apaise	Struck my cheek as I whispered your name
38	Ô	Oh
39	Je m'suis écriée	I called out to sea
40	La mer m'a écoutée	It called back to me

It seems clear why critics and theorists would take issue with self-translation as a sub-category of translation. Self-translations might be close translations, or they might be laden with inconsistencies. In this song, the first line presents such an inconsistency. It is a centralized lyric, and we know that centralized lyrics are difficult to translate. As discussed in chapter one, while the translation of prose allows for the process of drafting, redrafting, and making small adjustments to perfect the target text, translating centralized lyrics—and songs in general—often requires that the translator start from scratch with every “draft.” In my quest to transfer “I called out to sea / It called back to me” into French, I started from scratch several times, each time, finding a new rhyme scheme and completely changing the content of the first two lines. In the end, I chose, “Je me suis

écriée / La mer m'a écoutée." This translation means a significant structural shift: "sea" is moved to the second line. In the English version, the speaker calls out to an identified entity: the sea. The sea, then, responds. In the French version, the speaker calls out, and the sea is the entity that responds. This shift is significant, and it might be bold of an external translator to settle on these lines. But, of course, many changes can be justified on the basis of musicality. As the self-translator, I accepted this shift because the overall essence and emotion of these lines was still communicated. The speaker is alone and desperate. Calling out to sea does not automatically mean that you expect the sea to answer; it could mean a last-ditch, desperate cry for help to whoever happens to hear you. In this way, the two versions of lines 1 and 2 are comparable.

In line 4, I tried to preserve the imagery of a court hearing, wherein the speaker was being judged unfairly. "I entered my plea" became "J'ai rien contesté." These lines are examples of the "multidirectional and multilingual dialogue with the self" and the "hidden passages" discussed in chapter two. The source text and the target text feed each other; things are clarified in one version and left vague in the other, and vice versa. In this song, the English version does not indicate what the speaker's plea was, but the French version gives a bit of a hint: if the speaker did not contest to that of which she was being accused, it would seem that she pled guilty or declined to defend herself at all. While there is a discrepancy between these lines, I believe that "J'ai rien contesté" works well in the whole of the verse, as both the original and the translation go on to explain the speaker's position. In lines 5 to 8 of the English version, the speaker asserts that she knew that she had found the truth, but that the truth means nothing when the law is corrupt. Those same lines in the French version provide a little more detail as to what the speaker

had uncovered, with line 6 revealing that the speaker knew something about the addressee that was, or would be, a source of shame. In another example of these multidirectional connections, lines 7 and 8 of the French version explain in greater detail what lines 7 and 8 of the English version left vague. The English version of these lines is proverbial, while the French version spells out the exact situation: that the hearing was biased and was only ever going to result in a guilty verdict.

The second verse begins with another semantic shift. In the English version, the speaker had heard of a shore, while in the translation, she saw it. This shift was made for reasons that are largely musicocentric: it was difficult to develop a rhyme scheme that would accommodate the necessary content. “Shore” is an easy word to rhyme. “Rivage” is slightly more difficult, at least in a poetic context. Furthermore, “I’d heard of” makes up only three syllables, while “J’avais entendu parler de” comprises eight. This is an example of a situation where direct translation is utterly impossible, and significant alteration is necessary. I like the English version. I like the element of a legend, of a hope, of a place in the distance that the speaker believed existed and then tried to find. But due to the constraints of rhythm and rhyme, I chose to skip ahead to the moment where the speaker physically saw the shore. Regardless of whether the speaker had previously heard of the shore, she would have, inevitably, seen the shore before approaching it. Therefore, the translation is not inaccurate—it merely catches up to the speaker at a slightly different point of the story.

Lines 16 and 17 perhaps require some explaining, or perhaps simply are not the best examples of great literature. While writing these lines in English, the image in my mind was of a woman alone in a boat on rough waters. I imagined the wind threatening

her with its harsh gusts. The wind represents all that is out to destroy the speaker. “[T]he wind had a secret to keep,” and it would protect that secret by any means necessary, including violence. It clearly deemed the disclosure of the secret to be detrimental to its own well-being. So it entered a mode of self-protection. Like a frightened animal attacking a human, the wind howled and blew roughly against the boat, a boat that it saw as an adversary. Initially, I settled on the following:

French version:

English version:

16 Le vent

I knew

17 Le vent se protégeait du bateau

That the wind had a secret to keep

18 Toujours

Oh but you’d

19 Tu me disais, Je serais libre bientôt

Always told me, One day I’ll be free

Luckily, I received the valuable feedback that this translation of line 17 seemed to contradict the original. In evaluating this comment, I realized that, of course, the audience could interpret the wind’s having a secret to keep as the wind’s maintaining a self-protective silence. So, this multidirectional process caused me to reconsider a line in the source text. In this instance, I did not change it in the source text, but one can easily imagine that a self-translator would, indeed, choose to make changes to the source text upon deconstructing and reconsidering it so carefully. For these lines, I finally came up with, “Voyant / Que le vent voulait pas que je vive.” In both versions, it is clear that the wind is not an ally of the speaker, and that is the line’s core message.

Lines 18 and 19 were deliberately left ambiguous in both versions:

18 Mais souvent

Oh but you’d

19 Tu me disais, Un jour je serai libre

Always told me, One day I’ll be free

I did not include quotation marks in either version because I wanted it to be unclear who exactly the antecedent of “I” was, a choose-your-own-meaning type of line: 1) The addressee had always encouraged the speaker, telling her that she would be free; or 2) The addressee had always believed that one day he would be free, but now he has sentenced himself to a life of delusion. Consequently, I needed to craft the line in a way that did not reveal unintended information through grammatical gender. Originally, I had wanted the lines to be something to the effect of “Je savais que le vent détenait un secret / Mais tu me disais, Un jour je serai libéré(e).” This choice would have necessitated a gender designation and taken away the open-endedness. Fortunately, I thought of another rhyme scheme, with the near rhymes “vive” and “libre,” and was able to achieve a fairly close translation of line 19: “Tu me disais, Un jour je serai libre.”

In lines 23 to 26, there are a few important semantic changes. With phrasal verbs posing their usual challenges, “I washed up on land” needed to be restructured. I chose to change the line to “J’ai touché la terre” in an attempt to communicate the speaker’s relief upon reaching dry land. While the English version paints a picture more akin to a woman who has just survived a storm and has been washed ashore by the waves, the French version, admittedly, changes this tone a little. But taking a holistic view of the song, I decided simply to describe a different aspect of the speaker’s experience. Of course she was relieved to find land, so having her speak of the moment when she physically touched the land aligns thematically with the song. Next, line 24 was meant to emphasize the relief, rest, and calmness that the speaker experienced upon reaching the shore. After initially choosing “Aspiré son air,” I decided that “J’ai humé son air” carried more of a sense of experiencing the new surroundings than “Aspiré” did. In lines 25 and 26, I

wanted to describe the kindness that the speaker was shown from an unlikely source—the night. So the lines retained the element of comfort, with the night showing the speaker the same kindness that the sea had shown. One of the themes in this song is that of natural elements, some of which are friends and others foes. The friendly elements—the sea, the land, the air, and the darkness—come together to provide a haven for the speaker. So the night echoing the song of the sea is a gesture of friendship and an invitation to safety and comfort.

The final section of the song took, by far, the most time to translate, and made it abundantly clear to me that, while self-translation does seem to break more rules than translation by an external translator, it is not automatically easier. I spent an entire weekend trying to translate lines 34 to 37. Hour after hour, I stared at the page, I thought of rhyme schemes, I tried to rephrase the lines in the source text as a strategy to inspire a path to translation, and I tried out every other strategy I could think to. I tried to re-access my inspiration. I brainstormed for long periods of time, and came up with some of the paraphrases below:

I knew
That hope had been defeated
When the wind
Knocked me over as I dipped my foot into the sea

I knew
That I could never go home
When the wind
Blew me over as I approached the shore

I knew
That I had to forget my home
When the wind
Threatened to extinguish the embers of my fire

I also tried to construct lines in French, like the ones below:

Sachant
Que j'étais bannie de ma patrie
Et que le vent
Une fois un allié, m'avait trahie

I searched and searched for something, anything that captured the essence, the emotion, of the original lines. And eventually, after playing the song over and over in both English and French, I was finally able to unlock the door to my initial inspiration. Once I had truly re-entered and re-experienced the work, it became clear to me that keeping the element of fire was crucial. The fire was a source of both comfort and destruction. Having an element that is both positive and negative is meant to represent the complexities of human relationships: a friend can turn into a foe; something good can become something bad. The fire keeps the speaker warm, but also destroys the things she holds dear. It also needed to be clear that, while the speaker has found some amount of shelter, the wind would quickly turn against her should she ever attempt to go back home.

In the English version, the lines go like this:

I knew
That my treasure had burned in the flame
When the wind
Struck my cheek as I whispered your name

The wind is in control; it strikes her cheek when she dares to utter the name of her past lover, or dares to entertain the idea of seeing him again. Its frigid force would blow her over should she ever set foot in the water to start sailing back home. So how could I communicate this in the translation while still maintaining the rhyme? I tried out other solutions:

Sachant
Que les flammes avaient pris mon trésor
Quand le vent
M'a frappée dès que j'ai dit ton nom

And finally, I settled on this:

Espérant
Que le vent allait gracier les braises
Du moment
Qu'en ma condamnation je l'apaise

By translating these lines in this manner, I maintained the reference to fire (“les braises”), and also communicated the precariousness of the speaker’s new position—that any misstep could result in the wind turning against her. She, thus, resolves to live in exile with the hope that the wind will spare the embers of her fire, in which she sees some hope of renewal.

This is, admittedly, an alternate ending. In the English version, the song ends with the speaker realizing that hope has gone, that her “treasure had burned in the flame,” and that she would be destroyed if she ever so much as attempted to return home. In the French version, the speaker demonstrates a sad acceptance of her situation, and a resolve to sacrifice herself so that the embers, that small spark of hope that she sees, might be reborn. Despite their differences, both versions tell of the speaker’s sad realization that she is alone and that there will always be forces at work against her.

This song brought up some fascinating aspects of musical translation. I have already discussed the possibility of self-translation inspiring new content. But this song raised a new question: what if self-translation not only inspires new content, but also new music? While I have already argued that minute alterations of a song’s melody can be some of the most valuable strategies in song translation, I had not given much thought to whether there were differences between melody alteration in translation by an external

translator and in self-translation. In translating “The Sea,” I began with small changes, such as those in lines 1 and 2:

I call - ed out to sea It call - ed back to me

Je m'suis é - cri - ée La mer m'a é - cou - tée

Here, there are multiple smaller changes that occurred through translation. First, “called” in the phrase “I called out to sea” is played as one single tone occupying four counts. In the translation, those four counts are divided, with three counts—a dotted half note—going to “m’suis,” and a half note going to “é-” in the first syllable of the word “écriée.” Then, where “called” in the phrase “It called back to me” had occupied four counts, “mer” occupies three and “m’a” occupies one. These differences, while important in musical notation, are relatively subtle and may not even be obvious to the average listener.

Such changes were mainly necessitated by the chosen content. But other changes came about differently. As one of Peter Low’s five criteria for a good song translation (discussed in chapter one), naturalness should always be at the forefront of the song translator’s mind. And as I sang the French version, I found myself veering away from the English melody in certain places and reallocating certain beats. Rather than resist this change, I began to wonder whether the process of translation could, indeed, justify not just minute melodic alterations that could fall under the umbrella of interpretation, but

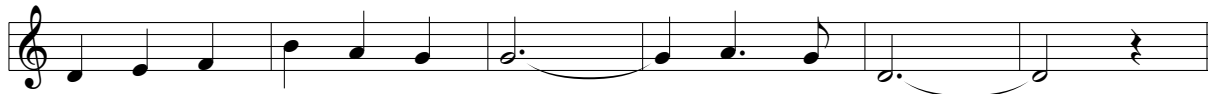
changes to the larger structure of the melody. And if I were to make significant changes to the melody during translation, should I, then, go back and change the melody of the original? Is it feasible to maintain two versions of the melody: one version for the English song and another version for the French song? This is a difficult question to answer, as so much depends on the purpose of the song and on the audience to which it would be presented. As we saw with Gilberto Gil's translations, an important factor to consider is whether the audience knows the song. "Não, não chore mais" was readily accepted as a translation because, musically, it had so much in common with "No woman no cry": the first word is the same and the syllable count aligns. The senses of ownership and of belonging that come from singing along to a song you know risk being violated by a translation that contains too many major changes.

So, here are some benefits to being a local musician and a self-translator: my fan base is small, so even if I make significant changes, I am only affecting the experience of a handful of people; of that small fan base, an even smaller number of people are bilingual, so most people would not even have the chance to notice, or care, if the melodies were slightly different; and finally, a lot of my songs are translated simultaneously or soon after the original is written, before the audience ever hears the first version, so they may end up hearing and learning both versions at the same time.

To help illustrate what I mean by significant changes, below is a comparison of the melodies for the English and the French versions of lines 5 to 9:



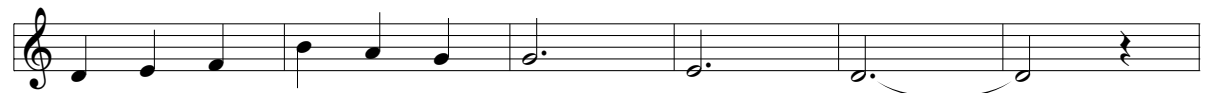
I knew knew that I had dis - covered it all But the truth's on - ly



e - ver as good as the law O - o - oh



Voy - ant que je te-nais la clé de ta hon - te Mais voy - ant que le



pro - cès cher - chait qu'une mé - chan - te Ô

Since the designation of musical alterations as small, moderate, or significant is subjective, I should define what I mean by these categories. To me, a small alteration concerns mainly the rhythm; it affects the value of the notes. For instance, converting a half note to two quarter notes is typically a small change. Moderate alterations might mean that a half note is converted to, let us say, four eighth notes. And in my opinion, alterations become more significant when they affect the musical tone. So if I were to convert C played as a half note to C as a quarter note followed by B as a quarter note, this would be a significant and conspicuous change. In the first notation above, the word “all”

is sung as a G and lasts for nine counts. Yet in the French version, “honte,” which corresponds rhythmically to “all,” is sung as a G for three counts, then as an E for six. The descent in pitch, especially since it comes at the end of the line, is undeniably more significant than the change in rhythm between “called” and “mer” as seen above. Adding ascent or descent where it did not exist makes for a noteworthy change. As a non-native French speaker, I could be entirely off base in saying that the new melody suits the translation better than the old, but I think it does. Regardless, I found that, at the very least, it complimented the translation and, therefore, I decided to keep it.

3.2.2 Streets of Vauvert

“Streets of Vauvert” is a song that I wrote while living and working in the South of France. Historically a vibrant hub of winemakers, Vauvert now has the appearance of a town that “once was,” with streets lined with beautiful—albeit cracked and crumbling—old bay doors through which wagons carrying grapes from the vineyards would enter the wineries. Whether because of the town’s melancholy charm or the fact that it was my first year living in Europe, I fell in love with the old, quiet streets of Vauvert. Being infinitely more proficient and confident writing in English, yet surrounded by the French language and culture, I found that I was simultaneously inspired to write in two languages. I wrote the core of the song in English, developed its structure, melody, chords, and theme. But I quickly shifted into French. In fact, this shift happened so fast that the English “original” was never completed. Instead, I entered a back-and-forth, multidirectional writing process that resulted in a bilingual set of lyrics. I have divided the text by language for the purposes of discussion.

Rues de Vauvert

Translated by Jessica Holtby

- 1 J'adore les rues de Vauvert
- 2 Sinueuses et étroites
- 3 Je me promène sans arrêt
- 4 A gauche, à droite
- 5 Vieux village en pierre
- 6 Allusion de mystère
- 7 N'abrège jamais mon séjour
- 8 Petite ville de Vauvert
- 9 Mon vrai amour

- 10 Quelles jolies rues de Vauvert
- 11 Quel esprit de village
- 12 Ce portrait du passé
- 13 S'améliore avec l'âge
- 14 Les rues ont l'air mortes
- 15 Mais écoutez aux portes
- 16 Vous entendrez son cœur vivant
- 17 Vivez les rues de Vauvert
- 18 À tout venant

- 19 La ville n'a pas trop d'étincelle
- 20 Elle est tristement belle
- 21 Elle a sa propre beauté
- 22 Ses murs s'effritent
- 23 Mais la ville hérite
- 24 De la vie du soleil
- 25 Qui ne l'abandonne jamais

- 26 À Paris je parie
- 27 Que la vie est jolie
- 28 Le soleil à Marseille brille à jamais
- 29 Bien sûr, Sommières
- 30 Est comme un château sur la mer
- 31 Mais petit Vauvert
- 32 M'invite à rentrer

- 33 Mon petit Vauvert
- 34 Une ville à la vieillesse
- 35 Où partout se cachent
- 36 De vraies richesses
- 37 Et chaque jour je me perds

Streets of Vauvert

By Jessica Holtby

- I like the streets of Vauvert
There's always something to see
They never change at all
But still feel new to me
I like the streets of Vauvert
Don't lead anywhere
And not a person around
Like how the streets of Vauvert
Never make a sound
- Head out to Sommières
It's like a castle by the sea
I'm in a fairytale
Won't somebody pinch me
They have a grand marché
On Saturday
You'd think it'd make me want to stay
I'd miss the streets of Vauvert
After one day
- You may not be pretty
Compared to the city
You're a little old and grey
Some say you're dead
But I say 'weary' instead
No, it's not too late
For you to be saved
- Little old Vauvert
The walls may tumble down
But the sun never turns
From its beloved town
Though I wander and stray

38	Dans les rues de Vauvert	Though I may lose my way
39	Il ne faut pas vous inquiéter	No need to worry at all
40	C'est dans les rues de Vauvert	I know my streets of Vauvert
41	Que je me retrouverai	Will always lead me home

As a whole, this song embodies two principles of song translation that this study has explored: non-linear connections and the multifaceted nature of meaning. Let us start by examining the former.

In the introduction to this thesis, I asked the following research question: Are loose, abstract, or non-linear connections between parts of the source and target texts strokes of genius or strokes of luck? To further explain this question, I refer once more to Peter Low's classifications of song translations as translations, adaptations, and replacement texts. As we saw with Mack David's English version of "La vie en rose," it is very well possible to establish semantic connections between the target and source texts despite any alignment in line number. Non-linear connections can help transfer the essence of the song regardless of whether a close translation is accomplished or even attempted. With self-translation, I find that these non-linear connections are even more frequent, and "Streets of Vauvert" provides many examples. The two versions of this song are the result of a multidirectional translation process wherein a decision in the French version led to a change in the English version, which then led to an idea for the French version, which, in turn, led to a change in the English version. This back-and-forth approach produced a series of semantic links between versions but very little chronological alignment, as will be demonstrated in the analysis that follows.

Secondly, this song exemplifies the plurality of vessels through which meaning can express itself. If you pour water through a wicker basket, the same water is going to

seep through cracks and spaces of various shapes and sizes; the volume and the look of the water seeping through different cracks will change, but the essence will not. In the same way, meaning can seep through a multitude of expressions. As discussed throughout this study, one of a song translator's success indicators is that she has fully transferred the work's essence to the new context. Concerning "Streets of Vauvert," several pieces contributed to the transfer of essence between the two languages. Certain lines, or at least certain ideas, were translated directly, and certain images and symbols were maintained, but a lot of things were said in a slightly different way. The result is, really, a set of songs that pour the same water through two different shapes.

Returning to the issue of non-linearity in the self-translation of songs, while it is an entirely natural result of the self-translator's process, non-linearity makes the analysis of translation more difficult. To best highlight the semantic connections between the English and French versions of this song, I have grouped the lyrics according to meaning rather than presenting a line-by-line comparison. I have presented these semantic equations in the chronological order of the French lyrics.

I will start with line 1 in each version:

1 J'adore les rues de Vauvert

1, 5 I like the streets of Vauvert

I wrote the English line first, and the French is a fairly direct translation, with the exception, of course, of the variance in degree of affection between "adore" and "like," which was mainly necessitated by the rhythm. I felt that "aime" would be awkward in this context, as it would likely mean that the word-final *e* would need to be pronounced and would receive equal stress as the first syllable in "aime"—schwas typically receive a reduced stress.

Next, let us consider the following lyrics:

2 Sinueuses et étroites	6 Don't lead anywhere
3 Je me promène sans arrêt	37 Though I wander and stray
4 A gauche, à droite	

The image in both groups of lyrics above is that of the speaker wandering aimlessly or walking through the streets with no veritable destination.

Line 5 does not have a clear equivalent in English:

5 Vieux village en pierre

In writing the French version, I found myself adding more descriptions of the physical aspects of the village than were present in the English version.

Line 6 seems to map to lines 7 to 9 in the English song:

6 Allusion de mystère	7 And not a person around
	8 Like how the streets of Vauvert
	9 Never make a sound

The connection might not be overly clear, but as the self-translator, I enjoy a little extra insight into the process that produced these versions. The quiet town of Vauvert always grew eerily silent after dark. Evening walks down winding cobblestone roads were rather mysterious, as oftentimes I would not pass a single soul or even hear the noise of traffic. The French line is crafted more poetically than the English; I will comment on this later on in this section.

The next line relates to the English as follows:

7 N'abrège jamais mon séjour	16 You'd think it'd make me want to stay
	17 I'd miss the streets of Vauvert
	18 After one day

In an attempt to represent the fact that any absence from Vauvert—no matter the length—made the speaker yearn to return, I flipped things around and expressed this fear of separation from a different angle. While in the English, the speaker visits other places and

cannot seem to stay away from Vauvert, the French lyrics have the speaker remaining in Vauvert and hoping that she is never made to leave. Either way, the meaning is consistent in that the speaker enjoys time spent in Vauvert above all else.

The next two lines, lines 8 and 9, connect, albeit more vaguely, to a few different lines in the English:

8 Petite ville de Vauvert

9 Mon vrai amour

33 Little old Vauvert

1, 5 I like the streets of Vauvert

36 From its beloved town

Both sets of lyrics express the affection that the speaker feels for Vauvert, as well as the fact that it is an older town.

Next, line 10 essentially rephrases sentiments that have already been communicated in the song, so I believe that the clearest equivalent is the phrase that appears in lines 1 and 5 of the English:

10 Quelles jolies rues de Vauvert

1, 5 I like the Streets of Vauvert

Although there is not a line in the English version that comments on the beauty of the streets, the speaker's affection towards the streets is expressed in both versions.

Lines 11 to 13 do not have an equivalent:

11 Quel esprit de village

12 Ce portrait du passé

13 S'améliore avec l'âge

In fact, this set of lyrics is an example of ideas being embellished and further developed through self-translation. These embellishments set self-translation apart as a genre and demonstrate the freedom and authority in which self-translators operate. As discussed throughout this study, the self-translator tends to remain faithful to the source of inspiration, not necessarily to the source text.

The next lines, although not connected chronologically in the song lyrics, have a clear semantic link:

14 Les rues ont l'air mortes	7 And not a person around
15 Mais écoutez aux portes	22 Some say you're dead
16 Vous entendrez son cœur vivant	23 But I say 'weary' instead
17 Vivez les rues de Vauvert	24 No, it's not too late
18 À tout venant	25 For you to be saved

Much like Mack David found a way to transfer the delightful lines about “everyday words” to the target language in “La vie en rose,” I looked for the right place to translate these lyrics from English to French. Both texts build the image of a town that seems to be deserted, but is really alive. Additionally, both texts communicate the speaker’s hope that the town be revived. Prioritizing essence in song translation can make for a lot of changes, and in self-translation, even more changes tend to occur. But I felt that these lines were important to the overall body of the song and, therefore, I found a passageway through which to transfer them.

Next, let us examine lines 19 to 21:

19 La ville n'a pas trop d'étincelle	19 You may not be pretty
20 Elle est tristement belle	20 Compared to the city
21 Elle a sa propre beauté	21 You're a little old and grey

These lines show a relatively strong semantic link between languages. Both sets of lyrics communicate the relative lack of beauty of the town. The French version has a slightly more positive spin, describing the town as “sadly beautiful,” while the English version hones in on the negatives and describes the town as rundown, particularly in comparison to the newness of the city. Also, these lyrics have the added bonus of actually lining up chronologically in the song.

Moving on, lines 22 to 25 should be considered as one unit:

22 Ses murs s'effritent	34 The walls may tumble down
-------------------------	------------------------------

23 Mais la ville hérite
24 De la vie du soleil
25 Qui ne l'abandonne jamais

35 But the sun never turns
36 From its beloved town

Much like lines 14 to 18, these lines contain content that I considered to be vital to the song. Both passages communicate that even though the walls are crumbling, the town will live on because it has the sun keeping it alive. Vauvert is one of the sunniest places I have ever been to; although the town is fairly lackluster, its warm weather, bright sun, and stunning sunsets definitely offer some redemption to even the harshest of critics. And in a song about a town that “once was,” I felt compelled to include a description of this redeeming quality.

Lines 26 to 32 should also be considered as a unit:

26 À Paris je parie
27 Que la vie est jolie
28 Le soleil à Marseille brille à jamais
29 Bien sur Sommières
30 Est comme un château sur la mer
31 Mais petit Vauvert
32 M'invite à rentrer

10 Head out to Sommières
11 It's like a castle by the sea
12 I'm in a fairytale
13 Won't somebody pinch me
14 They have a grand marché
15 On Saturday
16 You'd think it'd make me want to stay
17 I'd miss the streets of Vauvert
18 After one day

For these lines, I wrote the English version first, wanting to communicate that even though Vauvert was unlikely to be named one's favourite place, and even though other towns and cities were much more visually appealing, the speaker had a deep fondness for the little town. Inspired by the comparison of Vauvert to Sommières in English, I expanded on this idea and added Paris and Marseille to the mix in French.

Line 33 of the English version converts to two lines in the French:

33 Mon petit Vauvert
34 Une ville à la vieillesse

33 Little old Vauvert

Both sets of lyrics speak of the town's old age and small size.

Lines 35 and 36 in the French song do not have a clear equivalent:

35 Où partout se cachent
36 De vraies richesses

Again, images were embellished through the translation process, and the speaker's experience in the town was described in new ways.

And lastly, I have grouped the song's final five lines together:

37 Et chaque jour je me perds	37 Though I wander and stray
38 Dans les rues de Vauvert	38 Though I may lose my way
39 Il faut pas vous inquiéter	39 No need to worry at all
40 C'est dans les rues de Vauvert	40 I know my streets of Vauvert
41 Que je me retrouverai	41 Will always lead me home

Interestingly enough, the English version of these lines did not exist until shortly before this thesis was completed, despite my having written the song several years prior. I created this song through a process of bilingual, multidirectional writing, as I have mentioned, and the result was such that not all French lyrics had an equivalent in English. Other 'gaps' in the translation have been shown through this unit-by-unit breakdown of the lyrics, but this gap is one that I ended up filling. More often than not, I perform "Streets of Vauvert" as a bilingual song, and the last part typically goes as follows:

33 Little old Vauvert
34 The walls may tumble down
35 But the sun never turns
36 From its beloved town
37 Et chaque jour je me perds
38 Dans les rues de Vauvert
39 Il ne faut pas vous inquiéter
40 C'est dans les rues de Vauvert
41 Que je me retrouverai

In completing this thesis, I felt inspired to return to the English version and add an English ending. The result was a fairly close translation from the French. Perhaps this is because a close translation just happened to work, or perhaps it is because of the distance

between the initial writing phase and the translation. It is difficult to say. What is clear, however, is that this *back-translation*, if you will, this delayed translation of what resembles a target text back to the initial language, challenges the very notion of a source text.

Having sorted the French and English lyrics by semantic relationship, I would like to make a few general observations. A comparison of the two sets of lyrics brought to mind Michel de Certeau's segment, "Walking in the City," from his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*. De Certeau identifies two ways in which one can encounter the city: one can be a *walker*, physically walking through the streets, experiencing them first-hand, and becoming a part of the city, or one can be a *voyeur*, one who observes the city from a distance and may see the bigger picture, but does not play a part in it (92-3). In the English version of "Streets of Vauvert," the speaker is a *walker*, one who experiences the streets. This is evidenced by a far greater number of first- and second-person pronouns in the English version than in the French version. For instance, in the English version, the speaker addresses the town directly with lines like, "You may not be pretty" and "It's not too late for you to be saved." While in the French lyrics the speaker does experience the city as a walker here and there, the majority of the lyrics contain observations about Vauvert. These observations make the speaker's experience much more akin to that of a *voyeur*. The speaker sings about the town in passages like, "Elle n'a pas trop d'étincelle" and "Ses murs s'effritent."

Another observation that struck me is that the French version is more poetic while the English version contains simpler descriptions. I believe that this can be explained by the discrepancy in linguistic competence, ironically enough, and in musical familiarity

and comfort levels. I grew up listening mostly to jazz music. It's one of the genres with which I am the most familiar and comfortable. In writing the English lyrics, I was likely influenced by the jazz standards I know so well, such as Rodgers and Hart's "Manhattan," which includes lines like these:

We'll have Manhattan
The Bronx and Staten Island too
It's lovely going through the zoo

And these:

And tell me what street
Compares with Mott Street in July
Sweet push carts gently gliding by

Many jazz standards contain relatively simple descriptions of what the speaker is experiencing, such as the lyrics shown above. This describe-what-you-see style is one that I have encountered throughout my entire life through jazz music. So when I was writing a song in my native language—particularly one that is on the jazzier side—I believe that this style naturally crossed over into my own songwriting. For an example, let us examine the second verse from the English version of "Streets of Vauvert":

Head out to Sommières
It's like a castle by the sea
I'm in a fairytale
Won't somebody pinch me
They have a grand marché
On Saturday
You'd think it'd make me want to stay
I'd miss the streets of Vauvert after one day

In contrast to this simple style, the French version contains many more descriptive and symbolic passages. I believe that the poetic language resulted from my having to spend much more time sculpting the French lyrics than the English. Songwriting in French takes me a lot longer than songwriting in English because of my language competence.

Rhymes do not come as easily, nor do idioms or other literary devices. So the poetry might be the result of the process of sculpting and refining the lyrics.

As I mentioned, I normally perform “Streets of Vauvert” as a bilingual song, and even vary the verses and the order. It is a subject about which I have a lot to say, so I do not commit to a strict order of verses or even to a set system of which languages I sing in and when. There is a certain spontaneity to my performance of this song, much like the spontaneity of writing and translating it at the same time. I allow myself to toggle between languages in a spontaneous, unplanned way, and allow my writing in one language to influence, change, and add to my writing in the other language. Thus, in writing, translating, and performing this song, I am a *walker*, experiencing and re-experiencing the work, helping write and rewrite it as I live and relive it.

3.2.3 *Un peu de ci*

I have been performing with the same guitarist since 2008, and we have recently endeavoured to co-write. The music for the following song was written by Jesse Cunningham, and the melody and lyrics were written by me. The message of the song is that real love is made up of both good and bad aspects and experiences. The lyrics switch between French and English, but unlike “Streets of Vauvert,” which can be performed as two separate, monolingual songs, “Un peu de ci” is truly a bilingual song and has only ever been performed as such.

Un peu de ci

By Jessica Holtby

1 Un peu de ci, un peu de ça
2 Un peu de lui, un peu de moi
3 Un peu de bonheur, un peu de malheur
4 Quelques larmes, quelques joies
5 Avant, il me semblait
6 Que le vrai amour était
7 Hors de ma portée
8 En cherchant le parfait
9 On manque le vrai

10 Un peu de pluie purifie le jour
11 Un peu de souci embellit l'amour
12 Un peu de nuage, un peu de soleil
13 Ça se mêle à quelque chose de parfait
14 Avant, il me semblait
15 Que le vrai amour était
16 Hors de ma portée
17 En cherchant le parfait
18 On manque le vrai

19 A little that, a little this
20 A lover's spat, a sudden kiss
21 A little laugh, a couple tears
22 Somehow make up the best years
23 Back then it seemed to me
24 That perfect love was nothing
25 But fantasy
26 But searching for perfect
27 Won't find what is perfect for me

28 Un peu de ci, un peu de ça
29 Un peu de lui, un peu de moi
30 Un peu de bonheur, un peu de malheur
31 Quelques larmes, quelques joies
32 Back then it seemed to me
33 That perfect love was nothing
34 But fantasy
35 But searching for perfect
36 Won't find what is perfect for me

I chose to include “Un peu de ci” in this study to represent the range of results that self-translation can yield. The multidirectional writing process can lead to full, independent works, as seen with “The Sea” and “Streets of Vauvert,” but it can also lead to bilingual works, such as this one. As with “Streets of Vauvert,” the writing and translation of “Un peu de ci” occurred more or less simultaneously, and it is this simultaneous, multilingual process that resulted in the two languages co-mingling to the extent that there is no full version in either language. I began writing the song in French, but the English came in the same sitting. This time, I will discuss the English lyrics chronologically and relate them to their French counterparts.

19 A little that, a little this

1 Un peu de ci, un peu de ça

This is, more or less, a direct translation, with “this” and “that” reversed in order to achieve an end rhyme.

20 A lover’s spat, a sudden kiss

3 Un peu de bonheur, un peu de malheur

Rather than the more general happiness/misfortune contrast in the French, I chose to represent these concepts through specific examples in line 20.

4 Quelques larmes, quelques joies

21 A little laugh, a couple tears

This is a fairly close translation, although I chose to represent joy through “A little laugh” as it was better supported by the metre and, frankly, sounds more natural.

22 Somehow make up the best years

13 Ça se mêle à quelque chose de parfait

These lines are similar semantically. The difference between “the best years” and “quelque chose de parfait” is small within the context of the song, and the speaker’s quest for a perfect love can be represented adequately through either term.

23 Back then it seemed to me

5 Avant, il me semblait

24 That perfect love was nothing

6 Que le vrai amour était

25 But fantasy	7 Hors de ma portée
26 But searching for perfect	8 En cherchant le parfait
27 Won't find what is perfect for me	9 On manque le vrai

The five lines above adhere fairly closely to the French. A few shifts occurred in order to support the English version's rhyme and naturalness. For instance, "Hors de ma portée" and "nothing / But fantasy" express basically the same thing: that "perfect love" or "le vrai amour" is unattainable. The most significant shift occurs in line 27, where "On manque le vrai" becomes "Won't find what is perfect for me." I believe that through self-translation, the source passage (the French) became something better. Line 27 adds a second meaning to *perfection* and to *real love* by identifying two types: *that which is perfect* and *that which is perfect for me*. The English lyrics compliment and clarify the French lyrics, and vice versa. This mutual reliance on the other language is what makes bilingual music so interesting and so distinct. Small features like this help to make a song a complete bilingual piece, like two parts of a set coming together to paint the full picture.

As another example of such features, let us consider the order in which ideas are expressed in the English lyrics compared to the French. The first French verse consists of a series of opposing pairs in the A part: "ci...ça," "lui...moi," "bonheur...malheur," "larmes...joies." Then the B part discusses the fact that the speaker had been searching for perfection but was, in the meantime, missing out on real life and real love. The second French verse finally gives context to the list of opposites by stating that love is a mix of the good and the bad. The English verse has a slightly different structure: it presents the list of opposites *and* gives the context (that love is a mix of the good and the bad), all before its B part. Although many may see this as a small difference, I believe it to be one

of the factors that differentiate a bilingual song from a translation. This bilingual song contains translations, but neither language version is complete without the other. Like an information gap activity in a language course—where students are provided with different sets of information and must use the target language to elicit the missing information from their partner—both languages are necessary to produce a full song at the level of form and often at the level of meaning.

Personally, I liken bilingual music to the phenomenon of code-switching (the tendency of bilingual interlocutors to switch from language to language, when in conversation with other bilingual interlocutors, in a way that is difficult to predict or explain linguistically). Just as code-switching is the expected output of individuals who speak multiple languages, so bilingual music should be the expected output of multilingual songwriters. After all, inspiration is unpredictable in nearly every way—timing, depth, result—so is it surprising that a bilingual songwriter would think of one verse in English and the next in French? Bilingual music does, however, call into question the intended audience. Either the singer of a bilingual song accepts that her audience may not get the full picture of the song, or she performs it exclusively to a bilingual audience. I generally choose the former.

3.2.4 Final Remarks

In many creative processes, ideas emerge as creators follow unplanned and unpredictable trains of thought. The process of self-translation cannot be expected to be any more linear than the creative process in general. Self-translation takes the writer back to the root of inspiration, from which the initial version grew. A translation grows from

an existing tree—the source text; a self-translation grows from the roots—the source of inspiration. This return to the source of inspiration undoubtedly makes the result less predictable. But, in the end, this spontaneity is not only a positive thing but is also precisely how creativity in general actually works.

The three songs discussed in this section demonstrate the broad spectrum of results that self-translation can lead to. With “The Sea,” we saw a relatively linear translation wherein many semantic changes occurred, but the overall plot was preserved. In “Streets of Vauvert,” the two versions often revealed different aspects of the same experience, or different facets of the same meaning. And with “Un peu de ci,” it was made clear that a multilingual, multidirectional writing process may also result in partial versions that are reliant upon each other and that function only in unison. Based on the wide range of results from a corpus of only three songs, it can be concluded that there is really no singular way to approach, study, or evaluate self-translation.

Conclusion

Beginning this study with a theoretical framework for song translation and ending in a maze of subversive acts of self-translation, I realize that the theory does sometimes fall apart when it comes to translating one’s own work. Several differences came to light when I compared my work as an external translator with that as a self-translator. The linear transfer of content and the steadfast adherence to the dyadic notions of source text and target text are clear in each of the song translations in the first part of chapter three, but unravel quickly in the self-translations. But, in all honesty, convolution arises the moment we so much as acknowledge a writer’s expression through multiple languages.

So perhaps self-translation is, in fact, a flawed classification. Perhaps it should be considered to be a separate genre of translation, or even its own genre of literature. Then again, sub-categorizing it in this way creates another problem: some self-translators may adhere fully not just to the essence of their text but also to the form and the content. Their translations might resemble their source texts so closely that it would make sense to consider them alongside target texts by external translators. There is, then, a danger in using designations like *translation*, *adaptation*, and so forth in a strict sense where self-translations are concerned. The term *self-translation* itself oversimplifies what is really going on. Perhaps a more inclusive term like *multilingual authorship* or *multilingual expression* would better capture the concept of a writer creating a text in more than one language. Or perhaps we should view self-translation not as a translation of the source text by the source text's author per se, but as *self-translation*—translation of oneself. Reframing it in one of these ways might begin to cover the boundless results that self-translation can yield.

Concerning song translation, this study offered some insight into the factors that affect translatability, namely, flexibility of rhythm and melody, and the absence or presence of centralized lyrics like hooks. For example, challenges pertaining to rhythm forced many of the translation decisions in “San Salvador,” as opposed to in “Babylon”, where the melody and rhythm were generally more fluid and syllable length varied. That said, “Babylon” was more difficult when it came to the chorus, with its centralized lyrics requiring a particularly strong translation. In the future, it would be beneficial to hear from other multilingual songwriters about their experiences crafting works in various languages. I would be especially interested to know if musical genre, inspiration, or

songwriting processes—length of time spent writing, whether the song was written chronologically, whether there were multiple songwriters, and so on—can be used to predict what a self-translation (and the process or result thereof) might look like. For example, do songwriters who write in a linear fashion find themselves self-translating in a similar manner?

To conclude, with regard to self-translation, the writer who self-translates has an additional tool with which to express herself. She can give her audience two works that stand independently in their respective languages; she can also create these works in such a way that they build one full picture. With all said and done, perhaps the one constant in self-translation is this: it tells us more of the story, and that is something to be celebrated.

Works Cited

- Alexander, Katherine. *Translation of "San Salvador."* University of Alberta, 2015.
- Apter, Ronnie, and Mark Herman. "Translating for Singing: the Theory, Art and Craft of Translating Lyrics." *Translating for Singing: the Theory, Art and Craft of Translating Lyrics*. Bloomsbury Academic, an Imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2016, p. 184.
- Bassnett, Susan. "The Self-translator as Rewriter." *Self-Translation: Brokering Originality in Hybrid Culture*. Edited by Anthony Cordingley. Bloomsbury Academic, 2013, pp. 13-25.
- Bayly, Anselm. "Musick." *The Alliance of Music, Poetry and Oratory (1789)*. G. Olms, 1989, pp. 77–78.
- Bieber, Justin. "Baby." *GooglePlay Music*.
https://play.google.com/music/preview/Tgyldic7zrpypebhg2iivruse5i?lyrics=1&utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=lyrics&pcampaignid=kp-lyrics&u=0. 14 Aug. 2017.
- Bucknor, Beth. "Babylon." 2007, *ReverbNation*. <https://reverbNation.com/bethholtby>. 5 Nov. 2016.
- Busby, Brian John. "Nancy Huston." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada, 7 Sept. 2007. <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/nancy-huston>. 7 Aug. 2017.
- Cintrão, Heloísa Pezza. "Translating 'Under the Sign of Invention': Gilberto Gil's Song Lyric Translation." *Meta: Journal Des Traducteurs*, vol. 54, no. 4, 2009, pp. 813-832. DOI: [10.7202/038905ar](https://doi.org/10.7202/038905ar).
- Cohen, Leonard. "Amen". *AZ Lyrics*.

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/leonardcohen/amen.html>. 14 Aug. 2017.

De Certeau, Michel. "Walking in the City." *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, 2008, pp. 92–93.

Eco, Umberto. *Experiences in Translation*. Translated by Alastair McEwen. University of Toronto Press, 2012.

"Fan Fiction." *Merriam-Webster*, <https://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fan%20fiction>. 7 Aug. 2017.

Gil, Gilberto. "Não chore mais." *Realce*, Ford, Gil, and Marley, 1979. <https://open.spotify.com/album/55vQisQQpdDR24JHxwxBHC>. 13 Aug. 2017.

Hardy, Françoise. "San Salvador." *Soleil*, Modiano and de Courson, 1970. <https://open.spotify.com/album/13HjwEkL2r9PQ2VSBAYzMA>. 7 Aug. 2017.

Hart, Lorenz, and Richard Rodgers. "Manhattan". <http://www.lorenzhart.org/manhattansng.htm>. 6 Aug. 2017.

Holtby, Jessica. "Judging a Song by Its Title: Translating Édith Piaf." *Studies in Translation: History and Theory*. Edited by Waclaw Osadnik and Alina Swiesciak, vol. 39, Katowice, 2015, pp. 141–162.

"Hook." *Cambridge Dictionary*, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/hook>. 8 Sept. 2017.

Jakobson, Roman. *Language in Literature*. Edited by Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987, p. 434.

Klimkiewicz, Aurelia. "Self-translation as Broken Narrativity: Towards an Understanding of the Self's Multilingual Dialogue." *Self-Translation: Brokering*

- Originality in Hybrid Culture*. Edited by Anthony Cordingley. Bloomsbury Academic, 2013, 189-201.
- Kundera, Milan, and Linda Asher. "Testaments Betrayed." *Testaments Betrayed*. Faber and Faber, 1995, p. 44.
- Lefevere, Andre, and Susan Bassnett. *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*. Multilingual Matters, 1998, p. 3.
- Lefevere, André. *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*. Van Gorcum, 1975, pp. 49-52.
- Lenorman, Gérard. "La ballade des gens heureux." *Je vous reparlerai d'amour*. 2004. <https://open.spotify.com/album/4PuFRRcHOC0ZnVOUQAYyzA>. 12 Nov. 2016.
- Low, Peter. "When Songs Cross Language Borders: Translations, Adaptations and 'Replacement Texts'." *The Translator*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2013, pp. 229–244. DOI: [10.1080/13556509.2013.10799543](https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2013.10799543).
- . "Singable Translations of Songs." *Perspectives*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2003, pp. 87–103. DOI: [10.1080/0907676X.2003.9961466](https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2003.9961466).
- . "Translating Poetic Songs: An Attempt at a Functional Account of Strategies." *Target*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2003, pp. 91-110. DOI: [10.1075/target.15.1.05low](https://doi.org/10.1075/target.15.1.05low).
- Margala, Miriam. "The Unbearable Torment of Translation: Milan Kundera, Impersonation, and The Joke." *Transcultural*, vol. 1, no. 3, 2010, pp. 30–42. DOI: [10.21992/T9C62H](https://doi.org/10.21992/T9C62H).
- Mayoral, Roberto, et al. "Concept of Constrained Translation: Non-Linguistic Perspectives of Translation." *Meta*, vol. 33, no. 3, 1988, pp. 356–367. DOI: [10.7202/003608ar](https://doi.org/10.7202/003608ar).

- Nord, Christiane. "Defining Translation Functions. The Translation Brief as a Guideline for the Trainee Translator." *Ilha Do Desterro*, no. 33, 2008, pp. 39–53. <https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/desterro/article/view/9208/9484>. 11 Dec. 2017.
- Pellerin, Fred. "Au commencement du monde." *Silence*, Disques Tempêtes, 2009. <https://open.spotify.com/album/0wt8XCNaKwJMX5SnjX8Bb7>. 31 Jul. 2017.
- Piaf, Édith. "Hymn to Love." *Saga All Stars: Hymn to Love / 1950-1958*, Constantine and Monnot, 2009. <https://open.spotify.com/album/0vMtB7mZ6NT5R7LOa6tKY5>. 7 Aug. 2017.
- . "La vie en rose (English Version)." *Saga All Stars: Hymn to Love / 1950-1958*, 2009. <https://open.spotify.com/album/0vMtB7mZ6NT5R7LOa6tKY5>. 7 Aug. 2017.
- . "La vie en rose." *Edith Piaf - The Best of*, 2008. <https://open.spotify.com/album/6l2DFKuP1jIsibWlIFGY3Q>. 7 Aug. 2017.
- . "L'hymne à l'amour." *Nos plus belles chansons, Vol. 9: 1949-1951*, 1994. <https://open.spotify.com/album/46nt4HKaeoqAgh0YeolIyB>. 7 Aug. 2017.
- . "If You Love Me, Really Love Me." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtXwz-M4tec>. 15 Apr. 2015.
- Reiss, Katharina. "Type, Kind and Individuality of Text: Decision Making in Translation." Trans. Susan Kitron. *The Translation Studies Reader*. Edited by Lawrence Venuti. Routledge, 2000, pp. 160-71.
- Sarang, Vilas. "Self-Translators." *Journal of South Asian Literature*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1981, pp. 33–39. https://jstor.org/stable/40873663?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents. 7 Aug. 2017.

- Titford, Christopher. "Subtitling - Constrained Translation." *Lebende Sprachen*, vol. 27, no. 3, 1982, pp. 113–116. DOI: [10.1515/les.1982.27.3.104](https://doi.org/10.1515/les.1982.27.3.104).
- Vansina, Jan. "A Note on Self-Translation." *JSTOR*. African Studies Association, 2004. <http://www.jstor.org/login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/stable/4128544>. 17 Dec. 2014.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. Taylor and Francis, 2012, pp. 19-20.
- Vermeer, Hans J. "Skopos and Commission in Translational Action." Translated by Andrew Chesterman. *The Translation Studies Reader*. Edited by Lawrence Venuti. Routledge, 2000, pp. 191-202.
- Whyte, Christopher. "Against Self-Translation." *Translation and Literature*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2002, pp. 64–71. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40339902>. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Woods, Michelle. *Translating Milan Kundera*, Multilingual Matters, 2006, p. ix.

Appendix A: Translations of “San Salvador” by K. Alexander and J. Holtby

San Salvador

Translated by Jessica Holtby

During the night
Winter has come again
And today all the streets
Are filled with wilted trees
As you listen to rain
And you think of that place
Oh the place you call San Salvador

You still remember
When you close your eyes
The strange place you would wait
For the dawn to arise
Where perfumes in the sky
Danced with blue butterflies
Oh could it have been San Salvador

San Salvador
You say over again
As if words could revive
What you see in your mind
All the twilights of lilac
And ships at the port
All returning with treasures untold

You can no longer
Think how to return
If it ever existed
Then who can confirm
Could it be in a dream
Or another lifetime
That you knew this place, San Salvador

San Salvador
Oh the wind, how it blows
In the sound of the rain
You can hear the echo
As a song that was lost
Comes to you from a place
That you may not see ever again

San Salvador

Translated by Katherine Alexander

As if overnight
winter came back again
all the trees in the streets
let their leaves fall once more
you listen to the rain
as you think of that place
oh its name was San Salvador

You can recall
each time you close your eyes
a field far away
where the morning would rise
a thousand perfumes
and blue butterflies
yes that may have been San Salvador

San Salvador
you repeat its name
as if the reflection
could thus be reclaimed
of the violet twilights
and old ships that sailed
from Treasure Island to San Salvador

How to return
you no longer recall
Who can say if it ever
existed at all ?
Perhaps it was in a dream
or another lifetime
that you visited San Salvador

San Salvador
blows through cracked windowpanes
you can hear an echo
through the sound of the rain
a long-lost refrain
comes to you from a land
that you'll never see ever again

San Salvador

Patrick Modiano et Hughes de Courson

Pendant la nuit
L'hiver est revenu
Dans les rues aujourd'hui
Tous les arbres sont morts
En écoutant la pluie
Tu penses à ce pays
Dont le nom était San Salvador

Tu te souviens
Quand tu fermes les yeux
D'un étrange jardin
D'où montait le matin
Des milliers de parfums
Et des papillons bleus
C'était peut-être San Salvador

San Salvador
Tu répètes ce mot
Comme si tu voulais
Retrouver le reflet
Des crépuscules mauves
Et de galions du port
Qui revenaient de l'île au trésor

Tu ne sais plus
Comment y retourner
Qui sait si ce pays
A jamais existé
Si c'était dans tes rêves
Ou dans une autre vie
Que tu as connu San Salvador

San Salvador
Le vent souffle aux carreaux
Dans le bruit de la pluie
Tu entends un écho
Une chanson perdue
Qui te vient d'un pays
Que tu ne reverras jamais plus