THÈME TRANSLATION AS MEANS OF PROPAGANDA. THE CASE OF *ROMANIAN REVIEW*

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Abstract. In this paper I will try to draw a comparison between two different stages which can be clearly identified throughout the evolution of a rather unusual product of translation. I am referring to a journal issued in Romania under the name of *Romanian Review* and made up entirely of thème translations.

One can identify two distinct periods in the history of *Romanian Review* – before and after the fall of communism. The former reveals interesting cases of manipulation (either con- or inter-textual), applied by a highly efficient system that dismissed anything that appeared likely to become subversive; a system operating at all social levels, known as "censorship" or "political visé" in totalitarian Romania.

Romanian Review was intended for distribution exclusively outside the country's borders, as a propaganda instrument. This paper will try to answer the following research questions: are the mechanisms through which censorship intervened in the shaping of this cultural product (by means either of omission, attenuation, extirpation or selection of authors, titles and translators) still visible after the fall of the dictatorship? Are there any radical changes in the form or content of this publication after the demise of the system?

The Translation Studies descriptive framework may provide one possible approach (among many others) to these issues while the methodological tools for its observation might be borrowed from the field of pragmalinguistics.

Keywords: *thème translation, Romanian Review, censorship, Descriptive Translation Studies, pragmalinguistic context.*

1. SOME INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

The research I carried out on the basis of some preliminary observations regarding this journal (the existence of which is entirely dependent on the translators' activity) is based on several questions that might be presented in the following terms:

(i) Did this publication bear any signs of ideological manipulation before the fall of communism? And, if so, how can we identify / describe / classify them?

(ii) Did these signs disappear after 1989? And, if so, could we say manipulation is no longer present / visible, or rather is it still there, only following a different pattern?

(iii) Do we witness, immediately after 1989, a radical change of policy regarding the message to be conveyed abroad through this cultural product?

My hypothesis claims that far from being "neutral", the new shape of *Romanian Review* (*RR*) (subsequent to the fall of Ceauşescu's regime), could be labelled as an example

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RRL, *2*, LXI, p. 195–206, Bucureşti, 2016

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of "positive manipulation", a message biased towards the opposite stance, in which what had been ignored was now recurrent, and what had been banished was now exposed.

But before I discuss the concrete examples extracted from a corpus based on issues of *RR* over two decades (previous and subsequent to the fall of communism in Romania), I will first approach the subject of this study, the journal itself.

2. A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF *RR*: AN IDEOLOGICALLY CONDITIONED TRANSLATION PRODUCT

RR appeared for the first time in 1861 in a Romanian language which was still not completely normalized, with the aim of helping to create a "unitary and literary Romanian language". This journal for "sciences, letters and arts" soon disappeared and it was not until the interwar period, in 1924, that it reappeared as a research journal. However, once the Communists had come to power, the publication changed its focus to: "Rumania's political, social, economic, literary, artistic, scientific life". Thus, initially concerned with language and literature, then science, *RR* eventually became a socio-political publication and was issued in four foreign languages but with no source language version. This might appear as a paradox if we regard *RR* as a translation product, but quite normal if we consider its propaganda purpose.

As the editorial board themselves acknowledged at the end of the table of contents in one of the volumes issued in 1946, the review «serves the cause of mutual good-will and understanding among all peoples». From that moment and until the anti-Communist Revolution in 1989, the review acquired a profound socio-political character (evidenced especially by its opening articles) and it served mainly as an instrument to praise/popularise abroad communist Romania's achievements rooted in a proletarian cultural system "successfully" borrowed from the Soviet Union. However, several prominent Romanian writers and artists contributed to the journal over the years since it had a strong graphic support.

An important turning point in the history of this publication (as in all editorial policy) occurred in 1973 when a new stage in the history of communist Romania began, an obscurantist period during Ceauşescu's dictatorship known as "the cult of personality", which reached its climax in the decade of the 1980s. Obviously, *RR* (as an instrument of the party) could not ignore this development and it started to increase the number of politicised articles while reducing literary contributions. It also introduced speeches, photographs, quotations from, and tributes to, comrade N. Ceauşescu.

A striking feature of the publication during all these decades is the fact that it does not state the names of the translators. No editorial board appears and no indication regarding the tutelage or the publishing house was given until the mid-1980s. Not even the name of the chief editor was disclosed between 1948 and 1980.

2.1. Formal changes after 1989

The most shocking example for a Romanian reader is the religious symbolism, obvious for instance in the number of covers with images that belonged to orthodox iconography, forbidden for more than half a century. This was a prelude to the presence of religious elements at more than one level in subsequent years.

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Another characteristic is the display of linguistic or semiotic devices to retrieve a part of history that had been denied or manipulated. If we look at the year 1995 (issues 1–2, devoted to the poet Ion Barbu in his centennial year), we can see one of the first references *RR* makes to its own longevity, 135 years, which is printed in Roman numerals as in its early times (CXXXV). This might be construed as an intention on behalf of the editors to ignore the communist period, by going back to the journal's origins, prior to the dictatorship.

A third feature is the transparency of authorship in the case of both editorial and translational responsibilities. Thus, in volume 359/1998 the presentation page is even more complete. It introduces a series of significant changes; among them, the fact that for the first time, the authorship of the whole translation work is evident throughout the journal.

Finally, in the aftermath of the fall of the regime, the publication showed a genuine interest in previously neglected commercial aspects. The same format was maintained in issue 363/1999 and additionally, full data were offered for those foreign readers ("institutions or private persons") who wished to subscribe, an important information which shows a wider readership was anticipated. This is a clear sign that the editor intended the new product to be interesting and to encourage subscriptions, a capitalistic focus not required before (when production and distribution costs were covered by the state).

2.2. Content changes after 1989

After the end of the dictatorship, a different chief editor took over and the list of contributors was almost entirely changed. The first issues after the fall of the communist regime contained contributions by outstanding figures of Romanian cultural life, some of them regarded as dissidents or persecuted by the former regime (such is the case of the poet Ana Blandiana, present in volume 1/1990 with a touching text, "The children's crusade").

Another significant change occurred in the selection of translators. There were fewer well-known translators and instead, new names appeared, blurring the former dividing line which existed between free-lance translators (prestigious figures from the humanities in charge of literary translations) and anonymous translators who belonged to the staff and were assigned non-fictional texts. This might be an indication either of a shift taking place in the profile of the journal or of an empowerment of formerly anonymous translators.

The tables of contents in this new series of *RR* issues reflected a total change of *skopos*[1]. Its aim was now to provide as varied as possible an outlook on Romanian culture and life either at one particular stage or diachronically. Therefore, the socio-political and pseudo-historical preambles, existing as a substantial first part in every issue before 1989, had now disappeared completely.

The contributions to this renewed era of *RR* can be categorized into areas such as literature (represented by contemporary and classical writers to whom monographic and tribute issues are dedicated), philosophy, literary theory and criticism, history and arts.

[1] A functionalist theory based on the term *skopos* coming from Greek which, applied to Translation Studies, identifies those scholars who consider the hypothetical expectations of the intended target code as decisive for the translational process. *Skopos* Theory, with Hans Vermeer, Kahtarina Reiss and Christiane Nord among its most relevant authors, stresses the reception stage, the product's translation functions and orients the process towards the needs of the receiver. For a further account of functionalism in Translation Studies, see Nord (1997).

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3. THE CORPUS

The corpus I worked on comprises the following issues of *RR*: 1980 (no.1, no. 2, and nos. 9/10), 1981 (no. 1), 1983 (no. 1), 1984 (no. 1), 1985 (nos. 3/4), 1989 (no. 11), 1990 (no. 1), 1995 (nos. 1/2), 1998 (no. 359) corresponding to the new numbering in accordance with the claim the review makes regarding its foundation date and actual age), 1999 (no. 363). The issues to which I will refer in my analysis throughout this paper are 1989 (no. 11) and 1990 (no. 1).

4. CONTEXT AS A FRAME FOR THE CASE IN POINT

One theoretical approach that can provide a suitable framework for analysis in this research (given the facts under discussion) is the Lambert – Van Gorp model for translational description, while communication in itself might be approached from the field of pragmalinguistics which provides such concepts as **context,** which is considered basic for most of the analysis models and generally accepted among theorists with different backgrounds. Unlike the "code model" defenders, for whom the context was not an essential element since decoding occurred automatically, free from inferential misunderstandings, for pragmalinguists the difficulty consists precisely in describing how the hearer constructs a new context to understand each new utterance. Context is crucial for Grice's theory on conversational maxims. One of these, the maxim of relevance, gave birth to a whole theory (Sperber and Wilson) and huge ramifications in the field of cognitive linguistics and was applied to Translation Studies by Gutt (1992). In this respect, the definition of context as «a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world» given by Sperber and Wilson (1987: 698) seems to be appropriate for this study.

In turn, Slama-Cazacu (1999: 121) raises the notion of non-linguistic **context** (seen as a unit of information belonging to a given communicative situation) which lies on two levels: an **explicit** one provided by the sender (and made up of the information released through verbal and auxiliary components) and an **implicit** one, pre-existing in the receiver's mind together with the background information about the sender (and made up of hints and ellipses). The implicit context lacks external representation through signs although there are some elements (deixis, anaphora) which evoke it. These two levels (explicit and implicit) are not static; they can exchange positions in a single communicative situation. Other scholars also delved into context and implicitness. One decade after Ducrot (1977) had published his "Theory of implicitness", Jaworski (1997) proposed an interdisciplinary attempt to combine linguistics, ethnography of communication, pragmatics, hermeneutics and ideology. Ruth Wodak defines allusions as associations which are only hinted at, while the task of making them explicit during the act of reception belongs to listeners/viewers/readers (2007: 212). She also shows that allusions depend on "shared knowledge" (Searle's *background assumptions*, Sperber and Wilson's *mutual manifestness*, van Dijk's *common sense knowledge*). White (2011: 17) argues that the implied appraisal poses major problems because activations of meanings rely on implications, inference and associations, in other words they rely on the reader/listener to interpret the depicted state of affairs as positive or negative according to the value system they bring to the text.

More recent approaches in linguistics (Asher, 2013) revisit implicatures (including Carston's or Recanati's approaches to inference at the confluence of semantics and pragmatics) to open the utterance spectrum to the concept of discourse relations, while

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Irmer (2011) makes an attempt to pan the object of analysis from language into thought and vital experience. Escandell Vidal (2016) shows that recent pragmatics focuses on revisions or refinements of Gricean maxims (see Horn, 2004 on the quality maxim, or Levinson, 1999 on default interpretations) arguing that there is a third layer between the sentence's and the speaker's meaning, namely the "utterance-type meaning". The relation implicitness-explicitness has been applied by Kisielewska-Krysiuk (2014) to lying (violation of the Gricean quality maxim) already studied in philosophy, ethics, and sociology but with few linguistic accounts. Other researchers delve into the notion of *implicitures* which is different from implicatures (suggested meaning) and logical implications (implied information) by enclosing not just the distinction between the explicit versus implied, but also between the implied versus implicit information. Implicitures are partially said by the speaker, the rest of the meaning remains implicit. While Sperber and Wilson claim in their relevance theory that implicitures' processing is context dependent, other researchers challenge this stance by proving that some implicitures succeed regardless of context. However, given the nature of the data analysed here, the view on implicitness depending on context as argued by the relevance theorists seems to cater for my attempt to detect implicit and explicit prompts able to trigger readers' assumptions regarding the meanings enclosed in issues of *RR* published before and after the regime's collapse.

Thus, in my analysis I will distinguish between **explicit information** (released through verbal communicative acts such as texts, titles, slogans) and **implicit information** (inferred by the reader from editorial decisions, semiotic allusions, ellipses).

4.1. An unusual modality: thème translation

Thème translation is performed from the translator's mother tongue/culture into a second language. This fact somehow modifies the typical scheme of the translation process in which the translator normally acts (i.e. from a foreign language/culture into his/her own), first as an individual receiver, then as a communicator transmitting the message to a target audience made up of readers belonging to the translator's own speech community or, as Mason (1992: 23) puts it, «the translator, as both receiver and producer of text, has the double duty of perceiving the meaning potential of particular choices within the cultural and linguistic community of the source text and relaying that same potential, by suitable linguistic means, to a target readership».

In this definition of the translational act, it is taken for granted that the translator has to immerse himself/herself in the "cultural and linguistic community of the source text" which is not his/her own, but an acquired one. This is the standard situation in which the translator interprets the author's intentions with the help of the source context (shared naturally by author and source audience as members of that speech community, and artificially/partially by the translator as a learned intruder). In a subsequent stage, the translator re-expresses the message in accordance with the target context (shared naturally by the translator and the target audience).

But somewhere in between there is another context which we might call "translator's context", in which the interpretation of the message by the translator takes place. This differs from the context of the original author and from the context of the target reader because the translator is a vantage point decoder of the message with a vast knowledge of the source and a native awareness of the target contexts. In this paper I assume that in the case of direct translation this "translator's context" is different from the source one, whereas in thème translation occurring chronologically close to the creation moment, these two contexts are highly similar.

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4.2. Thème translation for *RR*. An example

As I have said before, the *translator's context* is used by the translator in his/her hypostasis of "receiver" in order to interpret the author's intentions. This context normally belongs to the source culture which is not the translator's "mother culture" unless we deal with thème translation.

On the other hand, the *target context* is used by the translator to re-express his/her intentions, presumably resembling those of the author in an interpretive way (see Gutt's discussion on Interpretive Resemblance applicable to translation 1992, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 2000).

In an earlier study (Iliescu, 2009) I compared two English translations of the same theatrical text, namely *A Treia Țeapă* (The Third Stake) by the Romanian author Marin Sorescu. One version belongs to a British translator, Dennis Deletant (a direct translation, therefore) and was published in the UK with the clear purpose of being staged; the other one is by Andreea Gheorghițoiu, a Romanian translator who was very often commissioned to do literary thème translations for *RR* due to her high quality renderings. The purpose of this translation was not theatrical but rather informative (making Romanian literature known internationally). Thus, her version has a more philological nature. Throughout my comparative analysis of both translations, I observed that:

(a) on the **microlevel** there were:

– perception differences which I subdivided into ***textual*** and ***contextual***;

– re-expression differences which I subdivided into ***textual, contextual*** and ***genre convention related*** ones;

(b) on the **macrolevel** differences were patent in those categories related to the theatrical character of either text: metatexts, didascalia, dramatis personae.

One of the conclusions to my above mentioned comparative analysis between the direct and thème translation of the same source text is that the outstanding tendency followed by translators was to obey above all the principles of ***adequacy*** (in the case of thème translation), and ***acceptability*** (in the case of direct translation). This conclusion led me to two hypotheses for this study on the *RR*:

(1) *RR* was interested in an immediate translation (English and French versions of the play were published after its premiere in Bucharest), even if this meant sacrificing theatricality in favour of a more philological version (which, if staged, would have probably required modifications by a dramatist). The *skopos* of these versions was an immediate distribution abroad and the conveyance of a certain message. This was acquired through a high degree of faithfulness to the original texts (which had already surpassed the "political visé") as they were released to translators (typed) by the editors and not by the authors. Obviously, the publication's *modus operandi* in compliance with its propagandistic purpose obeyed the *polysystem's*[2] policies of the time.

[2] The Polysystem theory belongs to Itamar Even Zohar, who views socio-cultural systems as heterogeneous, versatile and dynamic networks and developed research methodology to deal with their complexity and interdependency. A 'polysystem' is multidimensional and able to accommodate taxonomies established in the realm of literature (the division between high and low literature), translation (the division between translation and non-translation) and social relationships (the division between dominant and dominated social groups). In his words, "translation is no longer a phenomenon whose nature and borders are given once and for all, but an activity dependent on the relation within a certain cultural system" (Even-Zohar, 1990: 51). According to Baker and Malmkjaer (1998/2001) polysystems can account for phenomena existing on various levels, hence the existence of a literature within a larger socio-cultural polysystem, which itself comprises other polysystems besides the literary, such as the artistic, the religious or the political.

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(2) The source culture context exerted greater influence on the translator who worked in thème translation while the target culture was more influential on the translator performing direct translation.

Before I go on to analyse the selected issues within my corpus, there is one more matter to be discussed here: why should a journal like *RR* resort to thème translation instead of direct translation?

In terms of costs, *RR* (at least in the communist period) was an important enough tool to be worth the necessary expenditure for translation abroad and the government would not have spared any financial effort should a direct translation have been regarded as the best means of conveying Romanian communist values. Therefore, the argument that foreign translators' fees were higher than Romanian standards can be practically discarded. This leaves us with two remaining motives: on the one hand, that Romanian translators' product was qualitatively satisfactory in the thème modality and on the other hand, that *political visé* could intervene undisturbed. On the contrary, a foreign translator might have been too independent, (s)he might not have agreed to translate from a typed text provided by the editors of the *RR*, but instead would have communicated bilaterally with the author (most of the writers published in the review were contemporary) thus trespassing the norms imposed by the journal's tutelary body (Press Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party).

The fact that Romanian translators produced high quality thème translations, as Dimitriu (2000: 187) shows[3], was due to the status achieved by translation (especially literary) as a prestigious activity generally carried out by members of the academia. But quality was not the only reason why the editors/authorities opted for thème translation. Translators working for *RR* (both as permanent staff and freelancers) were "controllable" because they belonged to the same polysystem and abided by the same norms.

Finally, there was also a reason connected to *skopos* which explains why source-oriented thème translation was preferred by the Romanian authorities. Apparently, the approximately five thousand copies of the *RR* print run during Communism were not marketed worldwide, but distributed through precise channels or delivered (a small number of issues) on subscription. Most of them reached their destinations by means of embassies, national libraries or cultural foundations. Therefore, if all the production stages of this instrument were under strict control (from text selection to dissemination) why should translation have been an exception?

5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO ISSUES OF *RR*

Since I already devoted other studies to the analysis of some of the translations published by *RR*, in this paper I intend to discuss only those elements which introduce and somehow create certain expectations about texts. In other words, I will not tackle the content of texts themselves, but my aim is to compare preliminary data and macro-strategies (as defined by Lambert and Van Gorp (1985) in their four-fold analysis model) and the way they are displayed in two key issues of *RR*, in order to observe translation and communication policies before and after the fall of the communist regime as well as the

[3] In her study on communist ideology and translation policies, Dimitriu acknowledges a "steady interest paid to translation of Romanian literature abroad" during the dictatorship as well as an institutionalization of translation entailing the achievement of a valuable corpus of translations and a highly trained group of translators and critics.

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influence exerted by the two levels (implicit/explicit) of the context as "unit of information" (Slama-Cazacu). From Lambert and Van Gorp's model for descriptive analysis of translational process and product, which comprises four levels of observation:

(1) preliminary data (title, metatext, general strategies);

(2) macro-level (division of text, chapters, relations between different types of narration, internal structure, comments);

(3) micro-level (phonographic transformations, syntactic, lexical-semantic, stylistic, elocution and manner) options chosen by translators;

(4) systemic context level (the opposition between macro and micro levels, inter-textual and inter-systemic relations).

I will only tackle the first level of analysis, in other words the information displayed on the cover, and the strategic pages of two of the *RR* issues which I deem essential to its evolution: the last issue before the fall of the communist regime and the first issue published immediately after.

5.1. A descriptive view on issue number 11 (November) 1989

(a) The **cover** provides: the name of the publication (*RR*); the reproduction of a painting entitled "Homage to the Romanian Communist Party" representing a composition in which Nicolae Ceauşescu's smiling portrait is surrounded by flowers, flags and blurry human faces.

(b) On the **first page** (metatext) we find: common information (name and definition of journal, languages, publisher's address, explanation of the art reproduction on the cover); the sponsorship by AGERPRESS (Romanian News Agency); as a format modification we should mention the chief editor's name written in smaller fonts and in line with the Editorial Staff (not in a separate box as before) and some translators' names (4).

(c) The **second page** (general strategies) contains: number, year; age of the journal; contents (no literary piece in the whole issue).

I should mention that the fourth page is devoted entirely to N. Ceauşescu's portrait (name and functions specified underneath). This visual element would not puzzle the source audience (used to over-exposure of such signs in any domain) but the journal is aimed at an international audience who, expecting some other semiotic element rather than the dictator's portrait, might feel disappointed by a cultural and translation product containing all kinds of totalitarian cliché. As predicted by the whole series of visual signs, the content of this volume is highly propagandistic and politicized, strongly contradicting the metatextual information, which announces *RR* as a "monthly of Romanian culture and civilization".

From a contextual perspective, we observe that on the explicit level, the publication reveals its title, common editorial information (including some translators' names), the age of the journal followed by the contents (no literature). On the other hand, the implicit level uses an allusive visual device (the reproduction of a tribute painting on the cover, the leader's portrait on page 4) which is likely to entail an inference of omnipresence in the Romanian receiver's mind (probably reinforcing the perception of absolute control), but in the foreign receiver's case, these visual hints are likely to provoke a clash between expectations and inference, hence a feeling of deceit, especially if there is no literature to compensate for the sample of "committed art" in its extreme dimension.

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5.2. A descriptive view on issue number I (January) 1990

(a) The cover provides: the reproduction of an orthodox icon; the name of the review underneath (no reference to year or issue number).

(b) The first page (metatext) contains: languages and definition: instead of "monthly" we read "periodical of Romanian culture and civilization"; the publisher's name (Foreign Languages Press Group "Romania") and address, phone, telex; no reference to the sponsorship whatsoever; no chief editor's name; the box containing the Editorial Staff (which is still composed of the same people) and 7 translators (new names appear alongside the three remaining from the 1989 issue, including the figure of a "translation editor"); cover explanation: St. Sylvester's Church of Bucharest ("Annunciation"); additional information regarding off-text plates included in this issue; a surprising element is the reference for the first time to the photo credits: Economic Department of the Ministry of Culture.

(c) The second page (general strategies) contains: in its upper section: the name of the review, issue number, year, and age (still 44 years); later in the nineties, the earlier foundation date (nineteenth century) is retrieved by the journal which reclaims its 135 years of age; in its central part we see the table of contents.

There are two striking elements here: first, the author selection displays a series of names that had been banned during the previous decade (intellectuals who had been persecuted by the organs of repression), and secondly, the two prose texts opening the volume by novelist Augustin Buzura and poet Ana Blandiana entitled: "This is the moment!" and "The children's crusade". The first one praises the awakening of Romania from what seemed an eternal slumber but warns against a misuse of freedom, whereas the second is an ode to those teenagers who died during the anti-communist revolution, in an intertextual reference to her own homonymous poem forbidden under the dictatorship for its clear hint at birth rate policies. As in the previous example, what strikes us is the degree of congruence between visual signs and intentionality in this volume. The orthodox icon[4] occupying the entire cover of this first issue after the fall of Communism is a clear recognition of a long struggle for survival on the part of religion throughout the communist years. This is a very strong visual stimulus after half a century without such images, but it is, at the same time, a prediction of what we will find throughout the volume(s) and throughout Romanian society in the following years: the reappearance of formerly invisible groups. As for the inferential clues, in this case, the contextual explicit level displays the name of the publication and its languages, the editorial information (minus chief editor's name), as well as the cover explanation (as it did in 1989) and as a novelty, the photo credits. This intention to recognize authorship (translator's names appear also underneath the authors' within the body of the journal) is a shift intended to show a change of attitude. Two texts with suggestive titles will also draw the Romanian reader's attention because of their authors' emergence as significant figures (a censored novelist and a dissident poet). The title ("Children's Crusade") strikes both the Romanian and foreign reader through its intertextual load, although each recalls different hallmarks. Regarding implicitness, the presence of religious visual signs together with omissions (ellipses) seem to be the main device in this issue's preliminary data frame (editor's name, sponsorship, the term "monthly" having been replaced by "periodical" denoting uncertainty).

[4] The word "icon" is used in its sense of a typical religious image worshipped in the orthodox rite.

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6. OBSERVATIONS

At the beginning of this paper, I formulated some questions which I hope I have answered. My first concern was whether there were any signs of ideological manipulation in the eighties. I identified them on the **preliminary data level** and on the **macro-strategies level** (in Lambert-Van Gorp's model) by means of visual stimuli, metatexts and, moreover, ellipses regarding chief editor, translators, authorship of doctrinal articles etc.), but also on the **micro-level** of the composition itself (by means of a certain selection/distribution of contributors, of art reproductions, type of content, topics, stances and styles). These elements have been briefly tackled in this paper from a cognitive perspective of communication and from a translatological polysystemic approach, considering the journal as a translation product governed by certain norms.

My second question referred to whether these signs disappeared after the fall of communism. In this respect, I noticed that preliminary data and macro-level strategies (e.g. the disclosed names of editorial staff and translators announcing a certain intention of the journal to adopt transparency in the following years), were not abruptly transfigured (between November 1989 and January 1990) but rather gradually replaced during the 1990s, except for the visual stimuli which were radically changed. For instance, art reproductions on the cover turned from standard images worshipping the figure of the leader, to the retrieval of the image of the orthodox church as an institution.

Regarding the micro-level, if we focus on content before and after the anti-Communist revolution, we can easily observe that while issue 11/1989 was made up of socio-political essays written in what became known as "wooden language"[5], and bearing pompous titles such as "A Civilization of Revolutionary Humanism", "Premises and Finality in the Dynamics of Values" or "the Arts and Man's Accomplishment", issue 1/1990 brings a diametrically opposed content. Not only are the selected essays written by prestigious figures (some of them dissidents prior to 1990) but non-literary language regains its rhetorical style and metaphoric dimension in the public sphere.

In drawing a comparison between the two issues, both the selection of authors', and the titles of each contribution become extremely relevant. Examples like "This is the moment!", "The Children's Crusade", "The Need for Purification", and "Damnatio Memoriae" are intended to function almost as directive speech acts, urging readers not to forget either the dictatorship or its violent end. However, far from being neutral (which would have been difficult given the historical moment) they are examples of an inclination towards the oppressed side, and thus still not free from ideological bias.

7. CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, the results of this analysis are not clear cut but ambivalent: preliminary data and macro-strategies related to an editorial policy within the polysystem did not undergo a sudden change, whereas there was a clear intention of a radical transformation of this publication's profile in terms of contents, immediately announced by visual stimuli but performed over time, throughout the first decade of political transition.

[5] A doctrinal jargon characterized by rigid structure, clichéd expressions and meaningless formulae encountered in the Communist Party's documents and extended to all domains of society.

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In terms of metatexts and general strategies (as they are conveyed through information on the first and second pages), we might say that drastic changes do not occur between November 1989 and January 1990, which is quite understandable given the short period of time. While visual signs and authors selected for the new volume are elements which can easily and immediately be agreed, publishers' general strategies in terms of visibility, translation and selection policies, self-definition, age of the journal are facts that need further and collective discussion as well as a submission to the new polysystem (still to be redefined) in the emerging era of democracy.

Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, this research might be completed with similar studies in, for instance, the other ex-communist countries in Eastern Europe, to determine whether they had similar "cultural products" and whether these disappeared after 1990 or were structurally adjusted according to the new system of values. Thus, we might learn some facts about the way this type of propaganda policy affected literary and translation systems in the whole area beyond the iron curtain in order to find out whether the pendulum (negative-positive manipulation) was part of the transition game and should be assumed as such.

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