"*ALL THIS EVIDENCE! BUT ONE PICTURE WOULD BE WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS*"[1] THE TRANSLATION OF IMAGERY IN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS ON COMMUNISM

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Abstract

This paper explores the nexus between Translation Studies and Oral History on Romanian communism. As such, it aims to map out the challenges posed by the translation of historical interviews from Romanian into English. More specifically, inspired by Portelli's theoretical framework, the paper illustrates the orality of transcribed historical accounts by bringing into focus their rich imagery. To instantiate the case, relevant data have been extracted from two main books on the era: *Memorial of pain: darkness and light*, by Hossu Longin, 2013 and *The Survivors: testimonies from Romanian communist prison*, by Anca & Raul Ştef, 2014.

Keywords: Translation Studies, communism, orality, imagery.

1. Orality

I ought to clarify, from the outset, the implications of orality in transcribed oral history interviews on Romanian communism. My claim is that these written texts preserve the orality features imbued in spoken conversation. It should not be negated though that their orality is, to a greater or lesser extent, tampered with during editorial work. What is ultimately achieved is a 'fictive orality', to borrow Koch & Oesterreicher's (2012) terminology. More specifically, a printed interview is a neat combination between the spoken and the graphic.

However, as the transcribed interviews were originally produced orally, it is the oral structure that clearly stands out in their written versions.

[1] Lord Birkett's comment on the Nuremberg trial (Newmark 2001:123).

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It is with this clarification in mind that I set out to investigate and map out the difficulties of oral history on communism in translation. Last but not least, I should mention that all my references to oral history interviews should call to mind their transcribed format. The video-taped interviews have only been consulted for informative and clarification purposes alone. Thus, this article is concerned with the translation of written texts and not with consecutive or simultaneous interpretation.

To continue, orality is identified as one of the key features of historical interviews, according to Alessandro Portelli (in addition to narrative, subjectivity and performativity; "What makes Oral History Different?; in Perks *The Oral History Reader*, 2003). I propose an original interpretation of Portelli's concept of orality in an attempt to nuance the linguistic specificities of oral history interviews. Indeed, I believe that elements like vividness, immediacy and fragmentation constitute organically the orality of these texts. I examine here the first concept which is predicated on imagery (and also on repetitions, which, due to space constraints, are not analysed here). Vividness corresponds primarily to the intensity of sensorial imagery a person can experience. In what follows, I devote my attention to the translation of the seven types of imagery identified by scholarly literature: *visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, kinaesthetic and organic* (related to the senses of hunger, thirst or pain).

These theoretical considerations made clear, I will embark on the analysis of my translated interviews from two main books on the communist era: Hossu Longin's *Memorial of pain: darkness and light* (Memorialul durerii: întuneric şi lumină Humanitas, 2013) and Anca and Raul Ştef's *The Survivors: Testimonies from Romania's communist prisons* (Supravieţuitorii: mărturii din temniţele comuniste ale României; Humanitas 2014).

1.1. Vividness

The translation of vividness adverts to the transfer of images and repetitions from one language into another. My understanding of vividness encapsulates a nexus of imagery intended to enliven speech. Inevitably, the question is raised about the translatability of images.

I find it crucial to reflect on the approaches developed by Translation Studies concerning imagery. One of the prominent prescriptions formulated within the field emanates from Jiang's 'Image-Based Model to Literary

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Translation' (in *Meta* 534, 2008:860-871). More concretely, as she argues, the success of a translation does not reside entirely in the adequate equivalence established at word or sentence level. Rather, it derives from a "*mentally formulated image gestalt*" (2008:860) that combines language structuring with the visualisation of scenes. More than that, translators' interpretation of a literary text progresses aesthetically, as they engage in an image-construction process moving from source text to target text. Conclusively, Jiang's cogent argument rests on the mental maps that should signpost the interface between linguistic conception and aesthetic images (2008:863). As can be construed from her statement, the images of the source text must be retained in the target text.

In what follows, I exemplify the vividness of interviews in translation by looking at the way in which their imagery has been rendered from Romanian into English. Were there any difficulties encountered by the translator? If in the affirmative, what strategies has the author used to solve intractable problems? Is vividness important enough to be retained in the target text? What types of images are the most frequent and how does the translator cope with them? The following analysis dissects the translation of Hossu Longin's interviews in order to offer precise answers to these questions.

1.1.1 Imagery: examples extracted from "*Memorial of pain: darkness and light*"

In this section, I intend to illustrate the translation of oral history imagery by retrieving pertinent examples from the corpus. Obviously, they will provide precious insights into the mechanisms at work when transferring images from one original language and culture into another. As appropriate, I conclude the section with some critical observations pertaining to the topic at hand.

Images are plentiful in the stories appended to the interviewees' testimonies. They inject dynamism to an oral history account while providing factual information. History is thus acted out in a narrative performance that sets much store by language. Ion Gavrilă Ogoranu's interview is a case in point. His description of a confrontation between Securitate members and the anti-communist fighters enables readers to visualise, sequence by sequence, the developing action. The abundance of verbs ensures the swift build-up of images that the translator must not ignore. The Securitate takes by storm the

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room where two fighters, Marcel Cornea and Virgil Radeş, were hiding; as the officers mistake one for the other, a tussle ensues.

As can be seen, the Romanian version oozes vividness:

"Or, s-au aruncat, din greşeală, asupra celui din margine, care a fost Virgil Radeş. Acesta s-a zbătut, s-a luptat cu ei şi, în acea luptă, şi-a rupt mâna. Marcel a pus mâna pe pistol, s-a apărat, ei s-au retras [...]. Deşi rănit mortal, a mai avut totuşi putere să pună mâna pe un bocanc – avea nişte bocanci grei, pe care-i observasem cu câtva timp înainte – şi aceasta a fost ultima armă a lui. În momentul când a căzut, a fost luat de Securitate. Au fost aruncaţi amândoi într-un camion" (2013:238-239).

As can be clearly noted, the images strung together are underpinned by many verbs of action that mark the swift tempo of the text. Once again, kinaesthetic and visual images overlap as language is teased out to express the motion and commotion of the scene. The English translation was mainly literal, so that the dynamics of the source language could be actuated in the target text:

"Yet, by mistake, they swooped over Virgil Radeş's bed, placed to the side. He writhed, fought against them and, in that fight, he broke his hand. Marcel laid his hand on the gun, defended himself, they withdrew. […] mortally wounded, he had still some strength left to grab one of his boots – he had some heavy boots which I had noticed before – and that was his last weapon. The moment he fell down he was seized by the Securitate. They were both hurled into a truck". (2013:238-239)

The cluster of verbs in the past tense is carefully transferred in English, as the full energy of the text is supplied by a succession of terms such as 'swooped over, writhed, fought, broke, laid his hand on, defended, withdrew, fell down, seized". Based on this assumption, it can be sensibly argued that oral history interviews are predicated on the use of verbs, rather than nouns. It is in the act of telling that the true meanings of the past congeal. On a different note, I draw attention to the centrality of details, which must be carefully marked out in translation. Narrators force readers' attention on details which create a more personal and intimate setting. Additionally, such a technique heightens the audience's sense of involvement into the related story.

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What is more, the telegraphic narration of scenes increases the suspense and draws readers in. Hence, visual images gain in clarity and intensity, as evidenced by the terse yet powerful sentence 'They were both hurled into a truck'. I find it necessary to alert translators to the pitfalls of the source text which, given its conciseness and intelligibility, might be easily domesticated. However, keeping close to the language and culture of the original, and opting thus for foreignization, my translation preserves the spirit of the interview, probing the deep inconsolate recesses of the human soul.

To continue, another visual image that reinforces the dichotomy 'us-them', or the antagonistic forces of communists and anti-communist fighters, is represented by the encirclement of villages and hideouts by the Securitate forces. Recalling the pincer movement of military attacks, the manoeuvre hints at the sly and Machiavellian tactics employed by the Secret Services. As can be easily inferred, translation is hardly problematic as a direct equivalent is easily identified in the target language. Hence, "*the entire village of Ileni was surrounded*" and "*They surrounded the shed*" exemplify a literal translation from Romanian.

Transposition is employed to maintain the sharp auditory image that shatters abruptly the silence of surrounding the confrontation between the partisans and the Securitate forces. "*The same people remember that, in the stillness of the night, nothing else could be heard but a mother's voice, crying 'My dear boy, my dear boy!'* " (2013:241). If the Romanian source text says that "nu se mai auzea decât glasul de mamă' (all that one could hear was a mother's voice) the target text uses a modal with passive voice to foreground the (universal) image of a wailing mother, mourning the death of her child.

Finally, the depiction of the confrontation winds up with two horrifying visual images connected to the fatal injuries suffered by partisan Toma Pirău. The fighter's brother states that "*He shot himself in the mouth. The bullet poked through his head and slightly gouged out one of his eyes*" ("S-a împuşcat în gură. Şi-a băgat pistolul, glonţul i-a ieşit prin cap, şi chiar i-a azvârlit un ochi mai în afară"; 2013:241). As compared to the original, the target text is more compressed as the equivalent meaning could be expressed via specific verbs. Thus, a literal and longer translation might have hardly accomplished the idea encoded in the source language.

The Boys in the Făgăraş Mountains, Episode 2, opens up with a vigorous image that readers can easily relate to sequences from action films.

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In translating the specific passage the visualisation of images is crucial, according to Jiang's theoretical tenet. Creating mental maps precedes thus a concern with language structure and aesthetics. More than that, translator's general knowledge can prove extremely advantageous in identifying the familiarity of the scene within the cinematic world. It goes without saying that, once the image becomes transparent, translation remains faithful to the original.

In what follows, I provide an example that bolsters the argument above. Silviu Socol and his group were executed in 1952 in the Citadel of Braşov (Transylvania). It was only twelve years later (i.e. in 1964, when there was a mass release of prisoners) that Socol family would discover the circumstances of his death. Aurel Socol, one of the fighter's brothers, declares:

"He came within inches of escape, because he took the captain's rifle, he snatched it from his hand, fought with him and an officer, coming behind his back, struck him over the head with the butt of his rifle. And then he collapsed. They asked the man where Silviu was staying for a rope and they wrapped the rope around him, they tied him up. That's how they took him to Făgăraş."

„Era gata-gata să scape, că i-a luat pistolul căpitanului, i l-a smuls din mână, s-a luptat cu el, şi un ofiţer, pe la spate, i-a dat cu patul puştii în cap. Şi atunci l-au doborât. Au cerut o frânghie de la gazda unde era Silviu şi l-au înfăşurat în frânghie, l-au legat. Aşa l-au dus la Făgăraş." (2013:243).

The translation follows closely the original, as demanded by the quick succession of visual sequences. Indeed, there are repetitive structures that have been preserved due to their emphatic role. Here, I emphasise the centrality of verbs in the past tense ('took, snatched, fought, struck, collapsed, asked, wrapped, tied, took') which find their equivalence in the Romanian 'perfect compus'. The profusion of action verbs increases the dramatic element of the scene, while facilitating the creation of visual images. Readers' attention is therefore excited, as the oral history interview verges into a cliffhanger. One remark should be made about the Romanian 'pe la spate' (adverbial phrase) translated as 'coming behind his back'. As can be seen, the addition of the present participle reinforces both the clarity of the image and the sly action of the Securitate officer.

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Finally, Episode 3 ends with a powerful visual image reminiscent of World War I. Octavian Paler states in a didactive yet fiery speech that

"*There were people who did not bear the weight of history and seized their weapons and took to the mountains in order to put up armed resistance to the sovietisation of the country, turning the Romanian mountains into the last trenches against the Soviet colonisation of Romania*"

"Au *existat* oameni care n-au îndurat această istorie şi-au luat arma în mână şi au urcat în munţi pentru a lupta împotriva sovietizării ţării, pentru a transforma munţii României în ultima tranşee împotriva colonizării sovietice a României" 2013:253.

More specifically, the Romanian writer and journalist associates the anti-communist armed resistance in the mountains with trenches, implying the war-like nature of the fight. As such, the Carpathians do not represent only a battleground but also a protective defence for the fighters. In regards to translation, Newmark's semantic strategy is largely applied. However, some minor changes have been esteemed necessary in order to fully capture people's firm resolution to oppose communism. 'A lua arma în mână' (take the weapon) is replaced by the more dynamic verb 'seize', which denotes better the unwavering determination and courage in fighting the enemy.

In much the same vein, the noun 'tranşee', used in the singular in Romanian is rendered by the English plural 'trenches'. It should be said though that such a modification produces the same effect on target language readers, more familiar with the plural form of the noun. Consequently, both the Romanian and English readers are presented with the same vivid image of the long, narrow ditches dug by troops to provide a place of shelter from enemy fire (Lexico, Oxford Dictionary). For the more informed reader this unexpected juxtaposition of Romanian fighters and soldiers in the trenches might call to mind the battlefields of Northern France and Belgium in World War I.

Episode 3 casts religion into relief as the mountain fighters are portrayed either praying or in similarly spiritual episodes. As is well-known, Communists' hostility to God contravened Romanians' century-old orthodox beliefs, being one of the main reasons that launched the armed resistance in the mountains. Indeed, the church, in addition to the school, was the quintessence of Romanian life and its teachings were instilled in children

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from an early age. In the light of this argument, the account of Cornel Vlad, a pupil at the time of his arrest (and who served a fourteen-year sentence in prison), needs hardly any explanations:

"*We both went there, we went in the cowshed. There was an empty place next to a cow and we found him lying there in the manger, wrapped up in a blanket and with a smoking lantern beside him. He was reading the Bible. [...] He says: "Jesus Christ was born in a manger too".*

„Ne-am *dus* amândoi acolo, am intrat în grajd. Era un loc liber la o vacă şi, în iesle, l-am găsit culcat, acoperit cu o pătură, lângă care fumega un felinar. Şi citea *Biblia*. Zice: 'Şi Iisus Hristos s-a născut în iesle' " (2013:255).

My translation stayed close to the original, as suggested by Venuti's foreignization technique. It is clear that in this particular excerpt it is not only language that counts but also culture. Thus, direct references to Jesus Christ and the Nativity scene can be very well depicted by a literal translation that sends universal reverberations across the reading public. However, my limited intervention is recorded in the elimination of the conjunction 'and' ('şi' in the original) at the beginning of the sentence '*He was reading the Bible'* ('Şi citea Biblia'). In order to make sure that the sentence fulfils the same function as in the original, I have judged it necessary to drop the connective word.

To continue, it may not be surprising to detect descriptions of armed confrontations in Episode 3 as well. Alexandrina Murariu-Cârstea is an indirect witness to an exchange of fire that resulted in the death of two young fighters, Mogoş and Mazilu. Her recollections of that tragic day are predicated on her sense of hearing, as she confesses: "*It's said that they killed them with the butt of the gun and they fell down. I heard them fall down there – I was in the opposite room - fall to the ground, dead*" ('Se vorbeşte că i-au omorât cu patul puştii şi au căzut. Eu i-am auzit cum au căzut acolo – că eram în camera de alături -, cum au căzut jos, morţi'; 2013:256). The verb 'hear' (a auzi) is employed in the target language, and, as expected, translation raises no problems.

Murariu-Cârstea's oral interview is precious not only factually but also psychologically. In this sense, it points out the powerful impact that unusual or deeply emotional events may exert on interviewees' perceptive

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memory. The sound of dead people falling down colours, both in image and sound, the accounts of many interviewees and acts as an omen of the fighters' inexorable defeat.

Next, I consider it adequate to draw attention to the vivid imagery embedded in the following passage:

"Another episode, funny in a way, was when in 1952, high up on the Izvor Mountain, we were drying our clothes in the sun, undressed, stark-naked, and the Securitate came around, so we had to grab our clothes, go down behind some rocks, get dressed and then, from there, defend ourselves so that we could retreat into the woods."

„Tot o situaţie într-un fel comică a fost când, în 1952, pe Muntele Izvor, ne uscam hainele la soare, fiind dezbrăcaţi, goi-puşcă, şi a venit Securitatea pe noi, încât a trebuit să ne luăm hainele în braţe şi să coborâm după nişte stânci, să ne îmbrăcăm şi apoi, de acolo, să ne apărăm, ca să ne putem retrage în pădure'" (2013:262).

Maintaining proximity with the original allows for a translation that mirrors the dynamic narrative sequence. With the Izvor Mountain as backdrop, the swift development of action is reproduced by the cluster of verbs ('grab, go down, get dressed, defend, retreat') that match perfectly that in the source language. Readers' attention is engaged as their imagination is stimulated and their sense of involvement heightened.

As has been seen, the cruelty of the Securitate officers is reified as physical injuries inflicted on the anti-communist fighters. The range of their savage actions can hardly be measured even with the greatest stretch of imagination. Victoria Haşu-Trâmbiţaş's story attains its apex with a highly upsetting visual image. Uncertain whether Andrei killed himself or was killed by the communists, she claims that he was placed "*on the shed ladder used for going up into the shed. And they took him to Voievodenii Mari. And they put him on display in front of the town hall. Children from Pojorta would go there […] and the children saw him*." ('Pe scara de şop, pe care te sui în şop. Şi l-au dus în Voievodenii Mari. Şi l-au pus în faţa primăriei. Şi acolo mergeau copiii din Pojorta [...] şi copiii l-au văzut'; 2013:266).

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Haşu-Trâmbiţaş's staccato way of speaking is rendered as such in English, even though the series of short and separate sentences might be considered strange by the target language readers. Yet, I argue that her manner of speaking is prone to silences and pauses. As a matter of fact, it is there that the true emotion lies. The history of an aggrieved sister's soul lies in that interstitial space that has to be left intact in translation.

Further, the emotional intensity of the scene is compounded by the presence of the children watching the dead body fastened on the shed ladder. The message of the Securitate was clearly spelled out: those who fail to comply with the communist ideology are severely punished.

Visual, auditory and kinesthetic images meld together in order to depict the Kafkaesque episode of the deadly clash with the Securitate. Citing a woman's words, Eugeniu Mărgineanu declares:

"*She said: "The cart was pulling them away and we, the women, were crying looking at their jolting heads as they bounced from one ball to another. […] They were covered in blood*" ('Zicea: "Îi trăgea căruţa şi plângeam toate femeile cum le zburau capetele, sărind de pe un bruş pe altul. […] Erau plini de sânge'; 2013:272).

Naturally, translation follows closely the original, yet, two modifications have been applied. If the original only insinuates that the crying women were looking at the dead bodies in the cart, the translated version renders the idea of 'looking' explicit. On the same note, the last sentence literally translates as 'they were full of blood'. However, the English version is more pallid and mitigates the intensity of the source language imagery. I have chosen not to ignore this caveat and I have opted instead for the more striking structure 'covered in blood'. This slight refashioning has been, in my view, necessary so that the original message could be effectively transferred into the target language.

Lastly, as Anastase Buciumeanu explicates, one cannot separate vision from audition when trying to construct verbally the punishment inflicted on the imprisoned fighters. More explicitly, talking about the prison of Timişoara the interviewee states:

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"All this time, terrible screams could be heard from the prison of Timişoara. Being sent to clean the cells where the men of the ghost-van had been taken, we were horrified by the blood on the concrete."

„În toată această *perioadă*, în închisoarea de la Timişoara se auzeau ţipete groaznice. Fiind trimişi să facem curăţenie în celulele în care au fost repartizaţi oamenii din duba-fantomă ne-a înfiorat sângele de pe ciment." (2013: 56).

The brutality and gruesomeness of the scene are expressed by the initial auditory image of the prison screams. The intensity grows as the sense of hearing is supplanted by that of sight. Readers were thus slowly prepared for the shocking description that would succeed the horrific screams of the prisoners. Such a macabre account impresses on translators the violent episode and calls for a literal translation. There is no need to hide behind the simple and direct language of the original, as the cruelty of the Securitate can hardly be qualified in words.

Bringing communist prisons into discussions, interviewees advert naturally to show trials and court rooms where prisoners were summarily judged before being executed or given heavy sentences in prison. The image of the courtroom is important inasmuch as it recalls the Greek enargeia and the vividness of first-hand testimonies. Going back to the Romanian oral histories, Marioara Horescu-Blănaru deplores her inability to attend her husband's trial:

"That's all I did, because we were refused permission inside. They entered the court room only with special invitations, workers with special invitations. I wasn't allowed. I was walking like crazy on the edge of the road."

„Atât, pentru că n-am avut voie să intrăm înăuntru. Au intrat în sala de proces numai cu invitaţii speciale, muncitori cu invitaţii speciale. Eu n-am avut voie. Eu umblam înnebunită pe marginea drumului." (2013: 57).

The broken linearity of Horescu-Blănaru's account testifies to the deep scars that the episode has left on her innermost self. I feel compelled to admit that the first version of my translation was cast in a more refined

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language that did no justice to the original. Cutting down the repetition 'special invitations' or replacing the structure 'walking like crazy' with 'pacing up and down' would not only dampen the vigour of the visual image. Rather, it would chase away the simplicity and conversational nature of the interviewee's language.

Imagery escalates into full-scale drama in Valeria Moldovan's testimony. Talking about Elisabeta Rizea, a fearless supporter of the partisans, she offers a snapshot into the physical torture suffered by dissidents:

"*During interrogations, they wrapped her long hair around their hands and turned her around all room walls that they tore off her hair. Mrs. Năstase showed us - not without shame, but she showed us though - that she was all riddled with holes, because they would leave her naked into a room with dogs, would bait the dogs which ripped chunks of flesh off her*."

„La anchete, îşi înveleau părul ei mare peste mână şi-o învârteau aşa în cameră de toţi pereţii, de i-au smuls părul din cap. Doamna Năstase ne-a arătat – cu ruşine, dar ne-a arătat – că era numai găuri negre, că o punea în cameră goală cu câini, îi asmuţeau pe câini şi-i rupeau bucăţi de carne din ea." (2013: 62).

The mental visualisation of the scene is difficult given the high emotional load of the excerpt. My translation strives to remain close to the original, even though this appears disjointed towards the end. Modulation is applied in the case of the structure 'cu ruşine' (with shame) rendered as 'not without shame' in order to capture the original more effectively. Along the same line of thought, I have added the past participle 'riddled' to the prepositional phrase 'with holes' so as to reinforce the graphic image embedded in the source language. It seems to me that language is entrusted with the heavy burden of expressing the atrocities committed in the name of the totalitarian regime. However, it short-circuits the scale of the communist crimes that can only be alluded to verbally. It is only through the power of silence and imagination that one can attempt to comprehend the incomprehensible.

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1.1.2 Imagery: examples extracted from "*The Survivors: testimonies from Romania's communist prisons*"

The second part of my translated corpus is constituted of interviews given by four former political prisoners: Matei Boilă, Nistor Man, Nicolae Purcărea, and Ioan Roşca. As a caveat, I reserve the right to say that these texts are more compact and unitary, an indication of the researcher's limited intervention.

I will launch an investigation into the translation of oral history imagery by retrieving illustrative examples from the translated data. Discussion is initiated by Matei Boilă's testimony about the ordeal he went through for mounting up opposition against communism.

Generous references are made to the great variety of people he met in prison. In this respect, the idiosyncratic nature of Boilă's account lies in his sympathetic portrayal of young detainees, perceived as courageous and spiritually powerful. However, he deplores the re-education they were subjected to by the communist authorities. His idea is couched in the following terms: "*And they all got swallowed up by the horrible spinning mill of re-education*." ('Şi toţi aceştia au intrat în moara cumplită a reeducării'.; 2014:195). The visual image expressed by the Romanian term 'moara' ('mill') evokes vividly the monstrosity and inhumanity of re-education. If the source language draws its semantic power from the previously mentioned noun, the target text increases explicitness a few notches.

As a result, to insinuate the horror of the re-education experiment the more mundane 'mill' becomes a 'spinning mill', whereas the pallid verb 'entered' ('au intrat') takes the form of 'swallowed up'. These lexical transformations are effective in conveying the dreadful message alluded to in the original. Readers can actually picture the act of savagery and brutality perpetrated by the communist diabolical cunning.

On a more general note, Matei Boilă's testimony can be read as a historical statement of an individual's active fight against a totalitarian regime. My claim is borne out by his detailed description of the large-scale demonstration he helped organise together with other students from Cluj. First, the initial stages of the demonstration are depicted as follows:

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”*From the top of the building next to the theatre, one could see how large masses of students, dressed in white shirts, were marching around Cluj chanting: “Am venit de 10 mai / pentru Regele Mihai!”*[1].

„De pe clădirea de lângă teatru se vedea cum mase mari de studenţi, îmbrăcaţi în cămăşi albe, mărşăluiau prin Cluj scandând: „Am venit de 10 mai / pentru Regele Mihai!” (2013:196).

In this short paragraph, vision and audition, as two major perceptive senses, are elicited. The image of the students dressed in white and marching around Cluj remains etched in readers’ minds and its translation into English is hardly problematic. Indeed, a literal strategy acquits itself well, both on a semantic and communicative level. However, the translator faces a major hurdle in the rendition of the auditory image in the target language. The students’ rallying call (‘Am venit de 10 mai / pentru Regele Mihai!) is highly melodious due to the correspondence of sounds between the words ‘mai’ and ‘Mihai’. A literal translation strips the target text of the original rhyme, so, my decision has been to retain the Romanian phrase in the target language. In all probability, a more informed reader might detect the graphically identical letters and, by implication, their undifferentiated sonority. Such a foreignising approach mitigates, in my view, the severity of this poetic loss.

Auditory imagery enjoys, nevertheless, a more felicitous rendering into English, as demonstrated by the following excerpt:

”*In the end, when he saw that the people’s reaction was not the one he had expected, he asked: “Will you call off the strike?” A sonorous wave rose from the crowd: “Nooooo!” Pătrăşcanu went mad. Then everyone stood up and started singing Long live the King! That was the royal hymn, and Pătrăşcanu had to stand up straight and listen till the very end.*”

„La sfârşit, văzând că oamenii nu reacţionau aşa cum dorise, a întrebat: „Renunţaţi la grevă?” S-a ridicat un val sonor: „Nu!!!” Pătrăşcanu s-a enervat. Atunci toată lumea s-a ridicat în picioare şi a început să cânte *Trăiască Regele!* Era imnul regal, iar Pătrăşcanu a trebuit să stea drepţi şi să-l asculte până la sfârşit.” (2013:198).

[1] “We came on the 10th of May / For King Michael”.

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The auditory image is preceded by a sentence that makes a good use of transposition. In other words, the Romanian verb 'a reacţiona' is converted into the noun 'reaction'. For the same purposes of fluency, the verb 'expect' is preferred to 'want', a more literal translation of the Romanian term 'a dori'. All these lexical and grammatical adjustments are made so that the English text could echo the readability and communicative facility of the original.

Further, the direct question provided („Renunţaţi la grevă?") is also in need of grammatical refinement. In order to highlight the menacing tone of Pătrăşcanu, called in to pacify the students, I have found the use of 'will' more adequate. The highly audible answer to the minster's question is a resolute 'no', ushered in by a perfectly suitable visual image. Truly, the 'sonorous wave that rose from the crowd' is an attentive translation of the source text ('S-a ridicat un val sonor'). In line with English grammar and syntax, the subject 'un val sonor' is moved from a final to an initial position.

The next auditory image has a great reverberatory power, as the students stand up and sing '*Trăiască Regele!'* Equivalence is established, as the well-known English counterpart 'Long Live the King' is easily identified. Translation reveals no other linguistic obstacles as the more common verbs 'a cânta' ('to sing') and 'a asculta' ('to listen') present no challenges lexically or grammatically.

Subjective images succeed one another with great rapidity, as one is forced to sense the cold of winter or the sweltering heat of summer and picture detainees sleeping on concrete floors surrounded by the filth of buckets. Going even deeper in the analysis, I note the presence of tactile imagery in the representation of prisoners' corporeal contact with the concrete floor. All in all, translation raises no major problems, yet, I recommend wariness of the convoluted images that may compose an interviewee's story.

Admittedly, compared to the first set of interviews, these historical accounts collected by Anca and Raul Ştef impress through the interplay of their rich imagery. Mateil Boilă is not alone in conjuring up prison life in the vivid intersections between visual, auditory, tactile and subjective images. Nicolae Purcărea is the second interviewee who appeals to human senses while knitting together the story of his trials and tribulations.

In the tradition of the partisans or the other interviewees whose testimonies have been formerly examined, Purcărea describes how he dodged his communist pursuers. As five individuals from the party, the police station

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and the prison came to look for him, he deceived them by greater ingenuity. The enthralling episode is worded as follows:

"*I managed to hide in hay. […] They climbed up into the hayloft and started jabbing here and there with a pitchfork. I was afraid not of being found but of sneezing because of the rising hay dust forced you to sneeze. […]"*

„Şi am reuşit să mă ascund în fân. [...] Au urcat în podul de fân şi au înţepat cu furca pe ici, pe colo. Mi-era frică nu că o să fiu găsit, ci că o să strănut, căci praful care se făcea în fân te obliga să strănuţi. [...] (2014: 19)."

The images that punctuate the paragraph account for a zestful description. The senses of sight and movement gain artistic valence, as one can easily picture Purcărea taking cover in the hay while the communists, climbing up into the hayloft, start poking roughly through the hay. Visual and kinesthetic images imbricate to offer an unforgettable representation of a 'cat and mouse' episode prevalent in the budding years of Romanian communism.

Concerning translational practice, addition has been employed for rendering accurately the message conveyed by the original. Therefore, the verb 'start' prefaces 'jabbing' ('started jabbing here and there') so as to mark the boundaries between actional sequences: after the communists climb into the loft they begin their jabbing with a pitchfork.

Similarly, I sidestep literal translation in the case of 'praful care se făcea în fân' ('the dust that was made in hay') and opt for the more evocative and reductive expression 'rising hay dust'. The adjective preceding the noun phrase 'hay dust' does away with the Romanian verb 'a se face' ('to be made'). Transposition is also recorded, as the position of 'fân' changes in order to produce the previously mentioned noun phrase ('hay dust'). I consider that such conscious manipulations of language not only play up the readability of the target text but authenticate that of the original as well.

To continue, the interviewee offers invaluable insights into life on the mountains. His intimate portrayal of the fugitives' predicament is captured perceptively in the overlap of visual and kinaesthetic imagery. I have selected the following excerpt for critical inquiry:

"*We slept in a makeshift shelter, we were down a valley, there was a slight rise, and on that side we dug up a hut that could not be seen from above.*

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We would light the fire only at night. If someone looked carefully they could discern the smoke, but no one could have imagined that we were actually there. […] We would sleep at night and then, the best we could, still at night-time, we would pack our traps and leave. I had my backpack with personal items, but we also had to lug what we held in common, for instance the stakes for a shelter or fire."

„Dormeam într-un adăpost improvizat, eram într-o vale şi pe partea cealaltă era puţin ridicat, iar în malul acela am săpat un bordei care de deasupra nu se vedea. Focul nu-l făceam decât noaptea. Dacă se uita cineva atent vedea fum, dar nu se gândeau ei că eram tocmai acolo. [...] Noaptea dormeam şi după aceea, cum puteam, tot noaptea plecam cu tot calabalâcul. Aveam raniţa cu elemente personale, trebuia să cărăm tot ce era în comun, de exemplu, parii pentru un eventual adăpost sau pentru foc." (2014: 19-20)

The natural geography of the place assumes greater importance as the runaways scan their environmental surroundings for prospective shelter. The minute inspection of the natural setting is adverted to in the first sentence. Translation remains faithful to the original structure, even if modulation is applied for a more effective communicative flow. As such, the English noun 'rise' is used as a substitute for the Romanian past participle 'ridicat' ('risen'). The visual images of the dug-up hut and of the rising fire coalesce into a unified whole that, yet again, serve as a typical representation of what it actually meant to live as a runaway in the mountains.

Further, the partisans' life is fleshed out, as Purcărea insists on their image as itinerant travellers. Being always on the move was a pre-requisite of survival, for fixity in one place maximised chances of visibility and subsequent capture. Needless to say, mobility involved carrying away all belongings, as the interviewee points out in the final imagery overlap.

On a translational level, it should be noted that the informal register of the Romanian noun 'calabalâc' presented serious challenges. I have identified a wide range of lexical choices, from the more general 'stuff' and 'baggage' to the more peculiar 'belongings' and 'goods and chattels'. However, I believe translation to be conditioned by the informality of the word, so I have opted for the noun 'traps'. More than that, applying addition and syntactical changes, I have made linguistic capital out of the collocation 'pack one's traps and leave'. Consequently, the Romanian 'plecam cu tot

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calabalâcul' is rendered as 'we would pack our traps and leave'. This technique allows target language readers to gain a better understanding of the language and imagery employed by the narrator. No other major difficulties are signalled, as the translation mirrors closely the Romanian interview.

Purcărea's account reinforces the power of sensorial memories, as vision and touch are ascribed primacy in historical recollections of prison years. Making reference to Jilava, the notorious place of detention near Bucharest, the narrator completes the official record by providing an insider's description:

"*[…] two hundred or three hundred people were squeezed together in a room that could accommodate only fifty people, there were three rows of bunk beds and you were put down below, close to the snakes, and then you had to put up with dampness because Jilava was underground.*"

„[…] pentru că într-o cameră unde puteau intra cincizeci de oameni băgau două-trei sute de oameni, erau trei rânduri de priciuri, şi erai băgat pe dedesubt, pe şerpăraie, iar după aceea era umezeala pe care trebuia s-o suporţi, pentru că Jilava era sub pământ." (2014: 28).

The Romanian text is predicated on more generic terms, such as the verbs 'a băga' ('to put/thrust in') and 'a intra' ('enter'). They bear fruit inasmuch as they reproduce the narrator's intended meaning. A literal translation though would be cumbersome and ponderous and would tamper with the communicative objective of the source text. I have considered it appropriate to domesticate the original, by proposing a version that uncovers partiality for target text language and culture. That being so, the verb 'squeeze' used in the passive voice shifts the focus on the great number of people imprisoned in a cell. Clearly, transposition is exploited in this sentence and in the final clause too, as syntactical reorganisation is deemed necessary for a better language flow ('you had to put up with dampness').

Hermeneutically, the visual image of 'squeezing detainees' forced to sleep close to snakes is congruous with the haptic one that denotes the humidity of the place. In this respect, I can aptly argue that the two images are synthesised as one – a unitary image of an overcrowded prison associated with dampness. My tenet is substantiated by the etymology of the name Jilava which connects it with the Bulgarian word **'žilav', meaning 'wet'.**

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Lack of sleep plays havoc with prisoners' lives. Being sent for indiscipline to the solitary confinement cell equated with sleepless nights and the continuous maintenance of an upright posture. Indisputably, such physical and emotional exertion exacts a heavy price, as Man asserts:

"*Three days. Three days only of standing up or leaning. You couldn't take it anymore and you would slump down. The suffering was terrible. When you were taken out you were only half-conscious, due to lack of sleep or pain... Man was half-plant, half-human. You no longer knew what you were because of pain and lack of sleep, which is a severe punishment.*"

„Trei zile. Trei zile să stai numai în picioare sau rezemat. Nu mai puteai şi te lăsai jos. Era o suferinţă grea. Când te scoteau afară, erai semiconştient, din lipsă de somn, de durere…Omul era o semi-plantă, un semi-om. Nu știai ce eşti, din cauza durerilor şi din lipsă de somn, care este o mare pedeapsă." (2014: 83).

The visual image of a detainee forced to stand up continuously derives its power from the repetition of the temporal reference ('trei zile' – 'three days'). Translation conjures up the meaning embedded in the original as semantic equivalence is quickly established. I have intervened more prominently in the translation of 'te lăsai jos' in order to facilitate the visualization of the scene. My option for 'you would slump down' strongly implies the damaging consequences ensuing from extreme tiredness. Last but definitely not last, the narrator drives home his message by his striking conclusion that 'Man was half-plant, half-human', translated literally from Romanian. Surely, this excerpt associates realistic sequences with more outlandish ones. Within such a linguistic paradigm, pain and suffering become palpable and factual as their description stands for an indelible sensory image transmitted to readers.

As can be easily noticed, Man's account is submerged in subjective imagery, as comments about cold, pain and hunger are consistently made. However, multiple entrances to the study of prison life are not provided by subjective imagery alone. Rather, as implied so far, it is the imbrications of images that render a description emotionally effective. The following passage is a case in point:

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”*It was freezing cold outside, the cell had no window and there was a wet concrete floor…The chains stood for punishment and safety. The chains are fastened as a form of punishment and for safety – safety when moving, and for the rest, as punishment, so that you couldn't walk, so that they could clank, disturb you, keep you cold, thick and with thick bolts.*”

„Afară îngheţa, celula era fără geam, pe jos era ciment ud…Lanţurile sunt socotite pedeapsă şi siguranţă. Lanţurile se pun pentru pentru pedeapsă şi siguranţă – siguranţă la deplasare, iar restul, pedeapsă, să nu te poţi plimba, să zornăie, să te deranjeze, să-ţi ţină rece, groase, cu nituri groase…” (2014: 87).

The incremental transition from the initial subjective image is achieved by means of the three dots. It is in this way that the reader is given a respite before the information could sink in. The addition of ‘floor’ is once again noted. As far as the tactile imagery is concerned, it should be noted that the sense of touch, activated by the presence of chains, holds sway. For semantic and communicative purposes, I have added ‘as a form of’ before the noun ‘punishment’. A literal translation would offer a skewered meaning, leading to incoherence. Moreover, difficulties arise in the translation of the last sentence. I have adopted a more literal translation that reveals the speaker's thought processes and fragmented language flow.

Complementary to this discussion about hunger and cold is the one about fear and physical violence. Man's references to beatings can be construed either as a self-defense mechanism or as an attempt to gloss over well-known information. Without any intention to take interpretative sides, I would like to cite a meaningful example: “*I can write a full page only about types of beatings – bundled up together, squeezed together or a pack beating. They would pounce on us, like a pack.”* (‘Vă scriu o pagină numai cu felurile de bătaie – la grămadă, la înghesuială sau bătaie în haită. Se năpusteau asupra noastră în haită’; 2014: 82).

This inventory of beatings attests to the extreme cruelty shown by the communist guards eager to devise ever new methods of torture. Regarding translation, I have incorporated transposition by converting the nouns ‘grămadă’ and ‘înghesuială’ into the past participles ‘bundled up’ and

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'squeezed'. A literal translation would have appeared awkward and restrictive in terms of message communication. However, literality is embraced insofar as it promotes the repetition of the term 'pack' ('pack beating' and 'like a pack'). There is no doubt that subjective imagery, echoing pain and physical suffering, modulates with tactile images. Indeed, the prisoners are brought in close corporeal contact as they squeeze together. What is more, to this duality of imagery attaches another one, as both a visual and kinaesthetic scene is represented by the 'pack beating' or the pouncing 'on us, like a pack'. Consequently, my recommendation is for translators to be reactive to the constellations of images drawn across the paragraph and ensure their apt transfer in English.

Beatings, cold, hunger, sleeplessness were all valid reasons that could precipitate a prisoner's death. Truly, death continues to threaten detainees as a Damoclean sword. Ioan Roşca offers an insightful account on the topic. A relevant excerpt is given below:

"*The morgue was also there, an eerie shack with sand on the floor. When someone died, they would toss him there, all naked, and rats would scurry along his body. Before they fixed shutters, we could see the cemetery across the prison and on one side, we could see how they took the dead, those of common law, in the evening, and carried them away in a blanket. They would dig a grave and there was water many times and they would fling the dead and run away because of the spurting water. Naked, without a casket, without anything. That was it.*"

„Era tot acolo şi morga, o baracă sinistră, cu nisip pe jos. Când murea cineva, îl trânteau acolo, în pielea goală, şi umblau şobolanii peste el. Până nu ne-au pus obloanele, vedeam cimitirul vizavi de puşcărie, iar la margine vedeam cum îi luau pe morţi,cei de drept comun, seara, şi-i duceau în pătură. Săpau groapa şi de multe ori era apă, şi-l aruncau pe mort şi fugeau, că-i stropea apa. În pielea goală, fără coşciug, fără nimic. Asta era tot". (2014 :182).

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The paragraph opens directly with the visual image of the morgue which is definitely not intended for the soft-hearted ones. The sand on the floor and the other-worldly air of the place, as implied by the noun phrase 'baracă sinistră' ('eerie shack), support my allegation. The target text models the fragmented structure of the original where details accrue separated by two commas. Surprisingly, the image of stillness and immobility is contrasted with the movement and dynamism of the next sequence. Someone's death implied the tossing of the corpse in the shack: 'îl trânteau acolo' ('they would toss him there').

However, what sends a chill of horror through readers is the perception of movement suggested by the phrase 'şi umblau şobolanii peste el'. Admittedly, my translation is more expressive than the Romanian original which is built around the general verb 'a umbla' ('to move /to walk'). Yet, the image conveyed in the source language retains its energy that I have striven to capture in English by the adoption of the verb 'to scurry'. The particular term evokes the hurried movement and scamper of rats and establishes both lexical and communicative equivalence.

This kinaesthetic image gives way to a visual one, as one pictures the cemetery lying across the prison and the transport of the dead in a blanket. Translation poses no major obstacles, even though I note the replacement of the more general verb 'a duce' ('to take') by the more explicit 'carry away'. Kinaesthesia gains expressive valence again, as the guards fling the dead and run away because of the spurting water. I should point out that, in the case of 'că-i stropea apa' ('water was spurting over them') transposition is considered as an adroit strategy. As a result, 'the spurting water' improves fluency and communication and announces the brevity and economy of the next two sentences.

Indeed, the nakedness of the dead reemerges in a final visual representation, reinforced by the expression 'fără coşciug, fără nimic' ('without a casket, without anything') centred around the repetition of the preposition 'without'. The last sentence 'Asta era tot' ('That was it') offers a synoptic outline of the passage, serving as a final intimation of the primitive, yet spectral, handling of human corpses.

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People are sentient beings and, by implication, their memories find a close correlate in their history of senses. This has been demonstrated so far in my analysis by representative examples of visual, tactile, kinaesthetic, and subjective imagery. Further, this claim is buttressed by remarks about the sense of hearing in prison. Nistor Man notes as a highly-perceptive observer:

"*The prison regime was the silence regime. You were not allowed to talk loudly in prison, only in a whisper. You couldn't talk loudly as inmates from other cells might hear your voice. It was quiet. Here is the regime of silence – one must be silent, not talk!"*

„Regimul închisorilor a fost regimul tăcerii. Nu aveai voie să vorbeşti tare în închisoare, numai în şoaptă. Nu cumva să vorbeşti tare şi să-ţi audă cineva glasul din alte celule. Era linişte. Aici e regimul tăcerii – se tace, nu se vorbeşte!" (2014 : 83).

The whole paragraph is centred around an auditory image that is being, to a greater or lesser extent, recapitulated in every sentence. My translation retraces the synonymy of 'liniște' ('quiet') and tăcere ('silence') or that between the verbs 'a tăcea' ('be silent') and the negative form of 'a vorbi' ('couldn't talk / must not talk'). The deliberate brevity of the sentence 'Era liniște' ('It was quiet') constrains readers to pause for a minute and sense the oppression of silence.

Vision loses no descriptive leverage once the narrator commences his story about Gherla prison. Hence, he does not rush into action, as he takes his time to provide an artistic description of Ţurcanu, the communist controlling the place. His physical portrayal of the man is impactful, for it situates evil and wickedness within a tangible and concrete dimension:

"*One evening, the door opens and Ţurcanu walks in. I didn't know who he was. He was wearing the prisoner's striped uniform, was smoking and had a wristwatch. He was an athletic man, taller than me and had a sculpted face, with a wide beard. A big-boned face.*"

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„Într-o seară, se deschide uşa şi intră Ţurcanu. Nu ştiam cine era. Era îmbrăcat în zeghe, fuma, avea ceas la mână. Era o fire atletică, mai înalt decât mine, şi avea o faţă sculptată, cu barbă lată. Un chip osos." (2014:180).

The preceding paragraph clearly sustains Tannen's theoretical claim about the poetics of oral language. Artistry, as she argues, is not the exclusive territory of literacy. On the contrary, spoken communication lends itself incredibly well to the language aesthetics. Ioan Roşca's fine description of Ţurcanu's physical features fosters this argument. Translation remains close to the original so that no detail of the communist's portrait could be omitted. I draw attention to the use of a compound adjective 'big-boned' to express the word 'osos' in Romanian.

If the other structures present little challenges in translation, it should be noted that a serious impediment has been constituted by the term 'zeghe'. A degree of caution is required as its translation should not be taken at face value. Its dictionary definition is misleading, insofar as it is semantically restrictive. The term is simply defined as a 'long peasant coat, occasionally decorated with chenille cord, worn in mountainous areas'[2].

However, in the paragraph under scrutiny this meaning cannot be applied. Considering the wider context and carrying out an in-depth examination of the term, it becomes clear that 'zeghe' refers to the prison uniform. As the word 'prison uniform' is too general, I have used the more specific noun phrase 'prisoner's striped uniform'. My decision is inspired by the numerous photos I could identify on the Internet relative to the uniform worn in Romanian communist prisons. In want of a precise term in English, the chosen paraphrase makes it possible for readers to visualize the item of clothing.

As a final remark, I argue for close attention to the translation of imagery in oral history interviews due to its richness and emotionally-laden messages. Additionally, given the subtle interdependence of images circumspection and prudence are required in the translational practice.

[2] For further references see https://dexonline.ro/definitie/zeghe

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2. Conclusions

As a concluding remark, the findings clearly indicate the high occurrence of visual and kinaesthetic imagery. I cannot fail to notice that, relying on this evidence, the extensive use of imagery marks its affinity to the oral conversational style.

Oral history interviews are a collage of pictures that raises doubts about the adequacy of language to illustrate extralinguistic reality. As such, thinking about language in images and pictures, I find Lord Birkett's comment on the Nuremberg trial pertinent: "*All this evidence! But one picture would be worth a thousand words*" (2001:123). As such, the translation of imagery is fulfilled picture by picture, sequence after sequence, as the past is painted in a staggering array of colours.

Critical remarks should be made about the translation of imagery from Romanian into English. I confirm the effectiveness of Jiang's model that encourages the visualisation of the written texts and the creation of mental maps. Once they crystallise in the translator's mind can the transferring process from one language into another begin. I point out that a literal procedure has been extensively used in order to fulfil both the semantic and communicative objectives of the original. What is more, transposition and modulation have also made a valuable contribution to the transfer from one language into another. As Newmark suggested, operations have been carried out on the grammatical and lexical interstices of language.

All in all, translation has attempted to remain close to the original as any extension of interpretation proved otiose. Indeed, fidelity to the source language could capture not only its cognitive meaning but also its stylistic and emotive one. If my inference is permitted, I am inclined to argue that, just as the language of music is universal, so is the language of emotions. Thus, translators should not embark on a wild goose chase, as the source text words, sentences, paragraphs and wider context should be enough as a linguistic and interpretative field of action.

The sincerity and straightforwardness of emotive language offers a gate of entry to a whole universe of feelings and sentiments, from wails of pain and suffering, to despair and finally hope. With this in mind, I take the

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printed word for what is appears to be, and leave the implied connotations for readers to fully grasp.

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