TICONTRE

TEORIA TESTO TRADUZIONE

T3

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NARRATING THE SELF IN SELF-TRANSLATION

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> I couldn't for the life or death decide in which of my two languages to write the story of my life. They had been *disputándome* for most of my existence, each of them dominating my life monolingually, for long stretches of years freezing the other out of power and articulation [...]. Whenever I wrote anything about my life, in either language it simply sounded ...false, *falso*, fraudulent, *fraudulento*.
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> Ariel Dorfman, *Footnotes to a Double Life*, in *The Genius of Language*, ed. by Wendy Lesser, New York, Anchor Books, 2004, pp. 206-217, p. 206.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the literary practices of multilingual writers have gained increasing interest among researchers[1] and have been discussed in terms of translingual literature,[2] language memoirs,[3] born-translated novels[4] and questions of identity.[5] Having two or more languages at hand, the writing practices available to multilingual writers are manifold. The possibility to switch languages allows them, for instance, to use heterolingualism[6] within one text or to create two language versions

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1 Starting with the groundbreaking monograph by Leonard Forster, *The Poet's Tongues. Multilingualism in Literature*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, to the most recent volume edited by Patrizia Noel Aziz Hanna and Levente Seláf (eds.), *The poetics of multilingualism = La poétique du plurilinguisme*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017, literary multilingualism has been the central topic of a vast number of monographs and edited volumes worldwide. Furthermore, various anthologies with first-person accounts have been published, see i.e. Alexandra Kroh, *L'aventure du bilinguisme*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2000; Isabelle de Courtivron (ed.), *Lives in translation. Bilingual writers on Identity and Creativity*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003; Steven G. Kellman (ed.), *Switching Languages. Translingual Writers Reflect on Their Craft*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2003; Wendy Lesser (ed.), *The Genius of Language. Fifteen Writers Reflect on Their Mother Tongues*, New York, Pantheon Books, 2004.

2 See Steven G. Kellman, *The Translingual Imagination*, London, University of Nebraska Press, 2000. For an exhaustive overview on research on translingual literature, see Steven G. Kellman and Natasha Lvovich, *Selective Bibliography of Translingual Literature*, in «L2 Journal», vii (2015), pp. 152-166, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/86m2x5x9.

3 See Alice Yaeger Kaplan, *On Language Memoir*, in *Displacements: Cultural Identities in Question*, ed. by Angelika Bammer, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1994, pp. 59-70 and Máiréad NicCraith, *Narratives of Place, Belonging and Language: An Intercultural Perspective. Language and globalization*, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012; Eva Karpinski, *Borrowed Tongues. Life writing, Migration, and Translation*, Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012 prefers the notion 'life writing'.

4 See Rebecca L. Walkowitz, *Born Translated. The Contemporary Novel in Age of World Literature*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2013.

5 See Mary Besemeres, *Translating One's Self: Language and Selfhood in Cross-Cultural Autobiography*, Oxford/Bern, Peter Lang, 2002.

6 See Grutman: "je parlerai d'hétérolinguisme, en reconnaissant par là qu'un texte littéraire est un espace où peuvent se croiser plusieurs (niveaux de) langues" (Rainier Grutman, *Les motivations de l'hétérolinguisme : réalisme, composition, esthétique*, in *Eteroglossia e plurilinguismo letterario, Atti del XVIII Convegno interuniversitario di Bressanone*, ed. by Furio Brugnolo and Vincenzo Orioles, Roma, Il Calamo, 2002, pp. 329-349, p. 331).

through self-translation.[7] Self-translation is a historically common and currently wide-spread practice that had been neglected within Translation Studies for far too long. However, research on self-translation has consistently grown over the last decades, as witnessed by the steady increase of conferences,[8] journal issues[9] and edited volumes[10] dedicated entirely to self-translation. This is also confirmed by the growing number of entries in the bibliography on self-translation, which comprises over 1,000 entries of published and over 200 entries of unpublished material of academic studies and research on self-translation.[11] In 2012, Anselmi acknowledged the existence of "self-translation studies" as a "rapidly growing subfield within translation studies".[12] Thus far, researchers have been concerned primarily with identifying (self-)translation strategies,[13] as well as the reasons for self-translating[14] and have aimed at reconstructing the history of self-translation.[15]

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7   For an overview of self-translation as both a process and a product, see Rainier Grutman and Trish Van Bolderen, *Self-Translation*, in *A Companion to Translation Studies*, ed. by Sandra Bermann and Catherine Porter, West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell, 2014, pp. 323-332.

8   E.g. Pescara (2010), Bologna (2011), Perpignan (2012), Cork (2013), Vitoria-Gasteiz (2015), Paris (2016), Rome (2016).

9   E.g. *Autotraducción*, («Quimera. Revista de literatura», special issue, ccx), 2002; *Autotraduction*, («Atelier de traduction», special issue *hors-série*), 2007; *Dossier: L'autotraducció*, («Quaderns. Revista de traducció», xvi), 2009; Alessandra Ferraro (ed.), *Special issue: "L'autotraduzione nelle letterature migranti"*, («Oltreoceano» v), 2011; Michael Boyden and Liesbeth De Bleeker (eds.), *Special issue "Self-translation"*, («Orbis Litterarum» lxviii/3), 2013; Maria Alice Antunes and Rainier Grutman (eds.), *Special Issue "Autotradução / Self-translation"*, («Tradução em revista» xvi), 2014; Paola Puccini (ed.), *Special issue: "Regards croisés autour de l'autotraduction"*, («Interfrancophonies» vi), 2015, http://interfrancophonies.org/images/pdf/numero-6/Table_des_matires_Interfrancophonies_6_2015.pdf; Christian Lagarde (ed.), *Special issue "L'autotraduction: une perspective sociolinguistique"*, («Glottopol» xxv), 2015.

10 E.g. Xosé Manuel Dasilva and Helena Tanqueiro (eds.), *Aproximaciones a la autotraducción*, Vigo, Editorial Academia del Hispanismo, 2011; Enric Gallén, Francisco Lafarga, and Luis Pegenaute (eds.), *Traducción y autotraducción en las literaturas ibéricas*, Bern, Peter Lang, 2010; Marcial Rubio Árquez and Nicola D'Antuono (eds.), *Autotraduzione. Teoria ed esempi fra Italia e Spagna (e oltre)*, Milano, LED, 2012; Andrea Ceccherelli, Gabriella Elina Imposti, and Monica Perotto (eds.), *Autotraduzione o riscrittura*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2013; Anthony Cordingley (ed.), *Self-Translation: Brokering Originality in Hybrid Culture*, London, Continuum, 2013; Christian Lagarde and Helena Tanqueiro (eds.), *L'Autotraduction, aux frontières de la langue et de la culture*, Limoges, Editions Lambert-Lucas, 2013; Alessandra Ferraro and Rainier Grutman (eds.), *L'Autotraduction littéraire. Perspectives théoriques*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2016.

11 See Eva Gentes (ed.), *Bibliography. Autotraduzione / autotraducción / self-translation*, 2017, https://app.box.com/s/y1c1cg7spwgevufbi2k5pempip7gi7ws.

12 Simona Anselmi, *On Self-translation. An Exploration in Self-translators' Teloi and Strategies*, Milano, LED, 2012, p. 11.

13 See Michaël Oustinoff, *Bilinguisme d'écriture et auto-traduction. Julien Green, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2001.

14 See Anselmi, *On Self-translation*, cit.

15 See Jan Walsh Hokenson and Marcella Munson, *The Bilingual Text. History and Theory of Literary Self-Translation*, Manchester, St Jerome Publishing, 2007; Julio César Santoyo, *Autotraducciones: Una perspectiva histórica*, in «Meta», l/3 (2005), pp. 858-867, http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n3/011601ar.pdf; Julio César Santoyo, *Blank Spaces in the History of Translation*, in *Charting the Future of Translation History*, ed. by Georges L. Bastin and Paul F. Bandia, Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press, pp. 11-43; Julio César Santoyo, *On mirrors, dynamics and self-translations*, in *Self-Translation: Brokering Originality in Hybrid Culture*, ed. by Anthony Cordingley, London-New York,

The special issue of *Glottopol* (2015), moreover, discussed self-translation from a socio-linguistic point of view.[16] Despite the increasing attention self-translation has received as "a complex and dynamic aesthetic practice"[17] (not only) within Translation Studies, though, many "blank spaces"[18] remain to be explored, one of them being the role of self-translation in specific genres.

This special issue of *Ticontre* tackles one of these blank spaces and maps out the role self-translation plays in autobiographies, memoirs and autofictional works[19] written by multilingual writers. While this aspect has already been addressed in various case stud-ies, this issue aims to explore the role of self-translation in self-narrations by taking into account various biographical and geographical backgrounds, a great range of language combinations and a variety of literary strategies and narrative choices. By narrating the same events at least twice, the self-translator offers a double perspective. These works are therefore of exceptional value in order to analyse how language shapes self-narration (in the different forms of autobiography, life-writing, autofiction, language memoir). Susan Ingram affirms that "it is not unusual for writers of literary autobiography to thematise language and the writing process".[20] As self-translators often have a migrant and/or multicultural background, they tend to have a special affiliation with language. Paola Bohórquez points out: "In migrant and/or multicultural contexts, language be-comes invested with complex and often contradictory valences and significations that reveal the arbitrary character of the traditional identification of language with nation and common ethnicity".[21] Therefore, it is rather unsurprising that self-translators, who face linguistic 'trans-bordering' so often, exploit this genre to make readers empathize with their struggles. In their autobiographical and autofictional texts, a central place is devoted not only to the act of writing, but also to that of translating – and their ex-periences seem to bring these two distinct moments closer than ever before. The mul-tilingual thinks, speaks and writes in at least two languages, inhabits and is shaped by different cultures and sometimes travels among distinct geographic areas. Together, all of these elements contribute to form his/her vision, his/her personal *Weltanschauung*. Moreover, the self-translator chooses the task of translation, i.e., the task to put these different elements in relation with each other, in order to conceive, show, describe and understand the difference, the gap between them, which, while being most of the time

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Bloomsbury, 2013, pp. 27-38.

16 LAGARDE, *Special issue "L'autotraduction: une perspective sociolinguistique"*, cit.

17 SARA KIPPUR, *Writing it twice. Self-translation and the making of a world literature in French*, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 2015, p. 26.

18 SANTOYO, *Blank Spaces in the History of Translation*, cit.

19 For a discussion of the notion of "autofiction" see KIPPUR, *Writing it twice*, cit., pp. 103-106. It is not our intention here to enter into a discussion of general epistemological categories, but we agree with Kippur who states: "Language crossings – as well as the places where they can't cross – open up new possibilities for autobiographical writing to challenge the fixedness of generic categories, as well as the boundaries of selfhood." (*ibid.*, p. 127).

20 SUSAN INGRAM, *Translation, Autobiography, Bilingualism*, in *Unity in Diversity? Current Trends in Translation Studies*, ed. by Lynne Bowker *et al.*, Manchester, St Jerome, 1998, pp. 15-22, p. 15.

21 PAOLOA BOHÓRQUEZ, *In-Between-Languages. Translingual Living and Writing in the United States*, in *American Multicultural Studies*, ed. by Sherrow Pinder, Thousand Oaks (CA), Sage, 2012, p. 37.

an enriching standpoint, might also turn out to be a problematic or painful one. Indeed, Hokenson & Munson have observed a tendency to reinforce narrations of the self that highlight the "split": "In collection of language memoirs today, 'between' is the banner preposition of many prefaces, and authors are invited to describe their struggles as creative writers who have suffered loss of the mother tongue".[22] For the South-African self-translator André Brink, on the contrary, the gains of multilingualism counterbalance its difficulties: "While each [language] has its unique treasurehouse of experience and understanding, the two in interaction are incomparably more than the sum of their parts".[23] It is this special awareness of language – which Lise Gauvin has identified as "surconscience linguistique"[24] – that becomes apparent among all multilingual writers. Self-translators show a common tendency to take a position with respect to their multilingualism, i.e., to explain, discuss, legitimize, or more simply narrate, this feature, which is, evidently, not given for granted. Their 'linguistic identity' is, on the contrary, a matter of utmost relevance for writers who are driven by their multilingualism to reflect upon the implications of being from a different country than the one they live and write in, for instance, or of publishing the same books in different languages and for different readerships. This "surconscience linguistique" can especially be observed in their translingual narrations of the self and becomes not only apparent in the content of these works, but also plays a crucial role in the writing process, as Brian T. Fitch has pointed out: "The bilingual writer is not merely aware of the existence of a multiplicity of tongues but lives in the continual presence of this awareness during the very act of writing".[25] The initial choice of the language in which to tell the story of their life poses a challenge to the multilingual writers. As Bohórquez stressed: "Choice of language is always cumbersome in translingual writing because of the lack of coincidence between the language of experience and the language of narration. This forces the author to confront the impossibility of a literal rendition of self, raising questions as to the authenticity and truthfulness of self-representation".[26] This observation also holds true for self-translations, where "preference given to one language is only temporary".[27] Consequently, the events narrated and the language of narration will not overlap in at least one version. Whatever determined the initial language choice, a quest either for authenticity or for emotional distance, is eventually subverted: as soon as the self-translation process starts, in fact, the writer has to face the challenge of self-representation in the other language, which s/he initially might have tried to avoid. In memoirs and autobiographies, this implies

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22 Hokenson and Munson, *The Bilingual Text*, cit., pp. 208-209.

23 André Brink, *Splendid shizophrenia of a lingual bigamist. Book review. Heading south, Looking North by Ariel Dorfman*, in «Unisa Latin American Report», xv (1999), pp. 73-74. In current research, a switch can be observed from emphasizing the struggles towards highlighting the gains of multilingualism. Cf. Elin-Maria Evangelista, *Writing in translation. A new self in a second language*, in *Self-translation: Brokering originality in hybrid culture*, ed. by Anthony Cordingley, London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2013, pp. 177-187.

24 Lise Gauvin, *L'écrivain francophone à la croisée des langues: entretiens*, Paris, Karthala, 1997, p. 6.

25 Brian T. Fitch, *Beckett and Babel. An Investigation into the State of the Bilingual Work*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 158.

26 Bohórquez, *In-Between-Languages*, cit., p. 46.

27 Eva Gentes, *Potentials and Pitfalls of Publishing Self-Translations as Bilingual Editions*, in «Orbis litterarum», lxviii/3 (2013), pp. 266-281, p. 268.

the challenge of "writing one's memory and writing in a language that, implicitly, has no memory of the self".[28] As language and identity are intertwined for translingual authors, they are inevitably haunted by the question of authentic self-representation in each language. Rita Wilson suggests, accordingly, that "self-translation is closely linked to the representation of self".[29] Hence, how is the narration shaped by the language in which it is told? Does it allow perceiving oneself with a critical distance? How does the self-translation process change the perspective on one's own life and the story that is being told? Are two different feelings of belonging revealed in each version? Is the process of translation built into the form of their works, or foregrounded in the narration? Does self-translation function as an "anchor able to ground the self in the middle of instability",[30] as suggested by Aurelia Klimkiewicz? These questions are especially pertinent in the context of self-narrations, where the issue of identity is often a central topic, as Isabelle de Courtivron has pointed out: "the elusive search for one-ness, and the haunting quest for the self are perhaps foregrounded more acutely in texts by bilinguals because their authors face an ultimate disconnection".[31] Furthermore, self-translation enables the writer to reach a different audience. The question of self-representation therefore needs to be linked to the question of how translingual authors want to be perceived by their respective audience. Moreover, a reader competent in both languages might compare both versions, thus complicating the question of self-representation much further. As Kippur has pointed out, "the possibility afforded by the ability to compare versions, pose a direct challenge to the idea of a stable text or subject".[32]

The nine articles gathered in this volume exemplify the various links between self-translation and self-narration in various linguistic contexts. The selected essays focus on memoirs and autofictional works by contemporary self-translators, living in Europe, the United States or South America. Combining "text-oriented" with "author-oriented" approaches,[33] they discuss cases of "autotraducteurs migrateurs"[34] – i.e. Theodor Kallifatides (Θοδωρής Καλλιφατίδης) (1938), Francesca Duranti (1935), Ariel Dorfman (1942), Gustavo Pérez Firmat (1949), Amara Lakhous (1970), Nancy Huston (1953) and Katalin Molnár (1951) – as well as cases of "autotraducteurs sédentaires"[35] – i.e. the Basque writers Miren Agur Meabe (1962) and Bernardo Atxaga (1951) as well as the Mapuche poets Liliana Ancalao (1961), Jaqueline Caniguán (1970) and Adriana Pinda (1970). For

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28 Kippur, *Writing it twice*, cit., p. 123.

29 Rita Wilson, *The Writer's Double. Translation, Writing, and Autobiography*, in «Romance Studies», xxvii/3 (2009), pp. 186-198, p. 186.

30 Aurelia Klimkiewicz, *Self-translation as broken narrativity. Towards an understanding of the self's multilingual dialogue*, in *Self-translation: Brokering originality in hybrid culture*, ed. by Anthony Cordingley, London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2013, pp. 189-201, p. 194.

31 Isabelle de Courtivron, *Introduction*, in *Lives in translation. Bilingual writers on Identity and Creativity*, ed. by Isabelle de Courtivron, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. 1-9, p. 4.

32 Kippur, *Writing it twice*, cit., p. 65.

33 Klimkiewicz, *Self-translation as broken narrativity*, cit., p. 190.

34 Rainier Grutman, *Francophonie et autotraduction*, in «Interfrancophonies», vi (2015), pp. 1-17, http://interfrancophonies.org/images/pdf/numero-6/1_Grutman_Interfrancophonies_6_2015.pdf, p. 10.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

most of these authors, self-translation has become a systematic literary practice, that is to say, writing two versions of their works in different languages. They thus belong to the category of "committed self-translators".[36] Having faced language displacement in various ways, it becomes apparent throughout the contributions that it is of utmost importance for these authors to find a way to express and affirm their hybrid identity in their memoirs and autofictional works. While the chosen literary strategies differ in each trajectory, some recurrent choices can be detected. Hence, heterolingualism is one of the strategies that is used quite frequently among the discussed authors. By inserting words and phrases in the other language into their texts, they allow the text to disrupt "its monolingual self-referentiality while simultaneously challenging the dominant language to contain and express within itself the excluded or implicit one".[37] By using more than one language within one version, these authors actively encourage the reader to encounter the Other. Self-translation is often presented as an empowering tool, not only because it "makes the two parts of the self physically present, visible and audible",[38] but also because it enables them to reflect upon their condition of linguistic and cultural in-betweeness from a translingual point of view.

In the opening essay (p. 1), Garazi Arrula Ruiz provides a theoretical approach to the analysis of identity within Translation Studies. She proposes to combine two psychosocial theories, namely social categorization and social representation. Linking these two theories to self-translation and autofiction, she presents self-translation as a significant tool for the (de)construction of identity as a discursive practice. Is self-translation used as an opportunity to create a different self-representation? In a close comparative reading of the Basque novel *Kristalezko begi bat* (2013) by Miren Agur Meabe and its Spanish self-translation *Un ojo de cristal* (2014), Arrula Ruiz demonstrates how these theoretical insights can be applied to analyzing how identity is shaped in a self-translator's autofictional literary work.

Hybridity, as a typical feature of the bilingual writer's identity, becomes especially apparent in the autofictional work of migrant authors as it is shown in the contribution by Maria Recuenco (p. 23), who explores the little known case of the Greek-Swedish self-translator Theodor Kallifatidis. She presents him as a migrant author who uses self-translation for personal reasons. Self-translation functions as a part of the writing process and is used to confirm oneself's hybrid identity. In this respect, self-translation is also understood as "escriptoterapia", i.e., as a means to reconcile two languages and thus two identities. Analyzing the autofictional narration "Una nueva patria al otro lado de la ventana", Recuenco demonstrates how the first-person narrator, a bilingual writer, can be interpreted as an *alter ego* of Kallifatidis. The narration discusses the migrant's condition as a foreigner in both cultures and claims that bilingual writing helps to affirm a hybrid identity and overcoming an ever-present feeling of foreignness.

The question of building and defending one's own identity is also very relevant among indigenous writers. Although self-translation is very common among indige-

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36 Kippur, *Writing it twice*, cit., p. 69.
37 Bohórquez, *In-Between-Languages*, cit., p. 47.
38 Klimkiewicz, *Self-translation as broken narrativity*, cit., p. 194.

nous self-translators, they have not received a lot of critical attention thus far. As illustrated by MELISA STOCCO (p. 41), the quest for one's own identity is not necessarily only an individual venture. Self-translation as a means to affirm one's own hybrid identity may also have language-political implications. A close comparative reading of bilingual poems by three Mapuche poets (Liliana Ancalao, Jacqueline Caniguán, Adriana Pinda) reveals the tensions and complementarity between the Mapudungun and Spanish versions. Analyzing their poems as narrations of identity and memory with a special focus on the figure of the "displaced", Stocco investigates how each of the poets negotiates her identity as a contemporary Mapuche woman. In this context, self-translation functions as a means to reclaim their "lost" language – Mapudungun, a language isolate spoken in Chile and Argentina – and is thus used to revitalize their frail linguistic and cultural heritage. One of the self-translation strategies applied by Mapuche authors to achieve this goal is non-translation within a self-translated text, i.e. leaving some Mapudungun words untranslated and therefore presenting a heterolingual Spanish version.

Self-translation as an empowering instrument to give voice to a hybrid self is also the central focus of the article by ELENA ANNA SPAGNUOLO (p. 67). Spagnuolo argues that Martina Satriano, the protagonist of the autofictional novel *Sogni Mancini* (1996) / *Left-Handed Dreams* (2000) can be interpreted as the *alter ego* of its transmigrant author Francesca Duranti, who shares her life between Tuscany and New York. While Duranti affirms in her foreword that she used the strategy of inserting heterolingualism in both versions to create an authentic atmosphere, Spagnuolo suggests that the chosen strategy is rather a means to destabilize the "monolingual paradigm"[39] of the reader. Self-translation is characterized as a form of "trans-writing" which enables the transmigrant author to linguistically represent a dynamic, hybrid identity.

The use of heterolingualism in self-translated memoirs is also discussed in the contribution by MARIA ALICE ANTUNES (p. 85). Because of its distancing effect, both Latino self-translators Ariel Dorfman and Gustavo Pérez Firmat have first written their respective memoirs in their second language English and subsequently translated them into their native Spanish. In a close comparative reading of each memoir, Antunes analyses the use of cultural references in both language versions. She shows that although they were aware of their respective readerships, both authors allowed the other language and culture to be present in each version and thus, each mirrors the in-betweenness of their own lives.

How self-translation functions as a fundamental step in the migration process of an author is the main topic of the article by CHIARA LUSETTI (p. 109), who discusses the case of the migrant writer and bidirectional self-translator Amara Lakhous, who left his native Algeria to settle in Rome. In her close comparative reading of Lakhous's novel *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio* (2006) and its original Arabic version, Lusetti shows how the use of heterolingualism not only reflects the multilingual reality of the setting of the novel, but also mirrors the writing and self-translation conditions of a migrant author. Initially, the novel had been written in Arabic in Italy by

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39 YASEMIN YILDIZ, *Beyond the Mother Tongue. The Postmonolingual Condition*, New York, Fordham University Press, 2012, p. 5.

an Algerian author who tells his former compatriots about his new homeland. The self-translation of the novel into Italian was part of the integration process of the author and aroused a different reception on the part of the Italian readership: seeing their own country through the eyes of a migrant, Italian readers are invited to critically reflect upon their own culture.

While heterolingualism had always been a topic within the novels of Nancy Huston, it only became visible on the linguistic surface of the text within one of her latest novels *Danse noire* (2013) / *Black Dance* (2014). In her contribution on Nancy Huston's trajectory as a bilingual writer and self-translator, Valeria Sperti (p. 129) takes a closer look at how the reflection of Huston's own bilingualism and self-translation practice has evolved in her fictional oeuvre. Discussing Huston's novels chronologically from *Les variations Goldberg* (1981) to *Bad Girl* (2014), Sperti identifies autobiographical traces not only in the content of the novels (recurring themes are bilingualism, identity and translation), but also in the chosen narrative strategies (i.e. the use of two intertwined narrative levels, heterolingualism of the characters). Sperti suggests to interpret the use of two interwined narrative levels as a *mise en abyme* of the writing process, and therefore as a reflection of the self-translation process. While self-translation remained an extratextual feature of her novels, with *Danse noire*, Huston combined the use of code-switching with providing translations in footnotes, thus imitating the use of subtitles in movies.

Within this special issue, Nami Kaneko's article (p. 149) stands out as it links the question of narrating the self with the question of non-self-translation. Her case study focuses on the most renowned and widely translated work by the Basque author Bernardo Atxaga, namely the short story collection *Obabakoak* (1988). In an autobiographical re-reading of the short story *Jose Francisco,* she discusses possible reasons for Atxaga's choice not to translate the story into Spanish and hence to exclude it from the Spanish volume.

Alain Ausoni's final contribution (p. 169) on the memoir *Quant à je (kantaje)* (1996) by Hungarian-born, Paris-based poet Katalin Molnár sheds an interesting light on a border case of self-translation, namely the inclusion of self-translated passages within a monolingual work. Despite not being marked as self-translated passages within the text, Ausoni shows how a closer look at the genesis of the memoir reveals that some passages have clearly been translated from former works in the author's native language, Hungarian.

This monographic section aimed at investigating how self-translation shapes the writing of multilingual authors in their narrations of the Self. As guest editors of this special issue, we hope to have shown that, for multilingual writers, self-translation is an important, many-sided tool combining literary and the linguistic dimensions in order to narrate their equally multifaceted polyglot self. While we could not tackle the specific role of self-translation within the genre of autobiographies, memoirs and autofictional works in an exhaustive way, we nevertheless hope to have stimulated some reflections on the particularities of this specific genre and to have provided inspiring roadmaps for further research.

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come citare questo articolo

Giorgia Falceri, Eva Gentes e Elizabete Manterola, *Narrating the Self in Self-translation*, in «Ticontre. Teoria Testo Traduzione», vii (2017), pp. vii–xix.
L'articolo è reperibile al sito http://www.ticontre.org.

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Sommario – Ticontre. Teoria Testo Traduzione – VII (2017)

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