"Palms require translation": Derek Walcott's Poetry in German

Three Case Studies

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1 Introduction

The comparatively young academic discipline of translation studies is a thriving field. The "proliferation of conferences, books and journals on translation in many languages" that started in the late 1990s continues to flourish (Munday 2008, 6). The UNESCO *Index translationum* provides a record of literary translation from 1930 to date and illustrates how widespread the practice of literary translation is. In addition, it conveys a sense of the importance of foreign literature as well as its influence on national literatures. According to this index, the number one target language for literary translations is German, the number one source language English (www.unesco.org/xtrans).

The amount of research conducted on literary translations greatly varies depending on numerous factors; one of them is the author's place of origin. Tomi Adeaga writes:

> There is no doubt that some books on translation in general have been in existence, but finding texts that deal specifically with the problems of transmitting the literary thoughts of African authors into German is a complex task taken on by very few. (2006, 10)

This holds for writers from the West Indies, as well: the translations of Derek Walcott's poetry into German, for instance, have not received any scholarly attention to date.[1] In addition to the reason pointed out by Adeaga, translations are still considered inferior to 'originals' in academia. Lawrence Venuti makes this very clear when he writes: "Translation is […] an offense against a still prevailing concept of scholarship that rests on the assumption of original authorship." (1998, 31)

Moreover, in German-speaking countries[2] the role of poetry is marginal. Two translators of Walcott, Raoul Schrott and Klaus Martens, both agree that the genre enjoys a much higher standing in the Anglophone world.[3] Martens describes the situation in the United States thus:

> Many universities and colleges hire poets-in-residence to teach writing classes, do readings, invite other poets, travel to poetry conferences, are able to write in some peace and security and to broaden the minds of their students and enrich the curricula.[4]

What makes Walcott's poetry unique also makes it especially challenging for a foreign audience: it is very complex in subject matter, extravagant in the use, variety, and abundance of metaphor, and rooted in a number of different cultural and literary traditions. These features pose great difficulties for readers and translators alike. Nevertheless, the number of translated works has steadily increased since Walcott received the Nobel Prize

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[1] With regard to other European languages, there are a few isolated essays on translations of Walcott's poetry: Christine Raguet (2010) and Jessica Stephens (2012) discuss specific aspects of Claire Malroux's translation of Walcott into French in two insightful essays. The Italian translator of *Omeros*, Andrea Molesini (2006) and Marija Bergam (not dated) who translated a fragment of *Omeros* into Croatian have each published an essay about the difficulties they encountered.
[2] In the following I will use German with reference to the various German-speaking unless otherwise indicated.
[3] cf. Schrott and Böhlau 2009, 433; <http://klausmartens-anthologie.de/criticism/index.html>.
[4] <http://klausmartens-anthologie.de/criticism/index.html>.

for literature in 1992 "for a poetic oeuvre of great luminosity, sustained by a historical vision, the outcome of a multicultural commitment" (Espmark 1992).

In addition to individual poems published in magazines, German translations currently amount to six book-length volumes, which were rendered by five different translators. Michael Krüger – until recently head of Hanser publishing – told me that it was a great advantage to have Walcott 'speak' in many different voices through the various translators. One guiding question of this paper is how the different translators (re)interpret Walcott's poems and, as a result, affect the perception of the Caribbean poet in a German-language setting.

For the purpose of this book, I will limit my discussion of translation theory to those aspects that are relevant for the in-depth analyses of my corpus and for contextualizing this study in the broad field of translation studies. The core of this paper will concern itself with the analyses of three book-length translations of Walcott's poetry into German in chronological order of the appearance of the source texts:[5] *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* (1989) by Klaus Martens, *Midsummer/Mittsommer* (2001) by Raoul Schrott, and *Omeros* (1995) by Konrad Klotz, alias Kurt Bitschnau-Durga.[6] For a number of reasons these volumes are especially fruitful for a translation analysis: Being the versatile poet that Walcott is, the source texts themselves vary substantially in genre, style, structure, thematic focus, volume, etc. *Omeros* is a poem of epic scale, its form reminiscent of Dante's *terza rima*, while *Midsummer* is a sequence of 54 loosely connected lyrical poems that have repeatedly been compared with Robert Lowell's *Notebook* (King 2004, 437; Birkerts 1993, 331; Pritchard 1984, 331). The poems that make up the first German volume *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* were selected by Martens from some of Walcott's then most recent works *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (1979), *The Fortunate Traveller* (1981), and *Midsummer* (1984).[7] This range of source texts offers a broad spectrum of translation problems to be discussed. Second, despite the fact that all three translations were published with the same publisher, the editions also differ from one another: Martens's translation is a compilation and – with the exception of the title poem – a monolingual edition; Schrott's 2001 translation of *Midsummer* was the first entirely bilingual volume of Walcott's to be published in German, and Klotz's translation of *Omeros* that appeared as a monolingual edition is the only one of the three to include annotations. The bilingual edition raises a number of unique questions. In case of *Omeros*, the epic scale of the poem made it impracticable for the publisher to include the source text. I will take into consideration the particulars of the publications in order to assess how they may have had an impact on the translation and its reception.

Jeremy Munday describes how "the study of *translators*, rather than the texts and cultures, has become centre-stage in [recent] translation studies research." (2008, 157 emphasis Munday) An investigation of "the role of the translator as active agent […]

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[5] A first translation of *Midsummer* by Raoul Schrott was published in 1994 in the literary magazine *Akzente*. Technically, the year of publication of the translations corresponds with the chronology of the publication of the original works. However, I will mainly concentrate on Schrott's revised 2001 edition rather than the 1994 publication.
[6] Klotz passed away shortly after completing the translation.
[7] Martens did not include poems from the 1988 volume *The Arkansas Testament*.

seemed worryingly absent from earlier theories." (ibid, 157f.) Venuti's studies have already initiated such a shift of emphasis in recent research. Munday is convinced that in the future, this "will clearly be an area of intense and increasingly delicate research activity" (ibid, 159). Therefore, I will explore in what ways and to what degree the translators' personal and professional background, and, to some extent, their own writing may have affected the translation result. Moreover, I will consider publications by the translators that may reveal their strategies and approaches. These include translators' paratexts, essays on literary translation, letters, but also different versions of a specific source text in translation. In addition, I will use personal information provided by the translators in form of letters, e-mails and interviews.

Martens taught literature at German universities for most of his working life. His publications include essays on Walcott as well as scholarly works on literary translation. He has translated various renowned authors and published his own volumes of poetry most of which appeared with small publishers. As a poet Martens is largely unknown. Schrott holds a degree in comparative literature and held some teaching positions at universities. He is a well-known author of essays, poetry, and prose works and has translated significant amounts of poetry from a range of languages and epochs. Klotz emigrated from Switzerland to Canada where he earned a degree in philosophy and linguistics. After returning to his home country, he worked as a teacher for interpretation and German as a foreign language and was editor of a literary magazine. Klotz wrote and performed his own poetry and published some prose works.

An important aspect that has been neglected in translation studies is the influence of external factors on a translated text. In a 1991 essay Martens stresses the importance of "pre-textual" aspects of translation such as "legal and socio-economic issues, in-house rules, publisher-translator relations, and the often rhizomatic personal constellations formative in the constitution of the translated text" (225). In Martens's view, these issues will "eventually […] turn out to be too fundamental to criticism of literary translation to be passed over easily" (ibid, 227). Therefore, he pleads for critics and reviewers to take such pre-textual aspects of a translation into consideration. For a long time, his plea has been largely ignored. Lance Hewson and Jacky Martin addresses the same problem when he argues that

> one of the shortcomings of Translation Criticism as it is normally practised is precisely that the role of the TI [translation initiator] is never taken into consideration, and in cases where this is a preponderant role, the translation critic is operating without the key piece of information […]. (Hewson, Martin 1991, 217)

Concerning the approach of this paper, the grave differences between the translators, the circumstances of translation, as well as the source texts not only make it impossible but even pointless to approach each translation with the same set of questions: Features that are of central importance for one source text are completely irrelevant for another. Mirjam Appel is therefore right when she argues that a model for translation criticism can only be vague due to the dynamic nature of literary translation which defies systematization (2004, 42). This becomes evident when considering the translations by

Martens, Schrott, and Klotz: Seemingly small changes may have a greater effect on the translation of a poem of epic scale than that of a sequence of short poems such as *Midsummer*. The question in what ways characters change when transferring them from one language to another is only relevant for *Omeros*. In addition, each translator – by necessity or because of personal preferences – puts greater emphasis on one aspect or another of Walcott's poetry. My approach may thus be considered target-oriented in the Manipulation School's use of the term. Norbert Greiner writes:

> [Es] werden nicht alle *potentiellen* Übersetzungsprobleme des Ausgangstextes untersucht, um sie sodann mit ihrer mehr oder weniger gelungenen Übersetzung zu konfrontieren. Vielmehr werden umgekehrt nur solche Elemente des Ausgangstextes berücksichtigt, die sich anhand der entsprechenden Übersetzungslösung vom Zieltext her gesehen als *tatsächliche* Probleme erwiesen haben. (2004, 61f.)

Greiner observes a shift from translation criticism ("Übersetzungs*kritik*") towards translation comparison ("Übersetzungs*vergleich*") that was initiated by Holmes (ibid, 56). It is the latter conception that is the underlying principle of my analyses. In this connection, two concepts found in translation theory are crucial: The realization that "any TT can only be one of many possible variations in a vast paraphrastic set" (Hewson, Martin 1991, 217) and the aim to describe differences between the source text and the target text in a non-judgemental way. According to Armin P. Frank, this is "the best *evaluation* of a translation" (qtd. in Baumann 1995, 342)[8]. The differences that I will point out in the course of this paper are thus not meant to be classified as mistakes or examples of an unsuccessful translation. Rather, they serve as a vehicle for discussing some of the myriad difficulties that arise in the course of translating poetry as well as the range of options that a translator has to choose from.

The greatest challenge of an endeavour like this lies in the risk of getting lost in the sheer amount of disparate findings. Virtually all translation critics have to face this problem to which there is no simple solution. I am hoping to avoid the pitfalls by not only taking stock of individual findings but trying to point out tendencies. As the process of translation is complex and versatile, it is illusory to assume that one translator opts for a certain approach which he or she rigidly executes. The literary translator William Weaver makes it very clear when he describes the practice of translation as "something that is, most of the time, unconscious, instinctive" (1989, 117). Accordingly, the translator's "instinct will be guided by his knowledge of the author's work, by his reading in the period. It will almost certainly not be guided by any rules, even self-made ones." (ibid) Therefore, counterexamples can be found for almost any phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is possible to detect certain tendencies, preferences, or emphases that vary from one translator to another.

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[8] Armin Paul Frank. "Theories and Theory of Literary Translation." Joseph P. Strelka (ed.). *Literary Theory and Criticism: Festschrift Presented to René Wellek, Part I*. Bern/Frankfurt a. Main/New York: Lang, 203-221. 1984 and Armin P. Frank. "Towards a Cultural History of Literary Translation: An Exploration of Issues and Problems in Researching the Translational Exchange between the USA and Germany." *REAL* 4, 317-380. 1986.

Greiner raises an important point in this connection when he talks about the Manipulation School:

> Dabei ist es entscheidend, über den Mikrokontext von Abweichungen hinauszugehen, Profile solcher Abweichungen festzustellen und die daraus folgernde Verschiebung des 'Tons', der allgemeinen Textorganisation zu benennen. In diesem Zusammenhang geht es also um Abweichungen, die sich gewissermaßen wie ein roter Faden an den Längsachsen der Werke entlangziehen (ggfs. sogar durch das gesamte Oeuvre eines Autors) etwa in Form von Wortwiederholungen oder der Verwendung von Wörtern, die einem bestimmten Bereich entstammen. Erst aus dieser Gesamtschau kann sich ergeben, daß scheinbar völlig unproblematische Einzelheiten in einem Mikrokontext als erkennbares Übersetzungprofil auf der Längsachse ein entscheidendes Phänomen darstellen. (2004, 104f.)

In case of the three translations that constitute the corpus of this paper, Greiner's assertion gains importance in two respects: On the one hand, there is an array of words that recur throughout Walcott's oeuvre such as history, exile, and home, to name but a few. The very fact that his works have been rendered in German by different translators makes it much harder to account for this fact as each translator will be preoccupied with the translation of the work at hand as opposed to keeping in mind the whole of Walcott's works. One may assume that the most promising figure in this regard would be Martens who wrote an entry about Walcott's poetic oeuvre for a renowned literary encyclopaedia (1992, 355-357). On the other hand, the very concept of Martens's translation of poems taken from three different volumes raises the question in how far the selection itself alters the way in which Walcott is perceived in the German-speaking world.

I agree with Hewson and Martin who argue that a literary translation "starts to function as a text in its own right within the LC2 [i.e. the language-culture of the target text], independently of the ST" (1991, 217). Therefore, they strongly urge translation critics to assess both the source text and the target text "separately before attempting to compare [them]. Thus it is not a direct comparison of two texts which is carried out, but a relativized overview of two complete situations." (ibid) Uwe Baumann calls for a similar approach and adds that one must also consider the individual style of the translator and its influence on the translated text (1995, 341). Such an influence is most noticeable in the translation of *Midsummer* as Schrott is the most accomplished poet of the three translators who has also received a fair amount of critical attention. In addition, he has reflected extensively upon poetry and its translation. Therefore, I will consider his own writings in more depth than those of the other two translators.

With this study I want to contribute to a number of underexplored fields: Primarily, the three case studies explore in what ways individual poems, volumes of poetry, and, ultimately, an author's entire oeuvre may change in the course of translation from one "language culture" (Hewson, Martin 1991, e.g. 150) to another. In case of the bilingual edition *Midsummer/Mittsommer* I want to make some contribution to the study of this specific type of edition, if only by raising awareness or fostering interest in further exploration of this intriguing type of translation. I agree with Hewson that "[a] more

detailed study of existing [bilingual] editions would undoubtedly be highly fruitful for the further development of translation studies." (1993, 157) Finally, in case of Martens's translation into German, this study shall also fill part of the gap surrounding Walcott's earlier volumes of poetry *The Star-Apple Kingdom* and *The Fortunate Traveller*, for although they were among the first volumes to be turned to for translations into German and French they have not received much critical attention to date.

1.1 Walcott's poetry in Europe: An overview

In the early 1980s, Roger Straus of Farrar, Straus, and Giroux of New York contacted European publishers in order to raise awareness of Walcott's work on the Continent (King 2004, 396f.).[9] Talks with Suhrkamp in Frankfurt and Adelphi in Milan revealed that rights were divided between Walcott, Cape in London, and Straus's own publishing house. However, legal matters were not the only reasons why it was not easy to promote Walcott in Europe. As Bruce King explains, Walcott "was not a slogan maker, and his poetry was difficult to translate, the context unfamiliar" (2004, 480). Paul Breslin describes similar difficulties attempting to write about the poet's works:

> I quickly recognized that considerable study of Caribbean history, literature, and language would be necessary before I could hope to write intelligently about it. Even after years of research and travel, I still read through eyes that opened to different landscapes and ears long accustomed to other varieties of English, with a mind formed by life-long North American residence […]. (2005, 9)

What is difficult for a North American reader becomes the more problematic for a European one who is even more distanced from the source culture. Although King claims that "[a]fter 1988 interest would develop rapidly beyond the English-speaking world" (2004, 480), the *Index translationum* shows that by 1992 when Walcott was awarded the Nobel Prize apart from Martens's translation into German, only the Swedish volume *Vinterlampor* (1991) was available to a European readership (cf. www.unesco.org/xtrans). As the interest in Walcott's poetry increased, so did the demand to have his works available in translation. Currently, there are 48 volumes in total including translations into Chinese, Japanese, Slovenian, Estonian, Polish, and Hungarian (ibid).

King offers some insights into the problems that the translators encountered: The Dane Bo Green Jensen, according to King, "translated the verse as if it were American" as he lacked familiarity "with the Caribbean, and [was] afraid that West Indian idioms could not be put into Danish without sounding like provincial dialects" (2004, 546). The question of how to translate Creole and non-standard English has continued to create major problems for translators. In addition, King notes how translators from different nationalities prioritized different periods of Walcott's work: "The Dutch seemed addicted to Walcott's later work whereas the Germans and Italians seemed more inclined towards

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[9] Here and in the following cf. Bruce King. *Derek Walcott. A Caribbean Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. 396f. unless otherwise indicated.

the earlier writings." (2004, 542)[10] One may add the French to the second group as the first translation by the poet-translator Claire Malroux was of *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (*Le Royaume du fruit-étoile*, 1992) that in the original had appeared thirteen years earlier. By 2005, six more translations appeared in French mostly comprising earlier works by Walcott that had originally been published prior to 1985.[11] Four of them were done by Malroux who has been awarded with numerous prizes for her translations. Walcott himself greatly admires and appreciates her French versions of his poetry, not least for their tonal qualities (2006, 103). King considers "[h]er translations themselves works of art, sensitive towards language, hesitantly using some French Caribbean patois" (2004, 546).

For German readers only a few individual poems were available prior to Martens's book-length translation. The first publication was an abridged version of Walcott's "Letter to Margaret" which had originally been published in the Barbados based magazine *Bim* in 1950.[12] As early as 1954, Janheinz Jahn translated the poem for his anthology of modern African poetry *Schwarzer Orpheus. Moderne Dichtung afrikanischer Völker beider Hemisphären*.[13] In 1982, the literary magazine *Akzente*, affiliated with Hanser publishing house, printed four poems from *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (1979) in German translation.[14] However, these were isolated cases.

Walcott's first book of poetry in German appeared in 1989 with the selections made by Martens. Apart from "Koenig of the River," Martens included his own translation of the four poems previously published in *Akzente*. In 1993, the Swiss Coron Verlag published a limited edition for subscribers of the Nobel Prize Series under the title *Der Traum auf dem Affenberg*. This edition includes Martens's translations of Walcott's Nobel lecture, the early drama *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1968), as well as his selection of poems included in *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* some of which Martens had slightly revised for this later edition. In addition, the book includes Christoph Wagner's translation of the essay "What the Twilight Says."[15]

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[10] The first Italian translation was a selection from Walcott's *Collected Poems 1948-1984* published as *Mappa del nuovo mondo* (1992). In 1993 a book of two early plays – *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* (1958) and *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1970) were published under the title *Ti-Jean e i suoi fratelli. Sogno sul Monte della Scimmia*. Only with the turn of the Millenium did three more recent book-length poems by Walcott appear in Italian: *Prima Luce* (2001) (*The Bounty*, 1997), *Omeros* (2003), and *Il Lievro di Tiepolo* (2005) (*Tiepolo's Hound*, 2000).

[11] Among them are two bilingual editions and two plays: *The Fortunate Traveller* (1981) (*Heureux le voyageur*; 1993), *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* (1958) (*Ti Jean et ses frères*, 1997), *Sea Grapes* (1976) (*Raisins de mer*, 1999), *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1970) (*Rêve sur la montagne au singe*, 2000), *Another Life* (1973) (*Une autre vie*. 2002), and *The Arkansas Testament* (1985) (*La Lumière du Monde*, 2005) (cf. Raguet, 182; Stephens, 168).

[12] *Bim*, 3(12), Jun. 1950:343.

[13] The poem was reprinted in his extended second edition of the anthology published ten years after the first. In both editions, Jahn omits three stanzas in his translation entitled "Brief an Margarete" (Jahn 1954, 111f. and 1964, 208f.).

[14] These poems were "Auf den Virgin Islands" ("In the Virgins") and "Wald von Europa" ("Forest of Europe"), translated by Johannes Beilharz and "König vom Fluß" ("Koenig of the River") and "Sabbate, Westindien" ("Sabbaths, W.I."), translated by Michael Mundhenk. In the same year, the Swiss literary magazine *drehpunkt* published Klotz's translation of the first half of "The Star-Apple Kingdom" under the title "Das Stern-Apfelreich." In 1988 Martens's translation of the poem "Salsa" was published in *Lettre International*.

[15] In the same year, a second selection of Walcott's poetry made by Martens appeared under the title *Erzählungen von den Inseln*. Again, the title is misleading for the book of poetry does not correspond with

In the anonymous epilogue to the edition, Martens is referred to as *the* translator of Walcott in German ("Schlussbemerkung" 1993, 339). This ceased to be true only a year later when Schrott's translation of Walcott's *Midsummer* was published in *Akzente*. With that, the first translation of a complete work of Walcott's poetry was available in German, soon to be followed by the translation of *Omeros* by Konrad Klotz in 1995. Since German publishers are well aware that the readership of poetry is very limited, this sudden interest in publishing Walcott's poetry in German translation illustrates the impact of the Nobel Prize. However, even after the first enthusiasm ceased, Hanser has continuously published translations of Walcott's poetry.[16]

1.2 Translating poetry: Theory and approach

More than any other literary genre, poetry has been proclaimed to be untranslatable. What this usually refers to is the impossibility of reproducing *all* facets of a poem in another language. In this sense, Rainer Schulte is right when he declares, "no one translation can ever replace the original source-language text."[17] What distinguishes poetry from other genres, according to Appel, is the fact that the form of a poem plays a central role in conveying its meaning (2004, 29). This is precisely what makes its translation so difficult. Felix Philipp Ingold argues that having to account for formal aspects inevitably results in deficiencies on the level of meaning. Therefore, he continues, every translator of poetry has to choose between conveying either the message or the craftsmanship of form. That Ingold favours the latter becomes evident from his criticism of free-verse translations of closed-form poems. Ingold writes:

> Das Problem (und letztlich die Unstatthaftigkeit) dieses Verfahrens besteht darin, dass auf solche Weise nicht das Gedicht als ein Ganzes übersetzt wird, sondern lediglich – wie ein Prosatext – als eine lineare Abfolge von Wörtern und Sätzen. (2013, 14)

Similarly, Andreas F. Kelletat discusses the issue of form vs. content, often raised in connection with poetry translations. He finds that the central question is not whether formal characteristics are to be reconstructed, but rather to what extent. The lowest common denominator on this matter appears to be that the translator of a poem should aim at creating a text that readers will accept as poetry (1994, 149).

Currently, most translation theorists agree that the proper approach to translation criticism is to consider the text as a whole as opposed to comparing singular aspects such as individual words. In accordance, Armin Paul Frank goes as far as arguing that the

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Walcott's sonnet sequence "Tales of the Islands" published as part of the volume *In a Green Night* in 1962, but is yet another compilation made up of the Nobel Lecture as well as selected poems from *Collected Poems: 1948 – 1984*.

[16] In 2001, Hanser published Schrott's *Mittsommer* as a revised bilingual edition, the first of three bilingual *en face* editions to date, namely Daniel Göske's *Der verlorene Sohn* (2007) (*The Prodigal*, 2004) and Werner von Koppenfels's *Weiße Reiher* (2012) (*White Egrets*, 2010). The latter won both the translator and the author the poetry award of the city of Münster (*Lyrikpreis der Stadt Münster*) in 2013.

[17] Rainer Schulte. "Translation Methodologies: Re-creative Dynamics in Literature and the Humanities." *Literaturübersetzen: Englisch. Entwürfe, Erkenntnisse, Erfahrungen*. Ed. Herwig Friedl, Albert-Reiner Glaap, Klaus Peter Müller. Transfer. Düsseldorfer Materialien zur Literaturübersetzung. Ser. 4. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1992. 113.

respect for the achievement of a translator forbids one to consider single passages in isolation (1992, 87). Greiner feels just as strongly about this issue. He argues that a theory that considers technical and systemic possibilities of individual elements of language in the context of literary texts misunderstands the very nature of literary texts and the function of specific elements therein (2004, 11). Schulte uses the metaphor of translation as transplantation to illustrate his position: "Translation means to transplant situations rather than words from language to language." (1992, 106) In order to support his argument he adds that "[n]o word means the same thing to two different people" and contemplates the word "culture" as an example: "In the mind of a biologist, 'culture' might be visualized as something that grows in the refrigerator; this is certainly not the first connotation that comes to the mind of a humanist." (ibid) In this case, Schulte's terminology is not quite correct; what he refers to as "connotation" is really polysemy. Usually, however, polysemy does not cause any problems since the meaning is unequivocal in the specific context of a text. Although there are also instances of deliberate ambiguity, this is not what Schulte refers to.

Schulte is right, though, that one word can have different connotations depending on the cultural and personal background. Various theorists even go as far as pointing out that equivalence does not exist between two words in two different languages (cf. Appel 2004, 39; Hesse 2004, 288f.). The prime translator of Ezra Pound into German, Eva Hesse, uses the example of the word for forest in her mother tongue and in Italian. She argues that to German readers, *Wald* conjures up images of a specific type of forest as well as associations with Eichendorff and the Grimm Brothers. The Italian word *bosco*, on the other hand, brings to mind not only a uniquely Italian landscape but a different literary tradition, as well (2004, 288f.).

Klaus Reichert's stance seems most plausible. He considers word choice to be part of the complex semantic layers of a literary text (2003, 66). Before attempting to find an equivalent expression in the target language, he explains, the translator must consider all synonyms in the source language first: The question why the author chose the word "horrible" in a certain context as opposed to "dreadful" must be answered prior to translation. Reichert mentions rhythmical, tonal, as well as etymological questions that may all play an important role for the author's choice. In addition, the condensed language of poetry legitimates a reflection on the diction of its translation, as every word can count. Brodsky puts it thus: "With poets, the choice of word is invariably more telling than the story line." (2003, 35)

This becomes evident when comparing different versions of one poem at various stages of the writing process. Sometimes entire passages are revised or cut out completely by the poet, sometimes, however, only an individual word is substituted with another. In a corrected galley of poem XLI from *Midsummer* printed in *The Paris Review*, Walcott changes "Wild pigeons gurgle" to "Brown pigeons goose-step," "the stubble fields where the smoky cries/ of rooks were nearly human" to "when the smoky cries / [...] were nearly human," and "should I have broken my pen" to "would I have [...]" (Hirsch 1986, 196). Whereas the first changes add to the imagery pertaining to concentration camps in Nazi Germany which is the theme of the poem, Walcott's other alterations add precision. This

seems to be a tendency in the poet's revisions of *Midsummer*, as Ben Howard makes similar observations in his review of the volume. He claims that Walcott's "revisions […] point at once toward greater precision and toward an effect of casual speech." (1985, 155f.) Accordingly, there are cases where seemingly small changes "tune and sharpen the line" (ibid, 156). In another case, Howard notes how "the revision disrupts the regularity and balance of the original […] and the rhythmic agitation represents the choice for colloquialism over melody, speech over song." (ibid, 160f.)

Walcott himself talks about the choices he makes on a number of occasions. For example, he uses the word "epoch" because to him it is "a historical word, an aspect of time, and it has an archaic sound that is deliberated because any definition of time, any aspect of the definition of time is archaic and contains its finish." (Hamner 1993, 45) Walcott's talk "The Length of the Breath" held at a workshop on Créolité and Creolization offers further insight into the processes behind finding the *mot juste*:

> I have written here three words in French, for 'palm': palme. (You get the little thing at the end in French, p-a-l-m-E. […]) Then there is palmier and palmiste. Of all those words, the one that to me most resembles a palm is palmier. Because visually it has that extra curling of the fronds in the wind that makes that turn possible in the length of the line. Palme is short, it is botanical. Palmier has that extra thing with the wind. What happens? You make a choice among those words. You have right and access to any word as a writer, any word in the world. But ultimately what matters is what you feel is right for where you are. (2002/2003, 244)

These examples are not meant to prove the primacy of a literal translation. However, the importance of specific elements should not be underestimated, especially with regard to poetry translations. The argument that one must consider the work as a whole is too simplistic. For this 'whole' is essentially constituted of an intricate interplay of many singular aspects. Therefore, translation can be regarded a tightrope act. Nevertheless, a translation critic should avoid nit-picking which is best done by considering overall effects and potential tendencies of interpretation.

According to Albert-Reiner Glaap, the great difficulties of translations are essentially rooted in three criteria of literary texts: The structural aspects of the two different languages, cultural differences, and aesthetic qualities of a text. He argues that while it can be very difficult to translate an expression from one language into another, it is relatively easy to generate cultural knowledge. For Glaap it is the aesthetic quality that poses an almost insurmountable obstacle in literary translation (1992, 136). Such a hierarchical order appears to be rather simplistic. Considering the translation of *Omeros*, for instance, it is true that a translator will have to acquire substantial knowledge of the work's cultural context in order to understand certain implications of the text. However, one cannot expect the reader of a book-length poem by a Caribbean poet to engage in extensive research in order to understand the translation. The great difficulty for the translator is to convey cultural knowledge within the translated text. This is no lesser task than reproducing the aesthetic qualities of a poem especially when translating a poet from a

remote Caribbean island such as St Lucia. Therefore, this aspect deserves to be treated in some detail.

Although critics tend to agree with Glaap's assertion that the cultural context must be taken into consideration when translating a literary text, many are wary of an intuitive application of the term to imply a static homogenous system (Greiner 2004, 111) that describes a "stable reality" (Hewson, Martin 1991, 112). Greiner notes that the term 'culture' subsumes a variety of disparate phenomena as well as an array of individuals (2004, 111). To make the term applicable for their purposes, Hewson and Martin define culture as "a specific collection of features which have to be minutely examined in each Translation [sic] situation." (1991, 123)[18] Jean Boase-Beier looks at it from a reader's perspective when she argues that a "translation cannot possibly be a way of creating the same or similar contextual effects as the reader of the source text might have experienced." (2011, 157) Rather, target language readers must make greater efforts as they would ultimately "need all the knowledge of the [source] language and its idioms and history that the original reader needed." (ibid, 154) According to Boase Beier, the fact that the translated text is "more demanding than the original [is] one of the effects of what Venuti calls foreignization [and] especially relevant in the translation of poetry." (ibid, 158)

It is not difficult to see how this idea pertains to the translator who is, after all, first a reader. Elizabeth A. Wilson concisely describes the special demands on translators of Caribbean literature when she writes:

> Translators always have to make choices which are sensitive to the cultural context. In the case of Caribbean texts, the task can be daunting, for Caribbean culture […] is […] a complex of syncretisms. Every image, idea, cultural artifact, is overlaid with layers of accretions and resonances. […] In addition, we are dealing with texts, where […] the language 'moves seamlessly' between Creole and French or English and the translator needs to render the voices […] as faithfully as possible. (2000, 19)

The question of how to translate the cultural implications of Walcott's use of Creole is one that all translators have to face to a greater or lesser degree. Therefore, it shall serve to exemplify the particular cultural context of Walcott as a Caribbean poet.

St. Lucia was first settled by Frenchmen from neighbouring Martinique as early as 1650. Despite the fact that it changed hands between England and France fourteen times in total, French Creole established itself as the language of St. Lucia. Partially due to a lively contact with Martinique, this did not change when in 1814 the island finally came under British rule. Throughout the 19th century, French remained the official language of the courts and there was strong resistance to the imposition of English on the population. Since Standard English was the language of the classrooms, a gradual shift occurred "from a French-patois-like vernacular to a creolized English as [the] native language." (Holm 1989, 375) As the English language was crucial for a formal education, it also became an

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[18] In order to account for the fact that language and culture are inseparably connected, they use the terms "Language Culture" 1 and 2 as opposed to source language and target language ("A Note on the text").

important vehicle for social advancement. In the late 1980s it was mainly spoken as a second language on St. Lucia with an adult literacy rate in English of 36% (Holm 1989, 458).

Concerning the orthography of Creole in the Caribbean, the experience of French rule plays an important role in the language's representation on the page. In Haiti, for instance, the official orthography is made to obscure its resemblance with written French. Laurence A. Breiner illustrates this with the expression "for me" which in Haitian Creole is spelled "pou mwe" thus visually obscuring its link to French "pour moi" (2005, 30). Walcott feels a "very strong resentment" toward this way of writing Creole in which he detects a kind of "hostility" and "revenge" (2002/2003, 20). Like Breiner he argues that by applying this orthography the language itself is being politicized. Besides, Walcott simply dislikes the way it looks on the page. Considering that a complete linguistic structure is readily available, it appears absurd to him not to use it and create "hieroglyphics" instead, which he finds inadequate for representing the "subtleties and elegance" of spoken Creole (Walcott 1997/1998, 228f.). Walcott admits: "when I write Creole, I can't approximate the exact sound, but what I do know is the approximation of the subtleties that are there in the pronunciation of French Creole." (Walcott 2002/2003, 20) According to Breiner, what Walcott has long been interested in is neither the reproduction of speech in an ethnographically accurate way, nor in "mak[ing] it in some sense 'literary,'" but rather in finding a way to communicate "features of spoken creole while remaining readily comprehensible for any Anglophone reader." (2005, 34)

In the course of history, the definition of the term "Creole" has undergone a number of changes. As the Jamaican-born critic Stuart Hall explains, it originally referred to both white and black native-born people in contrast to Europeans who moved to the colonies and slaves who were brought there from Africa. As Hall explains, "[t]he essential distinction is between those from cultures imported from elsewhere and those rooted or grounded in the vernacular local space." (2003, 29) It was not until much later in history that the term acquired its current meaning of racial mixing. However, as Hall points out, "its primary meaning has always been about cultural, social, and linguistic mixing rather than about racial purity." (ibid, 30) In today's discourse the second meaning has been widely accepted. In addition, the term refers to a vast number of mixed languages. In St. Lucia, Commonwealth Antillean Creole French is spoken. John Holm explains that since "it has been influenced by its coexistence with English rather than French as the prestige language [...] there has been considerable lexical borrowing from English and Creole English." (1989, 371)

Charles W. Pollard describes creolization as a process which is inseparably connected to the Caribbean experience of colonization (2001). According to Hall,

[t]ranslation is an important way of thinking about creolization, because it always retains the traces of those elements which resist translation, which remain left-over, so to speak in lack or excess, and which constantly then return to trouble any effort to achieve total cultural closure. No translation achieves total equivalence, without trace or remainder. (2003, 32)

Hall considers three "presences" to be crucial for the process of creolization: "*présence africaine*, *présence européenne*, and *présence américaine*." (ibid, 32f.)[19] Suppressed for centuries, the African voice was forced to be expressed by indirect means only. This is what Henry Louis Gates Jr. sums up under the umbrella term "signifying," which includes strategies such as mimicry, evasion, and appropriation. Rather than being restricted to a geographical place, Hall's use of the term "*africaine*" includes other minorities like East Indians and the Chinese. What they all share is the "experience of dispossession." The European presence refers to the omnipresent voice of the colonizer. However, as Hall explains, this is no longer an external voice but has become somewhat "indigenous" to Caribbean societies, speaking from within. Due to the numerous origins of this voice – ranging from France and Britain over the Netherlands to Portugal and Spain – it is diverse itself. It is the third presence, "*présence américaine*," that Hall considers the most crucial element of creolization in its conception of the New World as a "primal scene" in which different worlds encounter each other. For this reason, the process of creolization leads to a sense of identification with multiple cultural sources. What comes out of it is something unique for it is "neither indigenous to the region nor identical with its counterpart in a culture of origin." (Pollard 2001) Walcott believes that through creolization unique art forms like the calypso were created that "originated in imitation […] and ended in invention" (1974, 9).

Greiner observes how any author is part of a specific cultural discourse; accordingly, readers who are part of the same cultural discourse as the author will perceive a text differently than readers who are part of another cultural discourse and rely on the translator as mediator (2004, 28). In the specific case of translations of Caribbean texts, Wilson notes that "[a] translator's choices may be influenced by [his / her] access to 'creole' and creole usage" (2000, 19). Considering Walcott's poetry, however, it is difficult to define precisely who those readers are that share his discourse experience. Lise Winer questions whether "Creole writers and English readers [can] be considered part of the same literary discourse community" (1999, 391). Winer knows from experience that because "English readers often do not recognize Creole features in Caribbean texts, they often do not understand the text, and yet, by virtue of the nature of the Creole/English overlap, often do not realize that they do not understand it." (ibid, 394)[20]

Walcott's rootedness in the Creole environment of the Caribbean is but one aspect that may cause difficulties for his readers. Stewart Brown conveys an even more complicated picture of the poet when he writes:

> The particular and peculiar circumstances of Walcott's work […] demand careful contextualisation if its achievement is seriously to be assessed and understood. But which contexts? Walcott's work *is*, now, part of that International Hyperculture; he takes jets between continents as easily as he once took the row-boat ferry across Castries harbour. So to understand the poems in *The Arkansas Testament* and *Omeros*

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[19] Here and in the following cf. Hall 2003, 32f. unless otherwise indicated.
[20] An experiment involving undergraduate students who got the assignment to interpret a part of Walcott's poem "The Spoiler's Return" proved that "inadequate cultural background schema" paired with a "lack of suspicion of English-appearing words led to frequent misinterpretations" (Winer 1999, 397).

> [...] it is crucial to have some sense of where the poet has come from, and how; not just biographically but in terms of the Caribbean's social and cultural history. (1991, 7f.)

Therefore, it is of equal importance to consider the literary tradition(s) in which Walcott's craft developed and in which he places his poetic oeuvre. Hans-Wolfgang Schneiders argues that it is crucial to view a source language text in light of the literary tradition out of which it evolves and which is not always easily transplanted into the target language (2007, 150). According to Pollard, writers and critics alike often reduce postcolonial literature to an act of "stripping away [...] colonial Eurocentrism, including the principles of modernism, to revive indigenous cultural expressions." (2001) Such simplifications, he continues, are rejected by Walcott who instead fuses in his writing the various influences that have shaped the Caribbean: "the myths and histories of Europe, Africa, and the New World." (ibid) Hence, Walcott explains in a 1993 interview with Hall that "a West Indian writer can have resources that are Homeric and Dantesque at the same time but they remain within an oral tradition, within a shape that is really West Indian." (qtd. in Fumagalli 2001, 223)[21]

A translator of Walcott thus has to consider a number of very different traditions. In his Presentation Speech to the Nobel Prize, Kjell Espmark talks about what Walcott himself once called "the mulatto of style" (qtd. in Espmark 1997):

> Walcott's art arises from the crossing of two greatly differing traditions, the first a tradition he allowed himself to be adopted by, the European lineage from Homer via Dante, the Elizabethans, and Milton to Auden and Dylan Thomas, an elaborate tradition discernible in lavish metaphor and luxurious sound and rhythm, the second a domestic ageless tradition, an elementary language [...]. (ibid)

These two traditions are the ones most commonly acknowledged by critics, and Walcott himself writes in an essay: "[M]ongrel as I am, something prickles in me when I see the word Ashanti as with the word Warwickshire, [...] both baptizing this neither proud nor ashamed bastard, this hybrid, this West Indian." (1971, 10) Accordingly, Breslin argues that in *Omeros* "the wanderings of Gilgamesh" (296) are conjured up in one breath with Homer's *Iliad* despite the great gulf that separates them in terms of "language, time, and cultural tradition." (2001, 269) In an interview, Walcott explains that having received a Western education, he was "brought up with these associations" which you cannot avoid. His knowledge of Greek culture, he claims, "has really been one of echoes" in his head (Sampietro 1992/93).

At the same time, Walcott implies a sense of disconnectedness from this tradition when he poses the question: "How could I wish to join a classical tradition when where I was had nothing to do with the vegetation, people or anything remotely referential to Greece or Rome?" (Brown, Johnson 1996, 181) At first sight, this may seem contradictory in light of Walcott's apparent preference for 'established' traditions, however, he is not

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[21] Interview with Stuart Hall. "Derek Walcott: Poet of the Island." Arena (BBC2; January 1993).

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afraid to break with conventions in order to breathe new life into a genre like the epic that many writers and critics alike consider outdated. As Robert D. Hamner puts it, "the recycling of conventional influences and the intermeshing of real life with literary tropes on the written page" (1997, 166) is part of the intertextual method that Walcott applies in *Omeros*. Of the primary texts discussed in this paper, references to African traditions feature most prominently in *Omeros* where they appear in various different shapes.[22]

Apart from cultural aspects, Glaap mentions structural differences between two languages that may impact the translated text significantly. Monika Doherty writes about this topic in much detail (1997, 81-101).[23] She points to the fact that prior to analyzing the specifics of an author's style one needs to be aware of the grammatical sentence structure of the source language. For instance, Doherty illustrates with numerous examples that in English the verbal head of a sentence is preferably at the beginning, whereas in German it is placed at the end. Therefore, in the first case, the verbal phrase branches out to the right, in the second case to the left. Along with this physical distance between the verb and its complements comes a certain hierarchy: The further away from the verbal head an element is positioned, the less important it appears. The difficulty is that in English the most relevant part of the sentence usually stands at the beginning of a sentence, whereas in German it occurs in the final position. If an author writing in English bends the syntax to create a certain effect, this would go unnoticed by a German reader unless the translator readjusts the word order, eliminates parts of a sentence or extends it in order to compensate for the structural differences.

Other structural differences between English and German pose special difficulties for translators of poetry: Whereas in English, two-word compounds are encountered most frequently, it is not unusual in German to conjoin more than two words to form a compound (cf. Fromkin, Rodman 1998, 84ff.). An additional challenge is that German is a polysyllabic language. One example from Walcott's *Midsummer* LI shall suffice to illustrate this point: A literal translation of "saucer-eyed mandrills" (71) would be "untertassenaugige Mandrille." Five syllables in English would thus translate into ten syllables in German which affects the metre. In addition, participles are much more common in English than in German. Therefore, this translation might draw more attention to the phrase than is the case in the source text. To avoid this, one may consider the compound "Untertassenaugen-Mandrille." However, the poetic effect of this translation is rather dubious. Schrott opts for a different solution when he translates the phrase as a simile in "mandrille mit augen wie untertassen" (127). Regarding rhythm, the superiority

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[22] Baugh observes that when Walcott makes such references, "the connotations are always of the admirable." (2006, 190) One example is the storytelling aspect that originates in the predominantly oral tradition of the African culture and gains special importance. In his essay "Reflections on *Omeros*," Walcott writes: "What remains in the Caribbean, and in Caribbean fiction, is the human element of telling a story. […] I think that contemporary culture has absolutely lost the idea of narration." (1997, 240) Baugh detects the "storytelling mode […] throughout the poem, in the voice of one character or another" (2006, 190) while Pollard considers Seven Seas "a blind Afro-Caribbean character who serves as a New World 'folk' figure of tradition." (2001) In addition, the griot's "prophetic song / of sorrow" (148) also alludes to the storytelling tradition and what first appears like an oral performance of the history of the Caribbean people also resembles a creation myth typical for native peoples: "So there went the Ashanti one way, the Mandingo another, / the Ibo another, the Guinea. Now each man was a nation / in himself, without mother, father, brother" (149).

[23] Here and in the following cf. Doherty 1997, 81-101 unless otherwise indicated.

of Schrott's choice is obvious. One may also argue that reproducing the participle in German emphasizes the text's foreignness. In her review of Schrott's translation, Hannelore Schlaffer even argues:

> Die deutsche Lyrik vertrüge gelegentlich Partizipialkonstruktionen, die dem Englischen geläufig sind, zumal wenn es sich um das Genre der Hymne handelt, dem Walcotts Texte nahestehen. Schrott hätte sich manche Schwerfälligkeit ersparen und manche lange Zeile kürzen können. (2001, 14)

A different case in point is Walcott's verbal use of nouns. Jessica Stephens discusses the French translation of *Another Life* by Claire Malroux in some detail. One difficulty that Malroux had to face was rendering the phrase "rivering afternoon" into French. Stephens concludes:

> La traduction, quant à elle, ne peut qu'araser le sens kaléidoscopique de l'original […]. La syntaxe française paraît moins souple que la syntaxe anglaise qui, elle, se prête beaucoup plus aisément à la recatégorisation grammaticale. Ici encore, la langue d'accueil n'a pas les ressources pour accueillir l'autre et ne peut que tâtonner vers lui. (2012, 178)

What holds for the French translation of *Another Life* also applies to varying degrees to all translations discussed in this paper since the verbal use of nouns is a common practice in Walcott's poetry. Schrott still remembers the difficulties he encountered trying to find an adequate translation for the final line of XVIII in which Walcott describes "the painter with easel rifled on his shoulder" (28).[24]

In case of Klotz's translation of *Omeros*, the polysyllabic nature of the German language appears to have had a significant effect on the poem's metre. In an interview, Walcott rather casually describes the rough hexameter of *Omeros* as a "Homeric kind of measure," its rhyme scheme as "a Dantesque thing of the terza-rima design."[25] King observes that the poem's "rhythm is based on trochaic hexameter, six feet to a line, usually two-syllable feet, with a stress and unstressed syllable, or two stresses at times." (2004, 516) Edward Baugh attests Walcott a "bent for blending tradition and innovation" that becomes evident in the flexibility with which the poet applies "the chosen forms, relaxing them to the inflections of the modern speaking voice." (2006, 188) Accordingly, Breslin writes that at times Walcott's lines contract to "loose pentameter," on occasion even to "accentual tetrameter." (2001, 245) In this way, he continues, the poet creates an intricate blend of Homeric and Shakespearean metre. In Neil Roberts's view, Walcott's "choice of iambic hexameter simultaneously imitates and creatively departs from the examples of both classical and Miltonic epic metre." (2002-2003, 273) Brad Leithauser devotes the greater portion of his five-page essay on *Omeros* on its rhyme and metre. He concludes "that any systematic attempt to read the poem metrically […] must end in frustration.

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[24] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.
[25] Here and in the following cf. Sampietro. "Derek Walcott on *Omeros*: An Interview." 02 May 2008.
<http://users.unimi.it/caribana/OnOmeros.html>

There are simply too many uncertain feet, extra stresses, ambiguous emphases, and so forth […].” (1991, 93f.)

Asked about his reasons for choosing the hexameter instead of the pentameter for writing *Omeros* although the latter is traditionally *the* English metre of epic poems, Walcott explains that although he does not know Greek, he feels that Homer’s epic lines are more relaxed and allow more space for action. Since he was looking for a metre that would give him “a kind of prosaic space […] for the action of the narration,” the hexameter felt more appropriate. Moreover, Walcott was hoping to reduce the poem’s “epic echo” by choosing a hexametrical line instead. Finally, he imagined it to be “very difficult to navigate banality in the pentameter” which, in his view, tends to over-emphasize ordinary things (Sampietro 1992/93).

Since the German Homer translations by Johann Heinrich Voß, the hexameter has become inseparably connected with the epic tradition (cf. Reichert 2003, 32). Although Klotz uses an even more flexible line that is often dactylic, Leonore Schwartz finds the rhythm of the hexameters tiring at times (1995). As Jürgen Theobaldy points out correctly, it is mainly the polysyllabic nature of the German language that makes this adaptation necessary (“Nirgends” 1995). Essential linguistic differences between the two languages may impact the task of the translator as the following example illustrates. In the chapter preceding Achille’s spiritual journey to his African roots, the fisherman is disillusioned because Helen left him in favour of Hector. Being out at sea fishing soothes his pain caused by the belief that he will not see Helen again. What is more is that his home is not on the island with Helen, but rather the sea itself is his home. Walcott emphasizes this fact by equating the sea with a garden:

Achille felt the rim
of the brimming morning being brought like a gift
by the handles of the headland. He was at home.

This was his garden. (126)

In his translation, Klotz emphasizes one particular aspect of being at home, namely that of feeling safe:

Achilles
Fühlte den überschäumenden Morgen, dargeboten wie
ein Geschenk an den Griffen des Festlandes. Hier war er sicher.

Dies war sein Garten. (133)

Although both versions suggest a relation of cause and effect, i.e. Achille/s is at home/is safe *because* the sea is his garden, a shift of meaning occurs. In the source text, the garden is Achille’s home much like the Garden of Eden was home to Adam and Eve. At the same time, it provides Achille with food as a cultivated garden does. In the target text, the garden is a place where Achilles is safe which implies that there are other places where this

is not the case. Connecting the garden with the concept of safety rather than that of home, Achilles becomes the owner of an enclosure in which external threats cannot harm him.

Considering the metrical pattern of this passage sheds light on the reasons for Klotz's choice. Walcott interrupts the loose anapest of the long rolling lines comprising the first sentence with the staccato pattern of the two short sentences that follow. Rendering the latter into polysyllabic German poses special difficulties. Klotz has to face the question whether to focus on the meaning or the structure. As in other instances Klotz favours rhythm over semantics. In addition, the caesura is more subtle in his translation because the stress pattern does not change but remains dactylic. According to Walcott, there is a difference between a caesura in a pentameter line and a hexameter line. He argues: "If you have caesuras in a pentameter they are very conspicuous, very audible rests. If you have caesuras in the hexameter, you can have two and nobody will notice […]." (1996, 19) In this light, Walcott's clipped, staccato sentences serve the function that the caesura alone would fulfil in other cases.

In Glaap's view, the most difficult part of translating literature is connected with the aesthetic qualities of the source text. Critics have repeatedly proclaimed aesthetic equivalence as a central aim of literary translation (cf. Munday 2008, 61f.; cf. Appel 2004, 30). On a similar note, Susan Bassnett-McGuire refers to Durišin according to whom literary translators are primarily "concerned with establishing equivalence of […] artistic procedures." (Bassnett-McGuire 1980, 28) There is an array of suggestions as to how and what kind of aesthetic equivalence may be achieved: Levý calls for the reproduction of features as varied as "denotative meaning, connotation, stylistic arrangement, syntax, sound repetition (rhythm, etc.), vowel length and articulation" to varying degrees "depend[ing] on the type of text" (Munday 2008, 62). Ingold mentions formal, tonal, and metaphorical qualities (2004, 236). Kelletat argues that it is the intricate interplay of form and content that makes for the substance of a poem (1994, 165f.). He is well aware that not all of these elements can ever be reproduced in one translation and that this suggestion would only confirm the postulate of the impossibility of translation (ibid, 155f.). Therefore, a central question is what aspects should feature more prominently than others.

Ingold refers to an intriguing observation made by Michail Gasparow, namely that translators are generally more inclined to render nouns faithfully while treating other parts of speech more freely (qtd. in Ingold 2004, 238). In Ingold's view, this confirms that there is a tendency to put greater emphasis on what a poem is about than on the way(s) in which a poem conveys what it is about. He criticizes the common practice among reviewers to encourage this approach by praising the semantic precision of a translation, ignoring the fact that it is achieved at the expense of formal qualities such as rhyme, assonance, or homophony (ibid, 238f.). Accordingly, Ingold concludes: "Die meisten Lyrikübersetzungen sind zu genau, um adäquat zu sein." (ibid, 239) Similarly, Weaver believes that he "must do more than convey information" because in his view, "[t]he words of the original are only the starting point" (1989, 117).

There seems to be general agreement that the task of the translator begins with reading and understanding the source text: As Schneiders puts it, the translator is 'simply'

expected to understand the text and rephrase it in another language (2007, 19). For Fred Lönker the translator's task is to adopt the foreignness of a text *as far as possible* through understanding it before presenting it to the target audience. This foreignness then has to be presented in the translation by means of one's own language, literature, and culture (1992, 50). Both Schneiders and Lönker emphasise the importance of *understanding* the source text prior to rendering it in another language. However, understanding is a rather vague and problematic term, for two people can 'understand' one text in very different ways. Kelletat makes the following suggestion to circumvent this problem: "Man wird vielleicht nicht von falscher und richtiger Lesart sprechen dürfen, aber wohl zumindest von prominenter und weniger prominenter." (1994, 163) The question remains when the process of understanding is completed. Especially with poems as complex and multi-facetted as Walcott's – but ideally with any literary text– one may gain new insights with every reading.

Ingold has a very different view on the issue. He claims that the reason why he does translations in the first place, is precisely in order to understand a text (2004, 220). Therefore, he argues: "Kein Text braucht verstanden zu werden, um übersetzbar zu sein. Lesen, was dasteht, die Schrift übersetzen, und nicht bloß, was dahintersteht, Bedeutung." (ibid, 218) He even goes as far as saying that a successful translation does not depend on understanding the source text, but the contrary is the case: "die gelungene Übersetzung nimmt auch Unverstandenes in die Zielsprache mit." (ibid, 220) As Kelletat points out, Ingold passes the task to create meaning back to the reader (1994, 161).[26] Nevertheless, Bassnett-McGuire is right when she argues that "every reading is an interpretation, the activities cannot be separated." (1980, 100) Accordingly, every translation both constitutes and requires an interpreting act of the translator. Frank goes even further when he argues: "Auf jeden Fall heißt Literatur übersetzen nicht Sprache, auch nicht Text übersetzen, sondern eine – wenn auch nicht unbedingt vorausbedachte und kohärente – Interpretation eines literarischen Werks"[27] (1989, 5 qtd. in Baumann 1995, 342).

The question remains to what extent translators may alter the source text according to their personal reading. Boase-Beier is correct to point out that "[a] translation is always the translator's interpretation and different translators will see different aspects as important." (2011, 153) This becomes evident when considering the three German translations of Walcott's poetry in this study. However, one must bear in mind that in practice the translator of a book of verse may (have to) consider different aspects as important depending on the individual poems. Reichert, for instance, states that he has no theory of translation (2003, 19). Instead, he has to continually revise a number of theoretical approaches in order to find solutions for individual translation problems. Reichert knows from experience as a translator of poetry that a certain method is valid only for the specific poem at hand. Once the task is completed, he must develop a different strategy for another poem (2003, 299).

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[26] Apparently, Ingold had originally made this claim much earlier, but reconfirms it in his 2004 essay.
[27] Frank, Armin P. *Die literarische Übersetzung. Der lange Schatten kurzer Geschichten. Amerikanische Kurzprosa in deutschen Übersetzungen*. Berlin: Schmidt, 1989.

For Schneiders part of the translator's task is to consider whether a certain passage might provoke rejection and disapproval or produce disturbing associations in the reader of the translation (2007, 171f.). This is what he refers to as 'anticipatory interpretation' ("vorgreifende Interpretation"). It also pertains to such simple cases in which one language requires more precision than the other. The German word "Schraube," for example, has two corresponding words in English namely "screw" and "bolt" (ibid, 185). In a translation from German into English, one would therefore have to consider the differences between the terms in the target language and choose the appropriate one. Andreas Wittbrodt points to yet another form of interpreting translation which he calls explanatory substitution ("erklärende Ersetzungen") (1995, 51). He uses the examples of translating the word "ville" with "Paris" or the title of Baudelaire's poem *Parfum Exotique* with the German translation *Duft der Ferne*. Especially in Klotz's translation of *Omeros* numerous examples of this approach are discernible.[28]

Venuti puts much emphasis on the need for an "awareness [of] competing interpretations," both from the translator and the translation critic and argues that "formal or semantic correspondences […] are subject to the exigencies of an interpretive labor that is decisively determined by the translating language and culture." (2008, 112) Radegundis Stolze shares this focus on the translator as mediator when she argues that the very nature of reflecting the act of translating must be done from the translator's point of view. In her opinion, the translator has a special responsibility of being faithful towards the source text and the target reader alike (2008, 207).

Greiner is more cautious about applying the term 'interpretation' to translations. He makes an important distinction between interpretations the way they are conducted in the field of literary studies and translations in the sense of interpretation: Whereas the former category is more analytical and conscious, the aim of the latter is to be considered as a piece of art in its own right. Greiner agrees with Horst Turk that studying translations with this distinction in mind bears the unique opportunity to observe the contact ("eine Berührung") between two languages, literatures, and cultures (Greiner 2004, 106). He observes that literary translations have not been sufficiently studied from this vantage point although this would offer unique insights beyond those currently discussed within the academic discourse ("Fachdiskurs") of the source culture (ibid).

Poet translators

A moot point among critics remains whether only poets should translate poetry. Kelletat agrees with Vlavianos that although in theory the assertion is right, in practice poets are rarely good translators. In Vlavianos's definition, a good translator is one who aims at recreating a poem analogous to but not identical with the source poem; poet translators, on the other hand, use the source poem as a springboard for writing a poem of their own (qtd. in Kelletat 2011, 235)[29]. Similarly, Yves Bonnefoy is convinced that a

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[28] For instance, he renders "lantern" (143) as "Leuchtturm" (150), "every moonlight" (154) as "jede Nacht" (161), and "shocks of power" that do not "find a just horizon" (155) as "nie fanden die Machtkämpfe ein Gleichgewicht" (163).

[29] Vlavianos 2003, 160. Gregor Laschen (ed.): *Königs Schiffe vor Eden. "Poesie der Nachbarn - Dichter übersetzen Dichter." Bilder und Blüthenstaub [sic] vom Übersetzen 1988-2003*. Bremerhaven, 2003. 159-161.

translator who "is himself a writer […] will be unable to keep his translating separate from his own work." (1992, 189) Joachim Latacz arrives at the conclusion that a poet's creativity results in a lack of precision, whereas the precision of a professor who translates poetry mars its lyricism (2006, 361).

Although Ingold describes the different approaches of poet translators and what he terms professional translators in very much the same terms as Vlavianos, he favours poet translators who rather than rendering what they understand of the source text, move beyond the level of meaning to recreate the poem as a complex entity as well as the genesis of the source text (2004, 235f.). It is for these very reasons that Schrott – who is poet, translator, and academic all in one – greatly appreciates it when another poet translates his own work. Schrott puts much emphasis on the formal aspects of a poem, especially on rhyme, even when it does not feature prominently at first sight. He once said about an English translation of his volume of poetry entitled *Tropen*:

> Auf den ersten Blick wirkt nichts gereimt, aber in Wirklichkeit ist das alles streng durchkomponiert. […] Aber es ist etwas ganz anderes, dann eine Form übersetzt zu sehen, bei der beispielsweise diese spezielle Art von Reim erkannt und auch angewendet wird. Oder wenn ich merke, der Übersetzer hat das Bild dahinter schon begriffen, benützt nur etwas andere Worte. Oder er hat den Tonfall begriffen […]. Und dann ist es egal, was das für Worte auf Englisch sind. (Schrott and Böhlau 2009, 431f.)

At the same time Schrott is aware that it is this very type of translation that critics are most likely to label as 'wrong' (ibid, 432).

Jörn Albrecht thinks that yet another difference between author-translators and what he terms 'ordinary translators' ("gewöhnlichem Übersetzer") is their motivation: In contrast to the latter, he claims that authors follow a calling when they translate literature and argues that unless they do so for financial reasons, they get to choose the source texts according to their personal preferences. Professional translators who have to earn a living with their craft have no such freedom of choice. Instead, they must accept any offer made by a publisher, regardless of their literary taste (Albrecht 2008, 54). Such a black-and-white distinction is problematic for numerous reasons: For once, it does not account for the vast array of socio-economic situations in which individual translators find themselves. In addition, it is unlikely that professional translators consider their work merely as bread-and-butter jobs. On the contrary, one must wonder what motivates them to invest a great deal of effort in their work when literary translations are time consuming, underappreciated, and generally poorly paid. Accordingly, few translators can rely on this profession as the sole source of income. Moreover, at least in case of poetry it is common for translators to approach publishers with their translations much like authors do with their manuscripts.[30] Therefore, they have the same freedom of choice that Albrecht assumes only author-translators have.

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[30] Private conversation with Hans Jürgen Balmes on 27 Mar. 2014.

Walcott on translation

Walcott has some experience with literary translations himself. Once he even attempted to translate his own lines into Creole, but soon had to give up the endeavour because he lacked sufficient knowledge of the language and was unable to rhyme in it. When he turned to French instead, he made an astonishing discovery: "I did one stanza, and what happened was the translation was not the same metaphor. It was a totally different, surprising metaphor. It was an ecstatic experience." (2002/2003, 243f.) Years earlier, Walcott was assigned the task of adapting Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla* (*The Joker of Seville*) by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Walcott describes his initial struggles thus:

> When I began to do it, I saw what I had ahead of me. I saw that I would be doing, perhaps, a line for line translation. But I didn't think that that was what [I really ought to be doing]. [...] I used to do some translations; I took some sections of a speech by Tirso and began to adapt very painfully, actually trying to translate the Spanish and going way off. And I just felt that that was going to be a waste of time, because if they wanted somebody to do an adaptation, they should have got someone who knew Spanish. (1986, 9)

It was neither content nor language that was of central importance for Walcott, but rather the structure and metre of the play which he considered "as a poem principally [as it] goes in alternating lines on an eight-foot beat." (ibid, 10) Accounting for this structure in another language was the real challenge. As Walcott puts it: "It's when you try to do it in translation that you really get into a lot of sweat." (ibid)

Walcott decided in favour of a reinterpretation of the play. The freedom he took in adapting it making numerous additions caused his audiences some discomfort. Walcott responded to this unease by explaining that "any playwright is paying homage [...] to the original text by admitting or realising how much it generates his own adaptation of it." (ibid, 8) Hamner argues that Walcott's admission "suggests that the translator's version may either pretend to superior originality, or as he prefers, it might add unanticipated dimensions to a text." (2002-2003, 225) A review of Brodsky's book *To Urania* by Walcott underlines this point when he writes that there is a "benign envy which all poets have for the great poets of a different language, and this admiration may be perpetuated through memory, through recitation, through translation [...]." (1988/1998, 138) Walcott's preference for translation as reinterpretation also becomes evident in his comments on the works of other poets and translators. In an interview with Robert Brown and Cheryl Johnson, Walcott admiringly says about his friend Brodsky's self-translations: "In a translation, [he] is willing to change a metaphor for the rhyme. That's very gutsy." (Brown, Johnson 1996, 188)

The most important quality for Walcott, however, is the tone of a poem. This is what he praises about the translations of much of his poetry by the French poet Claire Malroux, and adds: "The test of a translation, I think, is tone, not even accuracy, or [else, it would be] a rhythmic type of accuracy." (2006, 103) Talking about an English translation of a poem by Aimé Césaire, Walcott elaborates on the difficulty of tonally adapting its

beginning 'Au bout du petit matin' to English. He argues that the result would have to be "West Indian in melody." (ibid) Therefore you could not merely translate it into Standard English because you would not get the "tone of saying" it.

Pretextual aspects of translations

The circumstances of a translation should not be underestimated when assessing the target text itself. Venuti stresses this point when he observes that translators are under pressure of norms, which "are always housed in the social institutions where translations are produced and enlisted in cultural and political agendas." [31] (qtd. in Munday 2008, 143) According to Munday, such social institutions include first and foremost "publishers and editors who choose the works and commission the translations, pay the translators" (ibid). Similarly, Martens is well aware of the importance of "pre-textual" aspects of translations including "socio-economic issues" (1991, 225) as they may well impact the quality of a translation. Although his 1991 case study is about the working practices of a publisher in the beginning of the 20th century, Martens points out that the situation of the translator has not changed significantly. He quotes the following passage from a letter by J.C.C. Bruns publishing to Huber who had done numerous translations from French:

> Work for "honor", "free copies", plus "a little premium" is what Bruns had offered Huber. This, to be sure, is also what a host of publishers today – whether foregoing a contract entirely, offering one on these terms, or paying a flat fee and denying royalties – pay to students or unemployed academics or housewives in need of some additional pin money for the difficult job of translation. (ibid, 236)

Hence, Martens pleads against discussing and critiquing translations solely from the perspective of literary studies (ibid, 237). He predicts that the circumstances of translations will "eventually […] turn out to be too fundamental to criticism of literary translation to be passed over easily" (ibid, 227). Martens names three reasons for the lack of research in this particular field: "written records, if they exist at all, are hard to come by[,] relatively recent correspondence and business files may still be considered 'sensitive' [and] older files have often been destroyed." (ibid)

I can certainly confirm the first and last points: At Hanser, if any contractual agreements were made concerning specifics of a translation, they were made verbally between Michael Krüger and the individual translator. Older files such as correspondences between the editor and the translator have not been archived. However, both Krüger and Balmes were open to any questions about the publishing processes and readily supplied anything they could remember of their work with the different translators. The same holds for Raoul Schrott who immediately suggested talking on the phone about his translation of *Midsummer*.[32] Both Schrott and Martens seemed to remember the circumstances of their

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[31] Lawrence Venuti. *The Scandals of Translation. Towards an Ethics of Difference*. London, New York: Routledge, 1998. 29.
[32] Unfortunately, Martens himself proved to be the least cooperative in supplying information on pre-textual aspects of his 1989 translation *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*. He kindly but firmly dismissed my enquiry replying that he had written all there is to know about the issues I was interested in. E-mail to the author. 10 June 2013.

translations very well, although at the time of my enquiry 19 and 24 years had elapsed, respectively.

Occasionally, the information I received was contradictory: Whereas Balmes says that additional expenses of a bilingual edition are negligible in most cases,[33] Krüger claims that Martens's translation was not published as an entirely bilingual edition because this would have increased the costs of production.[34] According to Munday, this is something that Toury anticipates: "Toury […] warns that explicit comments from participants in the translation process need to be treated with circumspection since they may be biased" (2008, 149). Nevertheless, Munday suggests that "such comments are at best a significant indication of working practices; at worst they at least reveal what the participants feel they ought to be doing." (ibid)

Only two years after Martens's case study, Hewson publishes his essay on the specific case of bilingual editions in translation studies in which he acknowledges the central role of the publisher:

> [I]t is important to stress that any consideration of the bilingual edition must, necessarily, take into account the publisher's position as one of the key variables in the translation process, not just in the presentation of the edition, but also in the actual content – notes, introduction, new translation, modification of existing translation. (1993, 143f.)

This would certainly be an interesting point to consider when discussing Schrott's translation of *Midsummer* as it was originally published as what Hewson refers to as a "normal translation" (1993, 140). However, while it is possible to describe and interpret the changes and adjustments that were made in both the individual poems and the epilogue, it is very difficult to acquire information about the publishing process, let alone the intentions of the publisher. Hewson observes that the bilingual edition in general is an aspect of translation studies that has been largely ignored and requires more research to be conducted.

Generally speaking, a bilingual edition not only allows and calls for a special way of translating, but also a specific way of reading. Both aspects are inseparably intertwined. After all, the translator is first a reader and the same is true for the translation scholar. Both approach a text with their individual world knowledge. The interplay of these unique backgrounds can open up new vistas for the reader. However, bilingual editions are not published for academic purposes. The scholar who is interested in the differences between the source text and the target text will move back and forth between the two. Not so the assumed naïve reader who opens a bilingual edition for pure pleasure as a leisurely read. Hewson explains that in the English-speaking world the main purpose of such editions is to offer support for second-language learners (1993, 156). This is not the case in Germany where foreign language texts are available in monolingual editions, annotated with select vocabulary that second-language learners are unlikely to know. According to Balmes, a

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[33] Personal interview. 27 Mar. 2014.
[34] Telephone conversation. 19 May 2014.

decision in favour of a bilingual edition is often made for aesthetic reasons, as when Arabic writing appears next to a German text.

Balmes explains that essentially, there are two opposing views on this issue: On the one hand, bilingual editions may foster a superficial way of reading as those readers who know some English go back and forth between the English and the German text to compare the two, but read neither of them in a concentrated manner. On the other hand, a bilingual edition may provide more freedom for translators since their audiences are free to read the text in either one of the two languages.[35] In addition, Balmes knows translators who insist on having their translation published in a monolingual edition, while others insist on a bilingual edition. Hesse is of the opinion that publishing poetry in a bilingual edition only serves to validate the theory that translating poetry is impossible (2004, 288). Hewson takes on the perspective of a target language reader who will respond differently to a monolingual translation and a bilingual edition. According to him, the former "takes its place among the vast production of texts in the second language-culture, finally to be indistinguishable from other texts and to become part of the work – perhaps even the classics – available in that language" whereas a reader of a bilingual edition "is constantly being reminded of [the text's] foreign origin, constantly being drawn back into its original system of representation" (1993, 155f.).

Reviews

Munday believes that "reviewers' comments indicate and to some extent determine how translations are read and received in the target culture." (2008, 143). Indeed, there are cases in which reviews hint at a certain attitude or prevailing expectations towards translations. Venuti, for instance, analyzes the types of adjectives that are used in reviews to describe a successful translation. In this way he illustrates that regardless of the genre, a translation is generally

> judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that […] the translation is not in fact a translation, but the "original." (2008, 1)[36]

Precisely this is the problem, though: A careful reading of numerous reviews of the translations discussed in this book reveals how difficult it is to discern whether critics' comments on specific features of the text, such as language use, for instance, refer to the source text or the target text. As Munday explains: "The TT is normally read as if the work had originally been written in the TL, the translator's contribution being almost completely overlooked." (2008, 154) He quotes Robert Coover according to whom the first things that are cut when publishers require reviews to be shortened "are usually the remarks about the

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[35] Personal interview. 27 Mar. 2014.
[36] Similarly, Kelletat writes: "An dem auch dank überzeugender Belege stringent argumentierenden Verriss der Biermannschen *Shakespeare-Sonette* lässt sich erkennen, wie unerbittlich derzeit die Maßstäbe der Übersetzungskritik in puncto Lyrik sein können, wie strikt die Forderung nach umfassender 'Treue' bzw. Äquivalenz zum 'Urtext' erhoben wird und wie das Wort 'Übersetzung' nur für jene interlingualen Neuschreibungen reserviert werden soll, die diesen Maximalforderungen zu entsprechen scheinen." (2011, 231)

translation."[37] (Munday 2008, 155) In Germany, the situation, as Hesse describes it, is hierarchical and authoritarian:

> ganz oben stehen die Dichter, kurz nach ihnen kommen die Denker – Essayisten, Sprachwissenschaftler und Theoretiker, die den Text für alle anderen erklären und auslegen – ihnen nachgeordnet rangieren noch die Lektoren und Rezensenten, erst an letzter Stelle kommen die Übersetzer, die ihre Weisungen von allen anderen empfangen und das übergeordnete 'Ballett hinkender Hypothesen' (J. G. Hamann) fraglos zu akzeptieren haben." (2004, 292)

Kelletat confirms this attitude when he writes that no 'original poet' ("Original-Lyriker") would ever accept the normative restrictions that are propagated for translations of poetry in Germany to date (2011, 231).

Generally speaking, three kinds of reviews can be distinguished. First, there is the rather rare case of reviews that do not comment on or mention the translation whatsoever (e.g. von Bitter 1993). Technically speaking, they are not reviews of the translation, but rather of Walcott's work. Usually, these are the instances when one cannot decide unequivocally if they refer to the source text or the translated text. Next, there are reviews that briefly praise the translator in a general sweep, describe the translation as excellent, or as equally ingenious ("kongenial") as the original without providing any arguments for this claim. Quite frequently, these reviews first refer to the postulate of the untranslatability of poetry (Dean 1989; Dultz 1992; Binder 1998, 91; Müller 2001). Finally, there are those reviews that actually critique the translation in some detail. More often than not this kind of review culminates in a detailed discussion of translation mistakes, frequently after having pointed out how difficult an endeavour it is to translate Walcott's poetry. These mistakes range from typographical errors to critics' disagreement about the translation on the level of semantics. The tone of many such critiques conveys the impression that the reviewer is personally offended by the translator's incompetence. This is by far the most common type of review to be encountered in German newspapers.

Of course there are also overlaps of the different types. Thomas Poiss's review of the bilingual edition of *Midsummer/Mittsommer*, for example, is a combination of all three: Only in the last quarter of his review does he mention the translator. After briefly praising him in one sentence, he devotes the greater part of the paragraph to point out four mistakes only to conclude that Schrott managed to translate an untranslatable poetic masterpiece ("Wunderwerk der Dichtkunst") (2001). Another exception is Peter Hamm's review of Martens's translation. Hamm analyzes the translation of the title poem in much detail and quotes rather extensively, but avoids pointing out mistakes or making any statements about the quality of the translation (1992).

Once Walcott was awarded the Nobel Prize, German journalists had no choice but to comment on him. In this context, Martens's translation usually found mention since it was the only volume of Walcott's poetry that was available in German at the time. In these articles, the translation was either praised with a sweeping statement (Dultz 1992; von Lutz

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[37] Robert Coover. "On not reviewing translations: A critical exchange." *Translation Review*: 9. 16-23.

1992) or not at all commented on (Cerha 1992). In a few cases, Martens's name does not even get a mention (e.g. *h*ai 1992; Schmidt-Mühlisch 1992). Similarly, when the second book length translation by Martens appeared, critics mentioned the existence of the earlier translation.

At the time of publication of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* in 1989, however, critics did not pay much attention to it. The picture that the few reviews of the book convey is one of ambiguity: On the one hand, critics recognize how difficult an undertaking it is to translate Walcott's poetry; on the other hand, they devote the greater portion of their articles to criticize Martens's translation and pick out a few individual mistakes which they discuss in much detail. Henning Thies and Hugo Dittberner even go as far as offering alternative translations of specific passages in their reviews.[38] Nevertheless, Dittberner admits in the end that Martens manages to emphasize those qualities that account for Walcott's international acclaim (1989). Thies is less lenient when he concludes that only readers of the source text can really appreciate the tonal qualities and rich associations of Walcott's poetry. Therefore, he urges anyone who knows English well enough to read the source text as opposed to the translation (1989).

As with Martens's translation *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*, very few critics took notice of Schrott's first translation of Walcott's *Midsummer* (Lodron 1994; Braun 1994) although it appeared two years after the Nobel Prize. A plausible explanation seems to be the fact that it was published in a literary magazine. The revised version published as a bilingual edition with Hanser in 2001, received much more attention from critics. In addition, by this time Martens's second translation of select poems by Walcott had been published as well as Klotz's translation of *Omeros* both of which were reviewed extensively.

The bilingual edition was not well received by critics. Only Lothar Müller uses almost exclusively positive terms when he writes: "Raoul Schrott lässt sich keinen gelehrten Unterton des Originals entgehen, meidet Fremdworte nicht, versucht die beiläufigen Reimbildungen und Assonanzen nachzubilden." (2001) However, this is the only passage of his review in which he mentions the translation. In line with the common practice of granting that a translator deserves respect before discussing the flaws of the translation, Poiss writes: "Raoul Schrott verdient allen Respekt als Übersetzer, denn oft hat er für den rhythmischen und lautlichen Reichtum von Walcotts Versen kongeniale Entsprechungen gefunden." (2001) Without going into detail, Michael Braun notes: "Trotz einiger Übersetzer-Fehler und Ungenauigkeiten kommt man nicht umhin, dieses […] Gedicht ein literarisches Ereignis zu nennen." (1994)

Other reviewers strongly criticize Schrott's translation. Bruno von Lutz, for instance, contrasts Walcott's rhythmical opening line from *Midsummer* XXXIII with its

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[38] Accordingly, Thies has no tolerance for mistakes. When Martens translates "bodies of patriots" (50) as "Piratenkörper" (34), Thies categorizes this as a blatant mistake ("ein krasser Fehler") and adds: "Man möchte hoffen, daß es sich hier um einen Satzfehler handelt, den das Lektorat freilich getrost hätte entdecken dürfen" (1989). However, it is not unlikely that the mistake is the result of a misreading. In the same poem, Thies notices another mistake, but grants that compared with the above it is a question of nuances when Martens translates Walcott's "I am finished with praying" (51) as "ich habe genug gebetet" (34). Thies suggests "Ich habe vom Beten genug" (1998).

translation to show how Schrott's repetitive use of relative clauses and added words – in this case a verb – spoils the rhythmic quality (2002, 78). Moreover, von Lutz criticizes the complicated sentence structure of Schrott's translation and his tendency to make additions for no apparent reason except, possibly, for clarification (ibid). He does not hide his irritation, perhaps even anger, when he claims that readers of the translation will become increasingly annoyed with Schrott's commentating additions (ibid). Similarly, Schlaffer's ironic tone indicates how she, too, is downright enraged by the translation when she writes: "Durch einen aparten Gebrauch von Satzzeichen baut er [Schrott] eine zusätzliche Leseerschwernis in seine Übersetzung ein." (2001, 14) In Schlaffer's view, *Mittsommer* is not even a translation, but rather the proposal of one interpretation ("Interpretationsvorschlag") (ibid). Von Lutz's verdict is similarly devastating:

> Der Lesegenuss, der uns im Original geboten wird, ist in der deutschen Fassung Raoul Schrotts schnell zu Ende. Die Übersetzung ist oberflächlich bis schludrig, in ihren Formulierungen oft unnötig aufgeblasen und schlicht falsch. (2002, 78)

As if to answer to such critics, Schrott argues in a 2005 essay:

> Wollte man eine 'Kulturgeschichte des Fehlers' Schreiben, wird man schnell merken, daß es nur wenige gibt, aus zwei Gründen: zum einen beschäftigt man sich beim Übersetzen weit intensiver und länger mit dem Originaltext als jeder Feuilletonkritiker. Zum anderen aber gibt es auf keinem Gebiet, schon gar nicht auf dem der Philologie, eine eindeutige und ewig gültige Wahrheit; Fehler werden immer nur als solche apostrophiert, wenn man abweichende Meinungen oder Interpretationen damit meint: die Ketzerei, die man mit ihnen begangen sieht, ist stets das Spiegelbild eines Dogmas gewesen. Dogma und Poesie aber sind immer schon im Widerspruch zueinander gestanden. (2005, 84)

Indeed, one often gets the impression that reviewers tend to pay more attention than necessary to mistakes. Von Lutz, for example, rectifies: "Walcott ist […] ein Migrant (und nicht etwa ein 'Gastarbeiter', wie Raoul Schrott in einem Gedicht übersetzt)" (2002, 78). Poiss notices another mistake: "Die 'verzogenen söhne' (XXXVI) sind 'gespannte Bogen' ('drawn bows', nicht 'boys')" (2001).[39] Although the criticism is valid, the question is whether details about occasional mistakes need be discussed, especially considering the limited space available to reviews. One cannot help but wonder if they serve the rather questionable aim of illustrating how carefully the critic read and compared the target text and the source text. Ingold seems to be right when he observes that it is common practice among translation critics to categorically reject any deviation on the level of semantics. He sees two problems related to this practice: First, it means to ignore the fact that a translator may have made a conscious choice in favour of formal qualities such as rhyme, assonance, or homophony. Second, liberties that are the result of a more creative approach to translating poetry ("kreative Nachdichtungen") are often classified as arbitrariness or incompetence on behalf of the translator (2004, 239).

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[39] Schrott still gets upset when he thinks about this mistake that is based on a simple misreading: Instead of "drawn bows" (49) he kept reading "drawn boys." Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20.08.2013.

In case of Klotz's translation of *Omeros*, most critics rave about the result: One critic praises the translation for being stylistically appropriate ("stilsicher") (Spinnler 1996), another admires Klotz's achievements in recreating Walcott's casual rhyme scheme and concludes that the German version is a poem in its own right (Michalzik 1995). With similar enthusiasm, von Lutz praises the fluency of Klotz's translation. Although one may be tempted to interpret this as an indicator of the "translator's invisibility" in Venuti's use of the phrase[40], von Lutz adds that the translation pleasantly frees itself from the English text ("Die wirklich flüssige Übertragung ins Deutsche, die sich vom Englischen wohltuend freizumachen versteht") (1995). Nevertheless, he concludes that the translation is not perfect. Similarly, Joachim Sartorius grants that Klotz's translation is a remarkable tour de force before discussing some mistakes only to conclude: "Dies alles darf nicht den Blick auf eine äusserst konzentrierte Übersetzeranstrengung verstellen." (1995)

Poiss is less lenient in his verdict: After expressing his admiration for Klotz's loose adaptation of Walcott's tercets and for the way he only hints at the English Creole dialect by means of minor deviations from standard German, he utterly pans the translation. With a self-righteousness often to be observed among critics, Poiss discusses a number of 'mistakes' without giving Klotz the benefit of the doubt:

> Leider verspielt der Übersetzer seinen greifbar nahen Ruhm durch grobe Fahrlässigkeit. Diese beginnt bei barbarischer Morphologie ('infiszieren', 'lügte', 'reitete'; Verwechslung von 'betrug' mit 'betrog', von 'Schildern' mit 'Schilden'; 'Narzissen' als Plural von Narziß), geht über Unkenntnis von Fremdwörtern ('androgen' für 'androgyn'; 'la mariée' heißt 'Braut', nicht 'Brautjungfer') bis zu schlichter Unvertrautheit mit dem Text. (1995)

In an unpublished letter to Theobaldy, Klotz refers to the review as shattering ("niederschmetternd") and unjustified (1996). He regretfully acknowledges the fact that spelling mistakes found their way into the book although they had been corrected in the galley proofs. Unfortunately, he adds, these things happened when working under pressure. Klotz feels inclined to reply to Poiss's review with a witty riposte entitled "Poetische Lizenzen. Was heißt eigentlich barbarische Morphologie?"[41] After an ironic opening in which he 'admits' that in the 2400 verses of *Omeros* there are indeed three lines containing 'faulty' conjugations of verbs, he argues that what Poiss refers to as 'barbaric morphology' is actually a creative way of using language that is characteristic of poetry. To underline his point he quotes from poetry by Goethe, Rilke, Artmann, and Kling, among others, in which they bend the German syntax, often in favour of rhyme. In addition, he gives numerous examples from *Omeros* to illustrate how Walcott himself applies 'faulty' syntax in order to create rhymes or achieve a comic effect (ibid). The very fact that Klotz has

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[40] Venuti illustrates that it is a common tendency in literary translation for readers and critics alike to expect the target text to read as if it was "not in fact a translation, but the 'original'" ("Invisibility" 2008, 1). This is what he means by "invisibility." In this regard, not much seems to have changed since Nida asserted in the 1960s that "a good translator should not reveal it's [i.e. the translation's] non-native source" (qtd. in Greiner 2004, 13).
[41] Included in "Letter to Jürgen Theobaldy." 8 Jan. 1996.

numerous examples readily available refutes Poiss's polemic of Klotz being downright unfamiliar with the source text.

To illustrate the widespread attitude among critics, it is worth considering one of Poiss's examples for this claim in some detail. The passage refers to the scene in which the lyrical I visits his mother the nursing home. Poiss writes:

> Der Erzähler besucht seine Mutter im Altenheim, wird von ihr in einem lichten Moment erkannt und beim Namen genannt. Als er geht, heißt es: 'Warwicks Sohn', sagte sie, / 'von Natur aus Gentleman. Seine Loorbern krönten sie weiß.' Im Original: 'His vineleaves haloed her now.' Es muß 'Weinlaub' heißen, denn Walcott sah seinen dichtenden Vater zuvor im Laub ebendieses selbstgepflanzten Weins stehen. (1995)

Rather than being unfamiliar with the text that Klotz spent three years translating, the 'mistake' appears to be the result of a misreading of the preceding passage which in the source text reads: "I saw him [the ghost of the father] patterned in shade, the leaves in his hair, / the vines of the lucent body, the swift's blown seed." (69) The corresponding passage in Klotz's translation reads: "Ich sah ihn im Schattenmuster, Blätter im Haar, die Adern / seines durchsichtigen Körpers, der gekeimte Same der Schwalbe." (75) Therefore, it appears that he simply misread "veins" for "vines." Be it as it may, Klotz is right when he concludes: "Auf den ersten Blick fallen die erwähnten Unebenheiten nicht weiter auf, da der Generalduktus der Übersetzung insgesamt trägt, einen darüber hinwegträgt." (1996)

2 Klaus Martens: *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* – A compilation

2.1 The translator

Klaus Martens is a promising candidate for successfully tackling the challenging task of translating Walcott's poetry into German: He has first-hand experience as a writer and translator of poetry and his academic interests and previous research provide him with a solid theoretical foundation. In 1998, he even had the rare opportunity to talk extensively with Walcott when he arranged for the Nobel laureate to visit Saarland University where Martens held the Chair for North American Literature and Culture at the time (Martens 2000, 243f.; Walcott and Martens 1999, 252). During the weeklong visit, Walcott conducted a public reading and co-taught an advanced class with Martens (Leber 1998, 9). Today, Martens even refers to Walcott as a friend.[42]

Martens was born in the community of Kirchdorf and grew up in nearby Bremen.[43] In 1971, he earned a teacher's degree in English and German from Georg-August University in Göttingen, completed a Ph.D. in 1979 and his post-doctoral thesis (*Habilitation*) in 1984. He conducted parts of his Ph.D. studies at Yale University and spent two years teaching at both Yale and Harvard afterwards. Back in Göttingen he was one of the founding members of a special research field on literary translation and co-edited various issues of the related publication series. In 1990, Martens was appointed full professor in the department of American and Canadian Studies at Saarland University where he taught until his retirement in 2009. Throughout his academic career and beyond, Martens has continued to offer insights into various aspects of literary translations in his publications.[44] Moreover, he has several publications on Walcott to his name, among them an entry in the reputable encyclopaedia of literature *Kindlers Neues Literaturlexikon* (1992).[45]

While still a student, Martens started to write poetry and published his first book of verse in 1984 with the well-known publishing house *Deutsche Verlagsanstalt*. Two more followed in 1985 and 1987 and, after a break of almost two decades, six more volumes of his poetry appeared between 2006 and 2013, each with a different small independent publishing house. Reviews of Martens's more recent work bear a striking resemblance with reviews of Walcott's poetry.[46]

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[42] E-mail to the author. 10 June 2013.
[43] Here and in the following cf. Martens's website <http://klausmartens.com/> unless otherwise indicated.
[44] These include numerous essays, as well as a book-length study of Longfellow's "Evangeline" in translation.
[45] Other essays include "Die Imagination als Nation: Derek Walcott" (1992) and "Derek Walcott: From Periphery to Center" (2000).
[46] Frank Milautzcki acknowledges the musicality of Martens's poems and recognizes childhood memories as a recurring motif (2010); Barbara Zeizinger adds everyday subjects, themes of nature as well as landscape and people in Arizona associated with surreal paintings by Max Ernst (2012). KH notes Martens's rich imagery and his substantial knowledge of poetry and admits that the latter is a feature which presupposes a certain level of education and may not be to everybody's taste (2007, 19). Chrysostomos finds that readability is not hampered by the numerous allusions. Martens uses similar terms to describe Walcott's poetry in his epilogue to *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*: "Walcotts Poesie ist […] mit Kenntnis durchtränkt,

As a literary translator, Martens made his debut in 1987 with a volume of poems by Wallace Stevens which Martens selected himself (<http://klausmartens-anthologie.de>). Since then, he made "[m]any other translations of poetry and prose, often annotated and with extensive commentaries, in German magazines, collections, and anthologies, including work [sic] by" numerous accomplished poets (ibid). Instead of translating one complete book of verse by a specific poet, Martens usually makes a selection from various poems of an author's oeuvre. This is the case with both volumes of Walcott's poetry translated by Martens.

One example is the 1995 bilingual edition of select poetry by Dylan Thomas that he also edited. The volume was a collaborative venture of twelve translators, including Martens. In the foreword, he describes the selection process thus: In a first step, the individual translators chose the poems they wanted to translate. Their choice largely depended on personal preference and capabilities. At this stage, it was possible for different translators to choose the same poem. In his function as editor, Martens then decided which titles to include and – if applicable – which version of various alternative translations of one poem. Next, the translators chose additional poems with the aim of creating a selection that would represent the different phases of Thomas's writing. In the prologue, Martens explains the purpose of the selection: "Sie will […] durch die Zahl und die Anordnung der angebotenen Texte dichterische Entwicklungen und Zusammenhänge bei Thomas zum ersten Mal für den deutschen Leser sichtbar und nachvollziehbar machen" (1995/2008, 5).

In the epilogue to his second selection of poems by Walcott, *Erzählungen von den Inseln* (1993), Martens uses similar terms when he describes the selection to include poems from all phases of Walcott's poetic oeuvre up until his 1987 volume *The Arkansas Testament*. His selection, Martens continues, makes a development visible that is by no means completed yet (1993, 133). Annotations offer additional information, help the reader with difficult passages, and at times reflect the translation process itself. Occasionally, Martens even offers his own interpretation in his endnotes. At times, his elaborations are of an erudite nature, providing information on a particular poem in the context of Walcott's oeuvre or the etymology of a term. Some information, however, seems redundant for the general reader such as details about Mark Strand to whom Walcott dedicates "Piano Practice" (cf. ibid, 151) or the fact that Walcott received the Welsh Dylan Thomas Prize in 1980 in a note to the poem "Wales" (152). More interesting and useful is information that the translation itself cannot convey, such as the fact that "Trailways" is a bus company providing service throughout the United States like the more commonly known Greyhound (151).

Hewson observes that the issue "of explanation and commentary in translation is a very delicate one" and argues that "the question posed is 'how far a reader should be led by the hand', or conversely 'how much a reader should work out for himself'" (1991, 140).

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aber sie trägt sie nicht zur Schau und umarmt weder Bildungsbürger noch Kritiker." (1989, 102) Although Christoph Schreiner believes that Martens is not just a professor writing dilettante poetry, but a poet and academic in equal terms (<http://klausmartens.com>) his poetic oeuvre has not drawn any critical attention to date.

Considering Martens's annotations, one may conclude that he has a strong tendency to lead the reader by the hand. Perhaps an even more interesting question is whether Martens's use of endnotes indicates the anticipation of a certain type of reader. Since the annotations are so varied, he appears to anticipate a very broad spectrum of readers. Reviews of *Erzählungen von den Inseln* reveal that the issue is indeed a delicate one as reactions to the notes greatly differ.[47]

Although according to Balmes it is quite common to include notes in translations of poetry, especially when the poet's background is as important and as foreign as in case of Walcott, Martens's earlier translation *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* does not include any annotations, a fact that Thies criticized (1989). This critique may be one reason why his notes to his second Walcott-volume are so extensive and detailed. The notes in the Dylan Thomas edition are less extensive and varied. In his foreword, Martens explains that they were subject to in-house rules related to the series published with S. Fischer (2008, 6). Since no such rules seem to exist in case of Hanser, it is not possible to determine who decided whether to include annotations.

In his case study of J.C.C. Bruns publishing, Martens examines such pre-textual aspects of a translation from various vantage points: On the one hand, he shows how certain practices of publishing houses may affect the work of a translator and thus the translation itself. On the other hand, he illustrates that unforeseen difficulties encountered by a publisher may be equally "formative in the constitution of the translated text" (1991, 225). In case of J.C.C. Bruns, for instance, unexpected expenses caused by legal issues over rights for a certain work forced the publisher to save money. Bruns's decision to save on the translator's payment ultimately affected the quality of the translation. As the public debate about translators' royalties shows, this is still commonplace.

According to Martens, he was not employed at any university when working on *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*. Instead, he supported himself with teaching assignments at different universities.[48] Accordingly, his financial situation may have been rather unstable. It is thus likely that he needed to finish the translation quickly because he was relying on the extra income. In his essay "Institutional Transmission and Literary Translation. A Sample Case" Martens remarks on exploited "unemployed academics" (1991, 236).

One can only speculate about the reasons that originally drew Martens to Walcott's works. In the 1988 fall-issue of *Lettre International*, Martens published his first translation of Walcott, namely the short poem "Salsa," followed by the publication of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* the year after. Martens's epilogue to this volume hints at a fascination with the foreign as he repeatedly refers to the foreign character of Walcott's poetry:

> Walcott's epischer Impuls, sein besessener Drang zu erzählen und poetisch erzählend seine Empfindungen kund zu tun, nichts zu übersehen und alles bedeuten zu lassen, sind das eigentlich Fremde seiner Lyrik. […] Es ist dieser bedeutsame Überfluß an

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[47] Heini Vogler is grateful for the 'excellent annotations' (1993). In contrast, the author Hans Christoph Buch's criticism is devastating as he considers much of the information superfluous (1993). He accuses Martens of boasting with his learnedness and reveals cases of imprecision.
[48] Cf. <http://klausmartens.com/>.

Bildlichkeit und Metaphorik, es sind die ambivalent zueinander sprechenden Details sowie der kontrollierte epische Duktus im Wechsel der Stilhöhe – zusammengenommen: diese Fremde der sprachlichen Mélange [...]. (1989, 102)

What Martens finds most difficult to translate is the foreignness of Walcott's long, meandering sentences with their subordinate clauses that may contain lists, observations, or complex metaphors (ibid, 103). As far as possible, he aimed at reproducing this aspect of Walcott's poetry, not least because he considers it a mimetic representation of the way in which plants grow rampant in the Caribbean (ibid). Martens reflects upon the two opposing approaches of localization versus foreignization and clearly favours the latter when he writes: "Es kann nicht darum gehen, 'einbürgernd', wie es heißt, das Fremde als dem Eigenen ähnlich erscheinen zu lassen. Der Widerstand, den jedes Fremde und Neue zunächst bietet, muß spürbar bleiben" (ibid). Accordingly, he pleads: "Deshalb sollte auch nicht jedes Wort beim Überschreiten der Grenze ins Deutsche das 'Zollamt Langenscheidt' und das 'Ordnungsamt Duden' in jedem Fall passieren müssen." (ibid).

R. A. Megrab raises some important points about the two approaches. On the one hand, he argues that there are good reasons to reproach the "process of domestication," among them its failure "to satisfy the criterion of cross-cultural openness which a translation could reasonably be expected to fulfil in addition to performing a communicative act" (1998, 67f.). On the other hand, he acknowledges the difficulties that the opposite approach of foreignization entails as it aims at re-creating "an equivalent response in the TL while maintaining the cultural load of the ST" (ibid, 68). According to Megrab, however, there are also translators who "simply find it easier or more exciting to invade the TL with SL peculiarities regardless of whether they fit into the general frame of the TL and target culture" (ibid).

For Martens, however, there is a limit to confronting German readers with the foreign: He excludes those poems in which Walcott applies the local vernacular of St Lucia, per se, arguing that they are untranslatable. With regard to one of Walcott's most often quoted poems "The Schooner *Flight*," Martens correctly concludes that it is impossible to translate this "*tour-de-force* in [...] Patois." (1989, 103)

2.2 The German collection – three books in one

The first book-length translation of Walcott's poetry into German appeared in 1989 under the title *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*: The title is misleading as it implies that the volume is a translation of Walcott's earlier book of verse *The Star-Apple Kingdom* originally published ten years before the translation. This accounts for a mistake in King's extraordinarily well researched Walcott biography in which he mentions "a German translation by Klaus Martens of *The Star-Apple Kingdom* [...] published in 1989" (2004, 480). Instead, the book is a compilation of select poems from three volumes published between 1979 and 1984: *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (1979), *The Fortunate Traveller* (1981),

and *Midsummer* (1984).[49] In accordance with this chronology, the German edition is divided into three parts. A page preceding the poems from the respective volumes indicates the title and year of publication with the English title in brackets following its German translation. With the exception of the title poem, the edition is monolingual.

Although Walcott had already made a name for himself in the United States, his recognition was still limited to certain circles in the mid- to late 1980s. As King puts it, "while Walcott was highly regarded by many writers and a few critics, he was still unnoticed by most American professors of English literature" (2004, 463). Similarly, when Walcott received the Nobel Prize in 1992, the vast majority of German critics had to admit that they had never heard of the most recent Nobel laureate. Ludwig Laher criticizes the common practice of reviewers in German-speaking countries to claim that Walcott was an unknown poet instead of admitting their ignorance. He points out that in Anglophone countries, Walcott's works appeared in the most renowned publishing houses (1993, IZA). Similarly, von Lutz is at a loss as to why Walcott had not received any attention from German critics and publishers before. He explains it with a strong Eurocentrism prevailing in German-speaking countries (1992, IZA). Hans-Jürgen Schmitt compliments Michael Krüger of Hanser on trusting his intuition and publish a small selection of Walcott's poetry, i.e. Martens's translation which he considers proof of the publisher's dedication to world poetry despite the small group of readers (1993, IZA). Indeed, according to an article in *Die Presse*, the number of copies of the first edition was 1500, a third of which was still in stock at Hanser by 1992 (*h*ai 1992, IZA).

At the time of publication, Martens's translation did not receive much attention from reviewers. In connection with the Nobel Prize, it finds mention by numerous critics. However, this rarely goes beyond the scope of a side note as most reviewers merely acknowledge that the existence of the translation is an exception to the rule in Europe (von Lutz 1992, IZA; Cerha 1992, IZA). Although von Lutz expresses the hope that the Nobel Prize may increase the chances of having Walcott's *Omeros* translated into German, he admits that no more than a few hundred people would likely read such a work (1992, IZA).

There are various reasons why European critics and translators largely ignored Walcott's work until he received the Nobel Prize. Paul Ingendaay argues that Europeans tend to consider nature poetry melancholy and anachronistic. This, he continues, is an element in Walcott's poetry that is easily misunderstood. In addition, he points to the great difference between a Caribbean and a European experience of sky, sun, and waves and notes how Walcott conjures up smells and colours of a region far away from the cultural centres (1993, IZA). Thus one reason seems to be the foreign character of Walcott's poetry that Martens speaks of (1989, 102f.). In addition, one must consider the status of poetry in European national literatures. As for Germany, Michael Cerha sums it up concisely: "Lyrik verkauft sich schlecht. […] Lyrik wird wenig gelesen. […] Lyrik wird selten rezensiert." (1992, IZA).

For Martens, the fact that he is the first translator of Walcott attempting to make a greater part of his oeuvre accessible to a German readership could be both a blessing and a

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[49] All references to these works appear parenthetically in the text, preceded by the corresponding abbreviation. For a list of abbreviations see appendix.

curse: On the one hand, it gives him much freedom to choose from Walcott's oeuvre, which was already extensive at the end of the 1980s. On the other hand, it puts much pressure on the translator to get the tone right and to convey as many facets as possible of this extremely versatile poet. An important question is if and to what extent the very choice of poems to include and exclude affects the first impression a German audience gets of Walcott and his poetry. In order to attempt an answer to this question it is necessary to consider each of the three volumes from which Martens made his selection separately. In this context the poems' geographical settings as well as recurring themes and motifs are of central importance.

2.2.1 Settings

The Star-Apple Kingdom is a slim collection of ten poems the majority of which are set in the Caribbean. David DeMott even goes as far as saying that "[t]he only items remote from the Caribbean circuit are a salute to Brodsky and a memorial to Robert Lowell" (1993, 300), i.e. "Forest of Europe" and "R.T.S.L.". Both are among the four poems from this volume that Martens selected for his translation. Walcott's volume opens with the dialect poem "The Schooner *Flight*" that consists of ten sequences of varying length that depict the sea journeys of a sailor called Shabine. The volume ends with the title poem, which is quite surreal at times (cf. Thomas 1991, 92). Preceding this poem is the more narrative but similarly surreal "Koenig of the River." Seamus Heaney appropriately uses the terms "dream visions" (1993, 306) and "dream-heavy thing" (ibid, 307) respectively to describe the two poems. While "The Star-Apple Kingdom" is strongly influenced by Gabriel García Marquéz's novel *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (Walcott, 1993), the most self-evident influence on "Koenig of the River" is Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (cf. DeMott 1993, 301). Like Shabine in the opening poem, Koenig has a nightmarish vision of the Middle Passage. The very fact that most of the poems in the volume had been published in magazines prior to the appearance of the book proves that each of them can stand by itself and be read separately. Yet, if read in the context of the collection as a whole, certain aspects gain prominence and connections become apparent – be it by means of similarity or opposition.

The Fortunate Traveller contains 26 poems and is subdivided into three sections: [I] North consists of five poems, [II] South is the largest section with eighteen poems, and [III] North concludes the volume with three poems. This structure in combination with the title of the volume suggests a geographical arrangement resembling a circular journey. The titles of the individual poems that make up the two North sections imply that the opening section is concerned with North America, the closing section with Europe. It would seem plausible that the poems comprising the South section were set in the Caribbean. However, numerous titles refer to European places, history, and myth. As it turns out, though, Walcott tends to transplant what appear to be uniquely European references into a Caribbean setting. In this way, he deconstructs the rigid geographical divisions that the structure suggests. Accordingly, Mervyn Morris observes how "Walcott often seeks to make us actively aware of the varying cultural elements he pulls together, or of the

transfiguring lens of history, literature or myth through which he views the present" (1991, 103).

The first four poems of the volume are set in the USA. They are best described as meditations, slice-of-life poems, or, as King puts it, "appreciative poetic sketches of a new landscape and its people" (2004, 408). As the title and position of the final poem in this section suggest, "North and South" serves as a transitional poem with references to Europe, North America, and the Caribbean. The majority of poems comprising the South section are indeed set in the Caribbean. However, Walcott repeatedly juxtaposes the landscapes of his home region with those of Greece and even with works from various European literary traditions. By no means does he limit this practice to titles such as "Europa," "Greece," or "Early Pompeian." The first poem of North II entitled "Wales" is the only one in this section that is set in Europe, exclusively. It is followed by the title poem that starts in Europe, but takes the reader across the globe ending in St Lucia. The final poem conveys a utopian vision of the Caribbean.

Geography certainly serves to give structure to the poems of this collection. Although Martens does not specifically refer to *The Fortunate Traveller*, his description of how Walcott "experiences his 'Here' and 'Elsewhere'[50] in his journeyings between, say, Upstate New York, Europe, and islands of the Caribbean" (2003, 11) sounds like a summary of this volume in which such "journeyings" feature most prominently.

Midsummer is a sequence of 54 poems most of which are deeply rooted in the Caribbean, yet they span different ages and geographical spaces, as well. The volume consists of two parts. Analogous to the division of the *Fortunate Traveller* into "North," "South," and "North" sections, *Midsummer* could likewise be divided into "South," "North," and "South" sections. Book I opens with the persona approaching Trinidad by plane. In II, the voice addresses Brodsky in Rome while the lyrical I is still in the Caribbean. *Midsummer* V. depicts a Caribbean summer day in New York and XXIII takes the reader to England. A few poems do not have an actual setting, but rather take place in the persona's imagination (VIII) or are to a greater or lesser degree ekphrastic as XIX *Gauguin i* or XX *Watteau*. Part II opens with the persona returning to "Boston, the city of my exile" (43). The poems that follow are mostly set in North America and Europe – mostly in England, but XLI is set in Germany. Starting with the eight poems comprising XLIII *Tropic Zone*, the setting comes full circle back to the Caribbean region including various countries in Latin America as well as Trinidad (XLIV). XLV and XLVI interrupt this pattern as they are set in Massachusetts and Ohio respectively.

Martens's selection *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* contains four poems from *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, six from *The Fortunate Traveller*, and nine from *Midsummer*. Roughly half of the nineteen poems are set in the Caribbean. At times, the only indicators for this fact are subtle details such as the mentioning of a specific bird or plant that are indigenous to the region. At other times, place names denote the setting. However, more often than not the general reader is not likely to be familiar with them. Although the opening poem "Auf den Virginen" ("In the Virgins") is set in the Caribbean, the

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[50] Walcott's autobiographical poem *The Arkansas Testament* consists of two sections titled 'Here' and 'Elsewhere.'

preoccupation with this region increases towards the close of the volume, culminating in the eight-part sequence *XLIII, Tropenzone* (*Tropic Zones*) that marks the end of the collection.

It is striking that Martens's selection includes a disproportionately large number of poems that are set in the United States and Europe. For instance, he chooses the elegiac poem "R.T.S.L. (1917-1977)" about Walcott's deceased friend Robert Lowell and "Forest of Europe" from *The Star-Apple Kingdom* over poems like "Sabbaths, W.I.," "The Sea is History," "Egypt, Tobago," or "The Saddhu of Couva" the very titles of which imply a connection with the Caribbean. Similarly, the selection from *Midsummer* begins with the second poem, addressing Brodsky in Rome rather than with the opening poem in which the lyrical I returns to Trinidad. Of the poems included from *The Fortunate Traveller*, Martens chooses two from [I] North including the transitional poem "North and South," three from [II] South, and the title poem from [III] North. Although Martens selects poems from all three parts, the edition does not account for this division.[51]

German readers of Martens's selection may conclude that in his earlier poetry, Walcott was more concerned with the "Elsewhere," whereas in his more recent poetry there is a noticeable shift of interest to the "Here." This is not to imply that it would have been more appropriate to include only poems set in the Caribbean. Such a selection would have suggested a thematic focus that is much too simplistic and one-dimensional and would not do justice to the complexities of Walcott's poetry. Nevertheless, Martens's selection does convey a distorted picture of Walcott's concerns, which may ultimately influence his perception and reception by a German readership. Martens's 1993 essay for the Nobel Prize special edition may offer some explanation: Martens describes what Anglophone critics pointed out in the early 1980s, namely that Walcott continues to draw on New England themes that were typically Lowell's territory (cf. King 2004, 407, Martens 1993, 68).[52] According to Martens, Walcott did not limit himself to this geographical space, though, but went beyond to encompass all of North America (ibid).

What is interesting about Martens's selection from the South section of *The Fortunate Traveller* is that all three poems he included share a thematic focus on literature. The last of these poems entitled "Jean Rhys" treats the Dominican writer in the setting of her Caribbean home. The other two poems, however, although set in the Caribbean are concerned with Western literature and Greek mythology: "Map of the New World" is a sequence of three short poems that revolve around Homer's *Odyssey*, "the legend of Yseult" (*FT* 26), and the poet Robert Graves, respectively. In "Europa" the insomniac lyrical I reinterprets the Greek myth that the Caribbean landscape conjures up.

Morris reasons correctly that in the first poem comprising the sequence "Map of the New World," "the landscapes are suffused with classical memories" (1991, 103). He is less certain about the poem's setting, writing hesitatingly: "[It is] – I take it, set in the

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[51] Martens confirms that this is because the collection already consists of three separate parts; thus further subdividing the small number of poems included from *The Fortunate Traveller* did not make sense: "Die Zweiteilung fehlt bei Nord und Süd, da mir die Auswahl zu klein schien." E-mail to the author. 6 Apr. 2014.
[52] King writes: "Walcott's writing about American subjects, however, gave critics a chance to point to the obvious imitation Lowellism of 'Old New-England'" (2004, 407).

Caribbean" (ibid). This illustrates well the difficulties that Walcott's practice of "juxtapos[ing] classical imagery with island realities" (Waters and Fleming 1994, 392) sometimes creates.

2.2.2 Themes and recurring motifs

Compared with the number of poems making up *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, Walcott manages to touch on an incredibly broad range of topics. Critics have identified "the theme […] of castaway figures" (Hamner 1993, 8), "the building and undermining of empire" (DeMott 1993, 302), and "questions of politics and ideology" (McWatt 1988, 1613) as being central to the collection. Heaney finds the volume to be "awash with love of people and places and language" (1993, 308). Walcott reflects on various aspects of language in numerous poems: He considers the fact that English is the language of the colonizer and treats the related issue of naming in the Caribbean,[53] as well as the process and effects of adopting a foreign language as one's own.

What unifies these seemingly disparate poems is Walcott's "struggle with the multiple divisions and tensions caused by a history of dispossession and forgetting in the region" (Beecroft 2001, 454) as well as his "concern with West Indian politics, illusions about the region, his personal situation, and the role of a poet" (King 2004, 349). Accordingly, another central question of the collection posed in the title poem is "What [is] the Caribbean?" (*SAK* 56) Different poems offer different answers: It is fresh and paradisal; it is afflicted by the elements; it is boring like a typical Sunday in the West Indies; and it is poor; it is a conglomerate of nations, but turning to Indian or African roots is futile. Poems like "The Saddhu of Couva" and "The Star-Apple Kingdom" illustrate that this practice, tempting as it may be, will offer no reconciliation. In addition, King notes a correspondence between "[t]he organization of individual poems and sequences [and] the arrangement of poems throughout the volume." (2004, 376) To illustrate his point, he points out how "the northward movement from Trinidad to Jamaica (and towards the United States) in 'The Schooner Flight [sic]' was also that of the arrangement of poems leading to 'The Star-Apple Kingdom'." (ibid)

A topic that almost haunts the poet revolves around the concept of history, including questions of personal history. Walcott's view of history is pessimistic as for him it is equated with war, exploitation, extermination, and oppression. The outcome is hatred. This is the experience in the Caribbean with the collective memory of the cruelties of European conquests and the Middle Passage. While colonization, sea battles, revolutions, indentured cane cutters, and the marginalization of slaves serve as examples from Walcott's home region, he also uses events from world history such as the Vietnam War, the Indian Removal Act of 1831, or the Gulag penal system of the USSR to illustrate the

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[53] As Döring explains: "The terms we use, the words we work with and the concepts we apply are never innocent. They constitute not just the field under discussion, but determine the approaches taken to this field, the questions raised about it and the insights to be gained. If theories generally begin by naming, postcolonial theory begins with the awareness that names are never natural but always imposed, hence that naming is an act of power." (2008, 15) Nana Wilson-Tagoe describes it as "the transforming and creative process by which the New World slave had yielded his own past, invested the acquired Christian tradition with new feeling and faith and began the new naming of things in the New World." (1991, 53)

universality of the theme. The poem "Antony and Cleopatra" shows that history repeats itself. It is a warning that all empires will eventually tumble and fall – a fact that "Koenig of the River" completely ignores in his arrogant recollection of questionable 'accomplishments' by the German and English empires. Although personal history features prominently in the first poem of the collection, when Shabine confronts his white grandfather who does not want to recognize him, the latter represents all white slave holders who refused to recognize their children who were the outcome of sexual relations with African slaves.

In *The Fortunate Traveller*, three aspects feature most prominently: the fall of empires, the ordinary as a source of inspiration, and various aspects of history. Julian Symons describes a change in Walcott's applying "the end of empire theme […] to the United States rather than England" (qtd. in King 2004, 409) in this volume. This is not entirely true, though, for over the course of the first two sections, the British Empire finds mention alongside various others, among them the Roman and American Empires. While the latter serves as an example of an empire that still exists, one must expect it to fall like all its predecessors.

Rather than treating different themes in each section, the themes are universal; accordingly, the small towns of Upstate New York are just as ordinary as a typical Sunday in the Caribbean or the common people of rural Wales. The ordinary is precisely what continues to inspire the poet. Hence, the Muse who appears in three poems of the first section is a simple, hard-working woman who is married to a common labourer.

While Walcott continues to view history in the same negative way as in the preceding volume, there is a stronger focus on the universal experience of expulsion and extermination in this collection. Each region, be it North America, the Caribbean, or Europe, has its unique history of "cruelty of man to man" (James 1991, 115). Accordingly, Walcott draws on the suffering of Native American peoples in [I] North, of African slaves in [II] South, and of the Jewish peoples in [III] North. Clement H. Wyke writes pointedly: "[F]rom North to South to North again the traveller encounters an ironic repetition of the same human hardships and calamities" (1989, 59). Walcott's view of the present and his future vision of humanity are equally pessimistic as his view of the past. He thus criticizes current politics in poems of all three parts of the volume, but predominantly so in the South section in which he repeatedly mentions corruption, censorship, graft, and the exploitation of the poor by the rich (cf. Morris 1991, 106).

Blake Morrison notes an important connection when he writes that Walcott "moves lucidly and at times brilliantly between abstract notions of power and responsibility and visual notions of landscape, cityscape and sea." (qtd. in King 2004, 409) Often the two are inseparably connected. In "North and South" for instance, Walcott uses a striking amount of words pertaining to the semantic field of war to describe the beginning of spring. Linking nature with war in this way, he underlines the omnipresence of its reminders in the Caribbean. In addition, he distinctly refers to the Vietnam War and the Trojan War but also uses references to specific places such as Somalia or the islands Guadalcanal and Guam in the Pacific Ocean – both of which played a decisive role in WWI – to conjure up associations of war.

Another subject that becomes increasingly important in Walcott's poetry is art, in this volume especially the art of literature: In the first section, he criticizes contemporary poetry; in the second section, the persona of Ovid reflects on literature, and in "Jean Rhys" Walcott pays homage to a writer who devoted her life to literature. In other cases, Walcott draws parallels between the character of Odysseus and African slaves or indentured Indians. As is the case in *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, language itself is an important subject that is often linked to other central themes: Walcott expresses his gratitude for the English language and all other languages spoken in the Caribbean. Furthermore, he reflects upon the implications of acquiring a foreign language in exile and making it one's own. Finally, there is a strong connection between nature and language throughout the entire volume.

In an interview with Walcott, Paula Burnett says: "[O]ne of the things that comes very strongly from your poetry [...] is a looking at landscape as in a sense a kind of language, that it is in a way communicating itself in forms similar to those that we use in language." (Burnett 2002-2003, 143) This becomes most evident in the first and the last of the three poems that make up the final section: In "Wales", Walcott uses literary and linguistic terminology to describe nature; in "The Season of Phantasmal Peace," he describes various species of birds as "nations" speaking "multitudinous dialects" (*FT* 98).

In the autobiographical poems of the volume, Walcott writes about his own mixed ancestry, about divorce and other very private issues.[54] The theme of exile gains importance from this volume on, as well. Walcott equates divorce with exile and refers to death as the ultimate exile. However, he also treats the topic in the literal sense of the word. Peter Balakian identifies the "exiled poet" as one of "Walcott's various selves" (1993, 353) that make an appearance in this collection.[55] This may account for the fact that all poems without exception feature a solitary figure, mostly the lyrical I, who rarely interacts with other people. Nevertheless, James McCorkle describes some important differences between the voice in the North and South sections:

In the two sections titled "North," his voice is distinctly distanced - observant but not participatory. In the section "South," Walcott's self emerges often as the lyrical "I," reflecting his own place in relationship to his wife, daughters, and friends. Though the relationships have undergone transformations, such as divorce, they are not marked with the pessimism of the "North" nor are they meditations on the historical *telos* of the "North." (1986, 8)

In *Midsummer*, Walcott applies a wealth of recurring images and motifs including the elements, hotels, light, and roads. Similarly, he covers a vast range of different themes many of which recur throughout the volume, as well. Therefore, King is right when he writes: "So many themes are compressed together in *Midsummer* critics were bound to be right and wrong in choosing age, political engagement, political disillusion, language,

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[54] King notes that "'Early Pompeian' concerns the late miscarriage of Norline's daughter in Trinidad, followed by 'Easter' addressed to 'Anna my daughter', followed by 'Store Bay', which [...] mention[s] his divorce" (2004, 408).
[55] Others include "the Augustan satirist [...] and the elegist enlarging his familiar theme of exile into a modern vision" (Balakian 1993, 353).

poetry, travel, death, or most anything else as a subject" (2004, 430). [56] The perception of which theme is most central to the collection greatly varies from one critic to another. Yet it would be wrong to conclude that the arrangement of poems is arbitrary. In fact, various underlying patterns are noticeable.

The very number of poems included in the cycle corresponds with Walcott's age in the year of publication and there are instances in which the speaker of the poems refers to events and people in Walcott's life. The book itself is dedicated to his daughters Elizabeth and Anna who make an appearance in three poems. [57] The volume's division into two parts corresponds with two stages in the poet's life. Accordingly, poems in which "Walcott contemplates his Caribbean childhood" (James 1991, 117) feature more frequently in the first quarter of the book and only recurs in one of the last poems – LII – in which Walcott reflects upon growing up with a colonial past. Significantly, part two begins with poem XXX – an age that people often associate with a new, more mature phase in life. The very title supports this reading, as Sven Birkerts's associations prove: "Midsummer equals mid-career, middle age, Dante's 'mezzo del cammin di nostra vita…'" (1993, 331). However, it also signifies on a literal level: As the title suggests, summer is the most frequently featured season in *Midsummer*[58]. In VIII, Walcott proclaims its universality when he concludes, "summer is the same everywhere" (*M* 18). Other seasons scarcely get a mention, e.g. spring in XLV and XLVI, winter in XLII, and fall in XXXVI and XXXVIII.

In some poems such as XXVIII and L, poet and persona are inseparably connected; others are metapoetic, treating the act and nature of writing poetry. Many poems of part one are self-reflective in two ways: On the one hand, they are often concerned with the dissatisfaction and self-doubts of artists in general and the poet in particular. Most of these self-conscious and self-critical poems appear in the first quarter of the volume, i.e. at the outset of becoming an artist. On the other hand, they are also 'self-reflective' in the sense of 'showing' the poet persona looking at his mirror image (III, XI), contemplating. Old age and death enter the thoughts of the persona in the beginning of the second quarter and continue mainly into the third quarter. The poems of part two often strike the reader as being more abstract, as self-contemplation gives way to more universal themes.

While some poems are narrative to a certain degree, the majority is rather descriptive, often even static. Various critics comment on this sense of stasis in *Midsummer*: Gilkes identifies "the stasis of middle-age" as one of the major themes (1986, 101) and Beecroft speaks of "a moment of stasis" (2001, 454). Jeffrey Gray describes Walcott's "depictions of the tropics as static and torpid" which he explains with the lack of seasons and, ultimately, of time in the region (2005, 127). Hamner more plausibly argues that it owes to Walcott's practice of "converting the diurnal scene into art" (2002-2003,

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[56] Like King, Louis James identifies a number of recurring themes: "impression […] of weariness, a loss of poetic energy" in XV, XIII, XXIV, XIII, XVII; dissatisfaction, self-consciousness, and self-doubt: IX, III, XII, XIII, XXIX; Caribbean childhood; "his remembered singleness of the artist's vision" in XIV to XXV; "despair at a world torn by war, famine, and the cruelty of man to man" in XXII, XXV, XXIV, XLI, XLII; "violence of poems XIX to XXV"; Cuba in "the eight poems which make up 'Tropic Zone' (XLIII)" (1991, 115).
[57] James even goes as far as arguing that "their presence is implicit […] in a sense of cycle and rhythm within the sequence" (ibid).
[58] In the preceding volume, i.e. *The Fortunate Traveller*, Walcott omits this season while featuring all others.

231). The visual arts are at the centre of many poems in a number of different ways: On the one hand, there are many examples of painterly or ekphrastic poems in the collection. On the other hand, Walcott has a great ability to make images appear before the mind's eye of the reader. Furthermore, art is the topic of various poems such as XVII – XX. Again, there is a connection between the Roman numerals and Walcott's biography, as they correspond with the age at which he made his decision in favour of the art of literature over the art of painting. It is not coincidental that the preoccupation with art as a subject of the poems ends at this point in the collection.

Instead, religion takes centre-stage in XXI, XXII, XXIV, and XXXI. The physical proximity of poems treating these two subjects in the arrangement of the collection emphasizes how closely connected they are in Walcott's view: While he considers his talent a god-given gift and a vocation (cf. Bensen 1986, 266f.) he often associates art with (Methodist) guilt (cf. King 2004, 308). Accordingly, Walcott reflects the guilt of art in numerous poems: In XVIII he proclaims "that death itself is only another surface / like the canvas" on which the artist uses "the identical carmine for still life and for the slaughter / of youth" (*M* 28) at Verdun. Walcott does not consider the art of literature to be any less guilty. In the title poem of *The Fortunate Traveller*, he already observes how in the face of people suffering "we turn away to read" (*FT* 96); near the end of *Midsummer*, he draws on such issues again. In XLI, he reflects his own guilt of writing poetry after Auschwitz and recalls how he used to feel "that / the gift of poetry had made me one of the chosen, / that all experience was kindling to the fire of the Muse" (*M* 54).

As in the previous volumes, the themes of war, violence, and racism recur. XXII is about wars in the name of God or religion and ponders the question whether they are an integral part of human nature. In part two, the motifs reappear more frequently in poems about racism in England (XXIII), and class divisions in Boston (XXXIII), the above mentioned poem about the holocaust (XLI), poems about tyranny in Latin America (XLIII ii and vii), and about slavery (XLIV, LII). Although a preoccupation with history remains, the ordinary increasingly gains importance. Walcott himself attributes this fact to the influence of Lowell whom he admires for "his directness, his confrontation of ordinariness" and who taught him that "some of the very ordinary banal details [...] can be illumined" (Hirsch 1986, 226).

In part two of *Midsummer*, literary classics come into focus. XXXII-XXXIV include references to ancient Greece and the only dedicatory poem XXXIII is for the US American translator of classic literature, Robert Fitzgerald. Finally, XLIII vi explores analogies between ancient Greece and the Caribbean. The motif of the road also recurs throughout the collection. Although the road as a metaphor for life's journeys is not new, it is a continuation of the traveller motif from the previous volume. On a literal level, Walcott writes about actual roads he travelled as his life had become increasingly international. The dirt road in XIV stands in stark contrast to these international roads. It takes the persona to his first encounter with literature at Sidone's poor but magical dwelling.

In the course of the collection, one theme moves into the next with great fluidity. On the level of the volume as a whole, it mirrors Walcott's practice of creating coherence

in each individual poem by repeating specific terms and motifs while the poems' thematic arrangement within the cycle resembles a wave-like pattern, pulling back and moving forward at the same time. Accordingly, the sea serves as a structuring device in *Midsummer*. The majority of critics tend to ignore any patterns in the arrangement of poems in the volume. Birkerts, for example, compares Walcott to Cézanne arguing that just like the painter "painted hill after hill because hills were not what he was interested in, Walcott writes poem after poem with little differentiation of subject […] in order to clear the path to his real subject: language becoming poetry" (1993, 333). Important as this subject is to Walcott, he treats numerous others with equal urgency. Patricia Ismond accounts for this when she writes that the sequence "does range, in fact, over a number of distinct concerns" (1986, 78).

The poems comprising the German collection *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* cover an immense range of themes including reflections on history, current or recent politics, as well as future prospects, which are usually pessimistic. Those poems concerned with history range from rather general reflections to specific events in African, American, and (Spanish) colonial history. Personal history plays a role in "Jean Rhys," in other poems, Walcott's heritage gains importance. Especially toward the end of the collection, revolution is a recurring theme connected with current or recent politics. Throughout the collection, suppressive political systems feature prominently in poems referring to the Gulag system of Russia, concentration camps in Nazi Germany, and the exploitation of slaves and native peoples by Europeans. Various poems describe tourism in terms of a modern kind of exploitation.

Other poems feature everyday racism encountered by African-Americans. Death and the end-of-empire motif pertain to past, present, and future alike. Another central theme of the collection is exile, which is emphasized by the fact that in all save two poems the persona appears as a solitary figure. Often the persona roams deserted streets and when other people are present as in "Upstate," he merely observes from a distance. The only interactions are brief dialogues in "The Fortunate Traveller" and *Midsummer* XLIII, i.

Many poems of the collection include reflections on art and cultural history, most frequently featuring references to Greek mythology as well as ancient Greek poetry and culture. Often, Walcott uses juxtaposition to create a link with the Caribbean (cf. Waters and Fleming 1994, 392). In various metapoetic passages, he reflects upon his sources of inspiration as well as the loss and decline of the imagination. Although the muses who appear in various poems are just as ordinary as a midsummer day in the Caribbean, both are treated as crucial sources of inspiration.

Walcott's attitude toward poetry is not always positive: While it can be a source of physical and mental nourishment, it can also be as worthless as a flea-infested couch or be a distraction from other people's suffering. At times, he describes poetry as a prayer, at other times he finds that its lines do not make any sense. When Walcott describes the act of writing poetry, he does so in terms of labour and craft. In contrast, language and language acquisition occur naturally and intuitively.

In his 1993 essay for the Coron edition, Martens writes about recurring vocabulary in Walcott's oeuvre: "doch fällt gerade im Rückblick auf, da wir *Omeros* als neuestes

Werk Walcotts in der Hand halten, dass die Gedichte über eine Erstreckung von fünfundvierzig Jahren hinweg sehr konstant einen bestimmten Wortschatz nicht allein beibehalten, sondern sehr gezielt wiederholen." (66). To illustrate his point, Martens draws on the example of certain species of trees that are mentioned repeatedly throughout Walcott's oeuvre, often in different contexts, such as sea almonds and sea grapes or the patois terms *bois-flot* and *laurier-canelles*. In this way, he argues, Walcott shows how Caribbean trees are constitutive for literature just like their European counterparts – elm, oak, beech, and birch – have been for northern European poetry (ibid). Such tendencies are already clearly noticeable in the three collections that form the basis of Martens's selection for *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*. Even in the poems that Martens selected for his translation, this practice becomes apparent. By no means is the recurring vocabulary restricted to trees. The word "fierce", for instance, occurs five times in four different poems. Martens translates the adjective with four different words depending on the context, sometimes by necessity. It becomes problematic, when Walcott uses repetition within a single poem to add coherence or imply an inner logic or to connect a number of individual poems. This is but one example of how the translator's choice may affect the overall impression.

Other motifs that recur in the selection include different forms of weather, which are mentioned in each of the three sections comprising *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*. In the beginning, different forms of precipitation are described – rain, snow, ice, dew, drizzle, thunderstorm, and fog –, later heat becomes more prominent. Each section contains a poem in which Walcott uses lace to describe some detail found in nature.[59] However, nature and landscape are more than just a backdrop as Walcott frequently uses semantic fields referring to nature as a means of visualizing less tangible phenomena such as death, music, language, history, or religion in the individual poems. Similarly, in each section the figure of an assassin appears. In four poems, metamorphoses take place; in another four, the motif of the moon recurs. References to art range from pastoral paintings to frescoes and include the artists Cuyp, Piero della Francesca, and Albrecht Dürer. There are descriptions of photographs that appear ekphrastic, and in the final section of the volume, descriptions of the Spanish conquerors are reminiscent of illustrations typical for history books. The fact that the imagery in the last section of the collection is strikingly static enhances the impression that kinetic imagery predominates in the preceding poems.

In Martens's selection, there is a discernible shift of emphasis regarding Walcott's central concerns. In his epilogue to *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*, Martens recognizes the fact that certain themes recur in much of Walcott's oeuvre: "Gemeinsam sind Walcotts dramatischen und lyrischen Werken die Themen des verdorbenen Paradieses, der Identitätssuche und der existentiellen Heimatlosigkeit" (1989, 97). However, his selection does not convey such a thematic focus.

Similarly, by omitting the subdivision of *The Fortunate Traveller* into "North – South – North" sections it is not possible to notice the underlying pattern that this very structure implies. As a result, one is not likely to read the poems in this section in terms of

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[59] In "In the Virgins," boulders are trimmed with lace; in "Jean Rhys" breakers are elegantly pleated like lace, and in *Mittsommer* XLIII, *iii* the surf surrounds the islands like lace.

a journey. The only hint towards this interpretation is the title of the original collection as indicated on the page preceding this subsection. However, since the title poem is part of Martens's selection, this likely goes unnoticed. Walcott, on the other hand, almost forces this interpretation on the reader.

The striking number of references to weather in the Martens's selection is one example that illustrates how the emphasis on certain recurring motifs undergoes a shift, as well. Another case in point is references to myths that draw much more attention in his selection than is the case in each separate volume in which the poems originally appeared. Perhaps Martens's view that allegory and myth make up the structure of Walcott's works accounts for his decision to include a comparatively large number of poems revolving around this motif in various forms (1989, 97). J. D. McClatchy observes how "Walcott's mode has […] shifted from the mythological to the historical, from fictions to facts, and his voice has gotten more clipped and severe" (1993, 359) in the three volumes that form the basis for Martens's selection. This is yet another indication that Martens's shift of emphasis alters the perception of Walcott's oeuvre.

Considering the poems Martens chooses to omit is equally revealing: He does not include any of the three poems that King describes as "openly personal" (2004, 408) and which conclude the "South" section of *The Fortunate Traveller*. Whereas Walcott concludes the volume with an optimistic vision of the future, the translation ends with the pessimistic view of "The Fortunate Traveller." None of the poems in which according to David Mason "Walcott's own mature voice is most evident" (1986, 272) find their way into the German translation, either. In the epilogue to *Erzählungen von den Inseln*, Martens writes that his selection for this volume allows the reader to observe a development in Walcott's poetry (1993, 133). This could have already been the case in *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*.

In 1988, Mark A. McWatt takes note of another tendency in Walcott's "latest poetry," namely an "increasing concern with the figure of the poet, [sic] and the business of writing poetry itself" (1614). He observes that this tendency becomes most apparent in "The Hotel Normandie Pool" from *The Fortunate Traveller* and various poems of *Midsummer*. In this light, it is useful to consider how the individual volumes connect with each other and what themes and motifs remain important, in order to further illustrate how Martens's selection affects the reception of Walcott's poetry by a German readership.

2.2.3 Interconnectedness: The collections in the context of Walcott's oeuvre

Different critics notice a continuity in various subjects and motifs throughout Walcott's oeuvre: DeMott considers "Koenig of the River" a continuation of Walcott's 1950s poetry concerned with the rise and fall of empire (1993, 302). Hamner finds evidence of Walcott's interest in "experimenting with the interrelationship between the writing process and subject matter" (1993, 10) in poems such as "Forest of Europe," "The Star-Apple Kingdom," and "The Hotel Normandie Pool," among others. In fact, both themes continue to fascinate the poet at least up until *Omeros*. Clara Rosa de Lima comments on the way painterly poems evolve in the course of Walcott's oeuvre which can be observed in poems such as "Piano Practice," "Hurucan," and *Midsummer* II. Although she recognizes that

"Walcott has always been painterly precise in his exact descriptions of colour" she argues that in the *Midsummer* poem he takes his technique to another level (1991, 184).

A theme that comes into focus repeatedly is Walcott's concern with the North vs. the South, which features most obviously in *The Fortunate Traveller*. However, it is neither new, nor limited to this volume: While King argues that "the spine of *The Star-Apple Kingdom* was a flight from the South" (2004, 408), McCorkle proposes that *Midsummer* "moves fully into the 'South'" (1986, 10). Baugh even suggests that a division into poems about "Here" and "Elsewhere" applies to "virtually all of [Walcott's] collections" (1991, 126). To a certain degree, such assertions may be the result of an interpretation from retrospect.[60] In case of *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, they seem almost forced considering the collection as a whole.

Ismond offers a more multifaceted view of the North-South relations in *Midsummer* as one of a myriad of other concerns. At times, these relations are burdensome, at others they openly collide. Ismond argues that poems and poet alike "commute […] between the metropolitan scenes of North America and the Caribbean landscape" (1986, 78). In addition, she points to a shift in attitude: Although exile is one theme of the book, Walcott begins to consider himself a traveller, rather than an exile. The fact that the first poem is set in Trinidad is crucial as it is the "home base" from which "he makes his excursions North […] and South" (ibid).

In the German translation, the travel motif is hardly noticeable. On the one hand, the omission of subdivisions in the section from *The Fortunate Traveller* makes it harder to detect. McClatchy criticizes the same omission in Walcott's *Collected Poems* when he writes: "[T]hat arrangement is lost in the *Collected's* curtailments" (1993, 359f.). On the other hand, Martens's selection puts much emphasis on poems that refer to Europe, be it in terms of European myths and works of literature or in terms of a European setting. If Walcott himself was repeatedly criticized for being Eurocentric (cf. Breslin 2002-2003, 175f.), Martens's selection only reinforces this perception. It is possible that this serves the aim of making the works of the still unknown poet more accessible for a German audience by offering points of reference with which they can identify more easily. However, rather than stressing the foreign as is his expressed aim, he emphasizes common grounds.

Certain motifs appear with an almost obsessive frequency. One case in point is the Romantic idea of nature as language and even a book. In Walcott's poems, written language can thus be found in the "scattered manuscripts of snow" ("Forest of Europe"), in "the ocean [that] kept turning blank pages // looking for History" ("The Sea is History"), in "the laurel's imprint" ("Egypt, Tobago"), in "the gull [that] screeches its message, / opening its wings like a letter" ("From This Far"), in "the hooves and horn-points anagrammed in stars" ("Europa"), in "ideograms of buzzards / over the Chinese groceries" ("Port of Spain"), and "alliterative hills", "rocks hard as consonants, and rain-vowelled shales" ("Wales"). Spoken language is equally present in nature as when "flakes are falling

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[60] Similarly, one may read a passage from "The Hotel Normandie Pool" in *The Fortunate Traveller* in which "swifts with needle-beaks dart, panicking over / the pool's cloud-closing light" as foreboding Walcott's symbol of the swift in *Omeros*. With this much later work in mind, the image takes on much broader implications.

like a common language" ("North and South"), when "the wind […] said the same word / for 'wind' but here it sounded different," ("Greece"), when "the beaks of fledglings [are] uttering your name" ("Hurucan"), or when "all the nations of birds lifted together / the huge net of the shadows of this earth / in multitudinous dialects" ("The Season of Phanstasmal Peace"). Gray gives a concise account of the way Walcott "deploy[s] world-as-text figures" in *Midsummer*:

> By the time we come to *Midsummer*, the trope hypertrophies: Walcott speaks of 'pages in a damp culture,' 'canefields set in stanzas,' 'bright suburbs [that] fade into words' (I), 'boulevards [that] open like novels / waiting to be written. Clouds like the beginnings of stories' (XLIII), so that finally it becomes impossible to know whether we are traveling through landscape or language. This mutual enfiguring of nature and language constitutes at once an irreferential play, an inquiry into the relation between 'reality' and representation, and an assertion of Walcott's sense of the world as mythic […], existing outside of linear history. (2005, 119)

In an interview, Walcott explains how such parallels are obvious to him: "[A]ll those symbols for me that are there…like a crab scratching on the sand is exactly what the hand does on a piece of paper" (Pérez-Fernández 2001, 176). In the Caribbean, he continues, you simply adapt what is happening in your surroundings to your writing. For example, "[t]he bird in the sky, the frigate-bird is looking for something, like you may be looking for a phrase. […] The ant is getting up early and working" (ibid).

As much as the three volumes have in common, there are also essential differences. For instance, Howard notes that the poems of *Midsummer*

> do not offer […] the rich brocade of *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, nor the colloquial vigor of *The Fortunate Traveller*. What they do offer is a risky, uneven exploration, in which passages of great resonance and aural beauty must compete with awkwardness and uncertainty (1985, 164).

In the German edition, this does not become clear as no variation of style is noticeable in Martens's translations of poems from the different volumes. Hence, German readers cannot observe any development of that kind. McCorkle describes another development that Martens's consistent use of archaic structures does not account for, namely that "Walcott increasingly seeks to site himself and history in the present, […] to map its tensions traced in language" (1986, 10).

On different occasions, critics have commented on the problems associated with separating poems from the context of Walcott's individual volumes. Many are sceptical of this practice, among them the poet Calvin Bedient who writes in a perceptive essay on *The Fortunate Traveller*:

> When you think of the volume as a whole you may miss purpose […] but feel ready to scrap with anyone who wanted to take from you, say, 'Early Pompeian,' 'Hurucan,' 'Wales,' or 'Jean Rhys,' various though their subjects and treatments are and though only the last two are free of faults (1993, 321).

What is noteworthy about Bedient's rather emotional response is that Walcott had originally published many poems of the volume in magazines, though of the titles he mentions this is only true for "Jean Rhys." Nevertheless, it illustrates how important the interplay of all poems in the volume is for understanding each individual poem by considering it in a greater context.

Reviewers of Walcott's *Collected Poems 1948-1984* are similarly sceptical of the success of such a selection. Balakian regrets that *Midsummer* is not included in its entirety, as he considers it "a kind of book-length poem" (1993, 354). McClatchy argues that while "[s]ome poets gain by being read in bulk like this" he does not think that this is the case with Walcott and concludes: "This *Collected Poems*, then, is not the best way – nor should it be the first way – to read Walcott" (1993, 360).

King describes how difficult it was for British and American readers to recognize the development in Walcott's early poetry because of the different editions available in their respective home countries:

A British reader, for example, would not have had access to "Origins" before the 1986 *Collected Poems*. That poems from *In a Green Night* follow parts of "The Castaway" sequence in the American *Selected Poems* means that readers need to consult the British edition to see the full power of the sequence and have a clear view of Walcott's devlelopment [sic] as a poet. Until a Complete Walcott is published, the study of his poetry will depend on the arbitrariness of the edition the reader has available." (2004, 206)

This applies the more to German readers for whom Martens's selection is the first opportunity to become acquainted with a greater portion of Walcott's work. Instead of witnessing certain developments in Walcott's oeuvre, German readers are more likely to get an impression of a versatile poet who uses an unvaried style in a variety of forms and draws on an abundant repertoire of themes. Martens does not reveal much about his selection criteria for *The Star-Apple Kingdom*. However, in his epilogue to *Erzählungen von den Inseln* he implies that this was precisely what he was aiming at with his first selection. When he writes about the difficulties of making a selection from Walcott's oeuvre, he suggests that this has not been an easy task in either case and uses the following terms to describe the underlying premises for each volume:

Ging es damals darum, einen hierzulande so gut wie unbekannten Dichter mit einer kleinen Reihe seiner neueren Gedichte überhaupt erst einmal zu entdecken und vorzustellen, zugleich seine essentielle Fremdheit zuzulassen, ohne zu befremden, so mußte es diesmal darum gehen, das erste noch skizzenhafte Bild zu erweitern, der Auswahl eine Erstreckung zu geben, die eine Vorstellung vom Umfang und der Vielfalt des Werkes des inzwischen mit dem Literaturnobelpreis geehrten Autors zu geben vermag. (1993, 133)

In his epilogue to *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*, he mentions dialect as a criterion for excluding individual poems. As a result, some of the most distinguished and oft-

discussed poems like "The Schooner *Flight*" or "The Spoiler's Return" did not find their way into the selection.[61] However, Martens has valid reasons for this decision:

> Geringfügige Abweichungen vom Ausgangstext, die in dem kleinen Rahmen von vier Zeilen erträglich sein mögen, summieren sich über vierhundertsechsundsiebzig Zeilen zu einem anderen Gedicht. Wenn auch die Arten der grammatischen Abweichungen vom englischen Standard überschaubar sind, ergäbe sich zusammengenommen im Deutschen nicht das Fremde dieses Patois, sondern nur Befremdliches im Deutschen. (1989, 103)

An essay by Brodsky – translated by Martens – serves as an introduction to the volume. In this essay, Brodsky quotes four lines from "The Schooner *Flight*" which by now have become epigrammatic. Considering these four lines in the source and target language illustrates Martens's point well:

> I'm just a red nigger who love the sea,
> I had a sound colonial education,
> I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
> and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation. (ibid. 6)

Martens's translation of Walcott's memorable and expressive lines reads as follows:

> Ein roter Nigger, der lieben das Meer,
> Bin ich, mit echt kolonialem Diplom;
> Hab Holländisch, Nigger und Englisch in mir,
> Bin entweder niemand oder eine Nation. (ibid)

Even in this short passage, the awkwardness of the broken syntax in combination with inversion in the first two lines creates exactly the effect Martens describes and wants to avoid.[62] Well aware of the fact that German readers miss out on some great poems of Walcott's oeuvre, he is right to conclude that it is something that cannot be helped (1989, 104).

There are reviewers of the translation who criticize Martens for this categorical exclusion. Thies, for instance, acknowledges the enormous thematic variety of Walcott's poetry, yet argues that it could have been even greater had Martens included 'Creole' poems. He believes that Martens decided against including such poems in order to avoid racial stereotypes connected with a language use in German for which Thies uses the

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[61] McWatt writes that "'The Spoiler's Return' is important not only for its masterful depiction of Trinidadian Calypso culture or for its political and social satire, but also because it represents perhaps the high point of Walcott's handling of dialect in his poetry" and continues to quote Seamus Heaney who "describes [the poem] as 'epoch-making'" (1988, 1614).

[62] In 1992, Martens attempts a translation of the first part of the sequence "The Schooner *Flight*" which is published in *Lettre International*. Here he translates the four lines differently: "Bin nur ein roter Neger, der lieben das Meer, / Mit echt kolonialem Diplom; / Hab Holländisch, Nigger und Englisch in mir, / Bin entweder niemand oder eine Nation." (15) On 24 July 1999, the paper *Die (literarische) Welt* published the 1989 version of these four lines titling the English version "I'm Just A Red Nigger" and the German version "Ein roter Neger" thus implying that it is a full poem by Walcott rather than merely a short quote. The impression is further enhanced by naming Martens as the translator of the *poems*: "Die Gedichte wurden ins Deutsche übertragen von Klaus Martens."

derogative term "Negersprache" (1989). Martin R. Dean arrives at the rather dubious conclusion that the problem of translating dialect could have been solved had the selection been published as a bilingual edition (1989). However, it is more plausible that the inadequacies of the translation of extensive Creole passages into German – and virtually any foreign language – would simply become more bluntly noticeable. Besides, Creole poems are the exception rather than the rule in the three volumes from which Martens made his selection. Dean's comparison of Walcott with the Jamaican poet Louise Bennett is inapt, beyond the scope of the corpus for Martens's translation.

Like Dean, other reviewers of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* criticize that merely the title poem appears side by side with the source language poem; the majority of them seem to prefer bilingual to monolingual editions. Manifold as their reasons are, they illustrate that there is a strong scepticism toward poetry in translation: Thies, for instance, argues that a complete bilingual edition would have allowed its readers to verify the translation (1989).[63] Schmitt openly admits that he does not pay much attention to the translation itself, because he cannot judge its quality (1993). Dittberner even encourages readers to write their own translation of the title poem using the bilingual version for verification. He writes: "Zudem ist in diesem Fall der Originaltext mitgeteilt, so daß jeder Leser selbst in den strengen Genuß kommen kann, eine eigene Version herzustellen" (1989).

2.3 Tendencies in Martens's translation

2.3.1 Questions of style

Archaisms and archaization

Versatile as Martens's selection is in terms of setting, subject matter, and motifs, what his translations of all poems share is a tendency for "conscious archaization" to borrow Bassnett's terms (1980, 101). Often, however, it lacks correspondence in the source text. For instance, Martens translates the closing line of "R.T.S.L." "not needing any book" (*SAK* 37) as "eines Buches nicht bedürftig" (22)[64] and the unobtrusive phrase "and though / there is no harder prison than writing verse" (*SAK* 40) in "Forest of Europe" as "und ob doch / kein härteres Gefängnis ist, denn Verseschreiben" (24). At other times, Martens renders common words with dated terms such as "Binder" (21) for "tie" in "R.T.S.L." or "Überhebung" for "presumption" and "Glast" (55) for "glare" in "North and South."[65]

On numerous occasions, this tendency proves to be a means of recreating a variety of prosodic features of Walcott's poems. Due to his academic background, Martens has extensive theoretical knowledge of the rhetorical and poetic features of poetry. Therefore, he is likely to recognize such features – subtle as they may be at times – almost instantly. Examples that illustrate Martens's awareness of the source texts' prosodic means and the

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[63] Reviewers of *Erzählungen von den Inseln* still use the same argument (cf. Schmitt 1993; Buch 1993).
[64] All further references to *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* appear parenthetically in the text.
[65] Whereas in the above instances there is no apparent explanation for Martens's preference of the archaic, in a passage from "Europa," he appears to replace one archaism with another with the aim of creating a similar effect in a more suitable place when he translates the phrase "as [...] beast and woman come" (34) as "da Tier und Weib [...] kommen" (64).

focus he puts on them are legion. In his translation of "The Star-Apple Kingdom," for instance, he renders "seashell grotto" (*SAK* 55) as "Grotte / aus Seemuscheln" (42) and "seashell silence" (*SAK* 57) as "Meermuschelschweigen" (48). It seems plausible that the repetition of the consonant /m/ serves to create an effect similar to Walcott's alliteration, since there is no other apparent reason for Martens's using two different words for "sea": The words do not occur within close proximity, which may make a German translator consider variation to avoid repetition. Even the syllable count and stress pattern are identical.

Inversion and metre

Two of the most prominent features in Martens's translation are inversions and dated prenominal genitive phrases both of which occur in virtually every poem. Inversion often appears to serve the aim of (re)creating a regular metre or the rhythmic quality of a poem. This becomes apparent when considering dactylic lines such as "whether they open the heart like a shirt" (*SAK* 36) or "and something that once had a fearful name" (*SAK* 37) in "R.T.S.L." In the first case, Martens changes the metre to an iamb: "ob wie ein Hemd sie's Herz dann öffnen" (21). In the second case the German line, though longer, is dactylic, too: "und etwas, dem einmal zu eigen ein furchtbarer Name war" (22). Sometimes, the metre is more regular in Martens's translation than in the source text: When Walcott writes in *Midsummer* XV of the persona "hoping to be another Albrecht Dürer" (25), the translation reads "und sieht als neuer Albrecht Dürer sich" (86) instead of "und sieht sich als neuer Albrecht Dürer."

In a brief reflection on his translation approach in the epilogue to *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*, metre is the first thing Martens mentions:

> Was das Formale betrifft, so zeigen Walcotts Gedichte keine besondere Strenge, aber eine Regelmäßigkeit der Taktzahl. […] Dies ist, mit gewissen Freiheiten, zu reproduzieren, so lange Walcotts […] formaler Konservatismus gewahrt bleibt" (1989, 102)

In "R.T.S.L." this focus results in a more archaic and solemn tone due to the repeated use of dated expressions, inversion, and prenominal genitives. In this specific case, it may be considered apt for the occasion of an elegiac poem in memory of Robert Lowell. Walcott himself says with reference to Rosetti's translation of Francois Villon's *Ballade des Dames du Temps Jadis*: "Elegy is by nature archaic and therefore it's OK for that tone to be in there in the translation" (1996, 20).

Dittberner notes a great faithfulness to metre in *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* (1989). Like Thies, he offers an alternative translation of parts of a poem from the collection and chooses the opening of "The Star-Apple Kingdom." Dittberner uses the following terms to contrast his approach with that of Martens: "Ich setze damit mehr auf den episch-lyrischen Sprachfluß und auf gedankliche Klarheit gegenüber einer größeren Treue zu Metrum und Vers, zu dichterischem Pathos, die Martens im Auge haben mag" (1989). The very strength of Martens's translation is the rhythmic quality as in the roughly dactylic line "'Herefords am Abend im Flußtal des Wye'" (26) for Walcott's alternation of spondee and pyrrhic in "'Herefords at sunset in the Valley of the Wye'" (*SAK* 46).

Dittberner's translation does not share this quality. He translates "'Herefords im Abendglanz des Wye-Tals'" (1989).

Sentence structure

In other poems, Martens's bending the syntax in order to remain faithful to the metre can be quite disconcerting. Although he decidedly wants to avoid this effect – therefore excluding Creole poems – he falls into this trap by resolving to frequent inversion. Often, the sentence structure becomes unnecessarily difficult, making it hard to understand a passage at first reading. This is the case in the following examples from "The Star-Apple Kingdom," *Midsummer* XXXI, and XLIII / vii, respectively: "Sie streichelte sein Haar jetzt, bis weiß es wurde, / aber verstehen konnte sie nicht, daß keine Macht er wollte " (36), "Weitersingen werden die Sirenen, sie werden niemals / ihres eintönigen Flusses Strömen anrufend stören" (87), and "zur Debatte sich finden können drei Männer noch immer / unter neuem Straßenschild" (95). In none of the corresponding passages of the source texts does Walcott use inversion.

Occasionally, Martens's use of inversion results in garden-pathing which Boase-Beier describes as "[t]he process of leading the reader in one direction only to change direction suddenly" (2011, 22). This is something that Walcott plays with repeatedly throughout his oeuvre. In "The Star-Apple Kingdom," for instance, Walcott writes: "He didn't hear the roar of the motorcycles / diminish in circles like those of the water mill" (*SAK* 54). The verb "diminish" alters the noise of motorcycles that the first line conjures up. Martens translates: "Er hörte nicht das Röhren der Motorräder / fortkreisen in Wellen" (40). Although he manages to convey the sound of motorcycle engines in the first line, the run-on line does not lead to a case of garden-pathing as Martens merely describes the sound in more detail. The reader does not need to adjust the image. A different case in point occurs in his translation of "The Fortunate Traveller" where he creates a similar effect when he places the negation at the end of the sentence: "Das Herz der Finsternis ist Afrika nicht" (73).

The opening lines of "The Star-Apple Kingdom" illustrate how Martens's archaic style may even lead to mistakes that result in a shift of meaning. Walcott writes: "There were still shards of an ancient pastoral / […] / […] / surviving from when the landscapes copied such subjects as / 'Herefords at sunset in the Valley of the Wye.'" In Martens's translation, subjects copy landscapes, rather than vice versa: "Es gab alter Pastoralen Scherben noch / […] / […] / aus einer Zeit, da Motive die Landschaft kopierten, wie / 'Herefords am Abend im Flußtal des Wye.'" At first reading, one may think that this is yet another inversion; however, this reading is syntactically impossible as the plural verb can only refer to "Motive," not to "Landschaft." Martens's translation lacks the irony of the fact that indigenous Caribbean landscapes imitate subjects of English pastoral paintings (cf. King 2004, 363).

King relates an event in Walcott's student days at Mona that illustrates the origin of this idea:

'Walcott told the story of how, when he was a student at Mona, he was travelling through Bog Walk, a scenic valley in Jamaica, along with Professor Sherlock, a Jamaican, and an English Professor [sic], when Sherlock commented; 'Beautiful, isn't

it.' To this the Englishman replied 'It is like a meaner sort of Wye Valley.' 'Which means' Walcott interpreted for his audience 'that the Jamaican landscape can break its ass trying, but it would never quite achieve the effort required.' 'This typifies the kind of experience we have been subjected to in every single nerve-end and aspect of our lives as colonials – a life of humiliation even in a remark like that.' (ibid, 87)[66]

The impression of this almost epiphanic moment is deeply engraved in the poet's memory and finds expression in the opening lines. With this in mind, the shift in the German translation – be it a misinterpretation, a typographical or syntactical error – gains even greater significance.

Prenominal genitives

As is the case with inversions, prenominal genitives often result in unnecessarily complicated structures. At times, they obstruct the reading flow or even obscure the imagery. In "The Star-Apple Kingdom" Walcott writes about a woman who is the embodiment of all women before her including those "who bore milk pails to cows / in a pastoral sunrise" (*SAK* 57). Martens translates: "Sie war / eine aus dem fließenden schwarzen Fluß / von Frauen, […] / […] / die während eines Sonnenaufgangs Pastorale / Milcheimer zu Kühen trugen" (46). The reader is tempted to pause after "Sonnenaufgangs" and read the enjambed "Pastorale / Milcheimer" as a semantic unit rather than "eines Sonnenaufgangs Pastorale." Although the capitalization of "Pastorale" indicates the noun phrase, the use of prenominal genitive is so uncommon and archaic that the reader may even think it a typographical error. This effect is further enhanced when reading the poem aloud.

Near the end of "North and South" Walcott describes how winter is defeated by spring:

> The winter branches are mined with buds,
> the fields of March detonate the crocus,
> the olive battalions of the summer woods
> will shout orders back to the wind. To the soldier's mind
> the season's passage round the pole is martial,
> the massacres of autumn sheeted in snow, as
> winter turns white as a veteran's hospital. (*FT* 15)

In the enumerations of the first sentence, Walcott uses short and simple SVO phrases. Repeatedly he interrupts the iambic metre, with only one line in iambic pentameter. Of special interest are the two cases when he uses a spondee to achieve an even more staccato pattern. Significantly, this is the case in "March detonate" and "shout orders." In this way, the stress pattern resembles the sounds of detonations and of shouting orders. The name of the first month of spring adds to the semantic field of war and conjures up the image of soldiers marching. One might even go as far as arguing that the monotony of the soldiers'

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[66] 'The Problem Facing W. I. Leaders: Through the Eyes of Derek Walcott in His Poems "The Star-apple [sic] Kingdom"', *Voice of St Lucia*, 18 June 1978, 10, 11, 15 at 10.

marching receives emphasis by virtue of anaphora and parallelism. In the two final lines, this pattern is slowly resolved until it gives way to a more gently flowing dactyl.

Martens creates quite different effects in his translation, which reads:

Vor Knospen sind die Winterzweige hohl,

aus Feldern des März wird Krokus explodieren,

Bataillone im Oliv der Sommerwälder

werden antworten dem Wind mit Befehlen. Dem Soldaten

ist kriegerisch der Jahreszeiten Polumrundung,

sind die Herbstmassaker mit Schnee verhüllt,

da weiß der Winter wird, wie's Veteranenkrankenhaus. (58)

Martens uses three inversions, two of which occur in the first sentence. The inversion in the opening line of the stanza sets the tone. While Martens's version is less monotonous as it lacks anaphora and parallelisms, he does try to recreate the staccato pattern of the metre. The opening line, for instance, is iambic pentameter. In most of the subsequent lines, the metre is iambic, too, but in the lines referring to the fields of March and the orders being shouted, Martens interrupts this pattern making it more melodious. In addition, his version is more euphemistic: In the opening line, he omits the metaphor of buds as mines and describes the branches as hollow, although it is not clear how a branch would be hollow from buds. Instead of shouting their orders, the battalions answer with orders. Most significant is the lack of interplay between formal and semantic aspects in the translation.

Discrepancies in tone

Throughout the selection, there are instances where Martens's style results in a discrepancy between what is said and how it is said. In the beginning of "North and South," for example, Walcott writes: "I accept my function / as a colonial upstart at the end of an empire" (*FT* 11). According to Wyke "there is a shameful sense of colonialist self-deprecation" in this statement. Arguably, this is not the case in Martens's translation in which the lyrical I uses a language that is dated and artificial: "nehme meine Rolle ich an / als kolonialer Parvenü am Ende eines Imperiums" (55). Both, the inversion in the first quoted line and the loanword "Parvenü" in the second contrast the humbleness of the assertion.

A short dialogue sequence in "The Fortunate Traveller" introduces the opposing positions of the lyrical I who is associated with the World Bank and the representatives of a Third World country. The whole scene establishes a notion of illegality; everything hints at an unofficial contract between the two parties. The conversation serves to underline this impression:

"Then we can depend on you to get us those tractors?"

"I gave my word."

"May my country ask you why you are doing this, sir?"

Silence.

"You know if you betray us, you cannot hide?" (*FT* 89)

The dialogue is realistic and resembles spoken language. From the very beginning, the dependency of one party on the other becomes clear from the question in the first quoted line. The threat in the question following the pause is obvious and unmistakable. This is different in Martens's translation:

"Sie werden uns sicher die Traktoren besorgen?"

"Ich gab mein Wort."

"Darf mein Land fragen, mein Herr, warum Sie das tun?"

Schweigen.

"Sie wissen, verraten Sie uns, so finden wir Sie." (70)

Translating the opening phrase of the first question into German is not an easy task. A literal translation would result in a lengthy line. If Martens wants to avoid this and recreate the structure, he can only imply the relationship of dependency instead of spelling it out like Walcott does. More importantly, though, Martens's dialogue is less colloquial and therefore does not sound natural. The use of past tense, for instance, is less common in spoken than in written German, the use of "mein Herr" unusual and if it was used at all, the end position would be more natural. It is striking that the longer lines in Martens's translation are loosely dactylic and more rhythmical than the corresponding lines of the source text.

In XIV from *Midsummer*, the lyrical I reminisces about his childhood days when he first encountered literature at his aunt's house. The poem makes the Caribbean landscape come alive and with very few words conjures up a vivid image of the local flora and fauna, the poor dwellings, and the roads that are often no more than rough country roads. In this poem, Martens's elevated style seems especially incongruent: He uses inversions such as "die Läden schlossen wie Lider sich der Mimose / Ti-Marie" and "Geschichten, die meinem Bruder und mir sie erzählte" (85) and prenominal genitives like "Ihre Blätter waren der Karibik Bibliotheken" (85). Only in the exclamation of the lyrical I near the end of the poem does Walcott arguably use a more elevated style when he writes: "The luck that was ours, those fragrant origins!" (*M* 24). However, if one was to consider this a case where Walcott "overwrites," to use Breslin's term, (2002-2003, 177), Martens even overwrites Walcott when he translates: "Welch Glück wir hatten, solch duftende Herkunft!" (85)

Self-reflexivity

With his tendency for archaization, Martens draws a lot of attention to language, although it is mostly unobtrusive in the source texts. In *The Star-Apple Kingdom* and *The Fortunate Traveller*, an elaborate Standard English prevails, occasionally interspersed with colloquial language. Exceptions are those poems in which Walcott uses Creole extensively. Critics have commented on and discussed them in much detail. However, since Martens categorically excludes these specific poems this aspect is mostly irrelevant for his translation strategies.[67]

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[67] The only dialect passage in the entire translation appears in the final section of "The Fortunate Traveller," in which the speech of a local named Philippe is related over the course of four lines.

Critics' opinions about Walcott's language vary significantly: Some contrast his earlier poems with later ones, implying that a shift has occurred, others point out differences between individual poems of one specific collection. Breslin writes that "bombast and overreaching" are "familiar faults" of Walcott's earlier poetry, but finds no trace of such faults in the closing poem of *The Fortunate Traveller*, i.e. "The Season of Phantasmal Peace" (1987, 181). At the same time, he praises those poems that "use the full resources of English in a way that most contemporary work – clipped prosy, and understated – does not even attempt to do" (ibid, 182). DeMott admires "the brilliance with which native dialects are […] transformed into instruments of public range, even grandeur" throughout *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, yet he finds traces of "a sin visible at the start of [Walcott's] career – a taste for portentousness" (1993, 302) in the poem "In the Virgins" of the same collection.

According to King, "a view held by many critics" is that poems such as "North and South" and "The Fortunate Traveller" are "overwrought;" Roger Garfitt is one of these critics who in turn "praised 'The Hotel Normandie Pool' and 'The Spoiler's Return' for their fine tuning of language and use of the colloquial" (King 2004, 409). While "The Spoiler's Return" is one of the poems that Martens excludes because of the extensive use of Creole English, he also decides against "The Hotel Normandie Pool" and favours two poems that Garfitt considers "overwrought." King continues to quote Morrison who refers to Walcott's diction as "refined," Denis Donoghue who agrees with other critics that "Walcott's style is too much for its own good," and Julian Symons who finds that "the whole book is marked by an unaffected eloquence which is one of the rarest qualities in modern poetry" (qtd. ibid). Similarly, Breslin writes about "skeptics [sic]" who have criticized Walcott's "language, either for its diction or for its form" (2002-2003, 177). One of them is Gerald Guinness who criticizes Walcott's "elevated diction and ornate syntax" and argues that "'Walcott often writes strongly and simply,' but 'at other times turgidly and with a numbing air of pretension.'" (qtd. ibid)[68]

In the sequence of poems that makes up *Midsummer*, Walcott's concern with portraying the ordinary gains importance. This emphasis becomes evident in his language use and is the subject of metapoetic passages. In IX, for example, Walcott writes: "Ah, to have / a tone colloquial and stiff" (*M* 19). In a 1982 interview conducted by James Atlas, the poet explains that he is aiming at "'the casual, relaxed throw of the thing, like something draped over a chair'" (qtd. in Howard 1985, 157). In addition to being reproached for Eurocentrism, Walcott now has to face criticism for being too North American. In McCorkle's words,

> [t]he poems of *Midsummer* arguably acquiesce to the conventions and poetics of the language of the colonialists in the rejection of the patois. One wonders if Walcott does not then become a 'North' American poet rather than an Antillean poet. In turn, in what ways does the more personal (and self-defining) poetry of *Midsummer* abrogate the very process of self-definition in the acquisition and maintenance of the conventions of a colonialist's culture. [sic] (1986, 11)

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[68] Gerald Guiness, *Here and Elsewhere: Essays on Caribbean Literature*. Río Piedras: Universidad de Puerto Rico Press, 1993, 152.

To make matters more complicated, the perception of Walcott's poetry may even differ from one country to another. King concisely describes the differences between England and the United States thus: "In England where poets still use metres the nightmare is excess" whereas "nothing can upset some Americans more than a pentameter" (2004, 409).

When German reviewers write about Walcott's language, it is often impossible to tell whether they refer to the source text or its translation. In his article on Walcott receiving the Nobel Prize, *hai* writes: "Das 'Lange Gedicht' bevorzugt er seit frühen Tagen. Dorthinein zwingt er einen wahrlich vermischten Wortschatz, stellt Salz und Eis und Frühling neben Begriffe wie Schriftstellerkongreß oder Rangierbahnhof." (1992) Dean claims that the epic style is characteristic of Walcott's poetry and adds: "Gerade das Sperrige ist indessen eine hohe Qualität dieser langen Gedichte. Der epische Duktus ist messerscharf kontrolliert" (1989). One cannot help but wonder whether the poems become even more unwieldy because of Martens's emphasis on the archaic. With reference to the title poem of the German selection, Dittberner argues that Walcott creates a language universe saturated with history (1989).

In the epilogue to *Erzählungen von den Inseln* Martens acknowledges Walcott's use of colloquialisms (1993, 138) and accounts for them in his translations, as well. Among others, the selection contains poems from *The Star-Apple Kingdom* and *The Fortunate Traveller* that Martens did not include in the first volume. Comparing his translations of these poems with those of the earlier volume, what is most striking is that there are few – if any – cases of inversions or prenominal genitives. Instead, Martens seems to make an effort to reproduce Walcott's plain, colloquial style. The reviews provide evidence of this new approach, as well: Schmitt, for instance, speaks of the poems' epic core and a mixture of colloquial and prosaic phrases (1993).

If dialect poems contrast the elaborate register of other poems in *The Star-Apple Kingdom* and *The Fortunate Traveller*, Martens's style does not offer any such contrasts or even variations of language registers. As if to make up for the loss, he dedicates a significant part of his epilogue to *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* to the different languages and registers in Walcott's poetry. Accordingly, he underlines that when Walcott uses Creole dialect, Spanish, or American and British English he does not merely do so in order to add colour to his works. Instead, Martens correctly explains:

> [D]as Kreolische, das Spanische, das Amerikanische und Englische [sind] Früchte des gleichen karibischen Lebensbaumes und Teil einer Vegetation, einer Flora und Fauna und einer wuchernden Mythologie, die nur hier gedeiht und ihren Ort dauernd neu schafft im Wechsel des Lichtes und des Bewußtseins. Das Ergebnis ist bei Walcott die kontrollierte Fülle seiner bildhaften Sprache, die den an nördliche Kargheit geschulten Leser des Angloamerikanischen (und des Deutschen) geradezu mit Eindrücken überhäuft […]. (1989, 99)

In his essay published in *Traum auf dem Affenberg* in which his revised version of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* appears, Martens points to the great influence of various Russian poets on Walcott's recent works, especially in terms of form. Martens argues that

having mastered the craft of writing verses, Walcott becomes even more outmoded in an Anglo-American context (1993, 69). At first sight, this may seem to explain his inflationary use of archaisms in the early translation. However, since he changes his approach in *Erzählungen von den Inseln*, the argument does not hold. Perhaps, it is an influence of Martens's own style, for even in the essay he uses dated terms occasionally.[69] Another explanation may be that according to Martens, Walcott feels especially drawn to 17th century literature from Great Britain and that his poetics largely rely on Mathew Arnold's ideas from the second half of the 19th century (1989, 97f.).

Although Martens uses both formal and informal language in his translation, inversions, prenominal genitives, and dated diction are characteristic of the entire collection. Often these archaic structures interrupt the reading process and make it unnecessarily difficult to understand entire passages. Moreover, they add a dated tone to the poems that is nonexistent in the source texts. According to Emily Greenwood, one point of criticism of Walcott's early poetry was anachronism in "his adherence to traditional form" (2005, 142). Martens's translation, on the other hand, is anachronistic in style and diction.

Meandering sentences

According to Martens, accounting for the foreignness of Walcott's meandering sentences is more challenging for the translator than reproducing what he refers to as "formaler Konservatismus" (1989, 102). Martens describes it thus:

> Komplizierter ist es, die Fremdheit der langen syntaktischen Fügungen zu übersetzen, wo oftmals zwischen Subjekt und Prädikat ganze Listen an Zwischenbemerkungen, ergänzenden Beobachtungen und weit verschlungenen Mataphern eingefügt sind. (ibid, 103)

Involved sentences are much more common in German than in English. Therefore, the special difficulty for a translator into German is to account for the effect on English readers.

Despite the unusual length of some of Walcott's sentences, the structure is usually plain, references clearly discernible even when a sentence runs over as many as eight lines. An example from "The Fortunate Traveller" illustrates this point:

> But fires
> drench them like vermin, quotas
> prevent them, and they remain
> compassionate fodder for the travel book,
> its paragraphs like windows from a train,
> for everywhere that earth shows its rib cage
> and the moon goggles with the eyes of children,
> we turn away to read. (*FT* 95f.)

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[69] For instance, Martens uses words like "Ruch" (66) and "Sänge " (67).

Walcott's sentence does not demand much from the reader in terms of the structure, but rather in the way the metaphor evolves and continuously expands. In Martens's translation, on the other hand, it is almost impossible for the reader to grasp the sentence structure at first reading:

> Aber Feuer
> ertränkt sie wie Ungeziefer, Quoten
> halten sie fern, und sie bleiben,
> Mitleidsfutter fürs Reisebuch,
> seine Absätze wie Fenster, vom Zug aus gesehen,
> denn wo überall die Erde ihren Brustkorb zeigt,
> und der Mond mit den Augen von Kindern stiert,
> wenden wir uns ab zum Lesen. (75)

At least the two commas at the end of the third and sixth line are superfluous and obscure the references. For instance, it becomes immediately clear in the source text that the first four lines are an enumeration. The translation, on the other hand, suggests that the fourth line is an insertion and the sentence will continue with a reference to the preceding phrase "und sie bleiben."[70]

Another strategy to convey the foreignness of Walcott's sentences is to recreate the English structure, strange as it may sound in German. Near the end of XXXII Walcott writes: "They move in schools, erect, pale fishes in streets; / transparent, fish-eyed, they skitter when I divide, / like a black porpoise heading for the straits" (*M* 45). What is striking is the amount of caesurae in each line. Martens makes even more insertions when he writes: "Sie ziehen, Straßenfische, in Schwärmen, bleich und aufrecht; / sie spritzen auseinander, fischäugig, durchsichtig, wenn ich, / ein schwarzer Delphin, sie teile, unterwegs zur Meeresenge" (88). Translating "skitter" as "spritzen" is an odd choice. This may be another instance where Martens aims at creating a prosodic effect similar to Walcott's repetition of /s/ in each line. Martens replaces it with the fricative [š]. However, Schrott achieves the same effect with a more suitable verb when he writes: "Aufrecht ziehen sie in schulen dahin wie fahle fische ohne halt / und stieben durchsichtig und fischäugig auseinander wenn ich in sie fahre / wie ein schwarzer tümmler der auf die meeresenge zuhält" (*MM* 75). Schrott creates neither caesurae nor end-stopped lines. His translation reads much more fluently than Martens's or Walcott's sentence.

Occasionally, Walcott's meandering sentences demand much concentration and sometimes even rereading. This becomes apparent in a poem from *Midsummer*. At first sight, Walcott's opening lines of XXXI read like a list of details that the lyrical I observes:

> Along Cape Cod, salt crannies of white harbours,
> white spires, white filling stations, the orthodox
> New England offering of clam-and-oyster bars,
> like drying barnacles leech harder to their docks

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[70] Using commas in this way sometimes even occurs in short statements such as "wird die Welt älter, um eine / Jahreszeit, doch weiser nicht sein" (56) for Walcott's "the world will be one season older but no wiser" (12) in "North and South."

as their day ebbs. (*M* 44)

Placing the verb "leech" very late in the sentence reinforces the effect. It marks a turning point in the sentence structure as it unites what seems like an enumeration of disparate images; for what all objects share is the quality of leeching like barnacles to the land. Despite the syntactical differences between the two languages, Martens adopts the structure of the source text:

> Auf Cape Cod salzwinkelige weiße Häfen,
>
> weiße Spitzen, weiße Tankstellen, als orthodoxes Opfer
>
> Neu Englands Muschel-und-Austern Bars, die,
>
> wie Entenmscheln, fester sich saugen am Dock,
>
> da ihr Tag verebbt. (87)

As in the source text, the first sentence seems to describe the setting by virtue of an enumeration of separate images and the verb "saugen" appears very late in the sentence although according to German syntax, it should occur after "Cape Cod." Instead of garden pathing, such an early position would build up the image one piece at a time from the very beginning. For the sentence to be grammatical in German, Martens turns it into a relative clause. Schrott provides an alternative solution that creates the same effect without bending the German syntax:

> Rund um Cape Cod die salzigen verstecke weißer häfen
>
> weißer kirchtürme, weißer tankstellen: orthodox
>
> wie New Englands opfergabe an muscheln-und-austern bars
>
> saugen sie sich wie austrocknende entenmuscheln hart an ihre docks
>
> um so mehr ihr tag verebbt. (*MM* 73)

Apart from adding a simile, Schrott also alters the meaning when he excludes the "clam-and-oyster bars" from the enumeration. In his translation, the opening images remain disparate impressions of an observer. These, in turn, are compared with the clam-and-oyster bars that are typical for the coast of New England. What unifies them in his interpretation is that they are orthodox. Only the clam-and-oyster bars leech to the land.[71]

Although Martens asserts that he strove to reproduce Walcott's meandering sentences as long as the structures of the German language allowed him to do so (1989, 103), he repeatedly opts for simplification when he could have recreated Walcott's structure without much difficulty. One such instance occurs in "North and South." In this poem, Walcott inserts five lines between the opening of a sentence and its coming to a close:

> So, once again, when life has turned into exile
>
> and nothing consoles, not books, work, music, or a woman,

---

[71] One may wonder whether knowing of Martens's translation influenced Schrott's in this specific case, as it is striking that both use the general word "Muscheln" for "clam" and choose "Entenmuscheln" out of a number of possible translations of "barnacles." In addition, neither translator hyphenates the last part of the compound "Muschel(n)-und-Austern Bars," i.e. "Muscheln-und-Austern-Bars."

and I am tired of trampling the brown grass,
whose name I don't know, down an alley of stone,
and I must turn back to the road, its winter traffic,
and others sure in the dark of their direction,
I lie under a blanket on an old couch
feeling the flu in my bones like a lantern. (*FT* 14)

Walcott creates a number of individual semantic unites, which he connects through the conjunction "and." The structure itself is not complicated as the conjunction indicates the beginning of a new unit. Nevertheless, at first reading one may lose sight of the bracket that the opening statement "So, once again, when life has turned into exile" forms with the two closing lines beginning with "I lie under a blanket." This bracket functions as a vessel for the insertions in between. Although recreating this effect in German is not difficult, Martens opts for a different solution:

Also wurde das Leben wieder Exil,
es trösten weder Bücher, Arbeit, Musik noch eine Frau,
und ich bin's müde, durch braunes Gras zu stapfen,
mit fremdem Namen, in eine steinerne Gasse,
und ich muß zurück zur Straße, zum Winterverkehr,
und anderen, gewiß im Dunkel ihrer Absicht,
ich liege auf kalter Couch unter einer Decke,
fühle in den Knochen die Grippe wie eine Laterne. (57)

In his translation, Martens does not create a bracket, but rather turns the insertions into a list of characteristics of a life that has itself become exile. The shift to the lyrical I lying on a couch seems abrupt. In the fourth quoted line, Martens adds ambiguity, as the phrase "mit fremdem Namen" can refer to either the lyrical I or to the grass.

Martens's tendencies for archaization and foreignization draw more attention to the corresponding passages than is the case in the source text. Greiner's general advice for caution thus proves to be legitimate:

Neben der Tatsache […], daß auch der philologisch erfahrene und bewußt vorgehende Übersetzer philologischen Irrtümern erliegt, zeigt sich hier, daß es auch stilistische/idiomatische *false friends* gibt, die viel problematischer sein können als lexikalische: daß sehr wortgenaue Übersetzungen völlig unproblematische Passagen in einer anderen Sprache Ton, Stilhöhe und stilistische Kohärenz einer Passage, damit aber die Figurenkonstitution und womöglich die gesamte dramatische Situation verändern können. (2004, 148)

Puns and wordplay

Although Martens claims that the act of punning is frowned upon by educated English and German speakers alike (1996, 32), Walcott uses puns and wordplays in many of his poems.[72] Martens describes the function of this practice thus: "Wie das Wortspiel

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[72] As Morris puts it: "Walcott is fond of wordplay, and is adept at it" (1991, 109).

mit einander ähnlichen Wörtern unähnliche Dinge ausdrückt, so hat die 'Pun' bei Walcott auch die Funktion, unähnliche und fern liegende Bereiche im Wort zusammenzuführen" (1996, 32). Translating puns demands a high degree of creativity as they can rarely be translated literally. This is the case with Walcott's word plays involving the image of leaves. According to Martens, these are central to Walcott's punning (ibid, 35). An example from "Map of the New World, [II] The Cove" shall suffice to illustrate this point: When Walcott writes, "I turn these leaves" (*FT* 26), he connects the act of reading literature with nature – a metaphorical field that never fails to spark his imagination. In Martens's translation, on the other hand, there is nothing unusual or innovative about the phrase "blättre ich um" (62). In German, "Blatt" is a homonym signifying both, a leaf and a sheet of paper. Accordingly, the translation merely describes how the lyrical I turns a page.

In "Europa," Walcott creates an atmosphere of eroticism. Accordingly, Morris notes that "[t]he poem is full of wordplay, much of it (appropriately) sexual *double entendre*" such as "Europa teasing with 'those flashes'" (1991, 109). While Morris's assertion is correct, he seems to overlook the ambiguity in the line he refers to. To detect it, one needs to consider the context in which the image appears. In the poem, the full moon is the cause of insomnia for the lyrical I. In the moonlight, the dark outlines of a tree and a hill are transformed into the body of a girl and that of a bull, respectively. This in turn conjures up the myth of Europa which the lyrical I begins to recall. As he imagines the unfolding of the myth, he reflects:

> Both would have kept their proper distance still,
> if the chaste moon hadn't swiftly drawn the drapes
> of a dark cloud, coupling their shapes.
>
> She teases with those flashes (*FT* 33)

In Morris's view, the female pronoun in the last quoted line clearly refers to the girl. As Martens's translation shows, another reading is possible and equally plausible: "Ja, er reizt mit jenen Augenblicken" (64). In Martens's reading, it is the moon, not the girl who teases with her "flashes." Since the gender of the moon is masculine in German, he replaces the female personal pronoun of the source text with a masculine one. According to Morris's interpretation, the girl teases with the flashes of silver drops splashing her bare breasts; according to Martens's, the moon teases with flashes of light that reveal the scene for only an instant. Both are equally valid readings, yet the translator has no choice but to decide in favour of one of the two.

As Walcott draws on the various languages that coexist in the Caribbean, even his puns transgress language boundaries. According to Martens, this is a new and unique way of applying the rhetorical device (1996, 32). While "heteroglossic puns" (Dvorak 2006, 52) take on special significance in *Omeros*, occasional examples occur in Walcott's earlier works, as well. In Martens's selection, "North and South" contains such a pun. At the very end of the poem, the lyrical I finds himself confronted with a case of everyday racism in rural Virginia:

when I collect my change from a small-town pharmacy,
the cashier's fingertips still wince from my hand
as if it would singe hers – well, yes, *je suis un singe*,
I am one of that tribe of frenetic or melancholy
primates who made your music for many more moons
than all the silver quarters in the till. (*FT* 16)

Walcott transforms anger into self-empowerment as spite gives way to a sense of pride in
the concluding lines of this poem. The lyrical I interprets the cashier's reaction as the
continuation of a long history of racism in the former slave state when he imagines the
woman's fear of being singed by the black hand of her customer. In the mind of the
(multilingual) persona, the very word evokes the French word for monkey. Although at
first sight the account of the cashier's reaction appears neutral, a hint of frustration or anger
may be detectable. Introducing the French statement with the words "well, yes" clearly
indicates the lyrical I's attitude of spite. Walcott does not stop at this, though. Instead, he
transforms the negative feelings into a positive self-perspective. After all, the very "tribe
[…] of melancholy / primates" to which the lyrical I feels he belongs has shaped an
important aspect of US-American culture by introducing blues.

Marta Dvorak argues that "[t]he metonymic gap of the subtly glossed" French
statement "establish[es] a distance between black, French creole culture (the 'Je') and
white, english/English culture' [sic] (the cashier but also the Anglophone reader)" (2006,
52). Burnett describes the scene as "a deeply painful moment" and finds the "punning
between English and French […] devastating" (2006, 32). However, she also
acknowledges that "[t]he abject statement '*je suis un singe*' – 'I am a monkey' – voices the
racist taunt, but goes on to do something with it that cancels out that abjection" (ibid).
Walcott ends the poem with another pun in the two final lines, which Burnett admires for
the "elegance and mastery of the figure, punning between quarter-dollar coins and the
lunar quarters" (ibid).

Martens translates this passage quite literally:
                              […] wenn
das Wechselgeld in der Kleinstadtapotheke ich
mir nehme, dann scheuen der Kassiererin Fingerspitzen
meine Hand, als ob sie die ihre versenge –
nun ja, *je suis un singe*, vom Zigeunerstamm
frenetisch-melancholischer Primaten, die für euch
Musik spielten, während vieler Monde mehr
als alle Silberdollar in der Kasse. (58f.)[73]

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[73] On various occasions, Martens translates words or phrases literally rather than idiomatically. For instance,
he renders "losing track of time" (*SAK* 52) as "verlor sie den Lauf der Zeit" (36) in the title poem. Similarly,
he translates "treble clef" literally instead of using the corresponding terminology "Violinschlüssel" when he
renders the phrase "[t]reble clef of the snail on the scored leaf" (*FT* 93) in "The Fortunate Traveller" as
"[d]reifacher / Schlüssel der Schnecken auf der Blätterpartitur" (73).

Various differences in Martens's translation of these lines are noteworthy: His use of inversion and prenominal genitive in the beginning of the quote seem especially out of place in the context of an everyday scene in a small town of the American South. Moreover, he omits the temporal adverb "still" which, according to Greenwood, "suggest[s] continuity." (2005, 141) In her insightful essay, Greenwood illustrates the implications of Walcott's use of temporal adverbs. She argues that

> the full extent to which Walcott's concept of time infuses and informs his use of language can be seen by his pointed use of temporal adverbs. These adverbs establish subtle and unobtrusive relationships between present and past, adding depth of field to the view of the past that is offered in the metaphors. (ibid, 132)

Martens's introduction to the heteroglossic pun with "nun ja" fails to convey a sense of spite. Instead, it sounds apologetic admitting the truth of the statement that follows. The pun itself is especially difficult to recreate in German. As Dvorak explains, "[t]he heteroglossic pun singe/singe is an antanaclasis, or homonymic pun, only to the eye, while to the ear it is a metaplasm (an alteration in the sound)" (2006, 52). Martens could have created an equivalent using the first person singular of "to sing" – "ich singe." It shares all the characteristics that Dvorak describes. However, in order to reproduce the pun by using this word, he would have had to alter the semantics of the passage significantly.

Nevertheless, the changes he does make are rather grave: His choice of the term "Zigeunerstamm" to account for the offensive connotation of the "commonly racist term" "tribe" (Burnett 2006, 32), results in a significant shift: The link between the lyrical I and African Americans and their music is replaced with a link to the Romani people and their music. The influence that the different musical traditions of African Americans and Romani people had on the music of the United States greatly varies. Consequently, Martens changes this aspect of the passage, as well, translating "who made your music" as "die für euch / Musik spielten." Playing music *for* people rather than making the music *of* a people are two very different things. Instead of conveying a sense of "heroic self-assertion" (ibid), Martens reinforces the cliché. In the final line, Martens uses the more familiar word "dollars" instead of "quarters" which have no equivalent in the German monetary system. Hence, to convey the meaning he would have had to use lengthy compounds such as 'Vierteldollar' or 'Vierteldollarmünzen.' However, there are likely to be no or few silver dollars in the register, as the bill is much more commonly used. Therefore, the foundation on which the comparison is based differs. In addition, the pun to the lunar phases is lost.[74]

Another notable difference in the translation of these lines is that Martens uses euphemistic terms to describe the cashier's reaction, which is much stronger in the source text. Such a tendency is detectable throughout the German volume, often in places where they render negative political implications in more neutral terms. In the same poem,

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[74] Perhaps to make up for some of the puns that cannot be recreated in German, Martens occasionally uses puns in places where Walcott does not. In *Midsummer* XLIII, v., Walcott describes how one of a group of old men "riddles the militia with his smiles" (60). Martens forms a neologism that combines the verbs "to riddle" and "to smile" when he translates: "jener durchlächelt die Milizsoldaten" (93). Schrott follows a different approach translating more literally: "der dort durchlöchert die miliz mit seinem breiten grinsen" (105).

Martens obscures the obvious reference to the Ku Klux Klan when he translates "white-robed horsemen" (*FT* 15) as "weißhemdiger Reiter" (58) and omits that "an old man" is "dressed like a tramp" (*FT* 16). In *Midsummer* XLIII, ii, "'the wrong done to our fathers'" (*M* 57) becomes "'das Unheil, getan / unseren Vätern'" (90). In "The Star-Apple Kingdom," "the dispossessed" (*SAK* 50) are merely "die Landlosen" (34) and black slaves on an old photograph are passively absent ("abwesend" (28)) rather than actively "excluded" (*SAK* 47). Walcott says about this passage:

> You see, people never painted black people in the Caribbean. […] And then there's a picture, a photograph, tinted and old, of the greathouse family. And outside the photograph, the frame, there is a sound, which is the sound of the people who've been left out of the photograph. […] That's just what frames the picture and that sound is heard or not heard later, the scream outside the painting. (1993)

2.3.2 Translating the Local

Néo-logie

Although Martens avoids the challenges of translating Creole or non-Standard English passages, he still has to face Walcott's creative language use that has its origins in the multilingual setting of his island home. Martens takes note of this fact in an essay published eleven years after his first book length translation of Walcott. He describes it thus:

> There is a *condition of founding*, of a fundamentally new and other poetry. […] [T]his new poetry takes the local as the multilingual and transcultural seriously and molds it into a reduced standard of what we already know but into a poetic language unheard of in its wonderful impurity (2000, 244).

Stephens argues that at the beginning of his career as a poet Walcott is looking for a new language to describe his Caribbean home. According to Stephens, this new language – or *néo-logie* – affects semantics and syntax alike (2012, 174).

As early as in 1934, Zora Neale Hurston refers to "the use of verbal nouns" as one of "the greatest contribution[s]" that African-Americans have made "to the [English] language" (1996, 245). Among other examples she mentions words like "[f]uneralize" and phrases such as "I wouldn't friend with her" or "[u]glying away" (ibid). Walcott goes even further: In numerous poems that Martens chose to translate, Walcott uses nouns as past participles as in "North and South" where there is "an old stag / spanielled by critics to a crag at twilight" (*FT* 13). In "The Star-Apple Kingdom" he uses past participles as adjectives as in "a black woman, shawled like a buzzard" (*SAK* 50) or motorcycles driving "down shuttered avenues" (*SAK* 54).

This language use confronts the translator with grave problems. In these and many other cases, Martens does not account for Walcott's use of *néo-logie* when he translates "ein alter Hirsch, / von Kritikern im Zwielicht an den Rand einer Klippe gekläfft" (57), "eine schwarze Frau, verhüllt wie ein Bussard" (34), and "vorbei an geschlossenen Läden" (40), respectively. In a final example from "The Star-Apple Kingdom," Walcott describes

the woman's face as a "map of parchment so rivered with wrinkles" (*SAK* 58). Again, Martens revises his original translation for the later edition changing it from "auf dieser pergamentenen Karte, / so geriffelt mit Runzeln" (48) to "auf dieser Karte aus Pergament, so durchbrochen von Runzeln" (259). Whereas in the first case, the participle "geriffelt" does convey the wavy surface of moving water, there is no reference to water or a river in the second case and neither translation recreates Walcott's adjective use of the past participle. [75]

There are other cases, though, in which Martens does find ways to create neologisms in German. For instance, he translates "bone-collared gentlemen" (*FT* 45) in "Jean Rhys" as "steifkragene Herren" (66) and "earringed ancestors" (*M* 44) in *Midsummer* XXXI as "ohrberingter Vorfahren" (87). In some cases, he even uses neologism where Walcott does not. For instance, he renders "on the roof / of the red iron market" (*FT* 13) in "North and South," as "auf dem Dach des roteisernen Marktes" (56) and "by the drizzling sea" (*FT* 25) in "Map of the New World, [I] Archipelagoes" as "an drieselnder See" (61).

A special case of *néo-logie* occurs in the omission of the obligatory "fire" after the verb "catch" as in the phrases "The sun's fuse caught" (*SAK* 55) in "The Star-Apple Kingdom" and "but however their flame trees catch, the green winds smell lime-scented" (*M* 57) in *Midsummer* XLIII/ii. Stephens writes extensively about this phenomenon, which is also evident in Walcott's book-length poem *Another Life*, and about the difficulties it creates for the translator:

> Ce qui est particulièrement frappant ici, c'est la liberté prise avec les contraintes des structures syntaxiques de l'anglais standard et plus précisément avec l'ordre canonique de la phrase: l'ellipse du complement *fire* après *catch* […]. Cette licence syntaxique s'explique, comme à de nombreux autres endroites, par la souplesse de la langue créole qui affleure. (2012, 176)

Although Malroux cannot account for the ellipsis in her French translation, she does create a similar effect of confronting her readers with the foreign in a different place of the line that follows.

Martens does not recreate the effect in his translation of "The Star-Apple Kingdom" when he writes: "Der Sonne Zündschnur fing Feuer" (42). The prenominal genitive phrase does not draw special attention to this passage, either, due to its inflationary use throughout the volume. In *Midsummer* XLIII/ii., Martens's translation is more puzzling for the reader: "doch greifen ihre Flammenbäume auch weit / so trägt der grüne Wind Limonenparfüm" (90). However, to Anglophone readers unfamiliar with the peculiarities of Creole language usage, Walcott's elliptical use of the word "catch" may be equally puzzling. In this case, the reference to fire is only implicit as the word "flame" in the tree's name conjures up this association. Therefore, it is not necessarily clear that the verb "catch" even refers to fire

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[75] There is, however, one example in his revised translation of "The Star-Apple Kingdom" where Martens does account for Walcott's "knee-hollowed steps": He changes his original translation "Auf den Stufen der verkrusteten Kathedrale, von Knien ausgehöhlt" (46) to "Auf den kniegekehlten Stufen / der verkrusteten Kathedrale" (257).

and a reader of the source text may arrive at an entirely different interpretation of this passage as well as the reader of the German translation.[76]

While Schrott does not account for the ellipsis, either, he translates the second part of the line more literally: "gleich ob die flammenbäume feuer fangen – die grünen winde riechen nach limonen" (*MM* 99). In Walcott's poem, this is the longest line. Martens decides to separate it into two thus creating lines of similar length throughout. In total, the German version counts five lines more than the source text. Schrott avoids this when he translates the line in its full length. His lines often appear lengthy and prosy. In Martens's translation, the lines are shorter, but the tendency to add lines increases in the *Midsummer* poems: Whereas in the preceding sections, only "Europa" and "Jean Rhys" contain additional lines, all but four of the poems included from *Midsummer* are made up of more lines than their English counterparts.

Breiner describes how Walcott's "ways of writing […] can appear to be both standard [sic] English and creole [sic] at the same time by exploiting unexpected points of coincidence" (2005, 34). In this connection, he points to "the widespread West Indian habit of turning adjectives into near-verbs" (ibid). As an example, he quotes the opening line of "The Schooner *Flight*" which reads: "In idle August, while the sea soft" (*SAK* 3). Breiner explains:

> A speaker of standard [sic] English assumes this is a dialectal "distortion" of a standard English expression, "when the sea is soft." But Walcott's use of *while* is a clear indicator that the word *soft* functions like a verb-as if "softing" were something the sea could do. (2005, 34)

Through this kind of "syntactical punning," Breiner continues, "two different readings can be realized from the printed text, neither sounding wrong, though neither is absolutely normal" (ibid, 35).

This appears to be the explanation of Walcott's use of the word "chaste" at the end of a three-line sentence in *Midsummer* XV. The persona ponders how his "imagination no longer goes as far as the horizon, / but keeps coming back" (*M* 25) What follows is this description: "At the edge of the water / it returns clean, scoured things that, like rubbish, / the sea has whitened, chaste." The adjective that ends the sentence leaves the reader puzzled as one would expect another verb. In accordance with Breiner, the reader may consider it a "dialectal 'distortion'" of "made chaste." Although in this context, its meaning of plain and simple in style seems more appropriate, it is also possible that the imagination has become desexualized.

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[76] In this particular example, the adjective green takes on special significance, too, as it implies a state of freshness, newness, and innocence. Ismond writes that in this very poem, Walcott "sees and relates to a pristine emptiness about Cuba, the green landscape of a young nation awaiting development" (1986, 82). At the very least, Anglophone readers may notice the synaesthesia in "green winds." In addition, the colour links the winds with the citrus fruit in "lime-scented." In German, green can also mean inexperienced as in the proverbial "grün hinter den Ohren." Arguably, Martens's translation slightly distracts from the use of synaesthesia, by shifting the emphasis to personifying the wind, which he describes as wearing perfume and translates plural "winds" into singular.

Both Martens and Schrott favour the latter interpretation using the word "keusch." Martens creates different units, separating "scoured things that, like rubbish, / the sea has whitened" from the rest of the sentence: "An der Wasserkante / ist sie rein – gescheuerte Dinge, die, wie Abfall, / das Meer geweißt hat –, keusch" (86). In Martens's reading, the imagination is clean and chaste at the water's edge. As the auxiliary verb includes both adjectives "white" and "chaste," Martens 'standardizes' Walcott's "dialectal 'distortion'." However, it is difficult for the reader to contextualize the insertion, which does appears to be a separate unit. Schrott conveys more of an interpretation rendering the passage in much simpler terms: "Sie treibt / die dinge zur kante des wassers zurück, rein und abgeschliffen / wie müll den die see ausgebleicht hat, keusch" (*MM* 37). Although the final word is clearly an adjective, what it refers to remains ambiguous in Schrott's translation: Either it is part of the enumeration of how things return to the water's edge – "rein und abgeschliffen [und] keusch" – or it describes the way in which the imagination returns things, i.e. "keusch."

Localization vs. foreignization

One way of confronting readers of the target text with foreignness is to keep specific words as they are in the source language. Surprisingly, Martens rarely follows this approach.[77] Instead, he frequently renders foreign terms with German pseudo equivalents. In "The Star-Apple Kingdom" "a patties cart" (*SAK* 55) in Kingston is turned into "Pfannkuchenwagen" (44) selling pancakes rather than Jamaican patties. In the same poem, Martens replaces the "mantlepiece" (*SAK* 47) with a windowsill as he translates: "auf der Fensterbank" (28). Although he revises this for his later edition which reads "auf einem Kaminsims" (237), it suggests that he favours cultural correspondences over simply replacing an English word with the equivalent German word. In other cases, Martens replaces specifically English terms with words of a general European context: In "Forest of Europe," he replaces the British gold coin "sovereign" (*SAK* 39) with Italian "Dukaten" (24) and "supper" (*FT* 95) in "The Fortunate Traveller" with French "Souper" (75).

Even something as seemingly simple as translating different types of roads can be the cause of substantial difficulties for a translator. Wilson illustrates this problem in a translation of Joseph Zobel's *La Rue Cases Nègres*: The Trinidadian translator rendered the title as *Black Shack Alley*. According to Wilson, however, "'rue' does not correspond to 'alley', which, while negative in connotation, usually evokes an urban milieu." (2000, 20) A similar case in point is Martens's translation of "hill road" (*M* 24) as "Bergstraße" (85) in *Midsummer* XIV. In this poem, the lyrical I reminisces his childhood days when he and his twin brother would visit their aunt and storyteller, "climb[ing] closer / to her house up the asphalt hill road". Martens changes the setting to make it seem more mountainous. Interestingly, Schrott uses the same term as Martens in his first translation, but in the later edition decides to changes it to "als wir auf dem asphalt / ihrem haus am hügel näher kamen" (*MM* 35). In this way, he accounts for the landscape as well as the material of the road without conjuring up associations of a specifically German context, setting, and scenery. In the opening of the same poem, Walcott describes the road in more detail as "the speckled road, scored with ruts, smelling of mold" (*M* 24). Martens translates: "die

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[77] One such exception occurs in "The Fortunate Traveller" where he keeps the English term "don" in the phrase "Als Don in Sussex" (71) untranslated.

modrig-fleckige kopfsteinige Straße" (85). Although one may read the adjective use of cobblestone as a form of *néo-logie*, he Europeanizes the image of the road. Schrott describes the road differently: "die von fahrrinnen narbig gescheckte, nach moder riechende straße" (*MM* 35). In contrast to Martens, he conveys the reference to the olfactory sense in "smelling of mold" that Martens replaces with a predominately visual description.

History, flora, and fauna

How challenging it is to translate uniquely Caribbean aspects of Walcott's poetry becomes clear when considering what Breslin writes about "The Schooner *Flight*": "'I know these islands from Monos to Nassau' says Walcott's Shabine. But where was Monos? Where was 'Kick 'em Jenny Channel'? […] Tracking those minute particulars, and many others like them, felt much like the actual travel that soon followed" (2002-2003, 173). Even well-educated Anglophone readers have to overcome the obstacle of deciphering an entirely new set of references based on experiences that they do not share. Local specifics are especially prone to misinterpretation. Walcott's reference to "pink and blue chattel houses" (*M* 25) in *Midsummer* XV proves to be very difficult to render into German.[78] Perhaps, Martens's translation of "pink and blue chattel houses" (*M* 25) in *Midsummer* XV as "Die rosa und blauen Ställe" (86) is simply based on a misreading of "chattel" as "cattle." However, Schrott recalls his great difficulties with the translation of this very term.[79] The fact that he renders the term differently in the two editions of his translation further illustrates this point: In the earlier version, he uses "Sklavenhütten" (1994, 405), but replaces it with the more neutral "Wellblechhütten" (*MM* 37) in the later edition.

In "The Fortunate Traveller," Walcott refers to the common practice of St Lucians to use conch shells as ornaments in low concrete or cement walls. In a hotel room, the persona reminisces a time when his people "bordered our temples / with the ceremonial vulva of the conch" (*FT* 91). In German, there are two possible translations for conch shell: "Trompetenschnecke" and "Tritonshorn." The syllable count of both words poses a problem for Martens with his focus on metre and the length of the line. Although the two meanings of the word are very different from Walcott's conch shell, Martens opts for the Greek-Latin term "Concha" in his translation. He writes: "als wir […] / […] unsere heiligen Tempel mit der Vulva der Concha säumten" (71). This term can either signify a semi-circular altar construction in medieval churches, or – in medical terminology – a part of an organ that resembles a shell. Although the first definition seems more suitable, both are difficult to connect with the image of the vulva – an image that Walcott will use again in *Omeros* when he describes "the beautiful conchs" as being "as delicate as vulvas" (41). Moreover, Martens replaces the adjective "ceremonial" with "heiligen" and does not use it to describe the conch shell itself as Walcott does, but rather to describe the temples in more detail.

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[78] According to Allsopp, a chattel house is "[a] single-roofed board-and-shingle house, or one of about the same size (about 20ft x 10ft x 8ft) with a galvanized-sheet roof, (originally) sitting on a groundsel of loose stones so that it could be removed wholly by its owner from leased land." (2003, 147)

[79] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.

In "The Star-Apple Kingdom," the central motif of the Great House functions as a symbol of Jamaican plantation history. Wilson stresses the importance of the building in this poem as it signifies on various levels: "A colonial, patriarchal structure *par excellence*, the edifice of Slavery [sic] dominates the psychological and historical landscape of the Caribbean the way the Great House dominates the plantation from its hilltop." (2000, 21) Walcott establishes the setting of the poem in the very first stanza with many details including a description of "the great house road to the Great House" (*SAK* 46). Near the end of the poem, Walcott answers the crucial question "What was the Caribbean?" in the following terms: "A green pond mantling / behind the Great House columns of Whitehall, / behind the Greek façades of Washington" (*SAK* 56).

Wilson strongly criticizes the French translator Malroux for omitting the "Great House" in this passage despite the fact that Walcott draws special attention to it by using capital letters. Malroux's translation of these lines reads as follows: "Qu'était la Caraïbe? Une mare verte moussue derrière les colonnes / palatiales de Whitehall, derrière les façades grecques de / Washington" (qtd. in Wilson 2000, 21). In a convincing argument, Wilson describes the various implications of these lines:

> The fact that Walcott capitalizes the words also conjures up and creates an association with the 'White House', picked up in 'White(hall)', reinforced in the next line where the White House with its columns is described and explicitly evoked in 'the Greek façades of Washington'. Whitehall and the White House become twentieth-century equivalents of the Great House, reducing the Caribbean to a green pond and perpetuating plantation relationships. The landscape clearly reflects an ideology, a socio-cultural, historical phenomenon. (ibid, 21f.)

Therefore, Wilson concludes, Malroux's omission results in multiple losses (ibid).

Martens does not omit the reference to the Great House. In the beginning of the poem, he translates "die Großhaus-Chaussee zum Großen Haus" (26). In case of the lines that Wilson quotes, he writes accordingly: "Was war die Karibik? Eine grüne Tümpeldecke / hinter den Groß-Haus Säulen von Whitehall, / hinter Washington's griechischen Fassaden" (44). In order to account for Walcott's capitalization, Martens forms a compound and joins the first two words with a hyphen rather than forming one long word such as "Großhauschaussee" or "Großhaussäulen" as is common practice in German. In the second case, he uses an anglicized spelling by separating the third word "Säulen" instead of connecting it with another hyphen in accordance with German grammar. The French term he uses to define the type of road, however, is problematic as it refers to a well-developed country road. The road leading up to the "Great House" is something along the lines of a cul-de-sac or a long winding driveway.

Klotz finds an excellent way to render this phrase when he translates "die herrenhäusliche Straße zum Herrenhaus hinauf" (1982, 12). His translation "Das Stern-Apfelreich" gains much from his tendency to take more liberties in rendering the diction of the source text. Klotz neither aims at recreating the line breaks nor the length of the lines,

which are often rather prosy. However, this does not diminish his achievement in conveying the powerful imagery that seems to be his focus.[80]

Along similar lines, Wilson continues to argue: "Caribbean landscape translates 'the pain of history' and we need to be careful to convey these connotations" (2000, 22). References to local flora, fauna, and landscape abound in Walcott's poetic oeuvre and pose a number of difficulties for the translator. Even with today's online resources, researching plants of the Caribbean is not an easy task. It must have been the more difficult for Martens who did not have access to search engines when he worked on *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*. In many parts of the world, it is not unusual for one plant to have a number of different common names. However, in this specific region, the various names often mirror history, if only because they derive of a range of languages originally introduced by Europeans and which still (co-)exist on the islands today. King pointedly describes the link between nature and history in the following terms:

> History itself, with its demand for order and events, works against valuing and seeing the local correctly. To have a botanist name a specimen makes it part of official history and occults its local name, associations, and use. Walcott sees himself and his 'race' as only now learning to grow from the local soil without concern for European refinements, to make art from an actual apprehension of nature rather than accepting old names. (2004, 307)

To make matters even more complicated, the scientific name of a plant or family of plants may be the common name of another as is the case with croton mentioned in "The Fortunate Traveller" (93). Virginia Barlow explains: "There are many shrubs in the genus *Croton*. These are not related to the cultivated shrubs with weirdly-colored leaves whose common name is croton. The name balsam is used for many crotons" (1993, 68). Before even attempting to tackle the task of rendering plant names into German, the translator has to define the exact plant that Walcott refers to, in the first place.[81]

In numerous poems that Martens chose for his selection, Walcott mentions yams. Martens, however, does not translate the term with one word consistently: In "Jean Rhys," he replaces one local root vegetable with another when he translates "wild yams" (*FT* 45) as "wilden Manioks" (66). While yams and manioc – also called cassava – are staples on Caribbean islands, they are different plants. In this case, he seems to favour the brevity of the word over a botanically precise translation. In *Midsummer* VII, Martens translates "a fresh jungle […] / of wild yams and dasheen" (*M* 17) as "ein frischer Dschungel […] / von Kolokasien und süßen Kartoffeln" (84). Here, he seems to base his choice on prosodic qualities: On the one hand, he creates alliteration with "Kolokasien" and "Kartoffeln." On the other hand, the line has a more regular rhythm than would be the case had he used the compound "Süßkartoffeln." In *Midsummer* XIV, Martens does use the compound to

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[80] Since Klotz only translated the first half of the poem, he did not have to face the problem of translating the allusion to the White House.

[81] In this specific case, Martens chooses the Greek-derived name "Kroton," which may be known as a houseplant.

translate "yam vines" (*M* 24) as "Wurzeln der Süßkartoffel" (85), but changes vines into roots.

Katie Jones writes about "In the Virgins" that "[t]he landscape of the poem is immediate, present, yet conveyed overwhelmingly by atmospheric effect rather than descriptive detail" (1991, 419). The same holds for "The Star-Apple Kingdom" as the following passage illustrates in which Walcott describes the persona sleeping

> he slept, without dreaming, the sleep after love
> in the mineral oblivion of night
> whose flesh smells of cocoa, whose teeth are white
> as coconut meat, whose breath smells of ginger,
> whose braids are scented like sweet-potato vines (*SAK* 54)

The last quoted line is especially interesting as Martens translates: "ihre Tressen duften wie das Grün der Süßkartoffel" (42). He uses the same word – "Süßkartoffel" – to translate Walcott's "sweet-potato" (*SAK* 54) that he uses in XIV for yams, although they are different plants. Whereas in the *Midsummer* poem he translated "vines" as "Wurzeln," in this case he opts for "das Grün" (42), instead, repeating the umlaut /ü/. The gravest change, however, is that instead of translating "braids" as "Zöpfe," he uses a word of French origin "Tressen," despite the fact that this and the preceding lines are sensual descriptions of a woman's body. However, in Walcott's description, the similarity goes beyond the olfactory resemblance between the braids and the sweet-potato vines to include the visual similarity. Martens makes it more difficult to detect for his readers.

Translators into other languages than German face similar problems. For a German translator, the title of the poem does not create the same difficulty as for the translator into French. Wilson offers intriguing insights into this case: Like Martens, Malroux translates "star-apple" literally as "fruit-étoile." While this happens to be one German common name of the fruit, the case is more difficult for Malroux as the fruit is not called "fruit-étoile" in French. Therefore, Wilson argues:

> [O]n first sight, the metaphor contained in the original English title would seem to be lost in French […].Yet the image, it could be argued, is maintained in a new way, […] because although the '*fruit-étoile*' does not exist, the equivalent term being 'caïmite' or kaïmite', the concept of a fruit which is at once a star could be said to embody in the title one quality of a star-apple tree, important in Caribbean culture, which is that its leaves are 'double' green on top and copper-brown on the undersides, thus indicative of duplicity/deception, of someone or something not be trusted [sic]. However, the reality of a 'star-apple kingdom' paralleled in childhood experiences of the 'caimitier' [i.e. the Caribbean French term], and the evocation of a similar world is lost in the French. (2000, 21)

According to Dittberner, one common name of the tree in German is "Goldblatt," accounting for the colour of the leaves' underside (1989). For those readers who share this very specific botanical knowledge, the complexities of what Walcott's choice of fruit signifies are therefore equally accessible for German and Anglophone readers. Obstacles

like these may account for Martens's decision to include a comparatively high number of poems from Walcott's collections that are set in the more familiar terrain of Europe or North America.

2.3.3 Intertextuality

Making intertextual references, i.e. quoting implicitly or explicitly from already existing literary texts is a rhetorical strategy that a writer applies intentionally in order to place a text in a specific context or to broaden the implications of a certain passage. Umberto Eco argues that from the vantage point of the author the use of intertextual references means to accept a double reading of one's text: While a naïve reader merely appreciates the narrative, an educated reader may recognize the allusions (2006, 252f.). For the latter type, this may open up numerous associations that may naturally vary greatly from one reader to another depending on individual previous reading experience.

Concerning the process of translation, Eco suggests that the translator should make all the different layers of the source text available to the foreign reader. Therefore, the translator must consider intertextual references which should ideally be just as obvious or subtle in the target text as they are in the source text (ibid, 253f.). This is not always an easy task: On the one hand, the allusion has to be recognizable for foreign readers. This requires a certain degree of familiarity of the reader with the specific literary tradition or traditions to which the author alludes. If this knowledge cannot be presupposed, it may be necessary to find an equivalent work in the canon of the target language culture that evokes similar associations. On the other hand, allusions that a foreign reader cannot be expected to understand may cause problems with comprehending the text. In this case, Eco believes a translator can only choose one of two evils: either to sacrifice the intertextual reference in favour of comprehensibility or to sacrifice comprehensibility in favour of the intertextual reference (ibid, 266). Every case calls for an individual assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the two options in the specific context.

Critics have repeatedly commented on Walcott's intertextual method and identified an array of poets who influenced his work.[82] Most critics of *Midsummer* recognize echoes of Lowell (e.g. Pritchard 1984, 331; King 2004, 437); others specifically attest a resemblance with his *Notebooks* (e.g. Howard 1985, 156f.). With regard to *The Fortunate Traveller*, critics' opinions are more varied: McCorkle, for instance, argues that "[l]ike Conrad and Rimbaud, Walcott investigates the knowledge of evil and how its action is repeated" (1986, 6). Wyke draws a connection to Byron who "had demonstrated [a] congruency between art and life and between the artist and his literary pilgrim in *Childe Harold*, a work which bears some resemblances to Walcott's *The Fortunate Traveller*" (1989, 57).

Walcott uses intertextual allusions in a number of different ways. Most obvious are those allusions that directly mention literary epochs and genres, specific authors' names, or titles of works. Occasionally, Walcott uses direct quotes that he indicates with inverted commas. Usually, he mentions the name of the author, but not the title of his source. In

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[82] Cf., for instance, Breslin 1987, 171; McWatt 1988, 1609; Brown 1991, 14f.; Bedient 1993, 315f.; Hamner 2005, 1.

"Forest of Europe," for instance, Walcott quotes a line he ascribes to Ossip Mandelstam "'to the rustling of ruble notes by the lemon Neva'" (*SAK* 40). "Map of the New World, [III] Sea Cranes" opens with the lines "'Only in a world where there are cranes and horses,' / wrote Robert Graves, 'can poetry survive'" (*FT* 27), and in *Midsummer* III Walcott quotes "that phrase in Traherne: / 'The corn was orient and immortal wheat'" (*M* 13).

However, even these types of allusions can be difficult to detect: The title "R.T.S.L." refers to the initials of Robert Traill Spence Lowell and "The Fortunate Traveller" is an ironic variation on Thomas Nashe's 1594 novel *The Unfortunate Traveller or the Life of Jack Wilton* (cf. Wyke 1989, 58). Occasionally, references to authors are hardly even noticeable, as when Walcott writes in "North and South:" "I am tired of words, / and literature is an old couch stuffed with fleas" (*FT* 13). Martens interprets "stuffed with fleas" as flea-infested and omits the adjective "old" translating: "Ich bin der Wörter / müde, […] /eine flohverseuchte Couch, die Literatur" (57). Arguably, the adjective "old" is more crucial in this case than the image of a flea-infested couch as the passage turns out to be a very subtle pun on the fact that the "*Oxford Book of English Verse* [had not] been redone since Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's edition of 1900" (Dwyer 1993, 329). However, this reference will likely go unnoticed by the vast majority of readers of the source text, too.

While the majority of the above applications of intertextual references do not pose any serious problems for the translator, this is different with allusions that are not specifically indicated as such. The first obstacle the translator has to overcome is to identify the allusion as such. The above example illustrates how difficult this can be. A translator of Walcott must also be familiar with and sensitive to the language of the Bible as references are plentiful in his entire oeuvre. In addition, there are poems that are inspired by other works of literature. Once a translator has detected certain resemblances, it is no easy task to transfer them into the target language.

One of the most interesting poems of Martens's selection in this regard is the poem that lends its title to the German volume. Although Walcott started writing first lines for "The Star-Apple Kingdom" prior to reading Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1975), it is this very novel that he claims "generated and accelerated" the poem (1993). Still, the poem is set in a very specific time and at a very specific place: It describes post-independence Jamaica under Michael Manley's rule. Yet, according to Walcott, whenever he read his own poem, he "always prefaced the reading with 'this poem came, or developed from reading The Autumn of the Patriarch'" (ibid). Indeed, reading the poem with the novel as a pretext, the resemblance is striking. The surrealistic, dream-like depictions of the setting, certain images such as the cows in the vicinity of the Great House, and the lone figure of the ruler, but also the long, meandering sentences – many of them running over 17 lines and more – are all reminiscent of Marquez's novel. McWatt points to a passage roughly in the middle of the poem that contains

a wonderful portrait of the regional prime ministers cutting up the Caribbean sea like bolts of blue and green cloth and selling it 'at a mark-up to the conglomerates' […],

much as Garcia Marquez's dictator had sold the sea and was forced as a result to live on the edge of a vast bowl of dust. (1988, 1613)

This passage is worth considering in some detail. Walcott writes:

One morning the Caribbean was cut up
by seven prime ministers who bought the sea in bolts –
one thousand miles of aquamarine with lace trimmings,
one million yards of lime-colored silk,
one mile of violet, leagues of cerulean satin –
who sold it at a markup to the conglomerates (*SAK* 53)

Martens makes some significant changes as he translates:

Eines Morgens wurde die Karibik zerteilt
durch sieben Premierminister, sie kauften sie in Posten –
eintausend Meilen Aquamarin, von Spitze umsäumt,
eine Million Yards limonenfarbene Seide,
eine Meile violetten, Meilen wolkigen Satin –,
zu angemessenerem Preis verkauften sie's weiter (39f.)

The first thing that is striking is that Martens does not mention the sea in his translation, but merely speaks of the division of the Caribbean. Most German readers would be inclined to think of the different islands, perhaps also the mainland countries that make up the Caribbean. Walcott, on the other hand, even seems to exclude the landmasses in his poem altogether. In this way, he not only emphasizes the satiric element in this passage (cf. DeMott 1993, 300), but also conveys his understanding of the sea as landscape. This becomes clear in an interview with David Daybdeen: When Walcott describes the Caribbean landscape, he first mentions "the intensity of the blueness of the sea," before going on to include "the richness of the greens and the houses on the hillside" (Daybdeen 2002-2003, 155).

The second shift occurs in the enumeration inserted between dashes: Instead of adding a fourth colour to describe the sea like Walcott does, Martens decides to translate the deep blue colour "cerulean" as cloudy – "wolkigen." It is difficult, though, to make a connection between the adjective and the satin material it describes. With this choice, Martens shifts the reader's attention from sea to sky and, arguably, from colour to texture: The reader no longer imagines the deep blue of the sea, but rather imagines white clouds moving across the sky.

Eco puts great emphasis on the effect that a text has on the reader.[83] He concludes that a translation is a strategy that aims at reproducing the effect of the source language text in the target language. Since poetry, according to Eco, is said to aim at an aesthetic effect, its translation more than that of other genres must give the foreign reader the opportunity to engage in the same investigation of the poem's linear manifestation and its

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[83] Here and in the following cf. Eco 2006, 347f.

content. Therefore, he argues, it is not enough to merely reproduce the effect, but also the means that create this effect.[84]

To support his argument, Eco uses an example from one of his novels in which the protagonist diving in the South Sea is overwhelmed by the great variety of colours. Eco explains that in this specific case it was not important that a given coral had a certain colour, but rather that no colour was named twice thus creating in the reader of a translation the same sense of awe in face of the colourful submarine world. For this reason, Eco encouraged his translators to choose a different colour if an equivalent was not available in the target language (2006, 171; 176). Eco would therefore argue that Martens's translation fails to do justice to the intense colour spectrum of the Caribbean Sea that ranges from different hues of blue to deep greens.

More shifts occur in the last quoted line: First, Martens repeats the measure "miles" in the last quoted line rather than translating Walcott's dated term "leagues" with another archaism. Second, Walcott very pointedly conveys the outrageous act of the prime ministers' selling their shares of the sea back at a mark-up, i.e. at a higher price making a profit. In Martens's version, they sell it at a more appropriate price: "zu angemessenerem Preis" (40).

Walcott ends the poem with a powerful and surrealistic image that again conjures up associations with Marquez's magic realism. He writes: "and the woman's face […] / […] / would have worn the same smile with which he now / cracked the day open and began his egg" (*SAK* 58). King writes about these closing lines: "The ending, cracking an egg, opens a world, anything can happen" (2004, 350). He describes precisely the feeling that the reader has at the end of the poem and – in case of the English volume – the book. What creates this response, however, is the fact that Walcott reverses the familiar: His figure does not crack his egg open and begin his day, but vice versa. Nevertheless, the commonness of the scene is ever-present all the same as the reader is aware of how it would usually take place. With this small change, Walcott creates a strong effect. Martens's first translation ends with the lines: "dasselbe Lächeln […] mit dem er den Tag nun anbrach / und sein Ei zu essen begann" (48). The first part is close to the elevated idiomatic expression "der Tag bricht an" and there is nothing unusual about beginning to eat an egg. The only thing that consoles is that this poem appears side by side with the English version. Therefore, some readers have the opportunity to consider both endings. Martens greatly improves this passage for the later edition which reads: "ein Lächeln / […] wie seines, / als er den Tag aufbrach und mit seinem Ei begann" (*TA*, 259).

2.3.4 Translation as interpretation

Repeatedly, critics and translators alike stress the seemingly banal fact that a literary translator is first and foremost a reader of the source text.[85] Therefore, Boase-Beier is right when she suggests that "[a] translation is always the translator's interpretation" (2011,

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[84] The intended effect on the reader is also one of Glaap's extensive catalogue of criteria of equivalence in translation (Glaap 1992, 139). However, it is a vague and highly subjective category, since the effect of a text can vary greatly from one reader to another and the emotions that are brought to the surface in a reader largely depend on personal experience.
[85] E.g. Bassnett 1980, 77f.; Baumann 1995, 342; Schrott 1997/99, 46.

153). Like any other reader, translators may misread, misinterpret, and consequently mistranslate specific words. Although such errors rarely go unnoticed by critics (e.g. Poiss 2001; Thies 1989), some mistakes are overseen even when the translation is reviewed for a new edition.

This is the case with a mistranslation in the title poem of Martens's selection. Having described the sell-out of the Caribbean and its effects, Walcott begins a new stanza with the words: "Now a tree of grenades was his star-apple kingdom" (*SAK* 54). The temporal adverb at the very beginning of the line indicates a turning point and immediately hints at a contrast between past and present. Walcott vividly visualizes this contrast in the image of the tree of grenades of the persona's current adult self that replaces the star-apple tree of the persona's childhood. Martens translates "tree of grenades" as "Granatbaum" (40) instead of "Granatenbaum." The German word "Granat," however, can denote either small shrimps or garnets. In addition, Martens does not place the temporal adverb at the beginning of the line. Instead, he writes: "Ein Granatbaum war jetzt sein Sternapfelreich" (40). Therefore, the turning point goes unnoticed more easily and the shocking effect of the stark contrast between childhood and adulthood is weaker.

The difficulties multiply for translators when the author of the source text implies different readings, be it by means of ambiguities, semantic gaps, or other rhetorical devices (cf. Baumann 1995, 342). Boase-Beier points out that there is no general agreement among translation critics/theorists as to how translators are supposed to deal with ambiguity; some even go as far as considering ambiguity a fault. In this case, according to Boase-Beier, "the translator will attempt to disambiguate." (2011, 146) However, as she correctly points out, "in most literary texts ambiguity is not a fault but is the very stylistic feature that allows the desired creative reading. So the question for the literary translator is how to preserve it […]." (Ibid)

This is certainly a question that translators of Walcott's poetry need to address as it often implies various readings. King lists some examples: "There are words with uncertain reference which look forward and backward, there is a lack of verbs, the syntax may be erratic, punctuation is erratic in terms of clarifying meaning (2004, 274).[86] In contrast to the general reader, translators of poetry have no choice but to interpret all parts of a poem they choose to translate. One advantage of making a selection from a number of different volumes, rather than translating one volume in its entirety, is that Martens gets to choose those poems that he finds accessible.

Often, translators are forced to choose one of a number of possible readings that the source text implies. One such case in point is the translation of words that have a different gender in the target text. In "North and South," the persona recalls the different ways in which three of his friends encounter death:

You move along dark afternoons where death
entered a taxi and sat next to a friend
or passed another a razor, or whispered 'Pardon'

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[86] A puzzling line occurs in "Map of the New World, [III] Sea Cranes." Walcott ends the poem with the one-line stanza: "Wrench his heart's wheel and set his forehead here" (27). The fact that Martens omits the verbs in his translation does not serve to clarify this image: "Herum das Herzenssteuer, hier die Stirn" (63).

in a check-clothed restaurant behind her cough (*FT* 12)

At least one of these descriptions is autobiographical: As King has it, Robert Lowell, a good friend of Walcott's "died (12 September 1977) in a taxi after returning to New York from England" (2004, 354). Neither the translator nor any other reader must know this to understand or appreciate the passage. What is important is that Walcott specifies neither the sex of the friend who encounters death in a taxi, nor that of "another [friend]" who apparently uses a razor to commit suicide. Only the last friend who encounters death in a restaurant is unequivocally a woman as the female personal pronoun indicates. Martens reinterprets this passage when he writes:

> Du ziehst durch lange Nachmittage, wo Tod
> ein Taxi bestieg, zu einer Freundin sich setzte,
> oder ein Rasiermesser weiterreichte, oder 'Pardon'
> flüsterte hinter ihrem Husten in einem Restaurant
> mit Würfelmuster (56)

Rather than describing the death of three different friends, Martens's translation appears to depict a number of possible ways in which one specific female friend may have encountered death. This impression is reinforced in two ways: On the one hand, the reader inevitably connects the female personal pronoun with the female friend mentioned in the second quoted line. On the other hand, the omission of the pronoun "another" makes it less obvious that the passage is about different people. Whereas in English "friend" can refer to persons of both sexes, in German the use or omission of the suffix *–in* distinguishes whether a friend is male or female.

In other cases, Martens creates different units of meaning, which result in a shift of imagery. In "The Fortunate Traveller," for instance, Walcott uses an inverted sentence to reveal an image one layer at a time: "At the window in Haiti, I remember / a gekko [sic] pressed against the hotel glass, / with white palms, concentrating head" (*FT* 89). One interpretation of this sentence is that the lyrical I recalls how looking out the window he noticed a small lizard – a common sight in warm countries such as Haiti. The attributes "white palms, concentrating head" serve to further describe and personify the lizard. Martens's translation implies another reading, which may even be more plausible. In his interpretation, the posture of the lyrical I – pressed against the window – resembles that of a gecko: "Am Fenster in Haiti, erinnere ich mich, / ein Gekko, ans Hotelglas gepreßt, / weiße Handflächen, ein sich konzentrierender Kopf" (70).

The degree to which a translator emphasizes a certain interpretation becomes even more apparent when comparing different translations of one poem. In many parts, Johannes Beilharz's 1982 translations of "Forest of Europe" and "In the Virgins," published in *Akzente*, are more literal than Martens's. An example from the latter poem shall illustrate this fact. Walcott describes the view from a window in the following way: "two yellow palm fronds, jerked by the wind's rein, / agree like horses' necks, and nodding bear, / slow as a hearse, a haze of tassled rain" (*SAK* 22). In Beilharz's translation, these lines read:

> zwei vom Zügel des Windes hin- und hergerissene
> Palmwedel […], die wie Pferdenacken übereinstimmen
> und nickend, langsam wie ein Leichenwagen, einen
> Schleier aus Regentroddeln tragen. (1982, 549)

Martens reinterprets this passage when he translates:
> zwei gelbe Palmwedel, gerissen vom Windeszügel,
> parieren wie zwei Pferdehälse und tragen nickend
> wie ein Leichenwagen so langsam, den buschigen Dunst
> des Regens. (20)

Martens's translation emphasizes the simile by explicitly mentioning two horses' necks. In contrast to Beilharz who recreates Walcott's personification as he translates the verb "agree" more literally, Martens uses the homonym "parieren" which can refer to the act of stopping a horse or changing its speed as well as to the act of obeying. Both translators interpret the final image of the rain differently: Beilharz translates "haze" in terms of a veil and describes it as consisting of tassels of rain as Walcott does. Martens, on the other hand, renders the word more literally, but omits the image of the tassels and describes it as bushy, instead. Neither translator recreates Walcott's intricate rhyme scheme.

A similar case is the translation of the idiomatic expression in "what's poetry, if it is worth its salt" (*SAK* 40) in "Forest of Europe": Whereas Beilharz translates quite literally "was sind Gedichte, / […] / […] falls sie tatsächlich ihr Salz wert sind" (1982, 551), Martens translates idiomatically "was denn ist Poesie, die etwas taugt" (25). Noteworthy are also the different ways in which they render "poetry": While Beilharz chooses the common word "Gedichte," Martens opts for the more elaborate term "Poesie" that, in addition, encompasses not poems alone, but also a poetic mood. Such differences in diction run like a read thread through the entire poem as both translators follow a clear agenda. Accordingly, Beilharz translates "manuscripts of snow" (*SAK* 38) as "verstreuten Schneemanuskripten" (1982, 550), Martens as "verwehten Schneehandschriften" (23) emphasizing the aspect of handwritten books of ancient times. Martens already sets the tone in the title: Whereas Beilharz's "Wald von Europa" is more literal again, Martens uses the term "Forst" in his title "Der Forst Europas." This term can refer either to a forest used for the production of raw materials, or, in the olden days, to a forest belonging to a king. Because Martens's tendency to favour archaisms is especially strong in this poem, the second meaning seems to suggest itself. However, he uses the term inconsistently in the poem, opting for the more commonly used "Wald" in two cases.

Shifts that are even more significant occur in the translations of poems from *Midsummer*. In III, the lyrical I describes the view from the balcony of a hotel in Port of Spain: "On the dewy Savannah, gently revolved by their grooms, / snorting, delicate-ankled racehorses exercise, / as delicate-ankled as brown smoke from the bakeries" (*M* 13). The last quoted line serves to emphasize the delicateness of the horses via the use of simile and to add another detail to the scene. Furthermore, Walcott begins with a visual

description, extends it to include the aural sense with the quick insertion of "snorting," and in the last line involves the olfactory sense with references to smoke and bakeries.

One has to read very carefully to reconstruct the references in Martens's translation, which becomes more oblique through his use of inversions: "Auslauf auf dem Tau der Savanne, von Stallburschen geführt, / hatten schnaubende, zartfesselige Rennpferde, / Fesseln so zart wie der braune Rauch der Bäckereien" (82). It is very difficult to understand this sentence without knowing the source text. Schrott makes it easier for the reader to imagine the scene. He translates: "Im tau von Savannah rennpferde die reitknechte aufzäumen / und sanft im kreis führen damit sie zu ihrem auslauf kommen / schnaubend, ihre fesseln zart wie der braune rauch aus den bäckereien" (*MM* 13). His lines are longer than those of Walcott and Martens, as he makes explanatory additions. The act of bridling the horses, for instance, does not get a mention in the source text. In the first line, the grammatical structure is ambiguous: At first sight, it sounds as if the horses bridled the stablemen, however, this ambiguity is resolved in the next line.

Considering an effect that Gilkes describes, it appears that Schrott aims at recreating a similar effect in his translation. Gilkes points out how "[t]he placing of 'gently revolved by their Grooms [sic] directly after 'savannah' provides, by semantic transference, an unexpected visual picture of the savannah revolving, seen through the groom's eyes" (1986, 103). In his first translation of *Midsummer*, Schrott spells the scene out even more explicitly: "Auf der savanne liegt tau; rennpferde mit ihren zarten fesseln / trainieren schnaubend, sanft von reitknechten im kreis geführt, / mit fesseln so zart wie der braune rauch aus den bäckereien" (1994, 397). Therefore, it seems very likely that the ambiguity in the second version is not coincidental. Martens, on the other hand, does not account for this aspect in his translation as he omits the circular motion of the horses.

Another aspect that Schrott revises for his second edition concerns the location: In the first edition, he translates "Savannah" in terms of the landscape rather than a specific park in Port of Spain just like Martens does. According to King, Walcott spent extensive amounts of time at a hotel across from this park and even painted the horses (2004, 391). Particulars like this require very detailed knowledge that a translator may or may not have access to. In his translation of "the Boston Common" (*SAK* 37) in "R.T.S.L." as "Bürgerpark von Boston" (22) Martens specifically mentions the park instead of keeping its proper name. Therefore, it seems likely that in case of "Savannah" he was not aware of the fact that it is a park in Port of Spain. Yet the capitalization in Walcott's version of the poem implies that it is a proper name. Accordingly, Schrott revises the spelling for his second edition as well as the grammatical structure to convey this fact.

Grave shifts do not solely occur in long, meandering sentences with difficult structures. Even the translation of seemingly unambiguous phrases like "at the black twist of the path" (*M* 24) in XIV carries the potential to create a very different image. In Martens's version, the path becomes a whole part of town as he translates "am schwarzen Ende der Siedlung" (85). The uninitiated German reader may well imagine a segregated town.

2.4 Differences between the 1989 and 1993 editions

The year after an author receives the Nobel Prize for literature, the Swiss publishing house Coron issues a limited collector's edition with select works by the respective Nobel laureate. In addition, the presentation speech and some critical essays are included. Accordingly, in 1993 a Walcott volume appeared under the title *Der Traum auf dem Affenberg* (i.e. Dream on Monkey Mountain). Apart from Espmark's presentation speech and Walcott's essay "What the Twilight Says," both translated by Christian Wagner, the volume includes an essay by Martens on Walcott, as well as his translations of Walcott's Nobel lecture, the drama *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1950), and a revised version of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*. In this edition, the English and German versions appear on opposite pages thus allowing readers to compare the two more easily.

According to Balmes, it is a great privilege and a rare opportunity for translators to get the chance to revise their work with which they may be dissatisfied.[87] Comparing Martens's 1989 and 1993 versions of the poems comprising *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* it seems like he was quite satisfied with his work as the majority of poems remain unchanged.[88] As one would expect, mistakes that found their way into the first edition despite proofreading were corrected for the Coron edition. Accordingly, Martens replaces his mistranslation of "bodies of patriots" (*SAK* 50) – for which he received strong criticism from Thies (1989) – with "Piratenkörper" (34).[89]

A more substantial revision occurs in part II of "The Fortunate Traveller," which Walcott ends with the rhyming couplet: "'So, aping His indifference, I write now, / not Anno Domini: After Dachau.'" (*FT* 94) Balakian writes about this passage:

> The poem is borne out of the poet's painful sense of the fissure between the need for a religious ethos and the absence of any moral order in our time. With his savage wit he recasts history so that "After Dachau" supplants "Anno Domini" (1993, 354).

In an interview with Burnett, Walcott comments on this passage: "I think pity has probably gone from the world. It's quite terrifying. I think there should have been nothing after the holocaust; nothing should have happened after the holocaust that was bad" (Burnett 2002-2003, 151).

In the 1989 edition, Martens's translation reads: "'So schreib ich jetzt, ganz aus seiner Schau, / Nach [sic] Christi Geburt nicht mehr, / sondern zähle die Jahre nach Dachau'" (74)[90] In contrast to Walcott's couplet, the rhyme seems forced. This in turn alters the tone and defeats the purpose of conveying the seriousness of the closing lines. Martens appears to apply the term "Schau" in the sense of view or perspective, however,

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[87] Personal interview. 15 Jan 2014.
[88] Martens does not alter his translation of "In the Virgins," "R.T.S.L.," "North and South," "Map of the New World," and "Jean Rhys". In the *Midsummer* poems XXXI and XLIII, Tropic Zone 1 he merely alters the use of hyphens. Minor adjustments in "Europa" and "The Fortunate Traveller" are rearranged line breaks in select passages, thus compressing some lines in the later edition.
[89] In addition, he corrects the typographical error in "ein spanisch-amerikanerischer / Reisender" (53) in "Hinterland" ("Upstate"), as well as the mistranslation of "yew" as "Juden" (72), i.e. the German word for "Jews" in "Das glückliche Geschick des Reisenden" ("The Fortunate Traveller").
[90] The capitalization seems to be another typographical error, for it is one of only two such instances.

this use is uncommon in German and adds to the awkwardness. Since Martens cannot reproduce the pun that Balakian points to, he tries to circumscribe its meaning. For the 1993 edition, Martens alters these lines to read: "'So schreib ich jetzt, ganz aus seiner Schau, / nicht Anno Domini: Nach Dachau'" (*TA* 299). Although the second line is certainly an improvement, the first line remains unaltered and is still a puzzling translation of Walcott's phrase "aping His indifference." It is striking that Martens puts greater emphasis on recreating the rhyme than on conveying the idea that God seems indifferent to the suffering of His chosen people in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany.[91]

Two of the most complex poems that Martens translates from the volume *The Star-Apple Kingdom* are "Forest of Europe" and the title poem. Both are subject to the most significant revisions for the Coron edition. Most noticeable is a tendency for eliminating inversions that occur in great numbers throughout the Hanser edition. Accordingly, Martens translates Walcott's phrase "and left their ovals echoing in the ear" (*SAK* 28) from "Forest of Europe" as "und ließen zurück ihre Ovale hallend im Ohr" (23) in the first edition and changes it to "und ließen ihre Ovale hallend im Ohr zurück" (*TA* 229) in the revised edition. In another instance, Martens – consciously or not – changes his original translation to the exact wording of Beilharz's. Originally, he translates the phrase "under clouds vast as Asia" (*SAK* 39) as "unter wie Asien so weiten Wolken" (24), later changing it to "unter Wolken so weit wie Asien" (*TA* 231 / Beilharz 1982, 551).

Similar kinds of revisions abound in "The Star-Apple Kingdom," the longest poem of the selection. Especially interesting is an extensive passage that Martens rearranges for the second edition. In the source text, it reads as follows:

> save the starlight for victories, we can't afford it,
> leave the moon on for one more hour, and that's it.
> But though his power, the given mandate, extended
> from tangerine daybreaks to star-apple dusks,
> his hand could not dam that ceaseless torrent of dust
> that carried the shacks of the poor, to their root-rock music (*SAK* 48)

Originally, Martens translated:

> das Sternenlicht bewahre für Siege, nicht leisten können
> wir's uns, laß den Mond noch an eine Stunde,
> das genügt. Wenn seine Macht, sein Mandat, auch reichte
> von Mandarinenmorgen zu Sternapfelabenden,
> den ewigen Schauer aus Staub konnt' er nicht hindern,
> der zu grundsätzlicher Musik die Hütten der Armen
>   […] hinabspülte (30)

The word "können" at the end of the first line rhymes imperfectly with "brennen" four lines earlier. In addition, there is a strong rhythmic pattern in these lines. However, the use

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[91] However, the revisions are not always an improvement: In "The Star-Apple Kingdom" Walcott describes "a black woman, shawled like a buzzard" (*SAK* 50). Martens's first translation "eine schwarze Frau, verhüllt wie ein Bussard" (*KdS* 34) becomes "eine schwarze Frau, wie ein Bussard mit Schal" (*TA* 243).

of inversion in various places creates a stilted effect that is especially unsuitable for the direct speech in the first two lines of the above quote. That Martens opts for a euphemistic translation of "torrent" probably owes to his preference for prosodic means. In this case, he creates alliteration and assonance in "Schauer aus Staub." His translation of "root-rock music" as "grundsätzlicher Musik" does not convey the specific type of music that Walcott refers to. Since the poem is about Jamaica at the time of Michael Manley's rule, the music of the poor refers to (roots rock) reggae. Martens substantially alters these lines for the Coron edition:

> bewahre das Sternenlicht für Siege, wir können's uns
> nicht leisten, laß den Mond eine Stunde noch brennen
> und Schluß. Auch wenn seine Macht, sein Mandat sich
> vom Mandarinmorgen zum Sternapfeldämmern erstreckte,
> konnte seine Hand die endlosen Staubgüsse nicht dämmen,
> die zu tiefverwurzelter Rockmusik die Hütten der Armen
>   […] hinabspülte (*TA* 239)

The unobtrusive sentence structure results in a much more colloquial tone. Only one inversion remains in the second quoted line, however, Martens uses it purposefully to put emphasis on the limited time span of one hour. For this improvement, Martens sacrifices the near rhyme and some of the rhythmic qualities of the first version. In addition, he uses the more colloquial phrase "das genügt" to translate "and that's it." He replaces the euphemistic phrase "Schauer aus Staub" with the stronger "Staubgüsse" at the expense of prosodic qualities. His translation of "star-apple dusks" as "Sternapfeldämmern" is more precise than "Sternapfelabenden" and echoes the verb "dämmen" in the next line. Finally, Martens finds a more suitable translation for the reference to the style of music, though arguably the best choice may have been to keep the term as it is in English.

Although in the 1989 version, Martens explicitly wants to avoid simplifying complicated sentence structures, he admits that in certain cases structural differences between the source and target languages leave no other option. This is the case in a six-line sentence from the same poem. Walcott describes in intricate detail how the central figure of a woman hears the silent scream:

> On the knee-hollowed steps
> of the crusted cathedral, there was a woman in black,
> the black of moonless nights, within whose eyes
> shone seas in starlight like the glint of knives
> (the one who had whispered to the keyhole of his ear),
> washing the steps, and she heard it first. (*SAK* 57)

Martens significantly rearranges the sentence making the references overtly clear, even at the expense of adding two lines:

> Auf den Stufen der verkrusteten
> Kathedrale, von Knien ausgehöhlt, war in Schwarz
> eine Frau (jene, die in seines Ohres

Schlüsselloch flüsterte), im Schwarz mondloser
Nächte, ihre Augen durchschienen Meere,
sternenbeleuchtet, wie das Blitzen von Messern;
sie wusch die Stufen, und sie war es,
sie hörte seinen Schrei als erste. (46)

For the 1993 edition, Martens revises this passage in the following way:

Auf den kniegekehlten Stufen
der verkrusteten Kathedrale stand in Schwarz,
dem Schwarz mondloser Nächte, eine Frau (sie war's,
die am Schlüsselloch seines Ohres geflüstert hatte),
in deren Augen Meere im Mondlicht wie Messer blitzten,
sie wusch die Stufen, und sie hörte ihn zuerst. (*TA 257*)

In both versions, Martens rearranges Walcott's sentence. In the earlier version, Martens first describes the woman in detail, moving the bracket closer to the beginning of the sentence. In the later version, he emphasizes the colour black that describes both woman and night by repeating it in closer proximity. The description of the woman occurs in the middle of the sentence. Another difference between the two translations is that in the first one, he explicitly mentions the scream in this passage to clarify what the pronoun "it" refers to at the end of Walcott's sentence. In the later edition, Martens recreates the unclear reference when he writes "sie hörte ihn zuerst." The very fact that Martens's revision of this passage is more substantial than that of many other poems is proof of how difficult it is to translate this particular sentence.

Especially in his revision of "Forest of Europe," Martens simplifies the sentence structure. In his 1989 review, Thies criticizes the translation for syntactical imprecision and inappropriate use of archaic-poetic diction, which stands in stark contrast to the source text. He uses the following terms to describe Walcott's poetry:

komplexe Werke, die [...] im Rückgriff auf große Epochen der englischen Literatur (besonders des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts) eigene, mythisch gebrochene Welten schaffen und die trotz (oder gerade wegen) ungewöhnlicher Metaphorik ohne gewollt-poetische Diktion auskommen; [...]. (1989)

To illustrate his point, he quotes the following passage from the source text:

Growing in whispers from the Writers' Congress,
the snow circles like Cossacks round the corpse
of a tired Choctaw till it is a blizzard
of treaties and white papers as we lose
sight of the single human through the cause. (*SAK* 39)

Martens's first translation read:

Das wachsende Flüstern vom Schriftstellerkongreß gebiert
umkreisenden Schnee, wie Kosaken, um die Leiche

eines müden Choctaw, bis hin zu einem Sturm

aus weißem Papier und weißen Verträgen, da sich der einzelne

Mensch, der Sache wegen, aus dem Auge verliert. (23)

Immediately it becomes clear that Thies's criticism is justified: The references of this involved sentence are very difficult to reconstruct, at times they remain obscure. As a result, no clear image becomes manifest before the minds' eye of the reader.

Thies offers an alternative translation of these very lines, which he introduces with the words "Mein provisorischer Übersetzungsvorschlag lautet":

Im Geflüster vom Schriftstellerkongress entsteht er,

der Schnee, der wie Kosaken um die Leiche

eines müden Choctaws kreist, bis es ein Schneesturm

von Verträgen und weißen Papieren geworden ist,

wobei man den Menschen über der Sache aus dem Auge verliert. (1989)[92]

Although one may criticize the wordiness of "er, der Schnee," or the unclear reference of the neuter personal pronoun "es," the image is much more accessible than is the case with Martens's translation. In addition, Thies explicitly aims to improve the final line as he criticizes Martens for changing the meaning to the individual losing sight of himself. It seems as if Martens agrees with this point, for he adopts Thies's translation of the last line word by word when he revises this passage. The overall result is a much more reader-friendly version:

Der Schnee entwächst dem Flüstern vom Schriftsteller-

kongreß und umkreist wie Kosaken den Leichnam

eines müden Choctaw, bis aus ihm ein Schneesturm

aus Verträgen und weißem Papier geworden ist,

wobei man den Menschen über der Sache aus dem Auge verliert. (*TA* 229)

In this case, one can follow the flow of the imagery and picture the scene much more easily. Again, Martens sacrifices a rhyme – "gebiert – verliert" – in favour of better readability. Unlike Martens, Thies translates "white papers" in terms of official papers or documents rather than sheets of paper as Walcott's use of the plural implies.

In his essay on the Nobel laureate included in the Coron edition, Martens writes about the meaning of the colour white in this passages:

Ein Gedicht wie *The* [sic] *Forest of Europe* verbindet über die Farbe Weiß – der Schnee, den Perse in seinem Werk *Neiges* (1944) beschreibt, die Weiße des Papiers der gebrochenen Verträge mit den Indianern, der russische Schnee – in einer intellektuellen

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[92] In 1982, Beilharz had already published a translation of "Forest of Europe" which offers yet another version of the lines in question: "Auf dem Schriftstellerkongreß wächst im Flüsterton / Schnee heraus und kreist wie Kosaken um die Leiche / eines müden Choctaw, bis daraus ein Blizzard / aus Verträgen und weißem Papier wird, während wir / einen Einzelnen einer Sache wegen aus den Augen verlieren." (550) Had Thies been aware of this version, he could have used it to contrast it with Martens's translation. However, like Martens, Beilharz seems to overlook the plural form of "papers" in the source text.

und emotionalen *tour de force* eine neue Internationale der Unterdrückten […]. (1993, 68)

According to Martens, "white papers" refer to the (white) sheets of paper on which the treaties are written. This interpretation does not account for the fact, though, that in Walcott's version treaties and white papers are two different things that combine to form a blizzard. Although Martens does translate the conjunction, he implies that the blizzard is made of the white paper *of* treaties. In this specific point, Thies's translation is more precise and apt in this context.

3 Raoul Schrott: *Mittsommer/Midsummer* – a bilingual edition

3.1 The translator

Raoul Schrott is writer, scholar, and translator all in one person. At times, it is hard to tell with which of these three parts of his personality he identifies most strongly. He was born in the small Austrian town of Landeck in 1964, but went to school in Tunis, studied in Innsbruck, Norwich, and Paris, and lived in the south of France and in Ireland. Yet he has always returned to his hometown. This he shares with Walcott: the experience of travelling extensively and returning to the place of origin. In 1986, Schrott received a degree in literary and linguistic studies and completed a habilitation treatise in the department of comparative literature at the University of Innsbruck on poetic structures from ancient Greece to Dadaism in 1996 (Leeder 2009, 622). In 2008, he held the Samuel-Fischer guest professorship at the Free University of Berlin (*FU Berlin*)[93] and in 2012 shared the lectureship for poetics at the equally renowned University of Tübingen with his fellow Austrian writer Christoph Ransmayr.[94]

Some consider Schrott the epitome of a "*poeta doctus*," a learned poet, for his extensive knowledge in various fields including neurolinguistics and quantum physics (cf. Leeder 2002, 53). This interest stems from his view that both poetry and the sciences rely heavily on interpreting observations. Therefore, Schrott proclaims a close connection between the two disciplines (Leeder 2009, 623). In addition, both disciplines tend to ignore the "*category mistake*" (Czernin 2007, 54) of equating two objects that technically exclude each other as both language usage and world knowledge imply. In addition, Franz Josef Czernin argues, one has to keep in mind that when Schrott poeticizes the sciences he does so as a poet and thus with a certain sense of playfulness. Czernin believes that one reason for Schrott's tendency to equate what is physical with what is psychological may be his longing for origins and constants in poetry that hold true beyond transhistorical boundaries (2007, 54f.). On a similar note, Daniel Rothenbühler points out that when Schrott speaks of poetry he does not necessarily refer to the genre, but rather to a use of language that is 'poetic' in that it obeys aesthetic principles and a way of thinking in images that go beyond what we can experience with our senses alone. What Schrott concludes from such an understanding of poetry is that it is superior to physics and capable of much more than the sciences.[95]

As an author, Schrott has created an impressively extensive and varied oeuvre that covers all genres including novels and other prose writings, poetry, film scripts, radio plays, as well as essays.[96] He has received numerous literary prizes. In various essays,

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[93] <http://www.fu-berlin.de/campusleben/lernen-und-lehren/2008/081106_raoul_schrott/index.html> Viewed on 3 July 2013.

[94] < http://www.germ.uni-tuebingen.de/abteilungen/neuere-deutsche-literatur/tuebinger-poetik-dozentur/archiv/2012-ransmayr-schrott.html> Viewed on 3 July 2013.

[95] For a summary of the concrete ways in which poetry may contribute to physics and in what regards it may be considered superior to the scientific field itself, cf. Rothenbühler 2007, 46.

[96] Cf. the author information on the websites of Fischer, Hanser, rowohlt Theaterverlag, and Random House: <http://www.fischerverlage.de/autor/raoul_schrott/10817>, < http://www.hanser-literaturverlag.de/autoren/autor.html?id=25703>, < http://www.rowohlt-

Schrott presents assertions concerning poetry that are traceable in his own works. Poetic form, for instance, is at least equally important for Schrott as content, perhaps even more so (cf. Schrott 2005, 79). In his essays from 1997 through to 2009, it quickly becomes apparent that he considers the metaphor to be *the* central trope of poetry (cf. also Leeder 2009, 623). Repeatedly, Schrott points to what he considers the trope's two most crucial aspects: that by connecting two concepts that are not normally thought of as a complementary unit the metaphor creates a *tertium comperationis* and that the metaphor oscillates between the literal and the figurative meaning (cf. Galbraith 2007, 12f.).

Rothenbühler observes a shift of preference from metaphors to similes starting with Schrott's 1998 book *Tropen – Über das Erhabene* (2007, 50). Although various essays published after that time seem to reconfirm Schrott's preoccupation with the metaphor (Schrott 1997/1999, 67f.; 1999, 39; 2009, 165; Scheck and Winkels 1999, 9), such a change of preference could offer an explanation as to why Schrott tends to replace Walcott's metaphors with similes in his translation of *Midsummer*. On the other hand, it may even be an indicator of the influence that translating this very sequence may have had on Schrott's poetics.

On numerous occasions, Schrott stresses the importance of musical qualities for poetry. When he speaks of the choreography of words, he means the various tools that are available to the poet such as metre, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, and assonance (1997/1999, 16). Not only do they make up the structure of a poem by creating symmetries, but Schrott even goes as far as claiming that regardless of the actual semantic value of what is said, prosody conveys emotions and intentions through the timbre of the voice (ibid, 81). In this context, he puts much emphasis on the importance of rhyme and argues: "Der Reim […] stellt gleichsam die Matrix des Gedichtes dar: sowohl musikalisch als auch logisch." (ibid, 88) On the level of logics, rhyme divides a poem into sequences and is a means of contrasting and connecting ideas. In this way, Schrott argues, rhyme is capable of suggesting consistency where there is none thus manipulating the logics of language (ibid, 88f.). In terms of hierarchy, Schrott considers rhythm inferior to rhyme referring to the latter as the centre of poetry. In his foreword to his anthology *Die Erfindung der Poesie*, Schrott writes:

> Ungleich mehr als vor ihm der Rhythmus bringt er in die Verszeile ein in hohem Maße determinierendes Element ein, sodaß man zu Recht die Verwendung des Reims das erste moderne textgenerative Verfahren nennen kannn. Das Gedicht entsteht – fast – von selbst. (1997, 18)

However, Schrott does not necessarily opt for recreating the rhyme scheme or metre of the source text. He explains that the reason why he decided not to recreate these formal aspects in the poems of the above anthology is that they depend to a considerable degree on the unique features of the source language. He compares a translation with the transposition of a musical piece from one instrument to another. His intention is to do justice to the tone of the source. In other words, in this specific case the timbre is what he

wants to recreate (ibid, 22). In his translation of Walcott's *Midsummer*, a very different emphasis becomes apparent: In this case, Schrott makes every effort to recreate as many rhymes a possible and on many occasions even creates more rhymes than there are in the source text. However, rather than considering it a contradiction of his own theories, it may prove the claim that every translation requires a reassessment of method and approach (Eco 2006, 184; Reichert 2003, 299). Instead of denouncing Schrott for breaking with his own theories, one should therefore give him credit for being courageous and flexible enough to adapt them according to a specific case.

Apart from the musical qualities of a poem, Schrott considers imagery to be of central importance. According to Lothar van Laak, Schrott's foreword to his anthology *Die Erfindung der Poesie* implies that the musicality of language is inferior to imagery because the latter is what turns a poem into a message (2004, 50). Thus, imagery like rhyme serves to develop a logical connection across line boundaries. For Schrott, the degree of complexity of imagery, similes, and metaphors used in a poem is proportional to the amount of aesthetic pleasure the reader will experience (1997/1999, 22). Accordingly, he defines a successful poem as one that uses imagery with great precision. On the other hand, Schrott quite categorically – and polemically – claims: "entweder leuchtet ein Gedicht schlagartig ein, oder seine Sache ist nichtig. Die Schönheit überrascht, oder sie ist keine." (ibid, 9)

Schrott's translations of ancient texts

Schrott has edited various anthologies of poetry, adapted *The Iliad* (2008) for a radio play and newly translated the ancient *Epic of Gilgamesh*. In this context, he has received a lot of attention from the media. On the one hand, his extrovert, and self-confident personality lends itself to television and radio appearances. On the other hand, his translations of ancient texts have inflamed a controversial debate about his approach to translation, questioning his competencies for translating such texts since his knowledge of the source languages were rather rudimentary. As he admits in his collection of essays *Handbuch der Wolkenputzerei*, he is no expert on Arabic, Greek, or Assyrian studies (2005, 80). Yet he has translated texts from all three languages in *Die Erfindung der Poesie*, *Die Ilias*, and *Gilgamesh* respectively.

Schrott has written quite extensively about his approach to the translation of ancient poetry. One reason may well be the great amount of criticism he has received in answer to his method that relies on three different aspects: Firstly, he draws on help from scholars who are experts in those ancient languages and literatures from which he translates. Secondly, he applies a comparative approach taking into account previous translations of the source texts into modern target languages with which Schrott is familiar. Thirdly, he uses critical editions for verification (cf. Schrott 1997, 22f.). This seems to be both a rather time consuming and scholarly approach to translation. On the other hand, it appears to be holistic as Schrott takes into account an array of sources. Concerning the first aspect of his method, Monika Schmitz-Emans criticizes that Schrott does not mention any names, but curtly speaks of a competent co-readership (2004, 19). Michael P. Streck dismisses the second aspect of Schrott's method in an essay about the translation of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which he claims merely amounts to a comparison of a number of previous

translations into German, English, French, and Italian (2007, 78). One may give Schrott credit, though, for referring to this translation as a reading version that is based on a cross section of current European Assyrian studies (qtd. in Streck 2007, 79).

Although Schrott does not consider himself an expert on ancient languages and refers to his academic work at an institute for comparative literary studies as his bread-and-butter job, he gets defensive when criticized by other scholars who *are* experts in these fields.[97] The ambitions of the creative writer and the scholar appear to be inseparable in this case. Schrott the scholar does not always take things as seriously as an academic discipline may call for. In his essays, there are numerous instances where he takes certain liberties when talking about poetic categories. For instance, he does not clearly distinguish between metaphor and simile when he refers to the line "Ich bin der Engel der Wirklichkeit" from a translation of Wallace Stevens's poem "Angel Surrounded by Paysans" as a simile (1997/1999, 36). Similarly, quoting from Schrott's definition of the allegory, Van Laak argues:

> In all seinen Bestimmungen der Metapher greift Schrott auf den Vergleich und damit auf eine rhetorische, vormoderne Metapherndefinition in der Tradition von Aristoteles zurück. So bestimmt er in den 'Musen' die Allegorie durch 'ihr konstitutives Element, die Metapher, die in der Kopplung zweier Begriffe und zweier Sinne das *tertium comparationis* erschafft, ein Drittes, das *a priori* göttlich ist' […]. Die literaturwissenschaftlich sinnvolle und erkenntnisbringende Unterscheidung von Metapher und Allegorie wird so unterlaufen […]. (2004, 61)

These instances may serve as examples of a *laissez-faire* attitude, which, according to Karen Leeder have given Schrott the reputation of a charlatan in certain circles (2009, 624). Accordingly, Schrott quotes one critic who claims that the poet's outrageous remarks prove that he does not know the first thing about metre (2005, 85). While this is a rather polemical statement, what Schrott's remarks do reveal is a certain amount of scepticism and reservation towards the German language. In his 1997 lecture series on poetics he writes:

> [Ü]ber die Linguistik letztlich begriff [ich], daß sich die redundante Syntax der deutschen Sprache mit der Kirche rund ums Dorf bewegte und die Wörter kaum Klang entwickeln konnten, weil sie an den Konsonanten erstickten. Und der Klang war mir ebenso wichtig wie Prägnanz. Ich schrieb in dieser Zeit kaum, wenn, dann auf Englisch […]. (1997/1999; 127)

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[97] Over the course of three consecutive issues of the literary magazine *Akzente*, Schrott and Joachim Latacz lead a heated discussion about Schrott's translation of *The Iliad* that was a contract work for a radio play production for the Hessian broadcasting company (*Hessischer Rundfunk*). In the first issue (June 2006) Schrott presents his propositions for a new translation of *The Iliad*. In the following issue (August 2006) Latacz who, as an expert, had cooperated with Schrott in his translation of the first two cantos of *The Iliad* answers with an elaborate and sound criticism of Schrott's translation which again is followed by an open letter from Schrott to Latacz in the next issue (October 2006). In his letter, Schrott elaborates on the need to transfer the original text into a present time and place (466). He also compares the need for new translations with different stage productions of a drama which amount to different interpretations of the same text (467).

On a similar note, he describes its syntax as unnecessarily complex and full of self-reflexive redundancies, its diction as swamped with consonants. As a result, Schrott argues, the number of rhymes is limited and the German poet often has no choice but to resort to the use of inversion in order to end a line with a noun, which is the speech part that holds the highest probability of rhyme (2005, 89). In another comment, he describes the German language as highly alliterative because of the plentiful use of consonants with few vowels. In this way, he argues, it is difficult to connect information musically by linking them through rhyme, as the number of rhymes that are available is limited (2009, 184).

Schrott on translation

In many essays, Schrott reflects on the nature of translation. In one case, he uses the popular metaphor of crossing a river, i.e. taking the source text from one side of the river to the other side.[98] In the course of this crossing, certain aspects of the text change. Schrott explicitly mentions language, vocabulary, and worldview in this connection. He does not merely repeat the well-established metaphor, but rather expands it in order to adapt it to the unique situation that he faces in his translation of ancient poems for his anthology *Die Erfindung der Poesie*. In this case, the source text is not only transferred from one riverbank to the other, but Schrott describes how the river itself has changed its course of the centuries, growing wider at times, drying out at others. What Schrott aims at in his anthology is to return to the source of this river, i.e. to the beginnings of poetry. At first sight, the image may appear imprecise: If the spring were the starting point of poetry then the river itself would merely have grown longer throughout the ages. However, its changing its course may also reflect the way that poetics have changed over time. The aim of author-translators is twofold: making the source text available to a current readership that is not familiar with the source language and learning from it and using it for developing their own craft.

These are central aspects of Walcott's conception of poetry and the poet, as well. Helen Goethals calls him a "poetical pirate" and describes his poetic technique as one of "stealing and giving back." In this way, she argues, "Walcott's borrowing is interactive, enriching both the new (Caribbean) culture and the old (European) one." Schrott very much agrees with this idea and considers the act of translation a school for poets (Scheck and Winkels 1999, 11). He explains that he translates what he can relate to and what is just beyond his reach (2005, 97). In other words, he pushes himself to his limits in order to get better at his own poetic work. This, he told me, is what originally drew him to Walcott's *Midsummer*, as well, and openly admits to "stealing" lines from *Midsummer* for his own volume of poems *Hotels*.[99]

In Schrott's view, the outcome of poetry in translation must be poetry in its own right. Therefore, the translator has to reinvent the images of the source language for the target language. The decisive factor for a successful translation of a poem is to transfer its imagery with the greatest precision possible. In order to do so, the translator as a reader

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[98] Here and in the following cf. Schrott. 2005, 76-95. Here: 77.
[99] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.

firstly has to visualize the image. In his foreword to *Die Erfindung der Poesie* Schrott explains:

> Übersetzen […] heißt, diese Bilder zu sehen, bevor sie geschrieben werden, und sie dann, weil sie sich nie nur kopieren lassen, mit den Utensilien der eigenen Sprache freihändig nachzuzeichnen und neu zu skizzieren […]. Wer sie überträgt, setzt nur fort, was die alten Dichter immer schon getan haben: er macht sich die Tradition der Poesie zu eigen und sucht sie zu verkörpern. (1997, 21)

This conception of translation corresponds with Walcott's understanding of how poets translate other poets. In a paper he presented at the Beautiful Translations Conference in London, he talks about Lowell's *Imitations* and describes this very idea:

> [W]hat pulls the writer from one language to another is not a difference but a similarity, a kind of instinct that says 'here is the mirror of what I would like to have written'. The basis of this, [sic] would be demonstrated in Robert Lowell's brilliant book, *Imitations*, in which he says, here is a poem by Rilke that I should have written. I will now write it in the language of Robert Lowell. I'm not going to be adapting Rilke; I'm going to enter Rilke and come out, not Rilke, nor a combination of Rilke and Lowell, but something through which the poem will be recreated. This is not an act of arrogance; this is an act of attraction. (1996, 17)

In a conversation with Markham published ten years after this conference, Walcott goes even further talking about Lowell's translations of Rimbaud: "What Lowell did was to say '[…] I will take a poem by Rimbaud, and I will enter it, and I will rewrite it'. […] It is as if those great poems were written by Lowell." (2006, 104)

Schmitz-Emans points out that for Schrott, a translation is an act of making something new, of creating new images rather than secondary images (2004, 16). Schrott himself believes that the newly created image should be as close as possible to that of the source language, yet as free as necessary (1997, 21). He describes his translation of diction in the anthology in similar terms explaining: "Die Übersetzungen sind so nahe wie möglich und so frei wie notwendig. Bei den meisten Kapiteln halten sie sich eng an den Wortlaut des Originals" (1997, 22). His use of terminology in this early essay is rather conservative as he speaks of *originals* and translating *closely* or *freely*. With respect to the recreation of rhyme it appears that he changed his approach for his translation of *Midsummer,* in which rhyme is one predominating factor even where it is not text determining. This corresponds with his understanding that what makes up a poem is first and foremost the formal aspects that are used in order to achieve a certain poetic effect (2005, 79).

In his later essay, Schrott appears to question the general assumption of a translation having to be faithful to the source text or its author. What he considers most important is a successful appropriation, i.e. a translation that sounds natural in the target language. Who cares then, he asks, who the author is and who is faithful of whom? He concludes that each translation is a transformation (2005, 101). At first sight, Schrott seems to proclaim the death of the author in accordance with Roland Barthes with translators becoming authors in their own right in an act of emancipation from the idea of original

authors whom the translators have to serve. However, Schrott's description of a successful translation corresponds with what Lawrence Venuti refers to as the "translator's invisibility": The readers do not even notice that they are reading a translation because the target language text sounds natural or fluent (2008, "Invisibility" 1-6).

In a 1999 conversation with Denis Scheck and Hubert Winkels, Schrott verifies the interviewer's question whether for him as a poet translation is a school for poets. Accordingly, he considers translation to be a rather humble act: "Das Übersetzen ist […], trotz aller Subjektivität des Blicks, immer noch die uneitelste Arbeit, die es gibt: weil man liest und lernt." (2005, 77). At the same time, Schrott admits that for this very reason the work of a translator is also a selfish undertaking as you translate in order to gain something for your own poetic output. This aspect of selfishness may well be unique for the special case of author-translators. Regarding the act of translation, Schrott feels torn between the challenges and pleasures:

> Ich denke mir, Übersetzen ist dann einfach eine passionierte Art des Lesens und auch eine Art von Egoismus, weil man es immer in seine Sprache bringen will. Das ist eine Schwierigkeit, das ist eine Herausforderung, es ist eine Art des Lernens, es ist etwas Lustvolles, wenn man ein perfektes Gedicht als Vorlage hat und zumindest etwas annähernd Perfektes machen will. (Scheck and Winkels 1999, 11)

Walcott describes his experience with the translation process in very similar terms: On the one hand, he speaks of "the sweetness that is involved in the process of translation," on the other hand, he also "remember[s] the pain and tension of translation" (1996, 19).

Why Walcott?

Since Schrott feels drawn to what he can relate to when it comes to translation, it is worth considering some similarities and differences between the poet and the poet-translator. Walcott grew up in a multicultural and multilingual environment, which he describes as a "downtown babel of shop signs and streets, mongrelized, polyglot, a ferment without a history, like heaven." (1998, 71) Although his formal education was in Standard English, he also grew up with French Creole and what he refers to as "a tonal English with a Creolized inflection" in an interview (White 1990/1996, 152).

Schrott describes the language situation in Austria as bilingual in the sense that the spoken language differs from Standard German used in writing. He puts it thus:

> [D]er Vorteil, daß eigentlich in Österreich jeder zweisprachig aufwächst, ist für die Literatur nicht zu übersehen; der große Anteil österreichischer Schriftsteller in der deutschen Literatur mag damit zu tun haben, daß man das Schriftdeutsch als etwas Fremdes lernt und deshalb auch bewußt als eigenes Medium mit eigenen Gesetzen begreift, als Instrument, bei dem man sich eine Fingerfertigkeit erst erwerben muß. (1997/1999, 117)[100]

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[100] If the disproportionately large number of renowned Austrian authors among German-language writers is indeed a result of this language situation, however, the ratio of renowned Swiss authors should be similarly high since they grew up in a comparable language situation.

Comparing dialect and standard language, Schrott distinguishes the two in quality: While dialect for him remains the language of emotion, Standard German carries a connotation of control, hierarchy, and rigidity (ibid, 116f.). In the context of Celan's translation of Shakespeare's sonnetts, Schrott describes "good poetry":

> [D]er Text [gewinnt] seine ungeschminkte Frische wieder; was vorher bloß geschrieben war, wird jetzt asl Couplet gesagt, auf eine Weise, die jede gute Dichtung auszeichnet: indem sie sich an der Sprache ihrer Gegenwart ausrichtet, nicht an einem bloß poetisierenden Vokabular." (2005, 99)

Walcott mostly uses Standard English in his poetry and although he does not use much décor its style is often elevated. However, in the poems in *Midsummer* Walcott mainly uses common vocabulary that is easy to understand.

One of the motifs that recur almost obsessively throughout Walcott's oeuvre is that of the book of nature. Especially in *Midsummer*, it features prominently (cf. Gray 2005, 119). Schrott seems to have a similar understanding of the connection between nature and language that Walcott implies with his use of the motif. He writes:

> [D]ie poetische Sprache [ist] den Chiffren der Natur verhaftet; ihre Worte verstehen sich als Signaturen der Dinge, als Zeichen an der Grenze zwischen Außen und Innen, Oben und Unten, Sichtbarem und Unsichtbarem. Die Natur ist – oder besser: sie war es bis zur Renaissance – ein Spiel der Zeichen, die man entziffern muß […]. (1997/1999, 71)

Rothenbühler argues that Schrott is not interested in reading nature, but rather in how to cope with the fact that there is no such thing as a code in nature. To illustrate his point, he quotes from Schrott's poem "Graukogel" in which he writes: "die natur kennt keine schrift" (qtd. in Rothenbühler 2007, 49). According to Rothenbühler, Schrott wants to point at the problem of anthropomorphism. Even if that was the case, Schrott makes the motif fruitful for his poetry and seems similarly fascinated with the idea as Walcott is.

Not only in connection with language does nature play an important role for both writers, but also in terms of the specificities of place. A great portion of Walcott's *Midsummer* poems is set in the Caribbean where nature and landscape are omnipresent. In addition, Walcott's life had become more international. Accordingly, Walcott started to consider himself "a World or International writer" (King 2004, 405) in the early 1980s. The different settings of the poems comprising *Midsummer* reflect this development: Both sections of the volume are more or less equally interspersed with poems set outside the Caribbean while those situated within the region predominate.

Wendy Anne Kopisch illustrates how Schrott's international experience has impacted his poetry, too. She writes:

> Ferner gilt Schrott literarisch sowie biografisch als 'Globetrotter', dessen internationale sowie weltgeografische Erfahrung sich durchaus im Sinne eines 'Besonderen des Ortes und der Region' in seinen eigenen Gedichten niederschlägt. […] Das Regionale wird bewahrt, aber auf überregionaler Ebene zugänglich und direkt erfahrbar gemacht. (2011)

In addition, Kopisch points out that the senses play a central role in connecting the locally specific with the global and universal. Writing about his early experiences with literature, Schrott describes how he felt especially drawn to those literary texts that involve and appeal to the senses. Although he also enjoyed intellectually demanding literature it were those sensual qualities that made reading most enjoyable for him (1997/1999, 126). Walcott's poems, especially those making up *Midsummer* often appeal to the different senses. Most prominent in the collection may be the visual sense as painting and light play a central role time and again.

Leeder observes a development in Schrott's poetic oeuvre: Comparing his book of poems *Tropen. Über das Erhabene* (1998) with *Weissbuch* (2004) she argues that in the more recent volume Schrott emphasizes the sacred in the ordinary rather than the sublime in the unattainable as in the earlier collection (2009, 624). Likewise, many poems of *Midsummer* describe how the poet persona draws on the ordinary for inspiration. As Hamner puts it, Walcott "wants to give expression to the miraculous within the ordinary" (2002-2003, 231). In addition, both Walcott's *Midsummer* and Schrott's *Weissbuch* bear resemblance to a diary or journal. Robert Bensen, for instance, refers to *Midsummer* as "the poet's sketchbook, the artist's diary" (1986, 259). Whereas in Walcott the likeness is more subtle, Schrott makes it more emphatic as he goes as far as adding notes on when and where he wrote the poems (Borgans 2009, 197).

Moreover, both poets choose hotels as settings. King writes about Walcott's poetry of the late 1980s that it "was filled with nights in hotels and foreign places" (2004, 480). This is certainly true for *The Fortunate Traveller* and *Midsummer*. Schrott even published an entire book of poetry entitled *Hotels* (1995). Both poets compare hotels to temples: While Schrott considers hotels the true temples of our century (Leeder 2009, 623f.), Walcott writes in XLIII *Tropic Zones/vi*: "her temples, / white blocks against green, are hotels" (61). Since hotels are usually related to journeys, it is not surprising that journeys feature prominently in *The Fortunate Traveller* and *Midsummer* alike. According to Leeder, Schrott's *Hotels* resembles a journey in that it turns poetic material gathered while travelling into a poetic logbook. Apart from describing a journey from Austria to Tierra del Fuego, she continues, the poems also resemble a journey through history and language (2009, 623). Describing Schrott's more mature poetic oeuvre, Leeder notes that he develops leitmotifs in his poetic sequences. She even explicitly compares Schrott's verses with Walcott's: "Auffallend sind die raumgreifenden rhythmisch schwingenden Langverse, deren formale Gestalt an Gedichte von Derek Walcott erinnern, den Schrott auch übersetzt hat." (2009, 624)

Finally, both poets share an interest in ancient poetry and tradition. This becomes most evident in Schrott's numerous translations from ancient languages and Walcott's intertextual allusions. As Leeder writes, Schrott considers tradition to be a major driving force of poetic output (ibid, 623f.). The same holds for Walcott who draws on the classical European literary traditions of Homer, Dante, and Ovid as naturally as that of English poetry throughout the ages. Both are interested in oral poetry, as well, which was one

reason why Schrott decided to include translations of ancient Arabic poetry in his anthology *Die Erfindung der Poesie* (2005, 80).

3.2 The en-face edition

Schrott's translation of *Midsummer* is the first bilingual edition of a complete work by Walcott that was made available to a German readership. It is important to keep in mind, though, that this was not the way it was originally published: Seven years earlier, in 1994, the entire sequence of poems had already been published in the magazine *Akzente*. This was the first translation of an entire book of Walcott's poetry into German. Schrott had completed his original translation in only three months during the previous summer.[101]

In a way, the translation process mirrors Walcott's writing process: Even though Walcott wrote the sequence in the course of *two* summers that he spent in Trinidad (King 2004, 428), both are rather short amounts of time for the respective endeavour. One reason for Schrott's speedy translation for the magazine publication was certainly the meagre payment he received: 20 DM per page with an average of one and a half poems per page amounted to roughly 800 DM, which was not exactly lavish, even in the 1990s.

A more convincing argument for doing this work was the idea of apprenticeship, of learning from a great poet. This is what Walcott had done when he first set out to become a poet, and this was Schrott's motivation, too. He had accidentally come across *Midsummer* in a Munich bookstore and after reading it, decided that this was the kind of poetry he wanted to write. He got in touch with the publishing house Hanser where Martens's translation had appeared. Hanser did not want to publish Schrott's translation as a book, but offered to print it in the affiliated magazine *Akzente*. Without any further instructions or terms of conditions from the publisher, Schrott went to work.

There are numerous ways in which to publish a source text and its translation in one book. *Mittsommer/Midsummer* is an example of the most common type: the *en face* edition.[102] According to Peter Großens, this type of bilingual edition has become increasingly popular in Germany since the second half of the 20th century. Großens describes the effects of this edition in the following way: "Damit wird zumindest dem Leser eine Form von Offenheit und Überprüfbarkeit suggeriert und zugleich die 'Andersheit des Anderen' betont." (2011, 275).

Hewson's chief concern is the influence of a bilingual edition on the second-language learner. Nevertheless, he believes that this edition will also influence "the translator in his translation work, assuming that he or she is translating with this type of edition in mind, and for the introduction and notes to be included in the edition" (1993, 141). Knowing that one's translation will appear along with the source text could have various effects on the translator: That readers can simply turn to the opposite page and read

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[101] In the following I will refer to an interview I conducted with Raoul Schrott on 20 August 2013 unless otherwise indicated.
[102] Lance Hewson describes such an edition in the following way: [The] source text appears on the left-hand page and the target text on the right-hand page. The page layout is designed so that the reader can consult the source text and the target text without having to change pages. The translation is assumed to be an integral one [i.e. the souce text has been neither cut nor censored]. The text may or may not contain a translator's preface and/or notes. (1993, 140)

the English text may take some pressure off the translator and inspire him/her to approach the poem more freely. At the same time, it may turn an inventive poet-translator into a kind of rival to the author of the source text. On the contrary, the thought of a reader comparing both texts could also be intimidating for a translator. When I asked Schrott about this, he answered without hesitation that for him it had a liberating effect to know that his revised translation of *Midsummer* was going to be published alongside the source text.[103]

Comparing the two versions it is striking how many changes Schrott made and how much work he put into revising his original translation for the new edition. As it turns out, not one poem was left untouched for the new publication. One may well conclude, then, that the planned bilingual edition made him reconsider his original translation. Of course, an attempt was made to eliminate obvious mistakes that had found their way into the magazine version. Some of them may have been the result of the short amount of time in which Schrott made the translation: In the first poem, his translation of "seaweed" as "seegras" becomes "seetang." In poem V, Walcott's "muslin midsummer" was misread and turned into a Muslim midsummer – "moslemischen mittsommer" – and later corrected to "musselin-mittsommer."[104]

However, the causes for such obvious mistakes are manyfold and not solely to be ascribed to lack of time: In the 1990s, the knowledge of specifics of Caribbean culture was neither as widespread as it is today nor was internet available for quick and easy reference. In addition, secondary literature on Walcott in general or specifically on *Midsummer* was still scarce and the *Dictionary on Caribbean Language Usage* only appeared in 1996. Schrott's attempts to contact the poet himself in the hope of getting answers to some of his questions remained unanswered.[105] All of this may account for errors such as turning Walcott's reference to a specific park in Trinidad in poem III. – "the dewy Savannah" – into a reference to the typical vegetation of the region in general: "auf der savanne." In the later version "Savanne" is capitalized, thus indicating a proper name.

A more complex case occurs in XXXII. Walcott describes Lowell with whom he used to teach in Boston in the following way:

> Cal's bulk haunts my classes. The shaggy square head tilted,
> the mist of heated affection blurring his glasses,
> slumped, but the hands repeatedly bracketing vases
> of air, the petal-soft voice that has never wilted –
> its flowers of illness carpet the lanes of Cambridge (45)

In the last line, it is quite clear that the possessive pronoun "its" can only refer to Lowell's voice, firstly because of grammatical congruence and secondly because the voice is described as "petal-soft" and "never [having] wilted" in the preceding line. Thus, the image of the "flowers of illness" is a continuation of the flower metaphor. In addition, the

[103] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.
[104] Other mistakes found their way into the new edition, such as the typo in "Almangasett" instead of "Amagansett." In some cases, Schrott changed the diction or sentence structure, but did not adjust the pronouns accordingly as in poems XIVand XXXVIII, for instance.
[105] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.

softness is drawn on again in the last line with the verb "carpet." The length of the sentence poses a difficulty in both of Schrott's versions because of German grammar.

> Cals sperrige gestalt sucht meine lektionen heim. Die haare wirr,
> der vierschrötige kopf, seine brille beschlagen vor hitziger hingabe,
> bucklig gebeugt, mit blütenweicher stimme, die ich nie vergessen habe,
> klammern seine hände unaufhörlich vasen in die luft, etwas irr –
> ihre blumen des kranken pflastern die gassen von Cambridge (417)

The female possessive pronoun "ihre" in this version could technically refer to the vases, Cal's hands, or his voice. In the second version "ihre" is replaced with the masculine possessive pronoun "seine" which can only refer to Cal himself. As far as the imagery is concerned, the flower metaphor in the first line does not carry the aspect of wilting, and instead of "carpet[ing] the lanes" "the flowers of illness" in Schrott's version *pave* them. In this way, the soft and muffling quality of Walcott's image becomes one of firmness and solidity.

Advantages of the bilingual edition

In 1995 Walcott was one of the keynote speakers at the "Beautiful Translations Conference" held at the Tate Gallery in London. Before contemplating some challenges of translating poetry, Walcott made an intriguing assertion: "I think that poetry can be translated into a complementary text" (Walcott 1996, 19). One of the most tangible realizations of a translation as a "complementary" text might well be a bilingual edition. Moreover, having the source text as well as the target text readily available, the (bilingual) reader can experience firsthand how a translation is also an interpretation. Reading the translation alongside the source text facilitates direct comparison and might help to more clearly see the translator's predicament – and achievement. Schrott describes the process of translation in his epilogue to his translation of *Midsummer* in the following way: "Was beim Übersetzen dazukommt, ist, daß man jemandem beim Denken zusieht. […] Die Übersetzung ist […] ein – gezwungenermaßen oft rudimentäres – Nachdenken dieser Diktion" (2001, 139). Similarly, a reader might get to the point of "watching" the translator think, of re-thinking his/her thoughts.

In this way, the bilingual edition may open up new possibilities of understanding the text. Kopisch is therefore right when she writes about the layout of the *en face* edition: "[D]as Layout [lädt] zum 'Gespräch' zwischen Gedicht und Übersetzung ein, indem beide nebeneinander abgedruckt werden"(2011). There are numerous examples for the different vantage points that are offered by entering into this 'dialogue.' They can be very fruitful and enrich the text as in XVI, where Walcott ends a reflection on the dead with the lines: "[…] But each one prefers / the silence that was his birthright, and the shore / where the others wait neither to end nor begin." (26) Schrott translates: "[…] Aber jeder zieht das ausharren / in der stille vor die sein geburtsrecht war und das ufer / wo die anderen warten, weder um zu enden noch um zu beginnen. " (39) In the first line, Schrott adds the noun "das ausharren." While Walcott emphasizes the absence of sound, Schrott stresses the absence of action implied in the act of perseverance and later in the synonymous verb "warten." In Walcott's poem, the dead prefer silence to the noise created by the prayers of

the living. In Schrott's poem, on the other hand, they prefer *waiting* in silence. Silence is only an attribute applied to the act of waiting. The second half of Walcott's sentence offers two possible readings. Either the dead prefer the shore "neither to end nor begin," or it is "the others" who "wait neither to end nor begin." Schrott could have recreated this ambiguity had he omitted the conjunction. Instead, he unequivocally suggests the second interpretation: "die anderen warten, weder um zu enden noch um zu beginnen." This illustrates Boase-Beier's claim that "[i]t is difficult to capture lexical ambiguity or ambiguity of reference in the target text, because […] such ambiguities depend on the linguistic contingencies of the source language." (2011, 147) What is more is that a translator must be aware of ambiguity in the first place. Often, however, one does not even notice that the text implies another interpretation that may be equally plausible as the interpretation that appears obvious at first sight.

At times, the possibility of a different interpretation only becomes apparent when engaging in a reading of both the English and the German text. It is therefore likely that the reader of the English version intuitively notices only one of the two possible readings considering it the more obvious. This seems to be the case with Bensen who writes about this passage: "natural beauty means nothing to those suspended outside of time, neither grim nor beatific, who on the shore 'wait neither to end nor begin.'" In addition, Bensen detects an "echo of Milton's 'They also serve who only stand and wait' (Sonnet XIX)" in this line (Bensen 1986, 265). It seems unlikely that this reference is detectable for those German readers. Those who are familiar with Milton's work in the source language may again profit from the bilingual edition.

The concept of translation as the production of a complementary text becomes even more evident when considering the two versions of IX. In the opening lines, the brevity of a lightning bolt is "like the swift note of a swallow on the staff / of four electric wires." Connecting very different elements through a simile, Walcott creates an image that is coherent, yet mirrors numerous different aspects of the newly created entity:

It touches earth, that branched diviner's rod
the lightning, like the swift note of a swallow on the staff
of four electric wires, while everything I read
or write goes on too long. (19)

The image is complemented by Schrott's version in that it sharpens one aspect: that of a note on a sheet of music. Technically, in the English version, a note could refer either to a musical note or to a written note. All these factors distract the readers, drawing their attention away from the actual image. Schrott translates the opening section in the following way: "die achtelnote einer schwalbe auf dem mast / mit seinen vier drähten" (25). At first sight, it seems as if he adds a detail by turning Walcott's "swift note" into a very specific kind of musical note, an eighth note. German readers with basic knowledge of music theory will know that this is a fairly brief note. Schrott's mast with its four wires may be no more precise than Walcott's "staff / of four electric wires", but reading both versions together, it suddenly becomes unmistakably clear that the bird sitting on one of

four electric wires looks like a note on a sheet of music, even if sheet music consists of five lines.

Homonyms

On other occasions the source text itself suggests more than one reading, for instance when homonyms are used. Often, there is no equivalent homonym available in the target language. In that case, the translator is forced to choose. In an essay on Claire Malroux's translation of Walcott's autobiographical poem *Another Life*, Christine Raguet writes about the difficulty of finding a French term that conveys the multiple facets of the word "darkness". Not only does the word convey the absence of light at a certain hour of day, but a human condition for Afro-Caribbeans, "la condition de l'homme noir" (2010, 180).[106] Readers of a bilingual edition has the opportunity to consider both texts and can still appreciate the different meanings inherent in the source text. They may even arrive at a different interpretation than the translator.

In *Midsummer*, Walcott repeatedly plays with the different meanings of the homonym "lines." In the first instance in III, the pun is obvious as two meanings are presented plainly. The poet persona looking at his image in the mirror of a hotel bathroom self-critically reflects on his writing: "Every word I have written took the wrong approach. / I cannot connect these lines with the lines in my face." (13) However, the meaning of "lines" cannot always be assigned so easily and unequivocally to one of these two meanings. In XXIII, Walcott writes: "Praise had bled my lines white of any more anger" (34). The central topic of the poem is the Brixton race riot and the poet persona's own confrontation with racism in England. Only a few lines earlier it says: "I was there to add some color to the British theater." In this passage, too, adding "color" refers to Walcott being of African decent and thus being "colored". Yet on another level it refers to the fact that his plays are exotic to a non-Caribbean audience.[107] The poem continues to describe how the rioters' "thick skulls bled with rancor". Walcott, repeating the verb "bled" in both contexts, keeps the two meanings deliberately pending. In light of the context and the self-reflexive tendency of many poems in *Midsummer*, the predominant meaning of "lines" in the case in question therefore seems to be that of written lines that have been depleted of anger. It is the central question of guilt and a feeling of betrayal that can be traced throughout Walcott's oeuvre. It is also closely linked to the reproach for being too Eurocentric a writer that Walcott has been confronted with. As Greenwood notes: "In the early stages of his poetic career, Walcott was often accused of imperialism – of behaving like an Afro-Saxon and selling out on the Caribbean through his engagement with the classical tradition of European literature." (2005, 142) In German, there are two separate words for the two meanings of "lines." Schrott opts for a different interpretation when he

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[106] Raguet writes: "La dificulté de trouver un mot français aussi polysémique que 'Darkness' qui s'insère naturellement dans le vers est pratiquement insurmontable, ce qui prouve combien l'économie poétique restreint le champ des possibles en traduction."
[107] In 1960, Walcott's plays *The Sea at Dauphin* and *Six in the Rain* were staged in Canonbury, England, where they received very mixed reviews. While one reviewer criticized the first play for its diction among other things, the second play was described as "genuinely indigenous" by Kenneth Young in his review entitled "Black Actors in Two Plays." For more details on the reception of Walcott's plays in England, see Bruce King 2004, 170f.

translates: "Lob hatte meine züge vor noch mehr zorn weißbluten lassen" (55). In Schrott's version, praise seems to have made the lyrical I so angry that his features look worn as a result. This is a rather grave shift. Unfortunately, a typographical error in the bilingual edition only makes the meaning more obscure: instead of "bled" the English text reads "Praise had blend my lines white of any more anger" (*MM* 54).

In XXV, Walcott writes about "the poet as laborer, working his physical and metaphoric lines" (Bensen 1986, 263) and concludes: "the lines I love have all their knots left in" (36).[108] Bensen interprets this line in the following way: "The West Indian sailor-fisherman must keep his nets mended or he catches nothing. The knots give a sure grip on the experience that is the object of the poet's handiwork" (Bensen 1986, 263). Schrott, on the other hand, adds a reference to a tall tale or yarn when he translates "die zeilen die ich mag sind alle noch voller knoten, seemannsgarn" (59).

In XXIX, the last poem of part one, yet another meaning of "lines" is implied by Walcott. Similar to III, the poem ends on a note of self-doubt:

What if the lines I cast bulge into a book
that has caught nothing? Wasn't it privilege
to have judged one's work by the glare of greater minds,
though the spool of days that midsummer's reel rewinds
comes bobbling back with its question, its empty hook? (40)

At first sight, the imagery in this passage is not that difficult to grasp. A fishing metaphor is applied to show how the poet persona having finished a book of verse is unsure about its quality and its success. Reading Schrott's translation, one can recognize the fishing metaphor in a number of different places:

Was wenn diese angeln die ich auswerfe wie ich meine sätze sage
sich zu einem buch bauschen das nichts gefangen hat? War es kein privileg
die eigene arbeit beurteilt zu sehen von größeren denen ich respekt zolle
obwohl die schnur der tage die der mittsommer aufspult auf seiner rolle
zurückgehaspelt kommt mit einem leeren haken, einer frage? (67)

It may strike the reader as odd that Schrott translates Walcott's "the lines I cast" with the more lenghty relative clause "angeln die ich auswerfe wie ich meine sätze sage", but this may be explained with attempting to keep the length of the lines consistent. The reader who takes a glance at the English poem, however, may be further irritated by the choice of "sätze" – sentences – where "Verse" – verses – appears more suitable. The fact that Schrott has a certain fondness for alliteration may account for this choice. Nevertheless, the very strangeness of his choice makes the reader notice the ambiguous diction at the end of the poem.

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[108] Much earlier, Walcott draws on the same imagery in his poem "The Schooner *Flight*": "Well, when I write / this poem, each phrase go be soaked in salt; / I go draw and knot every line as tight / as ropes in this rigging" (1979, 5)

3.3 Tendencies in Schrott's translation

3.3.1 Questions of style

Schrott's approach to translating Walcott's *Midsummer* is very versatile. Nevertheless, certain tendencies are traceable in his translation. Some of them are obvious whereas others only stand out after a more extensive and careful reading. One of the first things one notices is that Schrott does not apply standard German punctuation and orthography. Apart from rarely using commas, he also refrains from capitalizing nouns. Not only can this be quite irritating for German readers, especially when reading the poems aloud, it can also add ambiguity to a passage or obscure the meaning. Kopisch (2011) even goes as far as arguing that by capitalizing merely the initial letter of a sentence, Schrott adds an element of alienation to the poems for which there is no equivalent in the English text.[109]

However, Schrott does capitalize proper names and usually those words that are capitalized in the source text. One advantage of this practice certainly is that whenWalcott uses capitalization to emphasize certain words; this can easily be reproduced in the translation, as well. This gains importance with regard to Walcott's distinction between a history that is local, insular, and individual and a History that encompasses world events (Göske 2007, 207f.) in a "supposedly authoritative 'progressive and linear' version of events Walcott regularly debunks." (Rotella 2004, 143) Nevertheless, the effect on the reader may still vary from one language and culture to the other. The unusual and unexpected capitalization of select words in an English-speaking environment will certainly draw the readers' attention to them. German readers, on the other hand, are so accustomed to the capitalization of nouns that the emphasis may either go unnoticed or be thought of as a typographical error caused by the standards of German orthography. The bilingual edition allows the reader to note when capital letters are used intentionally simply by taking a glance at the source text.

Sometimes Schrott is inconsistent in this practice. Although he does capitalize the names of countries and cites, he uses lower case letters for adjectives pertaining to these places as in Spanish (IV), Flemish (VIII), Greek (XII), British (LII), etc.[110] Kopisch points out that Schrott tends to capitalize only the inital word of a sentence in most of his own poetry, as well (2011). In one of his lectures held at Graz in 1997, Schrott reflects upon the origins of this habit:

> Und auch die Kleinschreibung der Zeilen kam wohl daher, daß dies in den 70ern noch gang und gäbe war. Im nachhinein kann ich es wieder mit den hierarchischen Strukturen der Sprache begründen, denen eine konsequente Kleinschreibung viel an Raum abgewinnen kann, besonders in der Poesie, wo ja nicht einzusehen ist, weshalb

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[109] Here and in the following cf. Kopisch.

[110] The same holds for the names of days and months that are capitalized in English, but not in Schrott's translation. While he uses lower case letters for religious terms such as "Bible," (XXI) "Methodist," (XXXI) and "Anglican" (L), he capitalizes the translations of "Saviour" as "Heiland" and "the Word" as "das Wort" in XXI. In poem XXVII, Schrott chooses not to emphasize the word "besatzungszeit" as Walcott does by capitalizing "Occupation", in IV and XXXVIII, on the contrary, the word "Ende" for Walcott's "an empire's *ending*" and "when a play must *close*" (m.e.) is capitalized on both occasions. When Walcott writes about the Empire, Schrott maintains the English word, puts it in italics, but spells it with a lower case /e/. The general term "empires" is translated as "imperien" (XLIII *Tropic Zone/vi*).

Sustantive Hauptworte sein sollten, denen man eine Dominanz gegenüber anderen, sozusagen minderen Wortarten zugesteht.(1997/1999, 118)

Besides, he admits that he has never appreciated the unique and peculiar use of capitalization in German that has no counterpart in any other language (ibid).

Rhyme

Another visual aspect that strikes the reader of the bilingual edition is Schrott's lines are often longer. Partially this is due to the structural and morphological differences between the two languages. However, Schrott also adds words quite frequently. Often he does so in order to recreate a rhyme. This in turn makes more additions necessary to create lines of similar length throughout a poem. As a result, even key images are altered. In the first poem from *Midsummer*, Walcott writes: "The jet's shadow / ripples over green jungles as steadily as a minnow / through seaweed" (11). The sea is one of Walcott's primary metaphors as well as a prime motif. For Walcott, the Caribbean is the sea – not the islands, but the ocean itself. In an interview with Carrol B. Fleming, he explains: "[B]y landscape, I include the sea, the whole panorama" (Fleming 1993). In this first poem, the jungle is juxtaposed with the ocean, as the shadow of the plane moves in small waves while the land is parallelled with the sea. Schrott adds the German word "spitze" to "schatten," narrowing the image to the pointed tip of the shadow in order to recreate the rhyme. Moreover, the tip wriggles rather than "ripples" over green jungles: "Die schattenspitze / des jumbos schlängelt sich stet über grüne dschungel wie eine elritze / durch den seetang" (9). Both, the emphasis on the pointed shape and the use of the German verb "schlängelt" containing the stem "snake" create the image of such a reptile moving on land. Ultimately, this confirms the cliché of the jungle as a dangerous place rather than juxtaposing ocean and jungle.

In poem XXXV, Walcott depicts the Welsh and English countryside as viewed from a car. In the beginning, he explcitily refers to Langland's 14th-century epic poem "Piers Plowman" which Walcott describes as "a journey taken by pairs of plowmen through England—medieval England—and making a spiritual journey like a Pilgrim's Progress journey in a poem." (Fleming 1993) Landscape and poem are connected through the image of "the turning disk of the fields / with their ploughed stanzas [that] sang of a freshness lost." (48) On the one hand, the verb "ploughed" puns on the title of Langland's poem. On the other hand, the very fact that the disk "*sang of* a freshness lost" (m. e.) connects the image to the tradition of epic poetry in general. This tradition is drawn on even more explicitly in poem XXXIII dedicated to the poet and translator of Greek and Latin classics Robert Fitzgerald which ends with a quote from the *Aeneid* "*'Arma virumque cano…'*" (46). In his translation, Schrott reinterprets the disk as a record instead of the more likely discs of a plow and the singing is only implied in the playing of a song from this record: "die Schallplatte der felder spielte / mit ihren umgepflügten stanzen das lied einer verlorenen frische" (81). The playing of the record only hints at the disk's turning without explicitly mentioning it. Schrott probably opted for this translation because of prosodic qualites: He creates assonance between "hielt" and "spielte" and repeats the fricative /š/ in "Schallplatte," "spielte," "stanzen," and even "frische." As in the opening

line, the pattern of alliteration and consonance add up to onomatopoeia underlining the sound of tires on a wet road: "Schlamm. Schollen. Die schmatzende sohle des regenwerfers" (81). Whereas Walcott connects XXXIII and XXXV by references to the epic tradition, Schrott draws a connection to poem XXXVII by repeating the image of the record, which Walcott does not spell out explicitly.

Yet altering an image is not a negative side effect per se. Holman and Boase-Beier take a similar stance in their description of the translation of prosodic means and the possible consequences:

> Even those apparently more stable stylistic devices of rhyme and alliteration invite the creative participation of the reader, for words linked by any type of sound-similarity suggest other links, semantic in nature […]. However, alliteration, rhyme and assonance are devices in their own right and the translator who links different words by such repetition of sound will create different connections. Interpretation is a creative act carried out by every reader and thus by every translator; even when stylistic devices do not provide obvious gaps to be filled or obvious patterns to be complied with or creatively subverted, the translator cannot be free from the unconscious act of creative interpretation. (1998, 15)

This "act of creative interpretation" by the translator becomes most evident in poem XXXVII. In this poem, an injured wren triggers reflections on the inevitability of death. Walcott's concise imagery moves smoothly from "[a] trembling thought" to a glimpse of eternity in the dying bird's "targeted, targeting stare" (50). Kopisch argues that by using a gerund followed by an infinitive construction in "a heartbeat thudding to be gone" (50), Walcott evokes both the ephemeral threat and the energetic power of the heartbeat's fluttering (2011). In her view, the infinitive construction adds weightiness to the image through which life and death are inseparably connected.

At the end of her intricate analysis of the poem and its translation, Kopisch concludes that in this particular case, Schrott opts for a rather free translation to create a similar effect in German (Kopisch 2011). However, a close reading of Schrott's translation also reveals that the majority of liberties taken are the result of his focus on rhyme and prosody. It is no coincidence that in most instances he recreates Walcott's rhymes in exactly the same places. The second half of the translation contains even more rhymes than Walcott's version. Both poems end with a cross rhyme:

> It flutters in my palm like the heartbeat thudding to be gone,
> as if it shared the knowledge of a wren's elsewhere
> beyond the world ringed in its eye, season and zone,
> in the radial iris, the targeted, targeting stare. (50)

To recreate this pattern of cross rhymes, Schrott alters this powerful closing image:

> Er flattert in der hand wie der herzschlag schlägt, als wolle er betonen
> daß er entkommen müsse, als würde auch er auf sein jenseits harren
> seine ins auge gefassten anderweitigen welten, jahreszeiten und zonen
> in der sternförmigen iris, ihrem anvisierten, visierendem starren. (85)

The image of the target that is preconceived in "the world ringed in its eye" achieves completion in "the radial iris" and culminates in the description of the bird's stare as "targeted" and "targeting" at the same time. Schrott finds an excellent solution for the two closing adjectives. The image of the eye as a microcosm of the world, however, is blurred in the plural form "welten" and the idiomatic expression for something taken into consideration. Similarly, the translation does not convey the image of the eye as a target since the iris is described as star-shaped. In addition, it does not become clear in Schrott's translation that Walcott anthropomorphises the wren in the second line. Instead, the translation implies that both bird and lyrical I expect an afterlife.

What Schrott emphasizes with his choice is a reading of the record's black colour as the blackness of space (cf. Kopisch 2011): "if you died in my hand, the beak would be the needle / on which the black world kept spinning on in silence" (50). Walcott leaves it up to the reader to assemble the image of the record, though it is not very difficult to picture. Schrott, on the other hand, turns the metaphor into a simile and distinctly mentions the record: "stürbest du in meiner hand wäre dieser schnabel die nadel / auf der die schwarze welt sich wie eine schallplatte still weiterdreht" (85). Again, prosody can explain Schrott's choices. Walcott's use of assonance underlines the resemblance of the wren's beak with a needle by linking the two through the repetition of [i] sounds. In addition, the use of alliteration stresses the connections between the beak and the colour black on the one hand, and the world's spinning and silence, on the other. In his translation, Schrott finds equivalents for both figures of speech as he repeats the fricative [š] of "stürbest" in "schnabel" while creating assonance with "schnabel" and "nadel."

A view that Schrott and Walcott share is that rhyme is what propels a poem forward. In the epilogue to his translation, Schrott writes: "[Es ist] die ganze Palette des Reims, mit der diese Gedichte konstruiert sind: Alliterationen, Assonanzen, visuelle, äquivoke oder grammatische Reime, reine und unreine, die in ihrem Enjambement das Gedicht vorantreiben." (2001, 139)[111] What is most obvious when comparing Schrott's translation with the English version is that he focuses predominantly on recreating the rhyme. Where this is not possible, he resorts to at least creating the same number of rhymes as in Walcott's poem. Frequently, the poems in Schrott's translation contain even more rhymes than the source language poems.

In the year of publication of Walcott's *Midsummer*, William H. Pritchard quite unflatteringly wrote in his review: "Each poem goes on for around twenty or so lines of irregular length, and in such a form, unrhymed, you can say just about anything which occurs to you" (1984, 331). To prove his point he quotes extensively from XVII, XXII, and XLIV. One year later, Howard comments on this "derisive review," noting that inconspicuous as it may be, there is indeed a "pattern of rhyme, masked by elaborate syntax and strong enjambement" (1985, 158). Howard offers important insights into Walcott's use of rhyme and the effects he creates:

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[111] Much earlier, Schrott recognized that rhyme in all its facets creates symmetries in a poem: "Assonanzen und Konsonanzen; jede Alliteration und jeder Reim schaffen Symmetrien in einem Gedicht […].Sie geben die Struktur eines Gedichtes vor, seine Matrix, die Form und Inhalt aus sich herausbringt." (1997/1999, 37).

[T]he rhymes retreat behind the complex syntax and the enjambed conversational voice. Upon inspection some of the rhymes turn out to be approximate (resembles, temples) or even rather dubious (stoas, slow as). In any event, they make no more than a muffled sound, if that, and speech prevails over song. (1985, 158f.)

Although Baugh does not speak of a pattern he does recognize "irregular rhyming" (1991, 123) throughout the sequence. It can be agreed that Walcott's rhyme scheme is by no means rigid or prominent. Schrott himself refers to the poems of the sequence as "fast prosaisch […] in einer diskreten Assymetrie, in der ein Reim noch auf das Schlußwort zehn Zeilen zuvor Bezug nimmt" (2001, 139). While he notes the full spectrum of rhyme including such prosodic means as alliteration, assonance, and eye rhyme, among others, he also grants that upon first reading the poems – even if reading them aloud – one is not necessarily aware of any rhyme, because two rhyme words may well be separated by up to ten lines. During a poetry reading they did together, Schrott asked Walcott about the rhymes in *Midsummer*. According to the translator, Walcott acted as if he had not even noticed them, yet Schrott doubts that such an amount of rhymes could have come about by chance. Therefore, he attributes Walcott's reaction to his being somewhat conceited.[112] Overall, opting for rhyme as the underlying principle for his translation does not seem the most obvious choice.

Explicitness

Schrott's strong focus on rhyme sometimes results in the German version becoming more explicit, at times even explanatory, as the translator had to make changes on various levels to accommodate a rhyme pattern, irregular as it may be. As a result, certain aspects of the poem become more immediately accessible. In XXVI, for instance, Schrott adds a number of details to the poem to (re)create rhymes. In each case, he specifies what in Walcott's version remains more open to interpretation: he adds an adjective describing the sea grapes as damp, he offers a reason for the flash of a signal from the reef, specifies the place where bathers are gathered, and interprets "a year's trials" (37) as "einem Jahr […] und seinen blessuren" (61). Schrott chooses to be more explicit when he translates Walcott's "idolaters / angling themselves to the god's face, like sundials" (37) as "sonnenanbeter […] / die ihrem gott die gesichter zudrehen, wie schattenuhren." (61) Walcott's ends his poem with the word "sundials" which rhymes with "trials". In this case, Schrott translates "*schatten*uhren" instead of the common "*sonnen*uhren" thus emphasizing the shadow that indicates the time of day.[113] At first sight, there is no apparent reason for this choice since it does not affect the rhyme with "blessuren." The most plausible explanation is that Schrott wants to avoid repeting the word "Sonne" as he translates Walcott's "idolaters" in the preceding line as "sonnenanbeter."

However, rhyme is not always the reason for Schrott making additions to the poems. On various occasions, the German translation is interpretative or explanatory. One instance of Schrott explicating an image occurs in XL. On a reading tour, the persona finds

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[112] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.
[113] According to the dictionary of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Schattenuhr" is used as a synonym for "Sonnenuhr" (<http://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB>).

himself spending an evening in yet another hotel room on a reading tour. The lines in this poem are very short, the sentences often fragmented. The readings seem to exhaust him to a point of speechlessness. He describes himself watching TV: "Between the V made by your parted socks, / stare at the charred cave of the television" (53). Schrott explains the image as he writes: "Zwischen dem V ausgestreckter füße in ihren socken / auf die rußige höhle des fernsehers starrn" (91). Kopisch is therefore right when she claims that Schrott tends to articulate explicitly what Walcott only implicitly hints at with imagery (2011).[114]

Complex structures and prosaic feel

Be it to (re)create rhyme, to create lines of similar length, or to explicate images, Schrott's tendency to make additions to the poems also affects their structure, which becomes increasingly complex. In XXVIII, the poet persona spends an idle afternoon on the beach with his daughters. The end of their visit is only days away. The mood is melancholic as the lyrical I dreads the inevitable moment of their departure. Walcott visualizes the passing of time in images of shadows growing smaller "as / noon jerks towards its rigid, inert center," of the "clock test[ing] its stiff elbow / every minute," and finally of "the child's swing slacken[ing] to a metronome" (39). However, the poem's structure itself represents the diminishing amount of time left when the lines become shorter and shorter toward the end of the poem, culminating in the last five lines that consist of very brief sentences:

> The curled swell has the clarity of lime.
> In two more days my daughters will go home.
> The frame of human happiness is time,
> the child's swing slackens to a metronome.
> Happiness sparkles on the sea like soda. (39)

Bensen argues that the final line read in isolation is "pure corn, tacked onto a perfectly good final quatrain" but considering the context he grants that "[t]he line effervesces just as the poet almost submits to Time and Fate; it freshens like a late afternoon breeze; it gently declines to fret" (1986, 262). In Schrott's version, throughout the poem the lines are of similar length as he keeps making additions. Thus, the poem's final lines do not stand out:

> Hell wie zitronensaft kräuselt sich die dünung in der gezeit.
> Meine töchter fahren wieder heim, nur mehr zwei tage sind es.
> Den rahmen für das menschliche glück bildet die zeit
> wie ein metronom verlangsamt sich das schaukeln des kindes.
> Glück schäumt und funkelt auf dem meer wie soda. (65)

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[114] A similar case is XLIII *Tropic Zone/v* in which Schrott also expands Walcott's very clipped lines and images. At times, he adds pronouns or articles to make references clearer, at other times the nature of his additions is explanatory. The following passage may serve to illustrate the latter case. Walcott writes, "The socialists do not appreciate that. / But almonds do, and there is appreciation / in the tilt of a cannon's chin to the horizon" (60). In Schrott's translation, the same passage reads as follows: "Man kann nicht sagen daß die sozialisten das goutieren. / Die alten mandelbäume schon; und das kinn einer kanone / bezeugt ihre zustimmung indem sie sich aufrichtet zum horizont" (105).

The brisk simplicity of Walcott's lines is replaced with a more complex structure. In the first two sentences, Schrott extends the line. He adds a tidal image to the first line in order to rhyme "gezeit" with "zeit." In the closing line, he uses two words to convey both the visual and tactile aspect inherent in the one English word "sparkle."

Breslin describes the majority of Walcott's poetry as "clipped, prosy, and understated" (1987, 182). Interestingly, at the time when Walcott was writing the sequence a longer line was a common tendency among contemporary poets (King 2004, 430). Although he considers *Midsummer* a counterweight to this trend, King claims that Walcott himself had "always wanted to move in opposition to his natural lyricism towards something more prose-like" (King 2004, 430). Gray and Robert Bensen share the view that there is a certain resemblance to prose.[115] Birkerts, on the other hand, notes that although Walcott is "very much aware of the assaults that modernism has waged upon the metric line, he has elected to work with its possibilities" (1993, 334).

Metre

In describing the prevailing metre of the sequence, critics' opinions vary. While Michael Gilkes refers to the iambic pentameter as Walcott's "favourite metre" which he "has so mastered [in *Midsummer*], that he can give it almost unlimited power and grace, altering and shaping its stresses as naturally as one might stretch, flexing cramped muscles" (1986, 103), Birkerts takes note of Walcott's "naturally flexed hexameters" (1993, 333). Baugh in turn describes *Midsummer* as "a sequence of what, for want of a better label, one might call 'extended sonnets', with their long lines (variously pentameter and alexandrine for the most part)" (1991, 123). What this discussion shows is that the form of the poems is highly flexible.

As prosody is a central part of Schrott's poetics, he is highly sensitive towards the formal qualities of *Midsummer*. Nevertheless, Walcott's rhythm does tend to suffer in the somewhat prosy style of the translation. Walcott's poem XVI, for instance, is composed in a predominantly dactylic pattern. Roughly in the middle of the poem, this pattern is disrupted by a blunt question posed in iambic metre:

Any peace so indifferent, where all our differences fuse,

is an insult to imagine; what use is any labour we

accept? (26)

In the next sentence, the poem reverts to its dactylic pattern as it continues to reflect upon the dead. The change in metre corresponds with the way the train of thought is interrupted. In Schrott's translation, no such pattern is noticeable:

Ein so indifferenter frieden in dem all unsere differenzen sich aufheben

ist eine beleidigung unserer fantasie; welchen wert hätte alles konforme

wenn wir es akzeptierten? (39)

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[115] Gray describes *Midsummer* as "big, prosy, descriptive blocks of poems" (2005, 121) and Bensen writes about XXVIII: "The long lines might read as prose, did not the end-rhymes staple the aural canvas taut for the internal Pointillism of vowels and consonants" (1986, 261).

Special attention needs to be paid to the rhythmic quality of a poem's first line. As King shows, this is crucial in Walcott's eyes since it "creates an expectation of a rhythm and form" in its readers. If the structure does not meet this expectation, they will "find it difficult to follow the rhythm" (King 2004, 515). It is indeed striking that the opening lines of the poems in *Midsummer* often prove to have a particularly strong rhythm as the following examples illustrate: "It touches earth, that branched diviner's rod," (IX), "I have never pretended that summer was paradise" (XIX, *Gauguin ii*), or "Thalassa! Thalassa! The thud of that echoing blue" (XXXIV). In Schrott's translation, most of these opening lines read more prosaically:"Sie berührt die erde, diese verzweigte wünschelrute" (IX), "Ich habe nie behauptet daß mittsommer ein paradies wäre" (XIX, *Gauguin 2*), and "Thalassa! Thalassa! Der dumpfe schlag dieses widerhallenden blaus" (XXXIV).

Commenting on the opening line of XXXV, which reads "Mud. Clods. The sucking heel of the rain-flinger" (48) Bensen writes:

> Walcott's line can thin out to a watercolor wash, or thicken into impasto, to such density that the nouns stuck in the verbiage pull the syntax to a halt […]. Halfway between Homer and Heaney, the thick, clotted monosyllables ballast the agile feminine ending […]. (Bensen 1986, 263)

In XXXV, Schrott creates a similar rhythm and even adds an element of onomatopoeia: "Schlamm. Schollen. Die schmatzende sohle des regenwerfers" (81). When asked about the importance of the prosodic quality of his translation, Schrott raises a valid point concerning the number of syllables in a line. He categorically rejects an approach that consists of counting syllables, which he considers naive. Rather, he explains, one has to realize that the melody of a language is relative to the possibilities of this language. As Walcott's tempo is relative to the English language, it must be adapted to the tempo of the German language. In his view, there is no such thing as an absolute metre. Therefore, what Schrott strives for in his translation is an appropriate rendering of the melody of the source language text.[116]

This can best be illustrated with reference to XXX. In the beginning of the poem, almost every syllable is stressed creating a staccato pattern. The sound of horses trotting over cobblestone is mimicked by the repetition of /k/ in the second line in which the "click-clop of hooves [is] sparking cold cobblestone" (43). The alliteration becomes onomatopoeic and even the rhythm seems to be imitating the ryhthmic movement of the horses' hooves. The audible and visual qualities of the scene are very vivid. This staccato pattern continues for five lines. Although Schrott's opening line is more prose-like than Walcott's, in the second line there is a distinctly noticable pattern with trochee and dactyl alternating: "funkenschlagendes hufgeklapper am kalten pflaster vorm haus" (71). Therefore, one may argue that Walcott's and Schrott's horses trot at a different pace, yet each in a distinct rhythm. The conscious act of the translator becomes apparent when considering an alternative option: He could have added a /k/-sound by translating cobblestone with "Kopfsteinpflaster" rather than with the shorter and less precise

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116 Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.

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"pflaster." Since there is a strong preference for the use of alliteration in his translation, it is more than likely that Schrott was aware of this possibility. Two obvious disadvantages are that the line would have become even longer, the rhythm disrupted. In the lines that follow, no strict metrical pattern is discernible.

Walcott's XLIX opens with two dactylic lines, followed by an anapest: "A wind-scraped headland, a sludgy, dishwater sea, / another storm-darkened village with fences of crucified tin. / Give it up to a goat in the rain" (69). The change occurs quite abruptly and one is reminded of a goat jumping from rock to rock, bleating. In combination, content and form add up to resemble a line that could occur in a nursery rhyme. However, this impression is immediately deconstructed with yet another change in metre and a more serious tone as the poem continues: "whose iron muzzle / can take anything" (69). In this instance, Schrott does not recreate the rhythm and the tone takes on a more sarcastic note when he writes: "Überlaß es einer ziege im regen / deren eiserne schnauze alles frißt" (123).

Simile vs. metaphor

Drawing on a passage from Walcott's earlier autobiographical poem *Another Life*, Breslin describes the differences between metaphors and similes and the poet's use thereof. He illustrates how Walcott's "metaphors arrive in short, declarative statements, unimpeded by adjectives or the slow machinery of simile, which would have assured us, with 'like' or 'as if,' that metaphors are just figures of speech, not to be taken too seriously." Breslin acknowledges the danger of "rhetorical artifice," but praises Walcott's use of the trope to amount to "bluntly delivered force" with a language that "emulates the intensity of what it evokes" (2005, 14).

Schrott conveys a rather different view of the two tropes in his epilogue to *Midsummer* (2001, 138): Whereas he describes metaphors as suggesting a homogenous, united worldview, he claims that similes remain at a distance by using "like" and "as if." Such analogies, he continues, leave the objects that are being compared in their original context. Thus, they remain vivid and accessible. Schrott claims that the verbal images that are created in this way are more colourful and would fade in the abbreviation of a metaphor. At the same time, he writes: "Wo Brodsky sein sprachliches Material aus den Steinbrüchen des antiken Rom und seiner Dichtung gewinnt, greift Walcott dagegen den Metaphernvorrat seiner traditionslosen Tropen auf." (ibid, 135). This may explain Schrott's tendency to translate metaphors as similes and vice versa. Thus in XXVIII, the metaphor of "the child's swing [that] slackens to a metronome" (39) becomes a simile: "wie ein metronom verlangsamt sich das schaukeln des kindes" (65). Likewise, in XXXII "[t]hey move in schools, erect pale fishes in streets" (45) becomes "[a]ufrecht ziehen sie in schulen dahin wie fahle fische ohne halt" (75).

Perhaps, however, Schrott's strategy resembles that of other translators who also employ similes in order to understand and explicate what is, as metaphor, potentially ambiguous or underdetermined. This effect can be observed in poem XV in which Walcott's metaphor of the "name caught in / the kernel of my great-aunt's throat" (25) is difficult to grasp and hard to picture. Schrott makes the metaphor more accessible by turning it into a simile as he translates: "Mein name wie eine rinde brot / die steckenbleibt

in der rauhen kehle meiner großtante" (37). At other times, Walcott's use of "*néo-logie*" (Stephens 2012, 174) leaves the translator with little other choice. In poem XXXV, for instance, Walcott writes: "The sun brightened like a sign, the world was new / the cairns, the castled hillocks, the stony kings / were scabbarded in sleep" (48). Walcott's verbal use of the noun "scabbard" poses a great difficulty for Schrott who has no equivalent resources available in the target language. He chooses to translate the metaphor with a simile: "Die sonne leuchtete wie ein zeichen auf, die welt war von den toten / auferstanden, während *cairns*, schloßberge und steinerne könige wie klingen / zurück in die scheide des schlafs gesteckt wurden" (81).

According to Stephens, Walcott is looking for a new language as well as new metaphors that are not inherited from the Old World and therefore susceptible to the guilt of the name. Instead, she argues, he is looking for metaphors that are capable of depicting his still virginal world (2012, 174). From this perspective, the short statement "the world was new" takes on even more significance – not only because of the binary opposition of the Old World versus the New, but rather because the poem is set in England and bluntly alludes to Langland's "Piers Plowman."

In his scathing review of *Midsummer*, Pritchard polemically criticizes Walcott's inflationary use of similes in the volume when he writes: "Call it Whitmania or elephantiasis, but there's not much modulation. Verbally, the only thing that holds it all together is the ubiquitous word 'like'" (1984, 331). Schlaffer criticizes Schrott for outnumbering Walcott by dissolving metaphors into similes in his translation (2001). What the reviewer ignores, however, is the fact that there are severeal instances when on the contrary Schrott turns similes into metaphors. In VI, for instance, Walcott uses a simile when he writes the short one-line sentence: "The moon shines like a lost button" (16). In Schrott's translation, the moon *is* a lost button that shines like silver foil: "Der mond ein verlorener knopf, glänzend wie silberfolie" (19). In this example, Schrott first turns Walcott's simile into a metaphor, which he then connects with a simile. Here – as in other instances – the changes he makes serve to create a rhyme. However, this is not always his reason for changing a simile into a metaphor. In XLIII *Tropic Zone/v*, for example, Walcott describes a man who "shakes his cane like a question without answer" (60). There is no apparent reason for Schrott writing: "dieser hier / fuchelt [sic] mit seinem stock eine frage ohne antworten" (105).[117]

3.3.2 Translating the local

Geographical setting and localization

Although the setting of the poems of *Midsummer* varies, certain places recur more frequently than others and one might even speak of a loose geographical pattern. Part one and part two of the book open with a poem in which the persona returns to a place in which he has spent substantial amounts of time. In the first case, however, he returns to a place

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[117] Interestingly, in his earlier translation Schrott reproduces the simile: "dieser hier / fuchtelt leis mit seinem stock wie eine frage ohne antworten" (428). In addition to using the same trope as Walcott, the rhythmic quality of this first version is similarly prominent as that of the English version.

where he feels immediately at home, whereas in the second case he returns to a place where he feels an outcast. Poem I takes the reader along as the plane approaches Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad. Although the second poem is mostly concerned with Brodsky and his stay in Rome, at the close of the poem, Walcott establishes a link between the Italian capital and his own Caribbean home. The two succeeding poems continue where the first poem left off: In III, the poet persona is in a hotel room reminiscing the past, in IV the capital of Trinidad is described as being stuck in the past. Although in V Walcott describes a midsummer day in New York City, he does so in terms of a Caribbean setting. Accordingly, the "Big Apple" becomes a mango. In VIII, the poem is not set anywhere in particular. Rather, the persona "let[s] the imagination range wherever / its correspondences take it" (18). Although European places and artists are at its centre, it is also a poem about the universals of (mid)summer. Despite the references to European artist in the titles, XIX *Gauguin i* and *ii*, as well as XX *Watteau* are closely linked to the Caribbean world and XXIII takes the reader to England. The rest of the poems comprising part one are set in the Caribbean.

In the second part, the persona returns to Boston, "the city of my exile" (43). A great number of poems in this part is set in the United States, but some are set in Wales (XXXV), England (XXXVI, XXXIX), and Germany (XLI), before the sequence returns to a Caribbean setting again with the series of eight poems that make up XLIII *Tropic Zone*. Apart from XLV and XLVI that describe the Charles River and rural Ohio, respectively, all succeeding poems are located in the Caribbean. As in part one, some poems cannot be assigned to a distinct place, but rather deal with general concepts or ideas. XXXIII, for instance, treats the literary world of Greek and Latin classics, and in XXXVII an almost epiphanic moment becomes the springboard to reflections on life and death. Despite the title of the book, the poems do not exclusively take place in the summer time: in XXXVI, XXXVIII, and XLI a day in autum in Warwickshire, Brookline, and Germany is described respectively; XLII is about a taxi ride in a Chicago blizzard, XLV takes place in the transitional period between winter and spring, and in XLVI it is February. After all, Walcott wrote the poems over the course of one year and this bears resemblance to a year's journal (Howard 1985, 157). Moreover, as Mike Ditmore points out correctly, "*Midsummer* also stood for mid-life, this was a time of taking stock of life, which had become especially important to Walcott as his travels took him further from home into an always widening world."[118] (qtd. in King 2004, 437)

At first sight one would assume that translation does not affect the setting. Although this holds for most literary translations in general (Hewson, Martin 1991, 151f.), in some instances rather subtle imprecisions in *Midsummer* lead to a shift of place or at the least make it hard to distinctly recognize the locale. Poem II, for instance, is clearly set in Rome: The city is mentioned three times in the first line alone. With a reference to "my St Mark's" at the end of the poem, Walcott compares his Caribbean surroundings with Rome. Schrott's translation fo the corresponding passage reads: "um ein schlagnetz kreisende

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[118] Mike Ditmore, 'Walcott's Poetry Demands Rereading', *Abilene Reporter-News*, 23 Sept. 1984, 6E.

möven, [sind] die tauben meines Markusplatzes" (11). Schrott replaces the reference to St. Mark's Basilica in Rome with a reference to St. Mark's Square in Venice.

Reading the German translation of poem IV, one might feel transported to a port town in Spain as the opening line reads: "Diese spanische hafenstadt, piratenhaft in ihrer vielgestalt" (15). When Walcott refers to a "Spanish port, piratical in diverseness" (14), the pun on Port of Spain is more easily detectable thus indicating the Caribbean island of Trinidad and Tobago as the setting. The witty wordplay and assonance "hafenstadt, piratenhaft" in Schrott's translation is likely an attempt to create something similar to Walcott's pun, but it fails to specify the setting. Whereas readers of the English poem are likely to consider it a logical continuation of I and III, German readers are more inclined to think of the poem as shifting from the Caribbean back to Europe. If they locate the poem in Spain, German readers will miss some of the central implications of the poem. As Ismond points out,

> Walcott's explicit point is that the scene still retains the anachronistic 19th century image of natives in the barrack yard. […] The poem which immediately follows shifts to the metropolitan ghetto in New York. In this scene of Third World migrants in the heart of New York, the two worlds come closest to each other physically, and Walcott takes a critical look at the social and political complexion of that weird contact. (1986, 79)

Hewson and Martin describe other kinds of shifts that do not alter the actual setting of a poem, but rather "involve changes in the referential structures of the text" (1991, 126). They subsume this phenomenon under the term "localization." One example for such a case of localization occurs in poem XLIV of *Midsummer* in which life in the Caribbean is described as framed by the collective memory of slavery. The poem opens with the line "I drag, as on a chain behind me" and continues to list the subjects to be addressed in the course of the poem: the island's landscapes, villages, and fauna. Although in parts the scene may appear to be pastoral, Walcott deconstructs the idyll from the very beginning. The chain image recalls the days of slavery and illustrates that in a sense the lyrical I is still enslaved, as he cannot rid himself of his past. The second sentence begins with a variation of the opening line: "I pull the voices / of children behind me." Another enumeration of images follows, but they are more gloomy and complex than those in the opening lines. Although there is no specific mention of a chain, the use of synonymous verbs as well as the parallelism of the sentence structure conjure up this image. In the last part of the poem, Walcott describes the surroundings in different terms again; he draws on images from the preceding lines, often in slightly varied form. The poem ends with yet another variation of the first line: "I drag them behind me in chains." What seems like a minor deviation at first sight turns out to be a radically different image: In the opening line, the use of a simile visualizes how one may be a slave of images or memories. In the end, however, the slave image becomes very concrete as a more literal reading is implied.

Schrott does not mention a chain until the very end of the poem. In the opening line he replaces the image of the chain with that of an oxen under a yoke ploughing a field: "Ich pflüge wie ein ochse unter seinem joch." It is this very history that is now inseparably

attached to the lyrical I. Localizing the image in a more European context and eschewing the racial image results in a dramatic change as the lyrical I ploughs memories and images into a field. The three lines that are so similar in Walcott's poem differ much more in Schrott's version. Especially the first line deviates so much from the other two lines that the shift from the opening to the closing line is impossible to detect. In the second sentence of the poem, Schrott uses the same verb as in the closing line: "Ich schleppe / kinderstimmen hinter mir her," "Ich schleppe sie hinter mir nach in ketten." Thus, the connection between these two lines easily becomes apparent, but since the chain is only mentioned in the last line, the reader will not picture it in the preceding passage.[119]

In LII, Schrott replaces the image of a chain altogether. Walcott provides a concise overview of the history of slavery and oppression in the Caribbean and reflects on the language of the former oppressor. He describes the opposing groups of slaves and English as "one troop black, barefooted / the other in redcoats […] / […]. / One fought for a queen, the other was chained in her service" (72) The poem turns compassionate and empathetic: "but both, in bitterness, travelled the same road." The very fact that both groups are referred to as "troops" increases the idea of similarity despite all differences. Schrott turns the group into individuals and instead of being chained, they are rather pressed or pressured into the queen's service: "Einer kämpfte für eine königin, der andere wurde in ihren dienst gepreßt" (129).

On numerous occasions, Schrott opts for adaptations thus domesticating some poems to a certain degree: In XIX *Gauguin / i* he uses the German currency "pfennige" for English "pennies" and the metric unit "quadratzentimeter" for "square inch." While the two currencies may have deviating values and the units of square measure different sizes, they share the central qualities for which they are applied in the originial context: the colour of copper and the smallness of a dab of paint in pointillist art, respectively. In XLVI Schrott turns a "highway" in Ohio into a specifically German "autobahn." These two concepts vary quite significantly from one another, though. A German *autobahn*, for instance, would not lead right through a town as the highway does in the poem. Nor would you encounter a railroad crossing on an *autobahn*. None of these examples pose any difficulties for a contemporary German reader who would have no problem understanding the English words. In poem XXVII Schrott even goes as far as turning a "migrant" in the United States into a German "gastarbeiter". The term was used for foreign workers mainly from Turkey and former Yugoslavia who were encouraged to come to Germany in the 1960s and help with the country's economic recovery. This is the kind of adaptation that critics are quick to condemn: von Lutz points out the difficulties of using the German term in this context (2002, 78).

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[119] In addition, the verb "schleppen" seems an unorthodox choice since it usually refers to carrying something on one's back, shoulders, or in one's arms. It is not normally combined with the preposition "behind." Robert Bensen suggests a reading that stresses the poet's labour. Accordingly, he quotes the opening lines of the first two sentences of XLIV to illustrate how Walcott's "lines have a muscular energy that confirms the self-portraits of the poet as Herculean laborer, doomed to pull the full weight of his memory in his wake." (1986, 263) Schrott's opening line conveys this reading even more vividly than Walcott's beginning does.

Foreignization vs. domestication

According to Hewson, "[c]hoosing to keep source language-specific elements is understandable when such a strategy maintains connotations strongly associated with the source language" (Hewson 1993, 145). As an example, he refers to an English translation of a French text in which commonly known cultural elements such as "rue, boulevard, monsieur, château, etc." are kept. The important point in his view is that target readers are likely to understand them. While this is certainly the case with cultural references such as pennies, square inch, highway, and migrant that Schrott renders into German, there are other cases where Schrott leaves some words and even phrases as they are in English although they are not common knowledge even among educated German readers: "Hey, mister / just a sec…" (V), "barrio" (V), "cairns" (XXXV), and "dory" (XLIII *Tropic Zone/i*) are only some examples. None of them appear in the German standard dictionary *Duden*. In XLIII *Tropic Zone/i*, Schrott even adds the Spanish word "*cabaña*" for Walcott's "hovels." Schrott does not consistently italicize foreign words in his translation; of the above examples only *barrio* and *cairns* are italicized. Footnotes or endnotes could help the reader overcome the resulting difficulties; however, the edition does not to offer any explanations in the form of annotations.

At times, Schrott adds words for clarification, thus compensating the absence of annotations. On other occasions, however, his use of technical terminology and archaisms – frequently in places where Walcott uses common English words – makes it difficult for the German reader to unravel Walcott's often unusually condensed imagery. Where English readers can just resume reading, German readers of the translation are forced to pause. Before attempting to grasp an image, they have to engage in research to find out the meaning of a specific word. At the same time, Schrott recognizes in his epilogue that what connects an idea with an image is the very ease with which Walcott writes in everyday English (Schrott 2001, 137f.). In his essay collection *Die Erde ist blau wie eine Orange*, Schrott writes: "Literatur [war] für mich immer ein Mittel, um sich Welten anzueignen, Gedanken, Erfahrungen und Bilder." (1997/1999, 148). If he wants to confront German readers with the foreign, his use of archaisms and technical terminology is one way of serving this aim.

Near the end of the first poem of *Midsummer*, Walcott writes:

[…] The lowering window resounds
over pages of earth, the canefields set in stanzas.
Skimming over an ocher swamp like a fast cloud of egrets
are nouns that find their branches as simply as birds. (11)

The word "egrets" rhymes with the words "minarets" and "regrets" three and five lines earlier, respectively. The German translation reads as follows:

[…] Im herabgleiten hallt das fenster
über seiten von erde wider, die zuckerrohrfelder zu stanzen gesetzt.
Eine wolke reiher huscht über die ockergelbe marsch, ein quodlibet
Von substantiven die sich mühelos auf ihren zweigen niederlassen. (9)

The word "quodlibet" is added to create a rhyme with the word "minarett" three lines earlier and a near-rhyme with "gebet" five lines earlier – which is also added by Schrott. The word "Quodlibet" has three different meanings: It is a humorous musical piece, a card game, and an archaism for "mishmash". The last meaning fits the context best, but even educated German readers are not likely to be familiar with any of the three meanings. This also holds for the word "stanzen". The common German word for English "stanzas" would be "Strophen." "Stanze" has two meanings: It is a mashine for cutting metal and a specific kind of stanza.

Walcott tends to ask a lot of his readers, too. Bensen writes that "Walcott's powers are always sustained by the immediate, the local" (Bensen 1986, 263). What is local and uniquely Caribbean about the poems is certainly especially difficult to render in the European and particularly the German cultural context. Frequently, the translator is confronted with things and concepts that simply do not exist in the target culture.

Nevertheless, local referents such as political figures, geographical places, or plant names can be as challenging for an English-speaking readership as for a German audience. The fact that Wayne Brown's 1981 anthology *Derek Walcott: Selected Poems* includes extensive annotations proves this point. As Winer (1999, 391) has shown, an English native speaker does not necessarily recognize the allusion to the calypsonian Mighty Sparrow in XL simply because both reader and author belong to a certain speech community. In this poem, Walcott writes:

> Through the cleaned glass I watch a sparrow
> on a black branch with a tattered crimson fringe
> on some tree I can't name, though I am sure
> Sparrow could sing it like a citizen;
> that sassy tilt knows where the answers are. (53)

A native English reader may miss the reference just as well as Schrott did. Nevertheless, at least one German critic of the bilingual edition detected the misinterpretation in the year of its publication (Poiss 2001). Schrott's translation of the above passage reads as follows:

> Durch das abgewischte fenster beobachte ich einen spatz
> der sich niederläßt auf einem schwarzen ast
> mit einem karmesinrot zerfransten rand, irgendein baum
> den ich nicht kenne obwohl ich mir sicher bin
> Spatz könnte ihn singen wie ein einheimscher;
> er weiß wo die antworten sind, der zynische kasuistiker. (91)

Schrott translates the calypsonian's proper name, but he adopts the orthography and grammatical structure of the source text by capitalizing the bird's common name and dropping the article. Both devices at least indicate the use of personification even if one is not aware of the fact that Sparrow is a person. A reader could even draw a connection with fables in which animals resemble take on human traits. What may appear to be a perfectly simple phrase carries much deeper implications: When Walcott writes of "some tree I can't name" this goes far beyond the question of knowing or not knowing a certain type of tree.

Rather it conjures up the complex issue of naming in the Caribbean, which is ultimately a way of claiming the New World (Walcott 1970, 15).[120]

In the final sentence, Schrott's tendency to use technical terminology creates a discrepancy between what is said and how it is said. When Walcott refers to Sparrow as "that sassy tilt" he does not simply use a colloquialism, but implies an element of admiration similar to the way Trinidadians admire the trickster (Naipaul, 69f.; 72ff.). Arguably, the most difficult word in this passage is the noun "tilt." Neither the word's denotation of slant, nor of a certain type of cloth are appropriate in this context. Most likely, the term refers to a "traditional type of masquerade dancer on high stilts" called a "tilt-man" in Barbados rather than the more widespread "stilt-man" (Allsopp 2003, 530; 537). In his translation of this line, Schrott translates "that sassy tilt" as "der zynische kasuistiker [sic]." Not only is the connotation of being cynical distinctly negative, but the descripton of Sparrow as a casuistic seems too academic in the context and alters the tone and the speaker of the poem.

Similarly, translating Walcott's "quips" used in the context of a riot with the much more elaborate word "repliken" appears out of place in Schrott's translation of XXIII: "wenn das polizeiaufgebot und die skinheads sich bissige repliken in die ohren / brüllten" (55). The contrast between what is said and how it is said is rather stark. One difficulty that Schrott has to face is that lack of a single word that entails the wittiness of a remark that the English word implies. Therefore, he specifies the noun by adding the adjective "bissig." However, Walcott creates a similar tension by claiming that "you could trace [the quips] to the Sonnets, or the Moor's eclipse" (34). Since he specifically mentions Shakespeare only a few lines earlier, it is quite clear what the capitalized words allude to. While Schrott adopts Walcott's capitalization, the reference to Shakespeare's *Othello, the Moor of Venice* is more subtle, as one specific Moor becomes Moors in general.

XXVII treats the influence of the USA in the Caribbean. Walcott describes how even the rain in this region has turned more American as he writes: "This / drizzle that falls now is American rain, / stitching stars in the sand" (38). Although Walcott does not mention stripes, many readers will complete the image that clearly refers to the US flag. Only a few lines later at the close of the poem Walcott draws on the image again with the lyrical I describing how he "fear[s] what the migrant envies: the starry pattern they [his corpuscles] make – the flag on the post office – / the quality of the dirt, the fealty changing under my foot" (38).

Walcott's use of dashes in this section is confusing at first especially since the last part is separated not by another dash, but by a comma. Therefore, it may seem like "the flag on the post office" is a detail pertaining to "the starry pattern." Instead, it is one of the things the migrant envies and which the lyrical I fears. Upon closer reading, it becomes clear that Walcott enumerates the changes the lyrical I observes. He continues to describe the ultimate effect of these changes on the lyrical I which must be read in terms of temporality, i.e. *as* "the fealty chang[es] under my foot."

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[120] Cf. also Ismond 2002-2003, 251 and Wilson-Tagoe, 52f.

Schrott clearly implies the first reading by filling in some of the gaps for the reader: "diese sterne und streifen – auf der fahnenstange / vor der post – woraus genau der dreck besteht, oder präziser: / wie und ob sich die lehenstreue unter meinen füßen ändert" (63). Whereas Walcott connects the starry pattern to the corpuscles of the lyrical I, Schrott dissolves this image firstly by mentioning not only the stars but the stripes as well and secondly by connecting it more blatantly with the flag in front of the post office.

Relocalization

Relocalization is a special case of localization. It takes place when features of the source text originate in the culture of the target text and are relocated in their original context via translation. XLI provides an example of relocaliztaion in *Midsummer*. Especially with a German readership in mind it is an important poem as the persona considers his relation to the Holocaust. He feels guilty because he used to believe "that all experience was kindling to the fire of the Muse" (54). The naiveté of this idea becomes drastically apparent in the beginning of the poem that evokes the horrors of concentration camps in Nazi-Germany. The poet persona appears almost haunted by images of the holocaust that are omnipresent: in "brown chestnuts and gray smoke / that coils like barbed wire," in the "goose-step" of "[b]rown pigeons," and in the "squirrels [that] pile up acorns like little shoes" (54). The persona's feeling of guilt culminates in the question that ends the poem:

> […] But had I known then
> that the fronds of my island were harrows, its sand the ash
> of the distant camps, would I have broken my pen
> because this century's pastorals were being written
> by the chimneys of Dachau, of Auschwitz, of Sachsenhausen? (54)

As in "The Fortunate Traveller" and other poems, Walcott reflects his "deepest doubts about his vocation" (Bensen 1986, 266). His answer, as Bensen puts it, is that "[a]rt turns out to be not for its own sake but for the sake of the artist, turns out to be his way of sustaining faith that there is more to life than dying" (ibid, 268). Moreover, he appreciates the way in which Walcott uses form to underline content: "The rhyme of the last, prolific camp with pen and written tightens the sense of complicity of the artist, now self-accused." (ibid, 267). This interplay between form and content puts the German translator into a very difficult situation. Schrott translates the end of the poem as follows:

> […] sie drosch die spreu vom weizen und erntete skelette
> während ihr zur ehre hakenkreuze funkelten. Hätte ich damals gewußt
> daß die farnwedel meiner inseln eggen waren, ihr sand die fette
> der aschen weit entfernter lager, würde ich dann meine feder bewußt
> zerbrochen haben weil die kamine von Dachau, Auschwitz
> und Sachsenhausen die pastoralen dieses jahrhundert schrieben? (93)

Again, Schrott strongly focuses on the rhyme scheme. Therefore, he adds the word "bewußt" to ryme with "gewußt" and "die fette" to rhyme with "skelette." Although he does not replicate Walcott's rhyme scheme, he does create a pattern of two embracing

rhymes in this way. The second rhyme Schrott creates has an obscuring effect, as it is not clear how sand can be fats of ashes. Whereas Walcott connects an everyday writing tool with the process itself, Schrott links the fact of knowing with the idea of taking deliberate action because of this knowledge. In this way, he even emphasizes the aspect of guilt by implying that the lyrical I would have failed to sacrifice his love of poetry based on his knowledge. The most regrettable shift appears to be that the translation does not end with the names of death camps that have become the epitome of human evil. Instead, it ends with the act of writing and *the* central question of the poem: to write or not to write poetry. It thus becomes more narcissistic.

What makes it difficult to relocalize this poem in a German context is the insertion of German words such as "lederhosen" and "umlauts" in the English source text. In a non-German context, they attract much more attention and have a foreignizing effect on English readers. In the German translation, however, these terms do not stand out at all. What is more, though, is that the poem appears to strike German readers as a mere repetition of the usual clichés about the Holocaust preventing them from getting engaged in a reading beyond this surface level and recognizing deeper issues that Walcott addresses. Müller's review serves well to prove this point: He quickly dismisses the poem for remaining caught in old clichés and ironically describes it as a daytrip to the sights of the Holocaust (Müller). Even Schrott speaks of clichés in connection with Walcott's poem about concentration camps in his epilogue to both translations of *Midsummer* (1993, 442; 2001, 138).[121]

English-speaking critics approach the poem very differently: James identifies "despair at a world torn by war, famine, and the cruelty of man to man" (1991, 115) as one theme in a number of poems in *Midsummer* and notes how Walcott "sees the contemporary world conditioned by an awareness of two World Wars and the Cold War" (ibid, 119). King considers the poem in the context of Walcott's oeuvre. He correctly observes:

> Walcott's claim […] is that tyranny and oppression are common to human history – as witnessed by slavery, the destruction of the American Indians, and Nazi extermination of European Jewry – and that true poets speak against such regimes." (1993, 364f.)

In an interview with Burnett, Walcott puts it very clearly: "We should never stop writing poems about the holocaust no matter how tired the theme may become. […] there is some kind of terrible indifference that goes on." (Burnett 2002-2003, 150f.)

Flora and fauna

The natural world of Walcott's island home is a crucial part of *Midsummer*. Often the local flora and fauna provide the material for expressive metaphors and similes. Ismond points out how "[f]resh metaphors are being generated in [the] interaction with landscape, which pivots on the original principle of correspondences between human and natural

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[121] "Die Vereinnahmung der Gedichte von ihrer Topographie kann kursorisch warden, wenn man sie vorort auf ihre Klischees identifizieren kann, wie in Walcotts Gedicht über die Konzentrationslager […]." (1994, 443) "Lebt ein Gedicht vom Detail, läuft es umgekehrt Gefahr, als Versatzstück einer Kulisse degradiert und vor Ort als Topos identifizierbar zu werden, gleichgültig, ob es sich dabei um die Klischees eines Amerika, des Britischen Imperiums oder der Konzentrationslager handelt." (2004, 138)

worlds" (2002-2003, 236). One way of connecting the two is by way of personification. In XLV, Walcott describes how the Charles river undergoes a transition from winter to spring as well as a physical journey to the sea: "the thawed river, muscling towards its estuary, / swims seaward with the spring, then with strong shoulders / heaves up the ice" (65). In these few lines, the river is personified through the use of "muscling" and "swim[ming]," and the description of its "strong shoulders."

The verbal use of "muscling" – another example of *néo-logie* –challenges the translator. Using the idiomatic expression "die Muskeln spielen lassen" for flexing one's muscles, Schrott alters the implications: "obwohl der aufgetaute fluß seine muskeln für die mündung / spielen läßt und mit dem frühling meerwärts schwimmt wo er / mit starken schultern das eis aufreißt" (115). Whereas in Walcott's version the term "muscling" serves to stress the hard work and effort necessary for the river to complete its transition and its journey, Schrott adds an element of conceit as the idiom implies that the river is flexing its muscles in order to impress the estuary. Another difference is that Walcott describes the three stages – "muscling towards its estuary, / swim[ming] seaward," and "heav[ing] up the ice" – in chronological order. In Schrott's version, on the other hand, the first two stages occur simultaneously. Moreover, in the German version, the river does not heave, but rather bursts the ice open with its shoulders. In Walcott's version, the river presses up against the ice from below, applying a lot of strength; it may be a more or less lengthy process. In Schrott's version, on the other hand, the movement of the river is sudden, rapid, and forceful bursting the ice open immediately.

This example also serves to illustrate Bensen's claim that "Walcott's powers are always sustained by the immediate, the local, firmly grounded" (1986, 263). John Thieme attributes two seemingly opposing characteristics to Walcott's poetry when he argues that he "is both the most local and the most cosmopolitan of contemporary poets; his verse is suffused by influences from around the globe and yet intensely local in its immersion in the landscapes and cultures he knows best" (2002-2003, 291). Accordingly, in XXVII, Walcott juxtaposes the Caribbean island of St. Thomas with the United States of America. The poem opens on a neutral note with the assertion: "Certain things here are quietly American" (38). However, the description turns increasingly negative: "The night left a rank smell under the casuarinas, / the villas have fenced-off beaches where the natives walk, / illegal immigrants from unlucky islands" (38).

Concerning the translation of botanical names, Schrott's solutions vary. There are instances when he opts for a translation that will most likely confront the reader with an unknown word. This is the case in VII where Walcott writes about the "green / elephants' ears of wild yams and dasheen" (17). Although "dasheen" could be translated into German with the more common word "Taro," Schrott decides to use "kolokasien" (21) which is another common name of the plant and more closely resembles its scientific name *Colocasia esculenta*. As there is no obvious reason for this choice such as rhythm, rhyme scheme, or alliteration, Schrott may have favoured this translation precisely for its foreign, perhaps even exotic feel. In addition, in English the word "dasheen" is also less common than "taro." Therefore, Schrott is likely to aim at reproducing this effect in his translation.

XXIV opens with four lines resembling the call and response pattern, a verbal communication form of African origin. The answer to the first question "What broke the green lianas' rope?" is "[s]caled armor" (35). The image of scales is traceable throughout the poem in form of the animals that get mention: the mackerel, the fish in general, the snake, and metaphorically perhaps even the wings of the various birds – the bittern, sea swift, and parakeet. At first reading, it appears obvious that "[s]caled armour" refers to a person, possibly a European conqueror in the times of Spanish and Portuguese conquests of the 15th century. In three of the four opening questions, Walcott mentions specifics of tropical flora and fauna: lianas, bitterns, and mackerel. In the answers "[s]caled armor," "[o]ne arrow," and "[a] lancer" he draws the image of a hunter or warrior thus establishing a mystical mood that transports the reader to a time before the age of European conquests.

In Schrott's translation, a number of seemingly slight alterations result in a shift. In his version, it is not scaled armour, but a ringed shirt that tore the lianas' rope: "Was zerriß das seil der grünen lianen? Ein kettenhemd" (57). In the succeeding line, the bittern's flight is not "folded […] in midflight" by an arrow, but broken instead. Even more significant is the translation of the lancer with "konquistador," thus implying a very specific period. Most likely Schrott chooses this word to create an end rhyme with "bevor." Reading Walcott's version, one may be more likely to think of a time before European conquests when the Arawak or the Caribs inhabited the island. However, one may even argue that people in the Caribbean who dive for fish using spear guns bear a certain resemblance to lancers.[122] Walcott's version may therefore not even be limited to any specific time, but rather encompass a much larger time frame from a pre-conquest past to the present day.

Moreover, the image of the mackerel that is "flapped [...] agape into quiet" conjures up the image of the fish desperately flapping in a vain attempt to escape its approaching death yet at the same time astonished and struck with disbelief at the very fact. The image becomes more difficult to grasp in the German question that merely asks: "Wer schloß das offene maul der makrele?" (57) In the final question, Walcott's "sea sparrow" becomes a flying fish in Schrott's translation. The reason seems to be that in the succeeding line, Walcott continues to describe a "sea swift [that] flew nameless that wordless summer" (35). The different common names for the same bird[123] that Walcott uses are difficult to vary in German, though. Schrott even enriches the poem by providing an additional reference to an indigenous animal.

In line with this approach is Schrott's more consistent but debatable translation of the broader term "vines" referring to any climbing plant in general. Various vines grow on the Caribbean islands, most of which belong to the familiy *Dioscoreaceae*. Their common name contains the stem yam, as in winged yam, yam pule, or cush-cush yam, for example (cf. Broome, et.al., 2007). Walcott refers to vines in a number of poems of *Midsummer* for different qualities and effects. In VII, for instance, Walcott writes: "One step over the low wall, if you should care to, / recaptures a childhood whose vines fasten your foot" (17).

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[122] According to Allsopp, the term "lancers" also refers to "[a] set of five dances in wh[ich] pairs make 'figures' rather like N. American square-dancing; it is preserved as part of the rural tradition in some islands." (2003, 337)
[123] Cf. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/43158/auklet> 14 November 2013.

Similarly, in the first poem of the sequence XLIII *Tropic Zone* vines are personified as they "grip the seawall and drop like olive-green infantry / over from Cuba" (58). In both poems, it is the plant's characteristical feature of clinging to or wrapping around things.

In both instances, Schrott translates the plant with "kletten," the German word for burdock. Thus, in VII he writes: "ihre kletten schlingen sich um den fuß" (21). Analogously, XLIII *Tropic Zone/i* reads: "Kletten ranken den damm hoch und lassen sich wie die olivgrüne infanterie / aus Kuba drüben auf die andre Seite fallen" (101). While the central feature of clinging or holding on to something is a characteristic of the burdock plant, too, the climbing and wrapping traits are not. Accordingly, the personification becomes less prominent as the plants are not described as "grip[ping] the seawall." What is more is that burdock is not indigenous to the Caribbean islands. Therefore, Schrott's translation of the plant is another case of relocalization. Martens gives preference to the word "Ranken" in his translation of the same poems. In VII, he writes "ihre Ranken halten deinen Fuß" (84) and in XLIII *Tropic Zone/i* he uses a compound when he translates: "Weinranken erklimmen den Deich und lassen / auf der anderen Seite sich fallen wie olivgrüne Soldaten / aus Cuba" (89). Thus, he reproduces the distinct qualities of the plant as well as the personification of Walcott's version.

At the end of XLIV, Schrott adds the image of the burdock plant although Walcott makes no referenc to vines. The most likely explanation is that Schrott does so to recreate the rhyming couplet closing Walcott's poem: "[the furrows] spring up again in the rains / of November. I drag them behind me in chains." (64) Schrott recreates the rhyme by writing: "Sie [die furchen] schießen auf wieder vor kletten / in der regenzeit des november. Ich schleppe sie hinter mir nach in ketten" (113). What both versions share is the image of memories of landscape that are tied to the persona and which he cannot shake off. The sticking or clinging feature of the plant certainly conveys this interpretation. However, the literal chain in Walcott's version becomes a chain of burs making the image less forceful and disturbing.

3.3.3 Painterly techniques

In his 1999 essay collection, Schrott writes that what has always fascinated him about literature is that it can be experienced with all senses: you can smell, taste, see and hear it (1997/1999, 126). Moreover, literature has the power to evoke images and colours in the reader. These are widely acknowledged qualities of Walcott's poetry.[124] Schrott compares the poems of *Midsummer* to ideograms:

> Walcott [geht] über die englischen Imagisten weiter zurück auf Traherne und die *metaphysical poets* des 17. Jahrhunderts – Gedichte wie Ideogramme, in denen sich Emotion und Intellekt nicht im Abstrakten auflösen, sondern in den klaren Umrissen eines Emblems zueinander finden. (2001, 138)

The term "ideogram" suggests that there is a central theme or point of argument that each poem of the cycle resembles. However, quite the opposite is the case: The poems evolve in

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[124] Cf. Breslin 2005, 15; de Lima 1991, 184f.; Howard 1985, 161f.; James 1991, 118f.; King 2004, 66.

a highly associative manner. Starting with one theme, Walcott pulls his readers along his train of thoughts touching on a number of topics that at first sight appear to have no connection.

In the course of the first poem, he describes a plane approaching, flying "over green jungles," and finally touching ground on the runway. In between, he recalls colonial history by mentioning the 19th century English writers Anthony Trollope and James Anthony Froude, infamous for their assertion that nothing was created in the Caribbean. As it continues to address "Joseph" (Brodsky), the poem takes the readers to Rome before returning to the Caribbean with a descripton of Port of Spain. In between, Walcott describes the light and parallels the natural surroundings with language and the act of writing. In the end, the reader is left with the impression that the poem is logically structured, yet it is very difficult to say what its central theme is. As Birkert sums it up, "[r]eading the undifferentiated stanzas from start to finish can be like wandering around in a rain forest. There is something almost vegetal in the proliferation of Walcott's lines." (1993, 333)

The effect also compares with that created by M.C. Escher's works such as his famous woodcut "Sky and Water I" where the shapes of birds in the upper part resembling the sky metamorphose into shapes of fish on the bottom resembling water. In between there is a transitional phase in which the shape of the fish begins to manifest itself among the birds that lose shape until only the fish are left. Walcott creates a similar effect when he begins a poem with one image or idea and arrives at a completely different theme in the end while a sense of coherence prevails. A possible explanation for this impression may be the use of semantic fields and repetition of certain words that he arranges systematically throughout the poem, often in slight variation and different contexts. In this way, the poems seem to have a symmetrical structure that the reader may notice subconsciously.

Starting out as a poet, Walcott used to imitate works of accomplished poets whom he admired, in order to learn the craft. McCorkle illustrates how the concern with "duplicating old maps" gives way to that of "re-mapping" in *The Fortunate Traveller* and *Midsummer* (1986, 14). Walcott's

> use of traditional conventions and allusions suggests the impossibility of creating a wholly new map. […] The map becomes a memory and public record which can be interpreted, which interprets, and which is a means of generating new interpretations." (ibid)

In other words, not imitation but transformation takes centre stage in Walcott's poetry. Similarly, his early training in painting and his lifelong passion for the visual arts inspire much of his poetry.

In *Midsummer*, this takes on various forms as numerous critical essays illustrate. A number of poems are preoccupied with self-portraiture (Bensen 1986, 259f., 263, 268; McWatt 1988, 1614f.), others resemble still lifes (Dvorak 2006, 45f.), and de Lima attributes Walcott's depiction of Brodsky in II a likeness to "an Old Master painting" (de Lima 1991, 184) in that the scene is composed much like a painting. The influence of art

on the sequence also becomes evident in Walcott's attention to detail, colours, light and shade. Moreover, the poems convey a powerful sense of stasis in two respects: On the one hand, the reader can almost feel the incredible tropical heat that makes any movement undesirable; on the other hand, the poems' close proximity to the visual arts makes them static. Accordingly, Breslin refers to *Midsummer* as a "sequence of tableaux" (1987, 178). While Bensen considers it "the poet's sketchbook," he also describes the poems themselves as "verbal paintings" (1986, 259). On a similar note, Baugh calls them "painterly images" (1993, 240). In XVII, the lyrical I recollects how he "once brushed a drop of water from a Flemish still life / in a book of prints, believing it was real" (27). Howard finds evidence of Walcott's capability of "achiev[ing] similar effects" (1985, 161f.) in a number of poems.

Finally, throughout the sequence there are explicit references to one specific painting and numerous painters ranging through the ages: Pierro della Francesca's "Resurrection" (III), Brueghel and Pissaro (VIII), Albrecht Dürer (XV), Vermeer and van Ruysdael (XVII), Chardin and the Impressionists (XVIII), Cézanne and Watteau (XIX *Gauguin / i*), Puvis de Chavannes (XIX *Gauguin / ii*), Turner (XXIII), and van Gogh (XXVIII). It is striking that without exception these examples occur in the first part of the sequence. Numerous poems are openly autobiographical. In other cases, the arrangement of the individual poems corresponds with certain stages in Walcott's life. For instance, Walcott gave up pursuing a career in painting when in his twenties (de Lima 1991, 172). Correspondingly, poem XXVII is the last in *Midsummer* with direct references to painters or painting.[125]

If his complex use of allusions to literary works of European origin has earned him the reputation of being Eurocentric, the same holds for references to European art in his poetry. De Lima describes how Walcott's

use of European painting […] has been seen both as evidence of his cultured, all embracing humanism and as a sign of his alienation from the world he inhabited by the mass of his West Indian compatriots, part of his residual colonised vision (1991, 182).

In contrast to general assumption, European painting has indeed made an impact on Caribbean culture. De Lima points to such cases as "portraits of an emergent merchant class, images of events in nineteenth century European history, even simply […] the portrayal of clothes, manners and architecture, all of which bore directly on colonial life and values" (1991, 190).

In a way, translating these references into a European language can be considered another instance of relocalization. What makes the task of the translator more difficult, though, is the gap between the natural environment of Europe and St Lucia. Apart from different forms of vegetation, the intensity of light and colours in the Caribbean does not compare with that of the northern hemisphere. In *Midsummer*, Walcott accounts for these

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[125] In contrast, intertextual allusions continue to appear throughout the entire volume. De Lima compares Walcott's practice of referring to both the visual arts and to authors and works of literature for the purpose of "giv[ing] authority to an image, to point a way of seeing, to claim that culture as legitimately his own" (1991, 182).

phenomena when he writes in XXXVIII that "[m]aple and elm close in. But palms require translation" (51) and in XLVIII: "Go, light, / […] / be untranslatable in verse or prose" (68). Walcott grew up surrounded by colours that were "far different from the dull industrial colours of Auden and Eliot" and "contrasted significantly with the depressed greys of postwar England" (King 2004, 29). King notes a practical consequence that is easily overlooked: "the actual watercolours one purchases, are temperate, suited for painting scenes in temperate climates. The sun, water, sky, and people in the tropics are of a different colour than in the north, the light and dark in the colour are different" (ibid, 507). In 1978, Walcott talks about this topic in an interview with Fleming:

> The blue of some of the bays in the Caribbean is incredible. You really believe that if you went down there and put your finger in it, your hand would be stained. And if you are painting the intensity of that blue, or the intensity of that light, which is extremely difficult, then you are doing a whole new thing. And it affects the way you do your art. (Fleming 1993)

In reverse, the challenge for the translator who has to convey this intensity of tropical colours and light into the temperate setting of the target culture is of equal gravity. This becomes most apparent in XXXIV: In a moment of epiphany in which the persona mistakes "a swash of green-painted roof for the sea" at La Guardia Airport he realizes that although "midsummer is the same everywhere" his "nib, like the beak of the sea-swift heads nowhere else" (47) but to the seascape of his island home. Walcott juxtaposes the imagined seascape and the persona's body:

> My eyes flashed a watery green, I felt through each hand,
> channel and vein, the startling change in hue
> made by the current between Pigeon Point and Store
> Bay, my blood royalled by that blue. (47)

Although he does not refer to different hues of the colour blue explicitly, by connecting the two through rhyme, one inevitably evokes the other. Similarly, in the final line Walcott conjures up the deep bright tone of royal blue when he puns on the idiomatic blue blood of aristocracy with the verbal use of the adjective "royal." A "change in hue" is additionally indicated in the shift from the "watery green" of the eyes in the beginning of the sentence to "that blue" of the blood at its very end. On a very concrete level, what he describes is the difference in blues at Pigeon Point where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Caribbean Sea.

Schrott's focus on rhyme causes him to turn the unspecified "hue" into the more temperate colour gray:

> Meine augen blitzten wäßriggrün, ich spürte in jeder hand
> kehlung und vene, die überraschende veränderung hin zum grau
> der strömung zwischen Pigeon Point und Store Bay; gekrönt
> und gefürstet war mein blut von diesem blau. (79)

In the German version, there is a colour transition from the eyes' green to the gray of the current. The reference to the colour blue with a deixis – "*diesem* blau" (m.e.) – at the close

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of the sentence is rather puzzling for the reader since there is no previous mention of the colour. Although the same is the case in the English version, the reader logically connects the colour blue with the "change in hue." Schrott does not convey Walcott's use of *néologie*, either. A possible translation for "royalled" may have been a neologism such as "veradelt": Apart from conveying both the unusal verbal use and reference to the blue blood of nobility, there is the echo of 'veredelt.'

In her insightful essay, Dvorak refers to poems XVIII and XIX as "ekphrastic or iconic poems, verbal representations of a real or imagined work of graphic representation" (Dvorak 2006, 45). The first of these poems is about the art of "the other 'eighties, a hundred midsummers gone" (28). After establishing philosophical ideas, prevailing preoccupations of artists, and life of that period in brief sketches, Walcott describes a scene that brings to mind paintings by Monet "with the rippling accordion, / bustled skirts, boating parties, zinc-white strokes on water" (28). The works of this impressionist painter are so deeply ingrained in the collective memory that the reader may be convinced that Walcott is desribing one specific painting. However, this is not the case. Instead, Walcott draws on well-known subjects of the artist to convey this impression. The homonym "strokes" emphasizes the sense of ekphrasis in this passage as it refers to the strokes of the oars as well as the strokes of paint with which the artist captures the scene on canvas. What is striking is that the first part of the poem resembles a still life, while the ekphrastic passage comes alive with the movement inicated in these lines.

Schrott's version reads: "Hundert mittsommer vergangen mit dahinplätschernden akkordeons / dem cul de paris, bootsfahrten, zinkweißen schlägen ins wasser" (43). Schrott uses the technically correct translation for "bustle," which may not be comprehensible to some readers. Although the same could be true for English-language readers, they may consider it a reference to the sound made by the skirts' material, which actually increases the sense of movement and the involvement of the senses. In contrast to what Schlaffer claims, Schrott translates only the first meaning of the homonym "stroke" thus erasing the reference to the act of painting. Therefore, the impression of reading an ekphrastic description is not as prominent in the German translation. Howard notes how important even minute details are to Walcott who "[i]n an earlier version […] had written 'zinc-white sails on water.' The gain in precision is obvious, as is the evidence of meticulous attention" (1985, 162).

A similar case in point is XX *Watteau* in which the opening lines appear to allude to the famous painting "The Embarkation for Cythera." This impression is further enhanced with a reference to "the heart of all embarkations" and the mention of "Cythera" in the middle of the poem. However, a number of motifs appear that are not part of this specific painting, but of other works of the French artist. In contrast to the above example, the ekphrastic description is largely static: "The amber spray of trees feather-brushed with the dusk, / the ruined cavity of some spectral château, the groin / of a leering satyr eaten with ivy" (31). The only hint at movement in this passage is implied in the phrase "feather-brushed" in that it recalls the act of painting. In Schrott's translation the impression of stasis is even stronger as he turns the verbal phrase into a nominal phrase: "Die bernsteinfarbene gischt der bäume mit dem federpinsel des abends" (49).

XIX is subtitled *Gauguin* and consists of two poems. Dvorak argues that "the lower case isolated letter i in italics separated by a slash from the name of the painter and incorporated into the title of lyric XIX ('*Gauguin/i*') is a strong indicator that the poet invites us to read the poem in terms of voice" (2006, 45). This invitation does not extend to the German reader since the Roman numeral does not translate into the first person pronoun in German. The fact that the lower case "*i*" is replaced with an Arabic numeral in the bilingual edition therefore does not alter the reading per se. The prominence of the lyrical I in both poems supports Dvorak's reading. Especially in *ii* it remains ambiguous, though, whether the voice is that of Gauguin or Walcott (cf. de Lima 1991, 188f.). The letter /i/ gains special importance in two lines of the poem: "Cézanne br**i**ck**i**ng **i**n color, each br**i**ck no b**i**gger than a square **i**nch, / the po**i**nt**i**ll**i**sts' dots l**i**ke a m**i**ll**i**on **i**r**i**ses" (29) (m.e.). According to King, "Brodsky notes how Walcott's words look like their subject, the Moon's o's for example." He attests Walcott an "unusual sensitivity towards words" including "their physical appearance on a page." (King 2004, 420) In this example, the dots serve to illustrate the very technique of pointillism on the printed page. Schrott even outnumbers Walcott: "Cézanne der m**i**t farben mauert, **j**eder z**i**egel n**i**cht gr**ö**ßer als e**i**n quadratzent**i**meter, / d**i**e punkte der Po**i**nt**i**ll**i**sten w**i**e e**i**ne m**i**ll**i**on **i**r**i**s" (45) (m.e.).

Michael Davidson distinguishes between two ways in which poetry may treat the visual art of painting: On the one hand, he describes the "classical painter poem" as "a poem 'about' a painting or work of sculpture which imitates the self-sufficiency of the object." On the other hand, he applies the term "painterly poem" to a poem that "activates strategies of composition equivalent to but not dependent on the painting. Instead of pausing at a reflexive distance from the work of art, the poet reads the painting as a text, rather than as a static object" (Heffernan 1991, 299). The above examples illustrate how Walcott applies both strategies in *Midsummer*. At other times, one gets the impression that the Caribbean landscape itself becomes the subject of ekphrastic representation. As Gray argues,

> Walcott's poems contain many depictions of the tropics as static and torpid. In *Midsummer* the poet depicts Puerto Rico[126] as an island where 'things topple gradually,' where 'only a mare's tail switches,' and where what finally brings sleep is 'a sacramental stasis' (Midsummer XLIII, viii) (Gray 2005, 127).

In this way, the poet transgresses the boundaries between the arts of painting and writing from the very beginning:

In the opening poem, the persona's arrival in Port of Spain is accompanied by a culture shock: "It comes too fast, this shelving sense of home – / […] a world that still stands as / the trundling tires keep shaking and shaking the heart" (11). What resonates in "a world that still stands" is also a world that stands still. Although Schrott tries to render both meanings when he translates "eine welt, die noch still steht" (9), the sense that prevails is of returning to a world that has not changed but remained static.

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[126] It is not clear what makes Gray assume that the poem is set in Puerto Rico. Referring to the exact same passage, Ismond speaks of Cuba (Ismond 1986, 83).

3.4 Differences between the 1994 and 2001 editions

Considering that Schrott revised his original translation substantially for the book publication, it seems plausible that he did so systematically focussing on a few specific aspects. For instance, one version could be closer to the source text than the other. There could be a greater emphasis on rhyme or exotic elements might be more prominent in one of the two editions. Indeed, at first sight it seems as if the diction of the first version was closer to the source text. However, this is not the case consistently. In fact, there are instances where this does not even hold for one specific line: Sometimes in one part of a line version 1 is closer to Walcott's diction, while in the other it is version 2. On numerous occasions, the first version was revised extensively. Yet it would be wrong to think that either one of the two translations resembles the source text more closely in whatever aspect one may choose to analyse – they are just different.

This becomes clear when considering the end of XXXVIII. This is one of the more obviously autobiographical poems of *Midsummer*: It is about Walcott's time in England between 1959 and 1962 when he staged his plays there with actors and actresses from the Trinidad Theatre Workshop whom he had managed to bring along on grants (King 2004, 170f.). The poem ends with a reflection on why the lyrical I was not succesful as a playwright. While numerous other poems treat the topic of self-doubt, in this case Walcott lists specific points of criticism that were actually mentioned in reviews. He sums them up in the final lines:

> […] They didn't know your language,
> the characters were simple, there was no change of seasons
> or sets. There was too much poetry. It was the wrong age. (51)

Schrott's first version published in *Akzente* is more descriptive, explanatory, and offers more interpretations. For instance, in order to convey the two meanings of "age" as in the age of a person and a specific period in time he expands the final sentence to name both aspects separately. Moreover, by expanding the phrase "the characters were too simple," he also makes it ambiguous whether "charaktere" refers to the characters in a play or to printed letters. As a result, the translation is one line longer than the source text:

> […] Sie kannten deine sprache nicht, die charaktere
> wären in einer zu einfachen schrift geschnitten, der veranstalter
> hätte dekoration und jahreszeiten wechseln sollen. Die schwere
> von zuviel gedichten. Es war die falsche zeit und das falsche alter. (*Akzente* 422)

In his second version Schrott changes the order of Walcott's "reasons / for what went wrong" ending the poem on a different note. In this version, the main reason for the lyrical I failing to be successful is that what he tried to stage was not a play but rather a poem which – in addition – was too long. Despite the fact that Schrott uses the same components as Walcott, by rearranging them he creates a different emphasis. Compared with the earlier version, this later translation is more concise and the individual reasons are actually

translated more literally. In both cases, Schrott recreates Walcott's pattern of cross rhymes in the final lines:

> […] Es war die falsche zeit. Sie verstanden deine sprache nicht
>
> jahreszeit oder kulisse blieben unverändert, sie hatten nichts zu verkünden
>
> deine personen, kurz gesagt: es war kein stück sondern ein zu langes gedicht. (Hanser 87)

This example illustrates two things: On the one hand, it shows that the poems that Schrott revised extensivley are not only especially difficult to translate, but often they are the most difficult to understand in the first place. On the other hand, it proves Hewson's thesis that "[a]ny target text can only be one among a series of paraphrastic possibilities, and the bilingual edition is the ideal place to bring this out" (Hewson 1993, 153).

With regard to the general question of faithfulness in translation, Michael Holman and Jean Boase-Beier ask whether a translator should dare improve a source text or rather recreate potential flaws in the name of faithfulness. The critics argue that while the first answer is still considered "unusual" this is

> only because the prevailing view of the translator is still as one whose role is subsidiary […]. Just as the language of an original literary text will creatively deviate from standard language, so the translation can regard the original as a standard to deviate from, and the extent to which deviation is perceived will vary according to the cultural context in which the TT is to be embedded. (1998, 13)

With the monolingual and biliungual edition in mind, one may add that the extent to which such deviations are perceived also depend on the edition used. Schrott told me that he would translate *Midsummer* more boldly today and even go as far as correcting Walcott whose images are not always as precise as they could be.

The only consistent revision is that in the second edition, Schrott uses commas randomly and sparingly so that it is difficult at times to understand the meaning or some of the references. Accordingly, in her review for *Frankfurter Rundschau*, Schlaffer criticizes Schrott for his use of punctuation that impedes the reading process (2001, 14). In poem II, he does not indicate the relative clause with commas thus obscuring the meaning:

> Tonsuriert, murmelst du einen vers
>
> den dein exiliertes land bald auswendig wissen wird
>
> für eine splitternde sonnenhelle fensterbank wo eine taube gurrt. (2001, 11)

Without punctuation, it is difficult to read the first and third lines as a unit. At the very least, the reading flow is interrupted. The only comma Schrott does use in this sentence seems out of place.

In poem XIX *Gauguin ii*, Walcott contrasts the idealized view of "these virgins" with reality when he writes:

> on their wooden trays
>
> are the fruits of my knowledge, radiant with disease,
>
> and they offer you this, in their ripe sea-almond eyes,

their clay breasts glowing like ingots in a furnace. (30)

As the lyrical I proclaims in the opening, "these virgins [are not] virginal." Instead, in their eyes is a flash of sexual maturity and experience as they offer their bare breasts. While the scene is reminiscent of typical motifs of Gauguin's paintings, the poem goes beyond the surface, deconstructing the idyl. In Schrott's translation, the ripe sea-almonds are part of the gifts the virgins are offering instead of describing their eyes; the connotation of sexual maturity is hardly detectable:

auf ihrem holztablett
liegen die früchte meiner erfahrung, leuchtend und schwärend
in ihrer krankheit; das ist das geschenk das in ihren augen steht
reife seemandeln, brüste aus ton wie barren im brennofen glühen. (2001, 47)

In addition, Schrott does not account for the faint allusion to the biblical Garden of Eden and the fall of man when he translates "the fruits of my knowledge" as "die früchte meiner erfahrung."

The *Akzente*-version reads quite differently:

Auf ihren hölzernen schalen
liegen die früchte meiner erfahrung, leuchtend und schwärend;
das kranke bieten sie dir an, in ihren reifen see-mandelaugen,
mit ihren brüsten aus ton, die wie barren im brennofen glühen. (1994, 408)

Schrott creates very different units by his use of commas. The second version amounts to a veritable reinterpretation.

Another effect in the first edition is that the German punctuation creates more end-stopped lines than there are in the source text. In the later edition, on the other hand, Walcott's end-stopped lines often become enjambements. Although at times one gets a feeling of the poem rushing along, it is possible that Schrott wanted to recreate the same drive that is characteristic of Walcott's poems. Accordingly, Schrott describes the effect of enjambements thus: "Es verleiht dem Ausdruck [...] eine zusätzliche Dynamik" (2005, 139). In addition, Schrott creates very Walcottian enjambements that result in garden-pathing. This ist he case in LII: "Marschieren hab ich sie gehört auf den blätternassen straßen / meines kopfes" (129). Although Walcott does not create this effect in this specific passage in the source text he quite frequently plays with the startling effect of garden-pathing in his poems, such as in V where he writes: "The far ocean grinds in waves / of air-conditioning" (15). In his version of LII, the first seven lines are end-stopped lines; in Schrott's version, the first three lines are enjambements. In the 1994 edition, the first three lines are also enjambements, but this specific passage does not startle the reader as it reads: "Ich hab sie auf den blätternassen straßen meines kopfes marschieren / gehört" (436). Despite the fact that the sentence structure and the colloquial tone of this version is actually closer to Walcott's "I heard them marching the leaf-wet roads of my head" (72), Schrott decided to change it in favour of the startling effect.

Although the number of words that *Duden* categorizes as technical terminology remains quite substantial in the revised edition, Schrott simplified the diction on numerous occasions. In XXVII, for instance, Walcott speaks of "the sea's corrugations" (38). In *Akzente*, Schrott translates "riefen der see" (1994, 414), in the Hanser-edition, he merely writes "wellen der see" (2001, 63). It is only in Walcott's version that the image resonates with that of corrugated iron commonly used as roofing material by the poor inhabitants of St Lucia. In the same poem, Schrott also replaces the Latin-derived word "korpuskeln" for English "corpuscles" with the common word "blutkörperchen." In XLVI the Latin term "äquinoktium" (1994, 431) for "vernal equinox" (66) is repleaced with the common "tagundnachtgleiche" (2001, 115) and the mathematical term "polygon" (ibid) fell victim to omission in the process of revision. In XXVIII, Schrott had originally translated two terms quite literally using the German words "schwingen" for "to swing" and "Für stunden" for "For hours" (1994, 414). In the later edition, he replaces these with "schaukeln" and "Stundenlang," respectively (2001, 65).

4 Konrad Klotz: *Omeros*

4.1 The translator

Konrad Klotz is a pseudonym used by the Swiss author and translator Kurt Bitschnau-Durga who was born in 1951 in Zurich where he died in 1997.[127] After completing a commercial apprenticeship (Perret 2013, 608), he emigrated to Canada at the age of 19, studied linguistics and philosophy in Montreal and worked in various "work camps" in Labrador and British Columbia (Klotz 1991, dust jacket). According to his friend and fellow poet Roland Heer it was the negative connotation of "Bit(s)ch" in his last name in anglophone parts of Canada that made Klotz acquire a pseudonym. [128] His close friend Martin Hamburger adds that throughout his life, Klotz would play with and slightly alter this pseudonym.[129] This accounts for the fact that his translations and books appeared under various different names.[130] After eight years abroad he returned to Zurich and enrolled in a school for interpreters from which he graduated two years later in 1980 (CV, © Roger Perret, Zurich). According to Hamburger, Klotz started to teach German as a second language to adult immigrants, because – as is often the case – he could not support himself with his work as a writer and translator alone. Hamburger adds that even Klotz's first novel *Wegweisung* that appeared in 1986 with the small publisher *Nachtmaschine* was much like a self-publication.

One year after the publication of this novel, Klotz describes his experience as a writer and translator in an unpublished essay entitled "Stationen eines Unberufenen": "Für meinen Roman-Erstling 'Wegweisung' werde ich mit ermässigten Exemplaren honoriert" (1987, 2 © Roger Perret, Zurich). Yet he empathizes with the publisher in question for being in no better position than the author. Another passage concerns the difficulties of receiving payment for his translation of poems he had done for *Geflüsterte Pfeile* (1982), an anthology of Native American poetry. In his essay he writes: "Für das erste Buch, eine Anthologie mit Indianer-Lyrik, z.Z. in der vierten Auflage, musste ich zwei Jahre warten, bis der Verleger das Honorar auszahlte (die Korrespondenz ist sehr umfangreich)." (1987, 1f. © Roger Perret, Zurich) After recapitulating how he decided to be a writer and pursued this career, Klotz arrives at the disillusioned realization: "Schriftsteller ist also, ausser für ein paar Erlauchte, kein Beruf in der Schweiz." (1987, 3. © Roger Perret, Zurich)

In the 1990s, Klotz led a multifaceted literary life. In 1991 he published a book of short prose fiction – *Fremde Liebe – enges Land* –with *Z-Verlag* and in 1992 a volume of reductionist poetry under the title *GIGOrithmen & KARDIOgramme* with *Verlag im Waldgut*. He received numerous prizes, both for his own writing and for his translations (CV, © Roger Perret, Zurich): In 1993 he was awarded the *Fördergabe des Petrarca-Preises*, in 1996 the *Conrad-Ferdinand-Meyer-Preis*. In addition, he received various

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[127] Throughout this paper I will refer to this pseudonym under which he chose to publish most of his work.
[128] Whenever Roland Heer is mentioned in the following, I will refer to a private conversion from 31 March 2014.
[129] Whenever Martin Hamburger is mentioned in the following, I will refer to a private conversation from 01 April 2014.
[130] Other pseudonyms he used are David Konrad Klotz and Kurt Durga. His translation of Marnie Walsh's poetry appeared under his real name Kurt Bischnau-Durga.

prizes for his translation of *Omeros* ("Klotz, Konrad. immer schwerer/werde/das ist mein/los," 26). Moreover, he was part of a group of poets who called themselves "Orakel-Verschnitt" and put on shows with jazz musicians. Heer was also a member of this group. Like Hamburger, he describes these shows as predecessors of slam poetry and as being closely related to performance art. Heer remembers that on one occasion Klotz even recited a poem while doing a head stand on stage. According to Heer, Klotz was a member of the Swiss writers' association (*Schweizer Schriftstellerverband*) that also includes a division for translators. In 1991 and 1995 he was editor of the literary magazines *Entwürfe* and *Entwürfe für Literatur*, respectively (CV, © Roger Perret, Zurich).

Apart from the poems included in *Geflüsterte Pfeile*, Klotz translated two more volumes of poetry by Native Americans, one by Simon Ortiz, another by Marnie Walsh. The latter contains a brief afterword by the translator in which he describes Walsh's language as blunt, straight-forward and prosaic, her poems as narrative and deeply rooted in the oral tradition of storytelling not least in her use of what Klotz refers to as a kind of "Pidgin-English" (1989, 93). Although her poetry is very different from Walcott's, translating Walsh's non-standard English is equally challenging. Generally, Klotz renders the poems in Standard German, only occasionally using ellipses to account for Walsh's deviations from Standard English. The bilingual edition allows readers to consider source and target text.

What drew Klotz to Walsh's poetry was for once the wish to give a voice to a yet unknown writer – an aim he succeessfully strove for as editor of the literary magazine. As Hamburger, Heer, and Stephan Pfäffli put it in their obituary: "Mit viel Spürsinn suchte und fand er neue Stimmen, denen er zur Erstveröffentlichung verhalf – in der Literaturzeitschrift 'entwürfe'" (1997, 59).

In 1982 his first translation of Walcott appeared in *drehpunkt*: the first half of "The Star-Apple Kingdom." Two years before the German edition of *Omeros* appeared, Klotz's translations of three poems from Walcott's *Sea Grapes* and "The Sea is History" from *The Star-Apple Kingdom* were published side by side with the English version in *drehpunkt* (1993). For his translation of *Omeros*, Klotz had to engage in extensive research: He learned about such varied subjects as the history of the Caribbean or the craft of building boats, since he had no affinity to the sea or to sailing. Hamburger remembers that in the beginning, Klotz would work with a woman from England with whom he first viewed the source text. Later, Hans Jürgen Balmes, the German editor of *Omeros*, worked with Klotz for roughly four months.[131] Whenever Klotz had translated a new section of the book, they would meet to discuss the translation. At that time, Balmes worked for the Swiss publisher *Amman* and had acquired the rights for *Omeros*. When Walcott was awarded the Nobel Prize shortly after, it was decided that the rights to the poetic oeuvre should best remain with *Hanser*. Michael Krüger, head of *Hanser*, decided that Klotz should do the translation, not least because he had already completed substantial amounts of it. Balmes was put in charge of editing who enjoyed meeting with Klotz.

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[131] Whenever Hans Jürgen Balmes is mentioned in the following, I will refer to a private conversion from 27 March 2014.

In contrast to Schrott, Klotz did not publish any essays on literature, translation, or poetics. Unlike Schrott's translation of *Midsummer* and Martens's *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*, *Omeros* contains no afterword by the translator. However, some unpublished texts as well as an interview he conducted with Peter Weber for *entwürfe* offer insights into Klotz's understanding of literature. In the interview, for instance, he describes the way he works as an author: "Ich selber würde mich als sehr langsamen Wortarbeiter bezeichnen" (1995, 109). This seems to hold for his translations, too: In an excerpt from his letter to the editor of *drehpunkt* that was published along with his translation "Das Stern-Apfelreich," Klotz wrote: "Ich habe das zwölfeinhalbseitige Titelgedicht in der 'American Poetry Review' in der Mai/Juni Nummer des selben Jahres entdeckt und mich in den folgenden Monaten an die Übersetzung gemacht." (1982) His translation of *Omeros* took him three years to complete (Braun 1995). Heer recalls that Klotz had already translated significant parts of the book by the time Walcott received the Nobel Prize. Therefore, he was especially excited to hear the news.

In April 1991, Klotz wrote an unpublished two-page paper with the title "Zwölf Thesen zur immer wiederkehrenden Frage: Was soll das, Literatur?" (CV, © Roger Perret, Zurich). He proposes more or less serious answers to questions such as why people create literature, whether literature is a luxury, or at what point a text is completed. At various points he hints at his personal reasons for writing literary texts in spite of the difficulties he described four years earlier. While admitting that wanting to be admired can be one rather selfish reason, it was more important for Klotz to try to make a difference. This means nothing less than fighting for the human cause even if it puts the writer in a no-win situation. Klotz puts it thus: "Um für das menschliche Anliegen einzutreten, ist er immer auf der Verliererseite, er kann zwischen den herrschenden Mächten nur unterscheiden in der Art und Weise, wie er sie angreift." (1991 © Roger Perret, Zurich)

Whereas Schrott published a poetic alphabet ("Ein Poetisches ABC") in which he uses a quote from Klotz's translation of *Omeros* as an example of allegory (2005, ABC, 137), Klotz wrote a one-page alphabet of poets ("Dichter-ABC"). He lists Walcott under the corresponding letter and quotes from "The Schooner *Flight*": "Either I am nobody or I am a nation" (© Roger Perret, Zurich). Other poets on his list include Dylan Thomas, T.S. Eliot, and Wladimir Majakowski whose works have influenced Walcott. It is therefore highly probable that Klotz will recognize allusions to these poets in *Omeros*.

4.2 The monolingual edition of Omeros

Klotz is among the first translators of *Omeros* into a European language.[132] Like its predecessors, the German translation was published as a monolingual edition.[133] Various German critics judge Walcott's book-length poem to be difficult. King points to the fact that "highly structured poetry was out of fashion in most of Europe" (2004, 546).

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[132] By the time his translation was published, *Omeros* had been translated into Spanish, Catalan, and Dutch (www.unesco.org/xtrans).

[133] Although the sheer scale of the poem makes it plausible for publishers to decide in favour of a monolingual edition, the Italian translation that appeared in 2003 was published as a bilingual edition and encompasses 581 pages (www.unesco.org/xtrans).

Accordingly, Jürgen P. Wallmann raises a number of points that make *Omeros* challenging for a European readership in general:

> schon die Form […] ist den Zeitgenossen unvertraut. Und fremd und weithin neu sind für europäische Leser sowohl die Bilderwelt als auch der historische und geographische Hintergrund dieser englischsprachigen Dichtung aus der Karibik (1996).

Sartorius adds nautical terminology to this list (1995). It seems that Klotz was well aware of such difficulties as he comments on historical references to the Aruacs, the Battle of the Saintes, or admiral Rodney and explains the implications of geographical references to St. Eustatius, Benin, and Port Royal on two and a half pages of annotations. In addition, he supplies information on plants including tamarack and croton as well as on uniquely Caribbean terms such as pirogue, piton, or morne. Other annotations clarify references to writers and their works as well as to painters.

Only on very rare occasions does Klotz use annotations to provide information that he cannot convey by virtue of the translated text itself. This is the case in the following example: Chapter XXXV, I. is set in Georgia where "[h]ooded clouds / guarded the town squares" (178). The setting as well as the reference to "the gibbet branches of a silk-cotton tree / from which Afolabes[134] hung like bats" (178) draws a connection to the white hooded robes worn by members of the Ku-Klux-Klan. On the one hand, Klotz more accurately speaks of the *sons* of Afolabe, i.e. the slaves who are also descendants of Achille's ancestor: "[in] den Galgenästen des Kapokbaums, an denen / Afolabes Söhne baumelten wie Fledermäuse." (188) On the other hand, the reference to the Ku-Klux-Klan is less obvious as he renders "hooded clouds" as "Kapuzenwolken" (188). Klotz seems to be aware of this as he adds a note explaining the reference.[135]

In contrast to Martens's extensive annotations in *Erzählungen von den Inseln*, Klotz keeps them to a minimum. Placed unobat the end of the book in both cases, they do not interrupt the reading process. Hewson disagrees with the many translation critics who consider the mere existence of such explanatory notes proof of the impossibility of translation. In their view, footnotes indicate the defeat of the translator (Hewson 1991, 245). Others, among them Mittio Naito, argue that providing the reader with explanatory notes can fulfil one of the functions of a translation, namely to convey necessary cultural information (1993, 522). This is certainly the case with *Omeros* as the reaction of von Lutz (1995) and Fridolin Furger (1996, 7) illustrates: Both criticize the scarcity of Klotz's notes. However, due to the book's complexity it goes without saying that Klotz's notes can by no means be understood as complete. Besides, it is a translation, not an annotated edition.[136] Both critics also agree that some of the notes are imprecise. Von Lutz gives three examples: He notes that the St Lucian volcano "La Sorcière" is first mentioned on page 10 of the translation, but a note only appears with reference to page 64. Moreover, he believes

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[134] Afolabe is Achille's ancestor whom he meets during his sun-stroke invoked mind journey back to Africa in book three.
[135] "'Kapuzenwolken'Kapuzen des Ku-Kux-Klans [sic]"(343).
[136] In contrast, Donald Edwin Barnard's *A Critical Edition of Derek Walcott's Omeros* (2012) features 270 pages of annotations.

that the name of Achille's pirogue "*In God We Troust*" which is kept in English in the translation requires explanation. Though this may be a moot point, he is right about the fact that "Raj" (25) is not a British Governor General in India, as Klotz claims in the corresponding note.

Mostly, Klotz's translation remains very close to the semantics of the source text. The first thing one notices when comparing the two is that one can look at any random canto and find the exact semantic content in the corresponding stanza, often even in the corresponding line, as far as the differences between the two languages allow. Martens, on the other hand, adds entire lines to the poems in his translation of *The Star-Apple Kingdom* in order to convey the imagery. This shows that even in a bilingual edition it is not necessarily possible to compare source text and target text line by line as reviewers have frequently implied.[137]

That this is the case in Klotz's translation may have to do with the influence of Ingold's style: According to Balmes it was very popular in Switzerland at the time when Klotz worked on *Omeros*. The Swiss author, translator, and publicist Ingold prioritizes the source language rather than the target language. Instead of translating idioms with a target-language equivalent, for example, he propagates a literal translation. With this in mind, it is not surprising that on different occasions Klotz changes the sentence structure in order to achieve semantic correspondence between the lines. The following example shall suffice to illustrate this point: In chapter XLVII, I, Ma Kilman is desperately trying to remember her grandmother's way with medicinal herbs. Walcott writes: "But what path / led through nettles to the cure, the furious sibyl couldn't remember." (237) Klotz translates: "Aber welcher Pfad / führte durch Nesseln zur Wunderkur? Die zürnende Sybille / erinnerte sich nicht." (250) Another possible structure of this passage would have been the following: Aber die zürnende Sybille erinnerte sich nicht, welcher Pfad durch Nesseln zur Wunderkur führte. Klotz resolved to change the sentence structure in order to achieve semantic correspondence.[138] In addition, the rather odd word choice "Wunder*kur*" for "cure" may be another example of the influence of Ingold's style on Klotz. Throughout his translation he consistently uses the word "Kur" (24; 256) for "cure" (19; 143), odd as it appears in the context of Philoctete's wound.[139]

4.2.1 Questions of genre

Balmes recalls that one distinct aim of Klotz was to emphasize epic elements of Walcott's *Omeros*. The question whether the book-length poem is to be considered an epic or not has been a moot point among critics since its publication. David W. Hart, for instance, asserts: "*Omeros* is considered an epic poem" (2004). David Farrier, on the other hand, argues that

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[137] Cf. Thies 1989; Schmitt 1993; Buch 1993.

[138] In other cases, he divides long sentences into two for the same purpose as in the following example: "Ma Kilman, in a black hat with its berried fringe, / eased herself sideways down the broken concrete step // of the rumshop's back door, closed it, and rammed the hinge / tight." (236). Klotz translates: "Ma Kilman, in schwarzem Hut mit Glasperlenkrempe, / stieg behutsam die brüchige Steintreppe hinunter. // Die Hintertür der Rumkneipe schloß und verriegelte sie fest. " (249)

[139] Klotz adds the reference to a miracle that Walcott does not imply at this point thus hinting at the spiritual aspect of Philoctete's wound and its cure with the ritual bath.

in *Omeros* Walcott deconstructs the epic form in order to "reveal its redundancy as a faithful form of Caribbean expression and reject it in favour of an assemblage of images that more accurately reflect the fragmentary condition of the archipelago" (2003, 26). Pollard identifies the scene in which the persona encounters his father's ghost in the house of his childhood in Castries as part of "a classical epic convention" (2001): the son's instruction by his father about his future vocation alludes not only to the reunion of Odysseus with Telemachus or that of Anchises with Aeneas, but is also reminiscent of "the poetic 'father,' Brunetto Latini, advising his student 'son,' Dante, about the poet's craft" (ibid). Gregson Davis's view may be the most convincing. He writes: "In his many appropriations of epic subject matter, Walcott reveals that he is not actually renouncing 'epic' so much as redefining it and, in the process, demonstrating the fundamental fluidity of the whole concept of genre" (2003, 142). Davis does not single out certain aspects of the poem, but considers it as a whole accounting for characteristics of all genres that Walcott applies in *Omeros*.

Apart from epic elements, *Omeros* contains dramatic and prose elements, as well. With regard to the poem's metre, Walcott speaks of a "prosaic space" and according to Baugh, it may be described in Bakhtin's terms as "a novelization of epic." (2006, 186) Braun writes about Klotz's translation that, compared with *Midsummer*, the style of *Omeros* is often much more prosy. He does not indicate whether this holds for the source text as well. However, he grants that this is one genre characteristic of the epic (1995). In a riposte to Poiss's review, Klotz defends his style thus:

> Ja, man möchte dem Werk gar wünschen, dass seine Unebenheiten nicht korrigiert werden, denn wenn Derek Walcott im Original einem über weite Strecken eher unebenen, prosaischen Duktus verpflichtetet ist, so tut der Übersetzer ein gleiches, oder versucht es wenigstens. (1996)

The dialogues included in *Omeros* not only create a link to the dramatic convention, but also to Dante, whom Walcott admires for his use of dialogue, among other things. In the context of Achille's reverse Middle Passage, Walcott even includes a scene whose very form shows characteristics of drama: The names of the speakers are written in capital letters and the scene consists entirely of a dialogue sequence between Achille and Afolabe. Walcott even goes as far as saying that "each domestic situation has its own drama, as in life, so that Achille and Helen and Hector is one kind of play or drama or story, and then Major Plunkett and his wife is another story, and Philoctete with his wound, and so on" (Presson 1996, 191). In accordance with Eckhard Breitinger, one may interpret this as a link to the oral culture of the Afro-Caribs which included various dramatic elements; even prose narratives such as the Anansi tales showed characteristics of performance and often involved the audience (1999).

Time and again, Walcott has been asked in interviews whether he considers his poem an epic or not. Shortly before its publication, he replied that he thought of the design as epic (White 1996, 174). In in an interview he acknowledges that "in terms of the scale of it […] it's large and does cover a lot of geographic elements, historical ground" (Presson 1996, 189). Yet from the very beginning, Walcott's main objection to defining the poem in

terms of this specific genre has been the fact that "[i]n an epic, you presume that there is no narrator, but I am in this, coming in and out" (White 1996, 174).

Although Hart takes note of Walter J. Ong's claim that the classical epic is impossible to reproduce due to the fact that "the narrator of the Iliad and the Odyssey is lost in the oral communalities,"[140] never appearing as "I," he insists on a reading of "*Omeros* with its narrative 'I' as a modern Creole epic poem that intermingles both the oral and the literate/literary" (qtd. in Hart 2004). However, as Walcott explains he resists the idea of the poem as an epic because he "wanted to […] celebrate the diurnal, day-to-day heroism of people who go out and face the arrogance" (Sampietro 1992/93). Furthermore, he rejects a reading of *Omeros* that is solely based on a comparison of the Greek texts with the Caribbean. At a University of California reading from his poem, he brushes any comment that assumes such a simplistic analogy aside with the words: "It is pointless to re-write a great work" (2007, YouTube).

All things considered, Klotz's tendency to accentuate epic elements in his translation makes it more difficult for German readers to detect the tensions inherent in Walcott's work. That most German reviewers agree that formal aspects pose difficulties for contemporary readers – apparently more so than foreign concepts or regional specifics – supports this hypothesis. Another important point to consider is the question whether the epic as a genre is dated as German critics imply. Martens reflected on this question:

> Of course, we may compare this 320-page epic poem to Homer's *Odyssee* and to Joyce's *Ulysses*, but in both contexts we would wind up calling it an anachronism. After all, nobody, in the English speaking world – since, say, Joel Barlow, Herman Melville, and Charles Olson – writes epic poetry of that dimension any more. The epic poem simply was not in the books of the poetics of the past four decades. But then, again, we would be criticizing Walcott's epic poem according to the standards of the progress-minded authors of Anglo-Saxon literary histories. There, that grand poem does not fit. (2000, 243f.)

Martens is not entirely correct though, for in the anglophone Caribbean, other poets have been experimenting with the epic form.[141] King speaks of "a Caribbean tradition of autobiographical epic-like works" to which he links *Omeros* "although it goes far beyond in the sense of including more of the world, then [sic] anything by Perse, Césaire, or Wilson Harris" (2004, 517).

4.2.2 Translating dialects

An even greater challenge for the translator than the question of genre is Walcott's use of English with a creolized inflection. With reference to Allsopp's groundbreaking *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*, Wilson points out that in the Caribbean, a number of subvarieties of English coexist which differ in vocabulary as well as usage from one island

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[140] Walter J. Ong. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London and New York: Routledge, 1982. 159.
[141] Beecroft, for instance, describes Edward Kamau Brathwaite's 1973 poem *The Arrivants* as "[s]ignificant for the epic grandeur of its thematic design" (2001, 69f.).

to another (2000, 16). Wilson vividly illustrates how the repeated occurrences of code-sliding in the speech of Shabine in "The Schooner *Flight*" serve to distinctly identify him as St Lucian. She correctly concludes that this is a major challenge for the translator, not least because it "makes for the music of the text" (2000, 15). In case of *Omeros*, the setting strongly suggests that the creolized English spoken by the characters is indeed the St Lucian subvariety. George Lang confirms this assumption:

> Some readers might be tempted to call the phrasing in the first line [of *Omeros*] 'Creole' – a catch-all term in the Caribbean. Linguists would instead label the dialect upon which it is modeled 'Vernacular English of St Lucia' or VESL (pronounced 'vessel') (2003, 75).

The difficult task for translators is to find a satisfactory way to render VESL in the target language. King notes that this was *the* major problem "[i]n most languages […] as there were few acceptable regional varieties that did not sound oafish, limited, misleading" (2004, 546).

Wilson highlights another aspect of Shabine's mixing of registers that also holds for *Omeros*: "there is often no hierarchical relationship, the 'standard' is not privileged, nor is the 'creole'" (2000, 16). The ultimate proof of the lack of such a hierarchical relationship in *Omeros* occurs in Chapter XXV. Throughout the poem, the name of Achille's canoe *In God We Troust* is mentioned. Although the incorrect spelling itself is striking enough, Walcott draws further attention to it by making it the subject of a conversation between Achille and the priest. When the former smiles at the orthography, Achille snaps: "Leave it! Is God' spelling and mine." (8) This sentence takes on greater significance at the beginning of Achille's journey in Chapter XXV, in which God literally speaks in a mixture of biblical English with Creolized inflection:

> And God said to Achille, "Look, I giving you permission
> to come home. Is I send the sea-swift as a pilot,
> the swift whose wings is the sign of my crucifixion.
>
> And thou shalt have no God should in case you forgot
> my commandments. (134)

Yet another feature of Walcott's use of VESL is pointed out by John J. Figueroa who argues that the poet's way of combining standard and non-standard sentences within the speech of one person creates meaning that is difficult to achieve without "the tensions between the intimate and the formal, the old and the new, the synchronic and the diachronic" (1995, 158) that result from this combination. Although Figueroa refers to "The Saddhu of Couva," an example for this strategy can be found in Maljo's speech in *Omeros*. Starting out in Standard English, he soon switches to dialectal English:

> *Every vote is your ticket, your free ride*
> *on the Titanic: a cruise back to slavery*
> *in liners like hotels you cannot sit inside*

except as waiters, maids. [...]
Tell me if I lying [...]. (107)

This example also vividly illustrates Breslin's point when he argues that "the choice of dialect or official forms may be loaded with social implications, especially in those countries where there is a continuum of dialects based on the official language, ranging from most to least formal." (1987, 169f.) In his translation, Klotz reproduces Maljo's entire address in Standard German without any syntactical deviations. He renders the code-switching in Walcott's version with the idiomatic expression "*straft mich / Lügen!*" (115).

While Martens avoids this problem by choosing to omit those poems which contain extensive creole passages, the translator of *Omeros* has to face the challenge. In addition to VESL, the translator is confronted with a variety of different dialects, including the cockney English of the character Dennis Plunkett. Each dialect calls for a specific rendering into the target language. The great difficulty is that dialects are usually localized. Trying to find a substitute in another language is one option of dealing with the problem, however, the connotations are usually not the same. Rather than applying a specific German dialect, Klotz uses an accumulation of slight phonetic deviations which are quite common in spoken German. An example from the first canto of Chapter XXXVI illustrates his approach. In this canto the poet persona visits a museum in Boston. Turning a corner, he suddenly encounters Winslow Homer's painting *The Gulf Stream* in which he believes to recognize Achille. His thoughts get caught in the "sea whose rhythm swells like Herman Melville." Walcott continues in what appears to be a polyphonous stream of consciousness:

Heah's Cap'n Melville on de whiteness ob de whale -
…………………………………………………………
Lawd, lawd, Massa Melville, what could a nigger do
but go down dem steps in de dusk you done describe? (184)

Klotz goes to great lengths to account for the vernacular:

Hier is' Käpt'n Melville un' der große weiße Wal -
....
[…] Mein Gott, Masta Melville, was kann
'n Nigger tun, als hinuntagehn die dunklen Stuf'n, die

sie beschreiben? (194)

Sartorius is critical of Klotz's way to translate non-standard passages. He writes: "die Wiedergabe des Antillenpatois in dialektgefärbten deutschen Wendungen ist nicht befriedigend." (1995)

Claire Malroux opts for a similar approach in her translation of "The Schooner *Flight*." Wilson writes that in this case, the French translator "has not attempted to render the creole/standard contrasts in French except by the suggestion contained in the elisions, typical of collquial speech ('mais vous [ne] connaissez pas ma force') and not peculiar to a

creole voice" (2000, 15). Andrea Molesini wrote an insightful essay on his translation of *Omeros*. In this essay, the Italian translator, author of children's stories, and teacher of comparative literature at the University of Padua, elaborates on the problems that the very opening created for him regarding the question of how to translate "non-standard" English. In the end he decided to apply the same strategy as his German and French colleagues:

> We cut down them canoes is half-way between "we cut them down" and "we cut those [or these] canoes down". Obviously, a literal rendition - abbiamo abbatuto loro canoe – was out of the question. […] In a certain sense, popular local idioms as such do not exist in Italian, which has local idioms – dialects that cannot figure in written discourse if they are to maintain their expressive efficacy […]. Hence, the choice here was for a sort of simplified regularity – that is, a translation of such expressions with basically correct Italian. It was not an easy tactic to opt for, because in the original the continual grammatical errors help to give strength and character to the voice of the fishermen; but in Italian, those errors would not have had the same connotation at all, and the end text would have been some sort of non-translation. Nevertheless, a whole range of devices – including occasional twists of grammar – was used to maintain the sense of spontaneity and improvisation; though one has to admit that the overall effect did not capture the sense of the 'different' which exists in the English text. (2006, 25f.)

In the corresponding passage of Klotz's translation the syntactical deviations from standard German consist of progressive assimilations such as "wars" for "war es," or "gehts" for "geht es" and elisions such as "kipp" for "kippe," or "'n Dollar" for "einen Dollar" (9).

Throughout the poem single words – often the names of trees – are referred to by their French Creole names. In most cases Klotz simply transcribes them; only on some occasions does he translate them into the target language. Entire lines and stanzas written in French Creole appear in italics and are followed by Walcott's translation into Standard English. Therefore, French Creole passages do not pose any special difficulties for Klotz since they are simply transcribed and followed by a German translation of the English in the usual manner. However, one cannot always trust Walcott's translations. When Philoctete complains in French Creole "Moin blessé" meaning "I am wounded" Walcott deliberately mistranslates: "I am blest" (18). Likewise, Klotz has Philoktetes answer: "Bin gesegnet / mit 'ner Wunde" (24). According to Jahan Ramazani, "[t]he poet's discovery of likeness between the word blessé and 'blest,' […] demonstrates how the European languages inflicted on West Indians can be turned from curses into blessings" (2003, 193).

In his Nobel lecture, Walcott emphatically talks about his preference of the French Creole pronunciation in *Omeros*:

> [T]he dialect they exchange like the leaves of the trees whose names are suppler, greener, more morning-stirred than English – laurier-canelles, bois-flot, bois-canot – or the valleys the trees mention – Fond St. Jacques, Matoonya, Forestier, Roseau, Mahaut – or the empty beaches – L'Anse Ivrogne, Case en Bas, Paradis – all songs and histories in themselves, pronounced not in French – but in patois. (1998, 80)

Special difficulties thus pose the characters' names: for how can a translator account for the French Creole pronunciation "A-sheel" (Hamner 1997, 37) for Achille and "Fee-lock-TET" (Ramazani 2003, 199) for Philoctete? How important names and their pronunciation are for *Omeros* becomes clear early in the poem: In the third canto of chapter III, the persona learns how to correctly pronounce the Greek name of Homer:

> *O* was the conch-shell's invocation, *mer* was
>
> both mother and sea in our Antillean patois,
>
> *os*, a grey bone, and the white surf as it crashes
>
> and spreads its sibilant collar on a lace shore (14)

Lang points to a different kind of mistranslation in this passage, for "'bone' in Patwa is not os, which is French, a nuance Walcott has inferred to the careful reader (in Patwa, os is zo [<Fr. Le<u>s os</u>] – as in *pwézon ni an pil zo*, the fish has a lot of bones in it; *santi i jis an zo*, to feel it in ones [sic] bones)." (2003, 81). While Lang observes that this passage is representative of Walcott's fondness for "cross-linguistic mixing" which occurs throughout the book (2003, 81), Martens goes even further when he writes: "auch über Metaphern und Motive werden hier sonst sorgfältig getrennt Sprachen und Literaturen verbunden" (1996, 32).

Walcott's use of VESL and French Creole in *Omeros* serves multiple purposes: It creates the illusion of spoken language on the written page and the impression of immediacy by making the characters' speech come alive. Moreover, as Lang notes, individual French Creole terms are "ultimate tokens of place, regional flora and fauna" and function "as markers of *couleur locale*" (2003, 80). More than merely adding local colour, such references contribute to setting the locale. Ned Thomas correctly points out that French Creole "is the language of the country-people and fishermen" and as such "stresses the Saint Lucian context and the St Lucian continuity" (1991, 95). Similarly, Lang notes that there are instances, when the use of patois "represent[s] the diglossic reality of the island" (2003, 81). This is the case when Walcott has his characters switch to patois in situations where code-sliding would occur in real-life, as well. Accordingly, Lang argues that Walcott's use of patois occasionally indicates "moments of spontaneity" (2003, 81). He quotes from a scene where Achille and Philoctete are out at sea looking for a new place to settle: "Exultant with terror, Philo kept ravelling / the line round his fist, and then both grasped as one whale – / '*Baleine*,' said Achille – lifted its tapering wedge" (303).[142]

As a more general rule, one might argue that Walcott has his characters switch to patois in moments that are particularly emotional: When Achille and Helen fight at the market in Castries, Helen snaps: "'*Ba moin!*' / 'Give it to me!'" (38). When Hector comes "[c]urving around Praslin / [he] thought of his *camerades* hauling their canoes" (118) and at his funeral, Achille whispers over Hector's coffin "forever and ever and ever, / forever, *compère*" (232). Although Klotz usually leaves the patois terms as they are in the source language, he occasionally translates them into German. When Hector thinks of his

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[142] Another example for a "moment of spontaneity" is the above quoted passage in which the persona suddenly finds himself in front of Winslow Homer's painting (184).

camerades, for instance, Klotz writes: "Kaum bog er ein in Port Praslin, / dachte er an seine Kameraden, die ihre Kanus an Land zogen" (126). When Helen walks up Maud's garden to ask her for money, the Irish woman thinks: "She had timed it well. A little intimacy / between us girls. She'd seen the Land Rover in town / no doubt, but not this time, Miss Helen, *non merci*" (123). Klotz neither keeps the French wording, nor translates it literally, however, he finds a way to use a French-derived term while recreating the slant rhyme in "intimacy" with "*non merci*" (cf. Lang 2003, 81): "Gut hat sie's getroffen. Ein kleines Tête-à-tête, / nur wir Frauen. Hat wohl den Landrover in der Stadt / gesehn, aber nicht diesmal, Miß Helen: zu spät!" (130)

Walcott fairly frequently applies such rhymes across language boundaries in *Omeros*. When Achille returns from his mind travel back to Africa, he prays:

'Merci, Bon Dieu, pour la mer-a, merci la Vierge' –
'Thank God for the sea who is His Virgin Mother';

'Qui ba moin force moin' – 'Who gave me the privilege
of working for Him. Every bird is my brother';
'Toutes gibiers c'est frères moin'; pis n'homme ni pour travail' –

'Because man must work like the birds until he die.' (160)

Walcott connects the first and third quoted line by virtue of the eye rhyme "*Vierge*" with "privilege" and the last two quoted lines by rhyming "*travail*" with "die." In this case, Klotz uses a different strategy. The first thing one notices is that with one exception, he does not end any of his lines in patois. Therefore, he avoids having to recreate the cross-lingual rhymes. Instead, he uses assonance by repeating a dark, low /u/-sound in four consecutive lines including the French-derived "pour":

'Merci, Bon Dieu, pour la mer-a, merci la Vierge' – 'Danke,
mein Gott, für die See, danke, meine Jungfrau-Mutter.'

'Qui ba moin force moin' – 'Sie gab mir die Gunst,
für Dich zu arbeiten. Jeder Vogel ist mein Bruder';
'Toutes gibiers c'est frères moin'; pis n'homme ni pour

travail' – 'Denn arbeiten muß der Mensch wie die Vögel
bis zum Tod.' (167f.)

This example illustrates that Klotz is well aware of Walcott's cross-lingual rhymes, but that he decides on a case-to-case basis how to render them into German.

Although both Martens (1996, 33f.) and Leithauser (1991, 93) refer to Walcott's language mixture as macaronic, Breslin warns of a widespread misunderstanding in applying this term to anglophone Caribbean literature. Quoting Breiner, he argues that "'code-switching, which quite accurately reflects West Indian speech habits, is chronically misunderstood by critics outside the region. Convinced that no one could actually speak

like this, they find the texts artificial and "macaronic" because they do not abide by the decorum that segregates poetry in creole from that written in SE.'" (Breslin 2002-2003, 178)

Martens goes on to describe Walcott's cross-lingual rhyming as innovative and unique (1996, 34). He puts special emphasis on bilingual dialogue sequences and quotes from the first canto in which Walcott uses patois extensively. In this canto, Achille and Hector fight over the bailing tin of the latter:

"I told you, borrow nothing of mine. You have a canoe,

and a net. Who you think you are? Logwood Heart?"

" 'Ous croire 'ous c'est roi Gros Îslet? Voleur bomme!"

"You think you're king of Gros Îlet, you tin-stealer?"

Then in English: "I go show you who is king! Come!" (16)

Martens raises a number of intriguing points about this passage: First, he argues that in case of dialogues, Walcott's glossing in English approximates interpreting, rather than translating. Second, he observes that instead of using English Creole to render patois, Walcott uses Standard English. Finally, he notes a subtle implication that can easily go unnoticed:

mit dem auktorialen Einschub: 'Then in Englisch [sic]' wird keine weitere Sprache eingefügt, sondern das, was zunächst wie eine lokale Variante des englischen Patois erscheint: 'I go show you' anstatt: 'I'll show you.' Es handelt sich aber - '*Then in English*' - um das englische Patois, das als vollgültiges Caribbean English und dritte Sprache eingeführt wird. (1996, 31)

Translating these lines into German is no easy task. Klotz writes:

Habs dir gesagt, borg nichts von mir. Hast selber ein Kanu

und ein Netz. Wer glaubstu, wer du bist? Blauholz König?

" 'Ous croire 'ous c'est roi Gros Îslet? Voleur bomme!"

"Glaubst wohl, du bist König von Gros Îlet, Strauchdieb?"

"Ich werd dir schon zeigen, wer König ist, komm!" (21)

Klotz translates rather literal in case of "Wer glaubstu, wer du bist" as opposed to "was glaubstu" or "für wen/was hältst du dich?" By translating "tin-stealer" idiomatically with "Strauchdieb," Klotz does not account for the fact that it is an unreturned tin that causes the argument. In the final line, Klotz omits the authorial insertion that Martens mentions. There are numerous explanations for this choice: Perhaps he did so for the sake of semantic correspondence without affecting the length of the line. Another reason may be that it is awkward to announce an answer in English and then continue the dialogue in German. Had Klotz actually inserted a line in English, the effect on the German reader would have been a different one than on an English reader. As it is the translation does not

achieve the same distancing effect that Walcott creates by interrupting the dialogue at its climax.

In the second canto of chapter XXIX, Klotz treats a similar case differently. Philoctete asks Seven Seas if he has heard anything about his missing friend Achille:

"No news about your friend, yet?"
He asked in English. Philoctete sat on the same

step he chose every moonlight and said in Creole:
"They say he drown." (154)

The example is further proof of Martens's thesis that Walcott treats Creole English as a separate language in its own right: While Achille's question "asked in English" consists of Standard English, the answer "said in Creole" consists of VESL. Klotz translates:

Und dann auf Englisch:
"Noch nichts Neues von unserem Freund?"

wie jede Nacht auf der selben Stufe, da sagte der Kreole:
"Es heißt, er is' ertrunken." (161)

In this case, Klotz keeps the reference to English although no English phrase follows. Instead of describing the language in which Philoctete answers, Klotz describes his heritage by referring to him as a Creole.

In addition to Creole English, Klotz has to account for the speech of the Irish woman Maud and her British husband Major Dennis Plunkett. This is by no means an easier task. For instance, when the Major suddenly catches "himself saying things like 'Luverly,' / 'Right-o,' and, Jesus Christ, 'Ta!'" (25) the translator is faced with the problem of conveying the implications of the dialect into the target language. To German readers words like "Wunnerbar, rechtso" or "Dankedanke" (31) may appear odd, but do not conjure up the language usage of a specific group of people. In a tragicomic scene, Dennis Plunkett is about to receive his genealogical tree. The St Lucian wants to fill in the last empty space, but since the Plunketts do not have any children – a trauma that is a theme throughout the poem – he gets impatient, when the man does not understand that he has no heir:

"No heir," he told the mummy from Madame Tussaud,
who believed he had dropped an aitch. "I mean 'No. Here,'"
[…]
                                    […] "No heir: the end of the line.
No more Plunketts." (87f.)

The humour of the scene relies on the omission of the initial /h/ that is characteristic of certain English dialects (Fromkin, Rodman 1998, 404). At the same time, however, *h*-dropping is also a characteristic feature of Creole English (Mair, Sand 1998, 187). The pun therefore works on two different levels and for each of the two characters. Klotz's

translation of the corresponding passage resolves to convey the undertaker's interpretation of Plunkett's assertion:

"Kein Erbe", sagte er zu Mme Taussauds Mumie,
die glaubte, er sei niederer Abstammung. "Ich sagte schon:

'Nichts hier'" […]
                                    […] "Kein Erbe: Das Ende
der Linie. Keine Plunketts mehr." (95)

On two occasions, the British Major's way of pronouncing certain words is important. In Chapter XVII, we learn that he mispronounces the word "villains," saying "villians" (92) instead. Hamner writes:

Walcott's insistence on the mispronunciation in the last stanza not only exposes his sensitivity to vocal nuance but also recalls the flavor of Achille's misspelling, *In God We Troust*. Insistence on the correctness of these individual deviations underscores the human consciousness at the center of his poem, and it reinforces Major Plunkett's reaction against the historian's biased amnesia. (1997, 62)

In Klotz's translation, Plunkett says 'villains' instead of 'powerful': "Schurken statt Starken" (100). The pronunciation of the two words is so different, however, that it is impossible for the German readers to take the passage as a case of mispronunciation. Rather, they do not have a choice but to consider it to be a deliberate pun with serious political implications.

4.2.3 Recurring motifs and Homeric repetition

A number of different choices in Klotz's translation indicate that he tends to prefer variation over repetition. One must bear in mind that in German, *variatio delectat* is an old stylistic principle that is still propagated in schools, today. Accordingly, Klotz uses a number of different ways to introduce direct speech when Helen and Achille fight over who is to carry the groceries at the market in Castries. Whereas Walcott introduces such passages with "Helen said," "Achille said," "she said," and "[h]e said" (38), Klotz translates: "Helena sagte," "Und drauf Achilles," "[...] rief sie. Und er: […]" (44). Similarly, when Walcott repeats a word within a short passage, Klotz mostly uses synonyms rather than repeating the word. When Helen makes a scene at the restaurant, Walcott refers to a "waitress" (24) thrice in the course of five lines. Klotz omits one such reference and uses "Kellnerin" and "Serviererin" (29) in the other two cases.

Frequently, Walcott's use of repetition takes on special significance as is the case with the "gommier" tree in the opening scene: Not only was it the "first god" (5), it is also the first tree to be cut down and the nodding ferns confirm the necessity of its sacrifice. However, as Walcott explains: "The word *gommier* […] is not only the tree itself but also the dugout canoe manufactured by the indigenous Caribs; and as the tree, its sound contains the activity of a light breeze in the gum tree's boughs or branches […]."

(1997/1998, 225) Unfortunately for those German readers who are not well versed in botany, Klotz's tendency to favour variation cuts these links as he uses both of two different common names in his translation: "Kautschukbaum" (10) for the first god and "Gummibaum" (11) for the first tree to die.

Another effect of Klotz's preference for variation is that he is often more specific when rendering references to sound in general. According to Hart, "there are numerous endorsements for the critical importance of sound, especially 'noise' in Caribbean literature." (2004) Sounds and noise certainly play an important role in *Omeros*: The very words appear frequently, often in connection with the ocean. In the beginning of the poem, the voice proclaims in an apostrophe to Omeros: "Only in you […] / […] can I catch the noise / of the surf lines wandering" (13). In English, the word noise pertains to a broad spectrum of sounds ranging from neutral to negative in connotation. The corresponding German words "Lärm" or "Krach" however, have a distinctly negative connotation. If one was to use the neutral word "Geräusch" instead, this would be closer to the English word "sound." Consequently, Klotz does not employ one word continually, but rather chooses a specific sound according to the context. In this practice, he is extremely versatile translating "noise" as "Rauschen" (18,), "Brausen" (19), "Geräusche" (20), "Brandung" (89), "Donnern" (137), "Geschrei" (152) "Knattern" (205), "Gelärme" (212),"Ton" (217), or "Klimpern" (340). While each choice is certainly appropriate in the specific, it leaves fewer options for the reader's imagination and the leitmotif as such is weakened.[143]

To an even greater extent than in the previously discussed works does Walcott's use of repetition amount to a poetic strategy and a complex structuring device in *Omeros*. Some motifs reappear in ever changing contexts such as various types of lizards: Dispersed throughout the book and encountered by different characters they usually serve as a link to the island's history and a reminder of its permanence (cf. James 2002-2003, 260f.). Similarly, Walcott applies the metaphor of maps in various different contexts. If the character Dennis Plunkett has a passion – if not obsession – for studying maps and charts, Walcott appears equally obsessed with 'drawing' maps which he detects in unexpected places: in the sky (49), on wrinkled (28, 65) and sunburned skin (202) of different characters, in shadows on the ground (316, 318), or on the hide of grazing cattle (79). Klotz only occasionally translates the term "map" literally in these cases. More frequently he conveys different interpretations of the metaphor in the specific context. In this way he depletes the trope and makes the image less unusual.[144] Furthermore, readers of the translation do not have the opportunity to note the repetition and connect the passages in which the metaphor occurs. In this way, subtle but important details get lost.

In one of the first occurrences of a map-metaphor, Walcott directs the reader's view to look with Dennis's eyes at Maud "stretch[ing] a mapped arm from her nightdress" (28). Much later, the reader takes on Maud's perspective as "she studied the map of her

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[143] In the same way, Klotz often uses more specific terms for references to "sound" such as "Rauschen" (22), "Laut" (141), and "Namen" (145) and for the word "moan" such as "Ton" (40), "Stöhnen" (59), "klagen" (153), "Klang" (160), and "Ruf" (295).
[144] This is the case when Walcott describes a Dutch landscape with "its black-mapped, creamy cattle / grazing their long shadows" (79) which Klotz translates as "schwarz-weißgeflecktes / Vieh, grasend in seinen langen Schatten" (86).

forearm" (65). In this instance, Maud not only adopts her husband's view of herself, but for a moment she even appears to join him in his passion for studying maps despite the fact that she normally detests it. Shortly before her death, Maud, exhausted from the heat, "stopped to examine the maps along one hand" (254). In each of these cases, Klotz replaces the metaphor with his interpretation of the physical feature that Walcott describes with the image of the map. In the first case, Klotz translates: "sie streckte / einen zerfurchten Arm aus ihrem Nachthemdärmel" (34). In the second case, he merely describes the veins on her arm with "das Geäder auf ihrem Arm" (71), and in the last instance, he translates: "besah sie den // Plan auf ihren Handflächen" (267). However, what enables the reader of the source text to remember and thus connect these scenes is the metaphor's uniqueness.

Throughout *Omeros*, Walcott uses repetition to connect scenes. Sometimes the connections closely follow one another, are rather obvious, and easily detected. At other times, they are separated by numerous chapters, are quite subtle, and demand a high level of alertness from the reader. This holds even more for the translator who must detect the intricate pattern with which Walcott weaves a net of interconnected scenes. In one of the most extreme cases, thirty-eight chapters separate the first occurrence of an image and its variation: In the third canto of chapter VI, Helen walks along a beach as a boy on a horse comes racing by, stirring up a miniature sandstorm "while she dangled her sandals / and passed through that door of black smoke into the sun" (35). What follows is a juxtaposition of the scene with the Trojan War. Near the end of *Omeros*, Walcott increasingly uses metapoetic passages to reflect the value of Homeric associations in the St Lucian context. At the close of the second canto of chapter LIV, Walcott ask himself:

> Why not see Helen
> as the sun saw her, with no Homeric shadow,
> swinging her plastic sandals on that beach alone,
> as fresh as the sea-wind? Why make the smoke a door? (271)

Unlikely as it may be for a reader to recognize the connection at first reading this example illustrates how intricately Walcott uses repetition as a structuring device. In this case, Klotz's translation of the two passages allows for the same slim chance of recognition as the source text does.

More commonly, however, Walcott refers to a recurring motif with more frequency and uses an unusual image to introduce it for the first time in order to increase the probability of recognition at a later occurrence. One function of connecting different scenes by repeating certain images is to signify the simultaneity of events. In this way, Walcott manages to depict how different characters experience, evaluate, and react to one specific incident. Lawrence is a minor character whose main purpose seems to link two scenes in two consecutive chapters in which the lyrical I and the Plunketts observe Helen walking by on the beach. In the third canto of chapter IV, the lyrical I sits "on the white terrace" of a restaurant overlooking this very beach, waiting for the bill from the waiter who is "like a Lawrence of St. Lucia" (23). Walcott goes to great lengths to supply a

detailed description of the setting and – surprisingly – draws a lot of attention to the marginal character of Lawrence by making him the centre of a slapstick scene:

<div align="center">Like any born loser</div>

> he soon kicked the bucket. He rested his tray down,
> wiped the sand from the ice-cubes, then plunked the cubes in
> the bucket, then the bottle; after this was done,

> he seemed ready to help the wife stuff her boobs in
> her halter, while her husband sat boiling with rage
> like a towelled sheik. (23)

In the midst of this commotion, Lawrence suddenly halts and "frown[s] at a mirage" (23). When the lyrical I turns to see what he is looking at, the reader's view is directed as well and both discover that it is Helen. To the lyrical I, she is "a padding panther," a "mirage," "a woman with a madras head-tie" with her "head proud;" she is "a beauty // that left, like a ship, widening eyes in its wake," and an "ebony mask" (23f.). In this early scene, Walcott describes Helen with all the attributes he associates with her in different parts of *Omeros*.

In the next chapter, the Plunketts make their first appearance. In the third canto, Lawrence brings the bill to their table: "Lawrence arrived. He said: / 'I changing shift, Major. Major?' Maud tapped his knee. / 'Dennis. The bill.'" (31) Although in the preceding cantos Walcott's readers learn much about Major Plunkett, his status on the island, his relation to other cultural groups, and his war experience, they are very likely to remember and recognize Lawrence as the waiter of the lyrical I. Dennis and Maud Plunkett, too, discover Helen on the beach. While Dennis Plunkett sees "the pride of Helen passing," to Maud "that ebony girl" is the cause of their trouble (29).

By and large, Klotz creates a similarly strong connection between the scenes. Occasionally he changes certain nuances as when he translates "mirage" as "Erscheinung" putting more emphasis on the otherworldliness of Helen. On the other hand, he makes her seem more clumsy by translating "a padding panther" as "umhertappenden Panther" (29). When Walcott refers to the angry tourist as a "towelled sheik" (23), he forebodes how the sprawled out tourists trigger in Major Plunkett memories of the war in Africa. This connection is more difficult to detect in the German translation as Klotz describes the tourist with the compound "Turbanscheich" (29). When the waiter approaches Dennis Plunkett with the bill, a shift in meaning occurs. In the source text, the major incorporates Maud's comment about the bill into the ramblings of his mind: When he thinks that "the bill had never been paid" (31) he refers to a very different "bill," meaning that there has not been any reimbursement for the afflictions and suffering caused by the colonial powers. In Klotz's translation, it is not clear whether the phrase is part of Plunkett's train of thought: "Maud tippte ihm aufs / Knie: 'Dennis, die Rechnung.' Doch die wurde nie bezahlt" (37). In addition, the use of simple past suggests that the Plunketts did not pay the waiter.

A similar shift is observable in connection with an implicit reference to Lawrence: When Achille meets his ancestor Afolabe and "hear[s] the griot muttering his prophetic song / of sorrow that would be the past" (148). This song ends with the plea "So, when you see burnt branches riding the swell, / […] // after a night of rough wind by some stone-white hotel, / […] / remember us to the black waiter bringing the bill" (149). Although the German translation also includes a reference to a black waiter, it implies that he won't lift a finger unless he is paid for it: "bis hin zum schwarzen Kellner, der alles in Rechnung stellt" (157).

It is important to bear in mind that the epic has its roots in an oral tradition. Peter Jones emphasizes the fact that both "the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were composed in the *style* of oral poetry" (2003, xxvii). According to Jones, one distinguishing feature of oral poetry in contrast to written poetry is "the extent of its verbal repetitiveness" (ibid). Due to the epic's complex metre, he continues, "the poet needs a stock of prepackaged but highly flexible words and phrases ('formulae'), sentences, even complete scenes ('type'-scenes) to fit the metre, which can be adapted to whatever context the poet desires" (ibid). After illustrating this point with numerous examples, Jones concludes: "This is the inevitable consequence of an oral style of composition" (2003, xxviii). The different functions of Walcott's use of repetition bear a striking resemblance with these characteristics of the Homeric epics. Hence, one might well argue that Walcott, too, composes *Omeros* in an oral style.

The very opening line illustrates this point. Walcott begins with direct speech as he has Philoctete make the brief but significant statement: "'This is how, one sunrise, we cut down them canoes.'" (3) Quoting from the beginning of the poem, Maria Cristina Fumagalli describes *Omeros* as "a journey into the mythic origins or 'sunrise' of the West Indian people and their language" and points out that characteristically for myth, Philoctete's "how" in the first line stands for "why" (2001, 219). On a very literal level, the actual sunrise is one of many recurring motifs in this work. Considering Jones's elaborations, this motif is reminiscent of Homer's recurrent reference to the "rosy-fingered" Dawn in *The Odyssey* (Homer 2003, 2.1). In the first canto, Walcott depicts Philoctete's view of the tree-felling. In the following canto, he describes the same event from Achille's perspective. As if to emphasize the fact that both characters recall the same event in which they participated, he repeats the phrase: "After Mass *one sunrise* the canoes entered the troughs" (8) (m.e.). In chapter XXV, Achille tells Afolabe his name and "[t]he tribe rustles 'Achille.' / Then, like cedars at sunrise, the mutterings settle" (137). The mention of both the sunrise and the cedars evokes the first canto in which Philoctete is the one "to wound the first cedar" (3). Significantly, Walcott opens the final book of *Omeros* in which the poet persona encounters Homer with the line: "One sunrise I walked out onto the balcony" (279). Finally, near the close of the poem, Walcott refers to "that green sunrise of axes" (323).

In Klotz's translation, the opening line reads rather unobtrusively: "'So gingen wir bei Sonnenaufgang die Einbäume fàllen'" (9). Klotz consistently uses "bei Sonnenaufgang" to translate "one sunrise." In the second canto of chapter 2 he writes: "Nach der Messe, bei Sonnenaufgang, ließ man die Kanus / zu Wasser" (13) and the final

book opens with the line: "Bei Sonnenaufgang trat ich hinaus auf die Terrasse" (295). However, the translation of the phrase merely indicates the time of day without suggesting that it may be the same specific sunrise at which the different events take place. In the second case, for instance, the insertion simply seems to imply that Mass takes place very early in the day since it ends before sunrise. Again, it is more difficult for German readers to notice the connection between the various scenes in which the phrase occurs or to consider the possibility of simultaneity.

When Achille and Afolabe meet, Klotz omits the sunrise altogether: "Der Stamm flüstert: 'Achilles.' / Worauf das Gemurmel, wie das Rascheln der Zedern, sich legt" (144). Apart from the fact that the length of the line would have significantly increased had Klotz included the four syllable word "Sonnenaufgang," the dactylic metre would have been disrupted, as well. For the German reader, the reference to the cedar must suffice to conjure up the first canto of *Omeros*. Similarly, when Klotz translates the final mention of the sunrise as "seit jenem grünen Morgen mit Äxten" (339) he relies on the image of the axes and the deixis that implies the reference to one specific morning to convey the connection with the beginning.

The epithet is a type of repetition that is a unique feature dating back to Homer's epics. More frequently than using epithets, Walcott links many of the characters to a certain object. For instance, when the ghost of the poet's father makes an appearance, "*The World's Great Classics*" (e.g. 71, 187) are usually mentioned. Maud keeps working on "her tapestry of birds" (55) that will become "her shroud" (88, 89). Hector is linked to his transport, also referred to as "Comet" (117) or "chariot" (e.g. 38, 117, 230), Achille to his canoe with the significant name "*In God We Troust.*" Although Hamner refers to this "picturesque orthographic lapse" as the "hand-painted epithet on a local fisherman's pirogue" (1997, 37f.), this feature may be considered halfway between an epithet and an allegorical symbol. In the readers' mind, character and item become closely connected. Therefore, whenever any of the objects are mentioned, they inevitably think of the respective characters even when they are not physically present in a specific scene. Again, Klotz does not use the same words consistently when he translates the objects into German. Accordingly, he refers to Maud's "shroud" as "Tuchschleier" (96) in one instance and "Leichentuch" (97) in another.

Walcott equips the central character Helen with two such objects: She frequently appears either "swinging her plastic sandals" (e.g. 271, 288) or wearing Maud's yellow dress displaying "the black V of [her] velvet back" (e.g. 29, 103). The fact that Helen presumably stole the dress from Maud is the root of their quarrel. What is more, though, is that Walcott distinctly writes that "the lemon dress was her sign" (153). In the German translation, however, this important implication is reversed to the dress signalling something to Helen as Klotz translates: "da war ihr das Zitronenfarbene ein Zeichen" (161). The repeated description of the V-line of Helen's back in the yellow dress puts emphasis on Helen's physical beauty that turns everybody's heads.

According to Poiss, Klotz fails to convey this fact. He argues: "Lakonie wird hier zur Phrase eingedeutscht wie im Lob Helenas: 'Sie war berückend schön.' Der Übersetzer unterschlägt die Kunst, Helena in sieben Silben über Menschenmaß zu heben. Wie das

geht? 'Women studied her beauty.'" (Poiss 1995) One may disagree with Poiss's interpretation that the mere fact that women, too, study Helen's beauty proves how extraordinary, perhaps even otherworldly it is. What Klotz emphasizes, instead, is the enchanting effect of her beauty.

There are other instances where Klotz's portrayal of Helen is definitely less sensuous than Walcott's. In Chapter XIX, for example, Dennis Plunkett reflects on his obsession with giving Helen a History:

He had come that far
to learn that History earns its own tenderness
in time; not for a naval victory, but for

the V of a velvet back in a yellow dress. (103)

Klotz depletes the image of the sensuous reference to Helen's soft ebony back by simply speaking of the velvet V-neck of a yellow dress:

So weit war er gekommen,
zu erfahren, daß Geschichte mit der Zeit ihre eigene
süße Frucht birgt, keine Seeschlacht war gewonnen,

sondern der samtene V-Ausschnitt eines gelben Kleides. (110)

4.3 Tendencies in Klotz's translation

4.3.1 Questions of style

Rhyme and prosody

Hamner concludes with Leithauser that *Omeros* could well be used as a "rhyme casebook" for all its "exact and off-rhyme variations" (Hamner 1997, 5). Yet, rhyme in *Omeros* is mostly unobtrusive. As Leithauser convincingly argues, it "becomes preëminent in the absence of a clearly felt metre." (1991, 93) Nevertheless he concludes that "an 'Omeros' without rhyme is unthinkable. It would be a different beast altogether." (1991, 94) Walcott explains his choice of the *terza rima* with its force of propelling both writer and reader into the next stanza. For Walcott, "rhyme is propulsion. It pushes." (Sampietro 1992/93) Walcott's tercets are not as tightly woven as Dante's *terza rima*.[145]

Surprisingly, the form itself appears to be the first, perhaps even the greatest obstacle a reader must overcome. Not only the frequency is striking with which this aspect of *Omeros* is drawn upon in reviews, but also the repeated, often passionate criticism of the poem's division into tercets. Von Lutz finds: "Über dreihundert Seiten dreizeilige Strophen – das ist nicht leicht zu verkraften." (1995). Hans-Jürgen Heise even goes as far as claiming that the form is unsuitable for the setting and characters of the book. As he puts it: "Diese stereotype Gliederung und monotone Rhythmisierung paßt nicht recht zu den

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[145] According to Bernard (2012, 117ff.), the stanzaic design of *Omeros* is only reminiscent of Dante's *terza rima*. Leithauser seems to suggest this, too, when he writes that the rhymes of the "three-line stanzas *evoke* [m.e.] Dante's terza rima." (1991, 92)

tropikalen Handlungsorten und den schlichten Figuren" (1996). Interestingly, Heise's criticism echoes early reactions to Walcott's now much acclaimed poem "The Schooner Flight." As Breiner sums it up:

> the voice of Shabine has particularly provoked some metropolitan critics, who still tend to associate the use of creole with limited education and narrow emotional scope. On the basis of that assumption they find such a character unbelievable: only illiterate peasants speak creole. (2005, 36)

In contrast, Theobaldy urges readers not to let them be put off by the appearance of the tercets on the printed page ("Prallheit" 1995). Like his fellow critics Poiss (1995) and Wallmann (1996), he describe Klotz's tercets as loose and irregular rather than repetitive.

Leithauser classifies the various types of rhyme that Walcott applies throughout *Omeros* and illustrates them with examples. His list includes

> triple rhymes (gentility / humility) and visual rhymes (plough / enough) and pararhymes or rim rhymes (often coming in strings: nose / canoes / noise) and anagrammatic rhymes (organ / groan) and apocopated rhymes (river / deliverer) and macaronic rhymes (come / *homme*, glory / *mori*) and light rhymes (sea / money) and rime riche (piss / precipice, Raj / mirage) and hosts of intricate couplings - each bearing its own distinctive acoustical qualities – for which, so far as I know, no terms have been coined except that grab-bag designation 'off rhyme.'" (1991, 93)

However, Leithauser argues that rather than sounding like "Milton or Spenser," Walcott's employment of rhymes is more reminiscent of "W.S. Gilbert or Ogden Nash." This is the case when the poet "rhymes 'panther' with 'and her' or 'altar' with 'halt. Her' or 'Florida' with 'worried her' or 'hunter' with 'front of her'" (1991, 93).

Theobaldy's review of Klotz's translation reads very much like Leithauser's description:

> Manchmal reimen sich diese Verse, manchmal nicht, aber auf die Länge hin kommen alle möglichen Reimformen vor, kreuz- und paarweise, Halb- und Binnen- und Stabreime, Anfangs- und Trennreime und Assonanzen: Alles derart wuchernd, daß viele im Lesefluß unbemerkt untergehen, aber alle dem passionierten Sammler auf wenigen Seiten die Botanisiertrommel füllen würden. ("Nirgends" 1995)

Indeed, considering the first few pages of the German translation alone suffice to prove Theoblady's claim. In most cases, the first and last lines of a tercet are linked by various prosodic means including such rhymes as "Korolla / Dollar" (9), "überließ er / La Sorcière" (10), or "willens / Achilles" (13). Nevertheless, Tobias Heyl refers readers who want to appreciate the full scale of Walcott's versatile use of rhyme to the source text arguing: "Die deutsche Übersetzung, bis auf wenige Einzelfälle wohl gelungen, hätte sie beim besten Willen nicht nachahmen können." (1996) While in Heyl's view Klotz's translation of rhyme is mostly convincing, Sartorius finds there are more occasions when the translator's ambition to recreate Walcott's rhymes has a negative effect on the style of

Omeros: "Der Wille, Walcotts Reim so oft wie möglich zu bewahren, führt mintunter zu gelungenen Freiheiten, akzentuiert aber meist noch den getragenen Stil." (1995).

The closing canto of chapter IX illustrates Sartorius's point. In this canto, Walcott describes how the gods are having a fête causing a severe storm: The Cyclone's "wife, Ma Rain, // hurls buckets from the balcony of her upstairs house. / She shakes the sodden mops of the palms and once again / changes her furniture" (52). Klotz translates: "Sein Regenweib gießt Kübel vom Balkon hernieder. / Sie schüttelt den Naßmop der Palmen und rückt wieder / einmal die Möbel" (58). In another passage, Omeros and the lyrical I join in a song of praise on the island of St. Lucia: "'*In the mist of the sea there is a horned island / with deep green harbours where the Greek ships anchor*' / and the waves were swaying to the stroke of his hand" (286). In order to recreate the rhyme "island/hand," Klotz uses the elavated term "Eiland" for island rhyming with "Hand": "'*Aus dem Dunste des Meeres erhebt sich ein gehörntes Eiland / mit tiefen grünen Häfen, wo griechische Schiffe ankern*', / und die Wogen folgten der Bewegung seiner einen Hand" (302).

Leithauser points out that although there are occasions when Walcott "bend[s] his phrasing or sentence structure" in order to accommodate rhyme, "even in such instances the sheer oddity of his music often diverts the reader from any impression of strained or forced rhyming." (1991, 94) A tendency to "bend" the structure of the target language for this purpose is detectable in Klotz's translation, as well. In numerous cases he resolves to use inversion to create a perfect rhyme as in "aufgereiht zur Metzelei, / standen die Dorfbewohner, wie Wogenschlag ihr Schrei" (22). The same holds for prosodic means such as assonance or consonance. When Achille who is working at Plunkett's farm tries to escape a sudden downpour, Klotz writes: "Reggenspeere […] nagelten ihn gegen die Tür, doch / er rammte sie auf mit den Schultern und hörte das / Getöse von tausend Nägeln, geschüttet aufs Dach." (56) This practice reinforces the elevated style of his translation.

Occasionally, Klotz changes an image in favour of rhyme. When Walcott rhymes "whales" with "snails" (142), for instance, Klotz substitutes snails with eels thus reproducing the rhyme in German – "Wale – Aale" and when Walcott describes how "Ma Kilman saw Philoctete hobbling up the street" (18), Klotz has him sweating up the street thus omitting the reference to his wound as he writes: "Ma Kilman sah Philoktetes die Straße hinaufschwitzen" (23). At other times, Klotz adds new aspects even when there is no rhyme in the source text. When Helen leaves Ma Kilman's shop, Walcott writes: "The dividing air / closed in her wake, and the shop went into shadow, / […] as if she were the sun." (318) In the translation, Helen not only appears to be the sun, but fragrance, as well: "Die zerteilte Luft / schloß sich hinter ihr, der Laden versank im Schatten, / […] als wäre sie selber Sonne und Duft" (334). By adding this reference to the olfactory sense to the scene, Klotz implies that Helen not only looks awe-inspiring, but that her scent is intoxicating, as well.

Often, however, Klotz even recreates rhyme by similar means. In the first canto of chapter LIX, Walcott uses syllabification to create a triple rhyme: "The morning's gift / was enough, but holier than that was the crab's lift- / ed pincer with its pen like the sea-dipping swift." (295) Klotz uses syllabification to end each line with the vowel /e/: "Das Ge- / schenk des Morgens; aber noch heiliger war mir die erhobene / Krabbenschere mit

der Feder wie die hinabtauchende Schwalbe." (311) Similarly, when Walcott uses consonance and assonance in "nice–noise–eyes" (284), Klotz translates "schön–Schlachtgetöse–gewöhnt" (300).

Even more difficult is a passage in which Walcott describes the pivot of each odyssey in the following terms: "when a wave rhymes with one's grave / a canoe with a coffin" (159). By switching the positions of both wave and grave, as well as canoe and coffin, Klotz manages to create an end rhyme: "wenn sich reimt: Grab mit Woge / und Sarg mit Piroge" (167). In addition, there is the near rhyme "Grab – Sarg." Since the words canoe and coffin do not actually rhyme, what the lines imply is that it is the objects themselves that "rhyme" in that the shape and size of a canoe and a coffin are much alike. Therefore, Walcott does not simply write "when wave rhymes with grave," but "a wave" with "one's grave."

Sometimes it is necessary for translators to free themselves from too much respect for a poem's diction in order to preserve its rhythm. One example in *Omeros* where this would have been absolutely necessary is what Walcott has described as "kind of a lonely, separate thing" (Sampietro 1992/93): In chapter XXXII, the poet inserts seventeen rhymed couplets in iambic tetrameter. King describes it as "a pivotal lyric section in which the narrator summarizes his experience" (2004, 521). In the entire canto, the word "home" is mentioned only once making for the last rhyme, while the word "house" is repeated eighteen times. In eleven cases, it serves as the opening word of a couplet. In this way, Hamner argues, the fact is stressed that the poet persona finds himself "lost with only an empty enclosure to call home," a place that "has lost the essence of home." (1997, 90) Although Walcott varies the rhyme scheme throughout *Omeros*, the appearance of the couplets on the printed page alone draws special attention. Hamner describes the sequence as "almost incantatory in its repetitive simplicity" (ibid) its rhythm as basic as the subject, underscoring the entire poem's central theme. Furthermore, he argues that

> the implications of this sequence of couplets is a miniature of the overlapping actions affecting the narrator and all the protagonists. In order to convert a house, a colony, or a nation into a home, the individual must confront inner as well as external sources of alienation. (ibid, 90f.)

Whereas the source text has a sombre undertone reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe who is even explicitly mentioned in the second couplet, it appears that the German translator strives to reproduce rhyme scheme, metre, rhythm, and tone all at once while at the same time remaining faithful to Walcott's word choice. Of course, he is bound to fail with this approach. Rather than focusing on one or two of the various aspects, it seems like Klotz reproduces any one of these qualities whenever the opportunity arises. As a result, the translation does not amount to a coherent whole. There are some successful lines such as the opening couplet "Haus der Schatten, Haus der Klüfte / Haus der vielmalvielen Lüfte" (182). However, considering the canto in its entirety, a German reader may be under the impression that Walcott merely is not capable of producing rhymed couplets. For the poem continues awkwardly: "Haus der Erinnerungen, die wachsen / aus Allan Poes Nachtschat-

ten" (182) and includes unmotivated grammatical peculiarites such as "Haus, das ächzt, bin fünfzig-und-sieben / die Erde hölzern, der Himmel gipsern" (183).[146]

Klotz would have done better to follow his approach from the beginning of the translation: In the rather lyrical closing canto of chapter XI, Maud reflects upon how and why she originally came to St Lucia. The lyricism corresponds with the character's romanticized memories. The canto opens with the words "She thought:" and continues to convey the Maud's train of thought from a first-person perspective. Although it is structured in tercets, with few exceptions, the entire canto consists of cross rhymes. In this case, Klotz focuses on the rhythm as the predominant layer, only occasionally reproducing the rhyme scheme. The result is a section of equal lyrical and rhythmic qualities as the opening stanzas illustrate:

> Sie dachte: einst träumt ich von diesem Haus, umgeben
> Von Wald, mit Bäumen, die ich nur aus Büchern kannte,
> mit Blumen, die ich noch nie gesehen. Teil der Kasernen
>
> aber ohne Lärm, außer dem Zikadengewetz meiner Nähmaschine.
> Ich liebte das junge Teakgehölz mit saubern Stämmen wie
> Birken im leopardgesprenkelten Licht auf dem Weg, wenn eine
>
> Schwalbe mit schnellen Zickzackstichen zusammenheftete den
> Seidenen Himmel oder sich das Gefieder putzte am Vogelbad. (72)

Despite the lyricism, the language is colloquial both in the source and target text. This example illustrates that sacrificing one aspect may result in an improvement of the overall effect.

Archaisms

Throughout his translation, Klotz applies a number of stylistic features that make the target text sound more lyrical and archaic than the source text. Most widespread among them are inversions and prenominal genitives. The effect is a dated and elevated style that enhances the Homeric reminiscence while continuing the lineage begun by Martens: In *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* he consistently applies both features, as well. German readers who are familiar with this translation may recognize these features and thus consider them characteristic of Walcott's poetry when they have no correspondence in the source text in either case.

Often, Klotz employs inversion for the purpose of creating a rhyme; however, this is not the sole reason. Sometimes, rhythmic qualities appear to make him resort to this means as in the tree-felling scene: "Jetzt verstummte die Säge, // erhitzt und vibrierend noch" (11). In most cases, however, he seems to employ inversion when the polysyllabic

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[146] In Walcott's version, the corresponding lines read "House of umbrage, house of fear, / house of multiplying air // House of memories that grow / like shadows out of Allan Poe" and "House that creaks, age fifty-seven, / wooden earth and plaster heaven" (173), respectively.

target language causes difficulties.[147] The result are lines like "metallisch hell / widerhallten die verzinkten Dachtraufen" (55), "indem er abhakte mit geflügeltem v jeden Fehler" (98), or "Nicht vergessen konnten die gebundenen Handgelenke // den Holzschnitzer" (158). The same holds for his consistent use of prenominal genitives as in "des Seeigels Korolla" (9, 261), "des Diskjockeys Stimme" (119), or "der Insel kleine Flagge" (240), to name only a few.

A similar case in point is the frequent omission of auxiliary verbs throughout the translation. At first it seems that Klotz applies this technique solely in Homeric passages, possibly for the purpose of emphasizing allusions to the epic genre. However, a closer look reveals that this practice occurs in a range of different contexts. Therefore, it seems to be another way of answering to essential differences between the two languages, but also to enhance the rhythmic qualities of *Omeros*. This becomes apparent when considering two very different passages. In the tree felling scene that echoes Odysseus leaving Circe's isle, Klotz writes: "Die Stämme spürten denselben // Durst nach der See, der ihre umrankten Leiber genährt." (13) In the first canto of chapter XXIX in which Helen reminisces about how she used to take down the laundry when living with Achillle, he writes: "wo sie das gelbe Kleid von der Leine genommen." (161) What both examples share is a strong rhythmic quality. More often, however, the sole purpose of omitting auxiliary verbs seems to be to limit the length of the line.

The dated style is further enhanced by the occasional employment of the plural personal pronouns "Ihr," "Euer," and "Euch" in direct speech when addressing an individual. This is the case in in the above mentioned canto as well as in the scene in which the persona talks to his guide, Omeros, who came out of the sea: "Ich sah Euch in London […] auf den / Stufen von St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Euer Manuskript mit / Eselsohren an die Brust gepreßt." (282). In both cases, the pronouns occur in direct speech passages in which Odysseus, i.e. a Homeric character, or Homer himself feature as characters within Walcott's poem.

Again, Klotz does not limit this application to such cases in which they may function as a Homeric marker of sorts. In another instance, the use of plural pronouns decreases the authenticity of a speaker: When Achille recovers from his sunstroke, the mate says to him: "'I know you ain't like to talk, […] / […] but this morning I could use a hand. // Where your mind was whole night?'" (156f.) Klotz uses ellipses to account for the mate's colloquial, non-standard language usage; at the same time, he has him use plural pronouns: "'Ich weiß, Ihr mögt nicht reden […] / […] aber heutmorgen könnt ich n'Tip gebrauchen. // Wo war'n Eure Gedanken die ganze Nacht?'" (164)[148]

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[147] According to Balmes, this is a common practice among German translators who, when facing the difficulties caused by polysyllabic German often find that the only solution is the use of inversion. Balmes remembers that this was the case with Klotz, too.

[148] Similarly, when Seven Seas explains the etymology of the name "pomme-Arac" to Achille he does so in colloquial, creolized English: "'*Aruac* mean the race // that burning there like the leaves and *pomme* is the word in patois for 'apple.' This used to be their place." (163) In Klotz's translation, the character's elevated language is not convincing: "'Die Arawaks sind jene Rasse, die dort im Laub verbrennt, / *pomme* ist in unserem Patois Apfel. Dies war einst ihr Ort.'" (171)

At times, therefore, Klotz's tendency to use archaisms results in a tone that seems inappropriate for the speaker or the situation. In the worst case, it opposes Walcott's assumption "that his dark-skinned islanders cultivate a spoken language of sufficient beauty, punch, and dexterity to render it suitable for the elevated dignities of an epic poem." (Leithauser 1991, 91) Leithauser argues that "Walcott […] presents his fishermen, taxi-drivers, domestics, and barkeeps as natural poets" (ibid, 92). Sartorius uses similar terms when he argues: "Dass die Griechen Reiche bauten und die Abkömmlinge der Sklaven 'nur' Bauern in den Schachzügen der Konzerne sind, ist ihm [Walcott] nicht wirklich von Belang. Seine Barkeeper und 'Ebenholzkapitäne' sprechen wie Poeten." (1995) However, in contrast to Sartorius, Leithauser refers to the rhythm and rhyme scheme of the lines that convey a character's speech, not to language or style. At any rate, Sartorius finds this feature of Walcott's poetry artificial and tiring in the source and target text alike.[149]

Néo-logie

Like Martens and Schrott before him, Klotz has to develop strategies to translate cases of *néo-logie* in *Omeros*. Like his predecessors, he does not account for the omission of the obligatory "fire" after the verb "catch" when translating Walcott's lines "Night was fanning its coalpot / from one catching star." (325) The first star in the night sky is the initial spark that ignites a myriad of other stars until the black night sky becomes a sparkling coalpot. Rather than using the indefinite article "a," Walcott refers to the number thus emphasizing the fact that it is a single star that ignites the sky.

Klotz shifts the emphasis to the beginning of the phrase by opening with a spondee and a near rhyme: "Die Nacht fachte ihr / Kohlenbecken an, der Funke eines Sterns." (340) Although there is a stress on the first syllable of "eines," this can easily go unnoticed as one is more likely to read the word as an indefinite article. Although this could be resolved by adding "eines *einzigen* Sterns," it would have meant to expand the line by three syllables. Moreover, Klotz omits the preposition thus separating the image of the star's spark from the image as a whole. To avoid this, he could have translated "*ent*fachte […] *am* Funken eines Sterns" without even affecting the rhythmic quality of the lines in a negative way. However, he is careful to recreate at least one of Walcott's alliterations "fanning – from" and "coalpot – catching" in "fachte – Funke." Even translating the word "coalpot" is difficult as there is no counterpart in a German context. Accordingly, Klotz turns the "portable field cooker" (Allsopp 2003, 157) that is still used in the Caribbean today into a coal basin.

In addition, Walcott's use of verbal nouns that Schrott translates in a variety of ways – keeping the noun, using similes or idiomatic phrases – creates difficulties for translators of *Omeros*, too. When the persona discovers Achille among the people attending Maud's funeral, he begins to reflect upon the character traits of the St Lucian fisherman: "Where was it from, / this charity of soul, more piercing than Helen's // beauty?

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[149] Breiner points to the fact that in the 1962 poem "Parang," Walcott intentionally uses diction that echoes "the late poetry of Yeats" and "will not allow us to assume that these literary elements are somehow beyond the intellectual scope of his speaker." (2005, 35) However, in *Omeros* Walcott gives each character a unique voice that distinctly roots them within a specific social group.

runnelling [sic] his face like the road to the farm?" (265) What Stephens writes about Walcott's neologism "rivering" in *Another Life*, pertains to this passage, too. She explains: "[U]n 'après-midi-rivière', c'est-à-dire un après-midi qui s'étire comme les meandres d'une rivière ou d'un fleuve. Le suffixe *-ing*, […] rappelle le mouvement dynamique de l'eau […]." (2012, 178)

Like Schrott, Klotz develops different strategies to solve the problems posed by this practice. In this case, he resolves to combine a participle with a simile and successfully conveys the image: "Woher diese Großherzigkeit, / bestechender noch als Helenas Schönheit, sein Gesicht // durchfurchend wie Rinnen die Landstraße zur Farm?" (279) In another passage, the ghost of the poet's father recalls a scene at the barber's: "'toga'd in a pinned sheet, // the curled hairs fell like commas'" (71). In this case, Klotz interprets the image and renders it accordingly, emphasizing one quality of a toga, namely its colour: "'Da fielen die Haarspitzen // aufs weiße Tuch wie Kommas.'"(77) There is nothing unusual about the language of this sentence. In the second canto of chapter XVI, Walcott describes "[a]n evening with the Plunketts" (88). Husband and wife are both absorbed in their pastime, Dennis "marking cannons" (88), Maud embroidering birds. Walcott contrasts the silence in the house with the noises outside describing the latter in war-like terms: "Frogs machine-gunned the wind. // Dun surf cannonaded." (89) While the short SVO-sentences resemble the staccato pattern of the frogs' croaking and the surf's heaving and crashing, Klotz opts for a nominal style, instead, translating: "Franzmänner, Maschinengewehrfeuer // im Wind. Trübe Brandung, Kanonendonner." (96) It is striking that he does not translate "frogs" literally, but rather as a derogative term for French people. Although this fits the context of the preceding canto in which Denis Plunkett works on his genealogical tree, a literal reading is more plausible in this case. The shift is quite significant: In Klotz's interpretation, the major drifts off into the history of the island rather than taking note of his natural environment and the present moment.

An even greater challenge poses Walcott's use of proper nouns as adjectives or verbs. In a very humorous scene, the third canto of chapter XXIII relates the encounter of Helen and Maud. As she walks up the garden path to ask Maud to lend her money, Helen keeps tearing out allamandas. The Irish woman who watches her exclaims: "She'll wreck my blooming garden if I don't come down" (123). The adjective "blooming" can be interpreted in three different ways: as a description of the garden in flower, as a euphemism for the expletive "bloody" which Maud uses in the preceding stanza when she exclaims "My bloody allamandas!," or as an intertextual reference to the protagonist of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Leopold Bloom. Klotz does not account for the intertextual allusion as he translates Maud's first expletive as "Zum Teufel, meine Allamandas!" (130) and the second curse with "Sie reißt / mir den ganzen Garten aus" (130).

Klotz opts for a different approach in his translation of the third canto of Chapter XXXI which is openly dedicated to *Ulysses*, "our age's Omeros" (200) while at the same time having Maud Plunkett at its centre. It opens with the lines: "I leant on the mossed embankment just as if he / bloomed there every dusk" (200). Instead of translating this more obvious allusion to Joyce, Klotz adapts the verb to German grammar and puts it in italics: "Ich lehnte an moosiger Böschung, als *bloomte* er hier / bei jeder Dämmerung"

(212). As Malroux's translation of *Another Life* illustrates, there are other ways to render the verbal use of a proper name. In his autobiographical poem, Walcott writes: "Next day, her golden face seemed shrunken, / then, when he ulysseed, she bloomed again" (qtd. in Raguet 2010, 187). Malroux translates: "Le lendemain, son visage doré semblait flétri, / puis, son Ulysse reparti, elle refleurissait" (ibid). Raguet argues that although the verb *ulysseed* is not capitalized, its emblematic and metaphorical qualities are immediately noticeable in English, at least visually. She writes about the French translation:

> La traduction fait ressurgir la valeur antrhoponymique du nom en lui restituant sa majuscule et en ne lui laissant comme accessoire grammatical que l'adjectif possessif *son*, puis elle procède à une explicitation avec l'ajout d'un adjectif épithète, *reparti*, qui atrribue au héros homérique l'une de ses caractéristiques, celui de l'homme errant. Bien sûr, si cette idée est présente dans l'original où l'épaisseur sémantique nous situe dans une tension vertical entre l'idéal et le perceptuel, l'explicitation française abolit toute tension pour ne favoriser que les sensations dans leur rapport au factuel. Dans cet exemple, l'élément culturel hellénique a été privilégié, car il appartient au monde du poète qui atteindra un aboutissement avec la publication d'*Omeros* en 1990. (ibid)

It is interesting to note that there are two cases of the verbal use of nouns in Klotz's novella "Der Auswanderer" dated 1982 and published in the 1991 collection *Fremde Liebe, enges Land*. In the first instance, he writes about the protagonist: "Er wollte wieder *bauern*." (1991, 57; m.e.) Only a few pages further on, a dog rubs up against him while he is waiting for a cable car. Klotz writes: "Er stand auf der Seilbahnstation, […] während ihm der untersetzte, hellbraune Hofhund, die Maite, um die Beine *schwanzte*." (1991, 65; m.e.) Nevertheless, he does not always account for such instances in *Omeros*.

Semantic fields

There are various passages in *Omeros* in which a specific semantic field is applied as a rhetoric strategy. Describing the encounter between the character Omeros and a churchwarden, Walcott applies a semantic field to enhance the characterizations of both. The scene takes place in London where Omeros tries to have his "brown paper manuscript" (193) published. Tired, he wants to rest on the steps of St.-Martin-in-the Fields, but the churchwarden chases him off. In this passage, Omeros is described with a number of nautical terms: "the fallen sails of his trousers / were upheld by a rope" as he "flapped" through the streets "in the barges of different shoes." The warden in turn is explicitly referred to as a sparrow. Accordingly, Walcott describes how he "bobbed down the steps," "screeched," and finally "chirruped […] back to his sanctuary." Although the ratio of nautical terms in Walcott and Klotz is fourteen to nine, respectively, and that of words pertaining to a bird is only ten to four, the image is conveyed all the same. It is not always necessary, therefore, to meticulously translate every word as literally as possible in order to convey the essence.

In another central passage of *Omeros*, Ma Kilman goes on her quest for the healing plant and sees guardians in "the logwood thorns of her Lord, // or that golden host named for her mother, Mary" (242). The word "host" can refer to animals, plants, or to the bread eaten during service in the Christian church. Much earlier, the reader learns through

Plunkett's reflections that the island peasantry believes Ma Kilman to be "a *gardeuse*, sibyl, obeah-woman" (58). Although she goes to church and even takes "Holy Communion / with Maud, sometimes" Plunkett notes that "there was an old African / doubt that paused before taking the wafer's white leaf." (58) Immediately preceding her quest during which she practices obeah, Ma Kilman attends mass. Therefore, the above quote strongly implies that she mixes both belief systems arriving at a more personal faith. Accordingly, Christian terminology is inseparably connected with the natural surroundings.

Klotz omits the reference to the trees and conveys only the Christian aspect when he translates: "ihr Herr mit der Dornenkrone" (255) and continues "oder jene goldnen Käferherden, / benannt nach ihrer Mutter, Maria" (255). Translating "host" as "Käferherden" Klotz links the scene to the beginning of the chapter two pages earlier where a certain "race of beetles" (240) is mentioned. However, over the course of these two pages the imagery has evolved from beetles to plants. Therefore it is most likely that the "golden host" refers to the bright orange blossoms of the flower *Calendula officinalis* commonly known as Marigold.

Another passage hints at this interpretation: Only a few pages earlier, Ma Kilman begins "her own litany / of berries, Hail Mary marigolds" (236) during mass. Klotz translates: "Gegrüßt seist du, Mariengüldenkraut" (250). In this case, he keeps the reference to the flower, but omits the catholic prayer known as *Ave Maria* in German. In this light it is even more surprising that Klotz does not take up the motif in the later scene. In this passage, too, Walcott mingles Christian symbolism with nature when he describes "the sacred heart of Jesus / pierced like the anthurium" and a few lines later refers to "the hole in the daisy's palm" and "the hole in the fisherman's shin [that] was / pierced by a hook" (236). By repeating the words "pierced" and "hole" and mentioning Jesus and "the daisy's palm" Walcott conjures up the crucifixion of Christ and parallels his suffering with that of Philoctete. In Klotz's translation, the sacred heart of Jesus and the anthurium are not connected, but rather separate parts of an enumeration of plants as he writes: "geheiligtes Herz Jesu, durch- / bohrtes Anthurium" (250). Favouring variation over repetition impacts the connection between Jesus and Philoctete when he translates "pierced" as "gerissen" (250) in the second case. Instead of translating "holes" literally, Klotz chooses the more general term "Wunde" (250). Omitting the reference to a palm further weakens the semantic field.

As the wound plays a central role in *Omeros*, Klotz's translation certainly fits the overall theme. Not only Philoctete suffers from affliction, but every character has to deal with some kind of wound, be it physical, psychological or metaphorical. In a meta-poetic passage, the speaker of the poem explicitly declares: "This wound I have stitched into Plunkett's character. / He has to be wounded, affliction is one theme / of this work, this fiction" (28). Breslin even goes as far as arguing that Walcott's "obsessive proliferation of Homeric comparisons might be seen as a lingering wound of colonized consciousness, motivated by an insecure longing to claim the founding authority of the European canon." (2001, 266).

It is not surprising then, that the first reference to the wound occurs in the fifth stanza in Philoctete's account of the cutting of trees to make canoes: "I lift up the axe and

pray for strength in my hands / to wound the first cedar" (3). Klotz chooses the verb "schlagen" (9) instead of "verwunden." Although the term is more obviously related to the act of felling trees, it also means "to hit sb/sth." The reader of the translation is confronted with the word "wound" for the first time near the close of the first canto in the eighteenth stanza. Whereas Walcott repeats the term two lines later Klotz chooses the synonym "Schrammen" (11) instead. As Ramazani argues,

> the poem insists on the analogy between [Philoctete's] representative wound and what it repeatedly calls the 'wound' suffered by trees. Thus it makes of him the poem's spirit of life, of nature, and of the island, and his wounded body the synecdoche for all the wounds suffered by the island's natives, slaves, and natural beings, possibly even its epic poet. (2003, 185)

These implications are weakened if not lost altogether in the translation.

Throughout the canto, it is striking how often Walcott uses words pertaining not only to the semantic field of wounding, but also to that of the battle. Paralleling the felling of trees with the death of warriors on the battle field is a strategy that Homer applies in the *Iliad*, as well (Fumagalli 2001, 221).[150] Although Homer's descriptions of the slaying of warriors in battle are often quite gruesome, Klotz employs terms that are less graphic than those Walcott uses: "the axe of sunlight" (3) does not hit the cedar, but falls on it – "sobald die Axt der Sonne auf die / Zedern fiel" (9); the fishermen do not become "murderers" (3), but murderers of trees – "der uns zu Baummördern macht" (9); the egret does not "stab and stab the mud" but pokes it – "stochernd und stochernd im Schlamm" (10); and the equation of trees as gods is weakened, for "where the old gods stood before" (5) they merely "were" in the German translation – "Wo viele Götter vorher waren" (10).

Similarly, in the third canto of chapter LVIII that strongly echoes Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the poet persona follows his guide "through the veils of stinking sulphur" to a pit in which the poets are. Fumagalli compares Walcott's "pit of the poets" with "the area between Malebolge (Circle VIII) and the iced lake of Cocytus (Circle IX)" (2001, 211) which feature in *Inferno* XXXI. This canto is dedicated to the misuse of language. Fumagalli argues:

> The bad use of language, especially of figurative language, is condemned in Omeros as well. The poets in the Pit 'stew in shit' like the Flatterers in the Inferno (Canto XVIII. 100-36) condemned 'to weep at their own pages' written with excessive pride (or Ulyssean hubris) and with a blind eye for 'nature and men' (Ulyssean abstraction). (ibid, 212)

Whereas Walcott distinctly speaks of a "pit" to which the poets are "condemned" and the "shit they stewed in" (293), Klotz translates this passage in more moderate terms replacing the word "shit" with "Brühe" (309). Thus, in the German translation the poets merely stew

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[150] Lorna Hardwick draws a connection to *The Iliad* XVI.482-485: "He fell, as when an oak goes down or a white poplar / or like a towering pine tree which in the mountains the carpenters / have hewn down with their whetted axes to make a ship-timber. / So he lay there felled." *The Iliad of Homer*, tr. R. Lattimore, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1951. (qtd. in Hardwick 1997, 329)

in brackish water. In Karl Vossler's German translation of Dante's *Inferno*, the corresponding passage reads:

> Die Wände waren teigig überkrustet
>
> von einem schimmeligen Niederschlag
>
> des dicken Dunstes, ein Schreck für Aug und Nase.
>
> Der Grund so finster, daß das Auge nichts
>
> erkennt, es sei denn von dem höchsten Punkt
>
> des Brückenbogens senkrecht überm Pfuhl.
>
> Wir kamen hin. Von dort aus sah ich Menschen,
>
> im Graben unten eingetaucht in Kot,
>
> der wie ein Abfluß von Kloaken war. (2001, 91)

Despite Walcott's use of vulgarism and despite the fact that even Vossler explicitly speaks of "faeces" or "excrement," Klotz chooses a euphemism instead.

Euphemism

A tendency for euphemisms is noticeable in the entire translation. Fred d'Aguiar notes that "[c]haracters swear like troopers in *Omeros* and their bodies, their composed bodies, appear on the verge of spilling into pornographic revelation, stripping away decorum (helped by rum) for the common and sexually explicit" (2005, 222). Klotz often uses less explicit language than Walcott to convey violent or sexually charged scenes, vulgarisms, slang expressions, and expletives: When Walcott speaks of a women's asses (172, 312), Klotz translates "Hintern" (181, 312).[151] He translates "balls" (37, 195) as "Hodensäcke" (43) and "Hoden" (207), "tits" (259) as "Brüste" (273), and "piss" (263) as "Urin" (277).

At times even certain traits of a character are altered through this practice as the following example illustrates. After Maud's death her husband recalls how she tried to seduce him when they first met: "she steered my hand through the froth of her underwear, / sobbing, but with a firmness I didn't expect // from such a small wrist, but I couldn't." (305) It remains ambiguous whether the major could not sleep with her for moral or physical reasons. Klotz unambiguously implies the first interpretation when he translates: "doch ich hielt mich zurück." (321) The shift in the depiction of Maud is even more grave: She is less aggressive and more sensual in Klotz's translation in which she does not sob, but moan: "sie führte meine Hand durch die Rüschen ihrer Wäsche,[152] / seufzend und mit einer Bestimmtheit, die mich erschreckte // bei einer solch kleinen Hand" (321) When she fails to seduce the major, Maud angrily "bend[s] her white neck, stabbing her bun with a pin." (305) In Klotz's translation, she appears sad, calm, and composed rather than angry: "Sie senkte den Kopf und steckte / sich eine Nadel ins Haar." (321)

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[151] In Walcott's words, the New World in which the slaves find themselves after the Middle Passage consists of "stone barracoons, brown earth, bare as their asses." (151) Klotz translates: "Steinhütten auf brauner Erde, auf der sie nackt saßen." (159)

[152] Using "steer" and "froth" in this context, Walcott highlights the fact that it is Plunkett's subjective view of the event rather than an objective outsider's perspective. From retrospect, Plunkett thinks of the scene in terms of his nautical charts. Klotz does not draw this connection when he translates "führte" and "Wäsche", instead.

Puns and idiomatic expressions

Idiomatic expressions and wordplay often cause difficulties for translators, especially with a poet like Walcott who is "[n]ever one to overlook a pun." (Hamner 1997, 37) According to Naito, there are two options for translating puns: A translator could either engage in a creative process in order to find new wordplays within the target language, or render them literally at the risk of confusing or boring the reader (Naito 1993, 523). Often Klotz favours a literal translation as in the pun "Black maid or blackmail" (97) which he translates as "Schwarzes Dienstmädchen oder Erpresserin" (105). However, only a few pages further, Klotz uses the idiomatic expression "in guten wie in schlechten // Zeiten" (115) to render Walcott's pun on the wedding vow: "[l]ove Helen like a wife in good and bad weather" (108). It is important to note that in this passage Helen is juxtaposed with the island of St Lucia. The reference to the weather is central to the juxtaposition. A literal translation would not have caused any difficulties in German, either.

However, in various instances Klotz applies a number of creative techniques to successfully create equivalent wordplays in the target language: He translates "neglection-election" (107) as "Wahltag-Prahltag" (115) and when Plunkett puns "Seychelles. Seashells." (30; 56), Klotz substitutes seashells with starfish, translating "Seychellen. Seesterne." (36; 62) to recreate the pun that relies on the similarity of sound. His sensitivity toward prosodic means also becomes evident in a scene in which Helen tells another woman about her pregnancy. Walcott writes: "Helen said: 'Girl, I pregnant, / but I don't know for who.' 'For who,' she heard an echoing call, as // with *oo*'s for rings a dove moaned in the manchineel." (34). Klotz successfully recreates the sound pattern when he translates: "'Bin schwanger, aber weiß nicht von wo.' 'Von woo,' riefs // mit dem dumpfen Ton einer Taube auf dem Manzanillobaum." (40) In another passage, gods of African and European origin are having a *fête*. Neptune is drunk and the "music" of the elements drives him crazy: "I going in seine," he exclaims, "throwing up at this pun" (52f.). As Gordon Collier points out, this is not only one of Walcott's wordplays, but also an allusion to Book XII of the *Odyssey*, "where Charybdis sucks down the salt water and 'vomits' it up." The pun relies on the homophone "seine/sane." Klotz creates a neologism using "seerkrank" (58) for the English/Creole "in seine" by blending "sehr krank" (i.e. very sick) and "seekrank" (i.e. seasick). Instead of "throwing up at this pun," Klotz translates: "Dann kotzt er sich aus." (59) The German vulgarism refers to the act of throwing up, but also means "to vent." In this way, he substitutes Walcott's wordplay that cannot be translated literally in an adequate way.

One of Glaap's criteria of equivalence is that of "adequate idiomatic expressions in the target language." (1992, 138) Eco's example of the expression "pulling one's leg" well illustrates what this means: According to Eco, a literal translation of the idiom would imply that the author has created a new rhetorical figure. Of course this is not the case, for it is a common expression in the English language. The equivalent German expression would be "jemanden an der Nase herumführen." Therefore, replacing "leg" with "nose" would be the better choice or – in Eco's terms – a more faithful translation (cf. 2006, 17f.). And yet, as Reichert illustrates, this approach may cause problems. He argues that there are cases in which the vocabulary of an idiom also has a semantic function on a different level.

Translating an idiomatic expression correctly in Eco's and Glaap's sense could thus be as inadequate as translating it literally in order to remain faithful to the diction which is necessary for conveying that other semantic layer (Reichert 2003, 66.).

An example of such a case in point is Walcott's use of the idiomatic expression that something is Greek to someone. When Old St. Omere is at Ma Kilman's No Pain Café, Walcott writes: "his words were […] Greek to her." (18) An idiomatic translation into German would have to replace Greek with Spanish. However, Walcott not only implies that Ma Kilman does not understand what the blind man is saying, but since he also resembles Homer himself in various instances, his words may be quite literally Greek, too. In this case, Klotz is right to favour a literal translation: "Doch waren seine Worte / unklar, Griechisch in ihrem Ohr" (23).[153]

Simile vs. metaphor

Walcott's wealth of metaphors is as remarkable as the ease with which they appear to come to him. He has mastered the art of making his poetry "seem as fresh as the raindrops on a statue's brow" although in his own words it really is "perfection's sweat" (Walcott 1998, 69). Breslin attests Walcott a "way with metaphor" which undermines "simple matchings of literal and figurative meaning." (2005, 21) To illustrate his point he quotes from Chapter IX of *Omeros* in which Hector's former occupation as a fisherman is linked with his new occupation of transporting people in his van: "The wind changed gear like a transport with the throttle / of the racing sea" (49). Breslin points to the circular pattern of this metaphor in that "nature is like machinery, which in turn is like nature." (ibid) Walcott vividly illustrates Hector's bond with the sea for even though he turns his back on it, on some deeper level he remains with it just as the sea remains with him. Klotz translates: "Der Wind wechselt den Gang wie ein Kleinlaster, gedrosselt / von der rasenden See." (55) The German word for "racing" adds another nuance to this metaphor, because it can also mean "raging" which is very apt in this context, as well. If the sea is *raging* at Hector's turning away from it, this can be read as foreboding Hector's death in a car crash which, in turn, can be read as the sea's revenge for Hector's treachery. Unfortunately, in this and an earlier scene in which Achille follows Helen "to that part of the harbour's rim // […] where the transports were ranged / like chariots" (38), Klotz uses the word "Kleinlaster" for transport, thus obscuring the reference to Hector's van.

Throughout his translation of *Omeros*, Klotz tends to turn the greater part of Walcott's similes into metaphors and – less frequently – vice versa. When the fishermen prepare to go out to sea in the very beginning of the second chapter, Walcott writes: "They shipped the lances of oars, / placed them parallel in the grave of the gunwales / like man and wife." (9) In his translation, Klotz begins with a simile and ends with a metaphor as he writes: "Sie warfen die Ruder gleich Lanzen / ins Boot und legten sie, Mann und Frau, nebeneinander / ins Einbaumgrab." (15) Instead of imagining the oars as lances, the German reader pictures the fishermen throwing them like you would throw lances. Walcott's subtle mixing of registers in combining the binaries "man and woman" and

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[153] When the churchwarden chases Omeros off the steps in front of the church, the latter lets out "a curse as / Greek to the choleric cleric as one might imagine" (194). Again, Klotz opts for a literal translation: "da fluchte er, griechisch in den Ohren des Wüterichs" (206).

"husband and wife" has no equivalent in German. Moving "Mann und Frau" from the end position to the middle it becomes harder for the reader to visualize the image. This is much easier in the source text as Walcott relates the action before comparing it to the parallel position of "man and wife" in a grave. In the target text, it does not immediately become clear why the oars should be a couple. Therefore, one may wonder, for instance, whether they complement each other in a specific way as would be the case if each oar was only made to fit the gunwale on one side of the boat. The same dactylic opening of the sentence in Klotz's translation could have been achieved using a metaphor as well by translating "Sie warfen die Lanzen der Ruder ins Boot." Walcott draws on the image of the parallel oars again on the following page where he describes how the fishermen work to move their boats from the beach into the water "rattling the oars // that lay parallel amidships" (10). Klotz does not make this connection as he writes: "daß mittschiffs die Ruder ratterten" (16).

Leithauser admires Walcott for his "wonderful analogical talents, especially when he fixes his eye on the natural world." (1991, 94) The critic even goes as far as saying that Walcott "gives the reader roosters that really crow," "swifts that genuinely fly," and "jellyfish that truly float" (ibid). As an example for the latter he quotes from the second canto of LIX in which Walcott juxtaposes the submarine world with Greek architecture above which Achille dives, "over him the tasselled palanquins of Portuguese man-o'-wars / bobb[ing] like Asian potentates" (296). Walcott first equates the appearance of the jellyfish with palanquins decorated with tassels. The similarity of the way they move serves to connect both objects before linking them to Asian rulers who would be carried in such palanquins. The image is different in the German translation which reads: "wie Quasten von Sänften wiegen sich Röhrenquallen / gleich asiatischen Herrschern" (312) Klotz uses two similes to describe the jellyfish: On the one hand, they move like the tassels on palanquins, on the other hand, they move like Asian rulers move. In addition, Klotz does not refer to the man-o'-war's body as a whole, but only to its tentacles to render the image.

4.3.2 Translating the local

Flora and fauna

In her discussion of Malroux's translation of *Another Life* into French Raguet points out various features that strongly anchor the poem in the Caribbean. In this context, aspects of nature are of central importance. Raguet explains:

> La multiplicité des images de fusion avec la nature ancre ce poème aux resonances universelles dans un univers très localise où un nombre de lexemes comme *morne*, *ravines*, *allamandas*, ou même *lizard* dont l'équivalent local devrait être *anoli*, nous situe dans la Caraïbe, ceci sans parler des nombreuses allusions historiques et culturelles. (2010, 191)

The very lexemes that Raguet considers to be crucial for specifying the setting abound in *Omeros*, as well. Although her list could be extended almost infinitely, two groups deserve special notice: trees and birds. Both are mentioned from the very beginning of the poem, recur throughout, and take on special significance.

In the second stanza of the opening canto, Walcott refers to the trees by their French Creole names: *laurier-canelle* for cinnamon tree, *bois-campêche* for logwood, and *bois-flot* for West Indian Balsa. Breslin argues that in this way Walcott "remind[s] us of the French colonization of St. Lucia." (2001, 252) For readers of the source text, the use of French Creole names creates the impression of a foreign body especially since for native speakers of English it is not common to know a second language (Bassnett 2006, 86). On a visual level, the use of italics reinforces this impression. Klotz uses the German word "Zimtbaum" (9; 335) the first and last time Walcott mentions the *laurier-canelle*. In other cases he adopts the French term (12; 237) italicizing it as Walcott does. The advantage is twofold: first, it serves the same function of underlining the unique flora and language situation of the Caribbean; second, it saves the translator the questionable task of creating pseudo-equivalence by considering common trees in his own environment.

In the second canto, Walcott uses personification when he describes the logwood as "red-skinned" (6). In this way, he creates a link to the Aruacs[154] whose 'patois' "is linked to that of their creole successors" (Breslin 2001, 252). When Walcott uses common names of trees, Klotz translates them into German as in the case of logwood, which he renders as "[d]as rötliche Blauholz" (12). Klotz does not account for the use of personification as he merely describes the colour of the wood as reddish instead of "red-skinned" even though the combination of the colour red with the tree's common name meaning "blue wood" appears incongruous. Apparently, Klotz did not know that another common name for logwood in German is "Blutholz." As it contains the lexeme "blood" it would have been an excellent choice in this chapter of *Omeros* in which Walcott parallels the felling of the trees with slaughter.

Unfortunately, Klotz does not account for the ambiguity of the homonym "elders," either. In the same canto, Walcott writes:

> The bearded elders endured the decimation
> of their tribe without uttering a syllable
> of that language they had uttered as one nation,
>
> the speech taught their saplings (6).

It remains deliberately ambiguous whether this is a personification of the elder tree on which lichens are growing – such as the common "old man's beard" – or whether the reference pertains to an actual tribe. Since there is no homonym available in the target language Klotz has to choose between one of both possible interpretations and decides in favour of the second reading translating "[d]ie bärtigen Alten" (12).

The central image that connects the various narrative threads is a local bird species, the swift, sometimes synonymously referred to as sea-swift. James attests Walcott "ornithological precision" as he has Maud Plunkett identify the sea-swift "as '*l'hirondelle des Antilles*' (88), a bird similar in form to the swallow but different in genus, and (appropriately) related to the Caribbean humming-bird and the goatsucker." (2002-2003,

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[154] Walcott's spelling for "Arawaks."

263) The swift makes an appearance in many passages that are crucial for the action. For translators of *Omeros* into European languages it creates various problems: On the one hand, this specific bird does not exist on the European continent. On the other hand, its name is a homonym in English. Klotz has no way to account for both implications – the species and the swiftness with which it moves. To further complicate matters, Walcott describes the names for plants or animals used by locals as being much more vivid than their scientific names:

> '[T]he metaphors that one heard from peasants describing a tree, a flower, an insect, anything, were not like the Latin names for those things. … Let's say you're looking up at a bird in the sky over St. Lucia and somebody says 'ciseau la mer.' Now 'ciseau la mer' means 'scissor of the sea,' and that's much more startling, much more exciting than saying 'martin' or 'tern.' The metaphor is almost calligraphic: when it is pronounced you can almost see it.' (Hirsch 1996, 58)

It becomes clear right from the beginning that Walcott did not choose this bird at random: Once the fishermen have felled the trees to make canoes, Achille looks up at the sky through the empty space created by the missing trees. As a swift passes, he makes "a swift sign of the cross" (6). Only a few stanzas later, Walcott again alludes to the bird as the priest makes "the swift's sign" after blessing the new pirogues. If one listened to this passage as opposed to reading it, the difference between "swift sign" and "swift's sign" would not be audible. Klotz translates the first passage as follows: "Rasch / schlug er ein Kreuz" (12). In this case, Klotz decides to convey the adjectival meaning of the word. What may have influenced his choice is that the repitition of /š/ makes up for Walcott's use of alliteration. In the second case, he translates: "Der Priester / besprenkelte und segnete sie mit dem Schwalbenzeichen" (13). He leaves it up to the reader to connect the priest's sign with the shape of the cross. Although in the English version it may be easier to link the swift's sign to the cross-like shape of the bird in flight, Klotz's translation does imply this reading, as well.

The Italian translator of *Omeros* describes his difficulties regarding the translation of the bird's name. He explains his choice against a scientifically correct translation thus:

> I preferred to translate the word with rondine (in English: swallow) for two reasons: 1) 'swift' and 'sea-swift' often occur very close to each other – sometimes even in the same verse – and therefore the Italian rondine/rondine di mare preserves this play of the two words on each other; 2) the word rondòne is heavy due to the presence of the two o vowels (particularly the accented second o), which means that to the Italian ear the bird appears too clumsy and awkward, a rondine hampered by the suffix òne. Ròndine, on the other hand, is a proparoxytone, with the accent of the antepenultimate syllable; the very sound of the word conjures up the swiftness defined by the swift. (Molesini 2006, 29f.)

Klotz is not consistent in his translation of the two birds: Occasionally he applies the scientifically correct translation "Mauersegler," sometimes the German word for swallow, i.e. "Schwalbe," at other times he uses the German word for tern, i.e. "Seeschwalbe." A

systematic employment of the three terms in specific contexts is not discernible. Apparently, his main objective is not to reconstruct the play of words as he could have achieved this simply by using "Schwalbe" and "Seeschwalbe" consistently. One possible explanation could be that he wants to convey the characteristic features of the birds – the former has a hawk-like appearance, the latter resembles a seagull. However, such ornithological details are likely to be overlooked by German readers, for what Molesini writes about Italian readers may well hold for a German audience, too: "even the reader who looks upon himself as 'cultured' and 'educated' will […] rarely be able to distinguish between an albacore and a sprat, or a frigate-bird and a cormorant." (2006, 27f.) Therefore, the term "Mauersegler"can be misleading as it may evokes the image of a slowly gliding bird.

John Ennis draws a rather different picture: Although he describes the wing beats of swifts "as 'classical' – ironically 'stiff', 'slow'" they do beat their wings "four to eight [times] per second." According to Ennis, "[b]eing the fastest of small birds, they are believed to reach 110 kilometres (70 miles) per hour regularly" (2002-2003, 204). Klotz largely bases his decision in favour of either one of the three bird names on the prosodic or rhythmic qualities of the corresponding passage. This becomes evident when he translates the line "to the blue where forked swifts navigated" (191) as "ins Blaue hinauf, wo Mauersegler flogen" (203): As Klotz cannot recreate the internal rhyme "to-blue" in the source text he seems to choose "Mauersegler" as it further emphasizes the assonance in "Blaue-hinauf." Similarly, when he translates the phrase "the swift's blown seed" (69) as "der gekeimte Same der Schwalbe" (75), he emphasizes the rhythmic qualities.

Language in nature

In *Omeros*, Walcott further expands the motif of language in nature to include individual letters. On the one hand, he repeatedly links the swift to the figure of the cross. Jean Antoine-Dunne argues that "the X of the cross [joins] two worlds, two cultures, and two hemispheres [which] burgeon forth in such repeated images as the crossed oars, the wings of the swift […], and the wings of Helen's dress[155]." (2004, 135) On the other hand, one encounters the figure of the cross in the very mention of the letter X. For instance, the reverse flight of a flock of swifts repeats "the X of an hourglass" (189) and "as vision grows weaker, // it glimpses the straightened X of the soaring swift" (320). Farrier even refers to this letter as the "fundamental chiastic trope in Omeros [sic]." (2003, 33)

A similar case in point is the letter O. In what Hamner refers to as the "connotative etymology" (1997, 42) of *Omeros* "O was the conch-shell's invocation" (14). Some readers may recall this line later when Achille hears "the conch-shell blowing and blowing its low note / like a ground dove's." (160) Although Klotz cannot account for Walcott's strikingly frequent use of the vowel /o/ in this short passage, he employs the vowel /u/ with equal frequency: "und stieß ins Muschelhorn, stieß den dumpfen Laut / aus, den Ruf der Erdtaube." (168) In the source and target text alike, the respective vowel is articulated in a number of different ways. Therefore, the effect of the repetition is primarily visual rather than aural. According to Molesini who speaks from his own experience of translating

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[155] It is interesting to note that the V of Helen's neck physically resembles the upper half of the letter X.

Omeros, "the most perishable and changeable part of the language - the part which is most full of life and yet most fragile - is the vocal fabric of the vowels." It is this part, he continues, "which is what is most easily lost in translation." (Molesini 2006, 27)

One characteristic feature of Walcott's earlier poetry which he continues to apply in *Omeros* is the casual equation of his natural surroundings with aspects of language as well as the process of writing: raindrops are asterisks (98), the horizon becomes a hyphen (192), and the whiteness of winter is a blank page (218). According to Walcott, "islands [are] not written about but writing themselves! The palms and the Muslim minarets are Antillean exclamations." (Walcott 1998, 78) In a meta-poetic chapter near the end of *Omeros* the persona resumes:

> My light was clear. It defined the fallen schism
> of a starfish, its asterisk printed on sand,
> its homage to Omeros my exorcism.
>
> I was an ant on the forehead of an atlas,
> the stroke of one spidery palm on a cloud's page,
> an asterisk only. (294)

As is usually the case when Walcott applies this kind of metaphor, when he equates a starfish with the graphic symbol of an asterisk he does not imply a hierarchical order. In other words, as Wes Davis puts it, "it isn't clear which is the tenor and which the vehicle." (2003, 250)

In Klotz's translation of these two stanzas, the links between writing and nature are not as varied:

> Mein Licht war klar. Es zeigte mir die Aussetzung
> eines gespaltenen Seesterns, ein Asteriskus im Sand,
> seine Hommage an Omeros war meine Heilung.
>
> Ich war auf der Stirn des Atlas eine Ameise,
> der Schlag einer Spinnenhand auf einer Wolkenseite,
> eine Fußnote nur. (310)

The starfish is an asterisk in the sand, but is not printed on it and instead of repeating the word in the last quoted line Klotz interprets it in terms of a footnote. On this small scale, Klotz does not reproduce the circular motion that is central to *Omeros*. In addition, translating "stroke" as "Schlag" does not convey the image of the palm fronds moving a pen or brush across the surface of the clouds and Klotz's translation of "one spidery palm" as "Spinnenhand" (310) disregards the more probable interpretation of palm as a tree rather than a hand. In Walcott's image, the tree top of the palm resembles a spider its legs reaching as far as the clouds. As Klotz omits the reference to the palm tree it becomes difficult to combine the individual phrases in the last quoted stanza and visualize the image in its entirety.

Unfortunately, Klotz repeatedly omits references to language in nature. When a boy "watched asterisks of rain puckering the sand" (321), Klotz writes: "er sieht Regen den Sand zerfurchen" (337); "pages of sea-grapes" (98) are translated as "Blätter der Seetrauben" (105), "bitter nouns of strange berries" (151) as "Bitterkeiten / fremder Beeren" (158), and "brooks with leisurely accents" (178) as "Bäche […] in gemächlichem Ton." (188). Upon his return to the island, the persona describes the view from the window of the taxi that is about to take him home: "I saw the coastal villages receding as / the highway's tongue translated bush into forest, / the wild savannah into moderate pastures" (227). Walcott extends the metaphor of the highway as tongue by describing the changing scenery in terms of translation. This is not the case in Klotz's translation which reads: "Ich sah sie rückwärtsfliehn, die Dörfer an der Küste, / da die Zunge des Highways das Dickicht in Wald und die / wilde Savanne in sanftes Weideland ummünzte." (240) Omitting references to book-of-nature motif not only results in a change of imagery, but even depletes a characteristic feature of Walcott's poetry.

Landscape and seascape

The sea is Walcott's primary metaphor. Brodsky writes that it is "always present in his poems: as their background or foreground, as their subject, or as their metre." (2003, 42) In an interview with J. P. White, Walcott describes how the sea is omnipresent on his home island: "[I]n St Lucia the presence of the sea is bigger than the land in your own sight. There is a horizon; it could be totally empty of boats. Then you'd have an immensity between the sky and the sea." (White 1996, 158f.) In an interview with Stuart Hall, Walcott explains that for him the Caribbean is not the islands, but the sea itself (qtd. in Fumagalli 2001, 223). Accordingly, near the end of *Omeros*, Walcott refers to the Caribbean Sea as "our wide open country" (320). Klotz translates "country" as "Heimat" in this context. Since it is one of Walcott's central motifs not only in *Omeros* but in his entire oeuvre, it is tempting to agree with this translation. Nevertheless, what seems more important in this particular case is the very idea of the sea itself being equated with a country that usually consists of a land mass.

Furthermore, the metaphor of the sea is the epitome of the idea of constant erasure and rewriting. Walcott finds "images of erasure" everywhere in the Caribbean landscape:

in the surf which continually wipes the sand clean, in the fact that those huge clouds change so quickly. There is a continual sense of motion in the Caribbean – caused by the sea and the feeling that one is almost traveling through water and not stationary. (Hirsch 1986, 214)

It is this sense of starting afresh every day that Walcott appreciates most about his St Lucian home. In the interview with Brown and Johnson, he calls it a place where "what you feel continually is a daily erasure of what was yesterday. Simply from the sunlight, simply from the sea." (Brown, Johnson 1996, 184) Near the end of *Omeros*, he describes the sea as "an epic where every line was erased / yet freshly written in sheets of exploding surf" (296).

From the very beginning of *Omeros*, the sea is subject to a number of transformations. Breslin claims that the reader encounters the sea for the first time in line

seven in which the wind lifting the ferns is said to sound "like the sea that feed us / fishermen all our life" (3). However, even the very first line implicitly contains the image of the ocean in the word "canoes." In line seven, the reader witnesses the first transformation of air into water and at the end of the chapter Walcott juxtaposes earth and ocean as "the ground shuddered under the feet in waves" (5) (cf. Breslin 2001, 267). In the last canto of chapter XLVI, the elements are said to have "changed places" and been "reversed" (234) by the island: "The grooved sea was Achille's garden, / the ridged plot of rattling plantains carried their sense // of the sea," at night the "rain / rose upwards from the sea, and the corrugated iron // of the sea glittered with nailheads," and the rustling plantains "sounded […] like the night-surf" (234f.). Breslin sums it up concisely: "Nowhere is the metamorphic language more apparent than in Walcott's recurring descriptions of the shape-shifting sea itself." (2005, 267)

Klotz finds excellent ways to convey all references to the sea in his translation of the above canto. In another instance, he adds an element of sound to a visual image: In the closing canto of chapter LXII, Walcott describes how the European period of the island's history is omnipresent. The opening reference to "[g]alleons of clouds" paves the way for the image of "[t]he Battle of the Saints mov[ing] through the surf of trees." (315) Since the galleons are in the sky, the tree tops become the surface of the sea on which the battle takes place. The reference is to one of the most important sea battles in the island's past which finds mention repeatedly in *Omeros*. In his translation, Klotz implies that the battle can be heard in the rustling of the leaves that is like the sound of the sea: "Im Rauschen der Bäume wogt die Schlacht bei den Saintes." (331)

Yet in a number of brief statements in which Walcott juxtaposes land and sea, the translator does not recreate this kind of imagery. For instance, Klotz translates "[t]he serrated sea // of pines" (214) as "[d]ie gezackten Tannen" (226), "oaks threshing like seas" (261) as "von sturmgepeitschten Eichen" (274), and when the Plunketts' "old Rover / sailed under the surf of threshing palms" (259) Klotz translates "glitt der alte Rover durch die rauschenden Palmen" (273). Even graver is the shift in a passage that connects Hector's new business of transporting passengers in his van: "Soon the Comet was known / through the sea of banana fields to the airport" (118). By virtue of juxtaposition, the land becomes an alternate sea for the former fisherman, the van his alternate canoe. It could also imply that Hector has not turned his back on the sea, entirely. As the translation is void of any reference to the sea, these interpretations are not open to a German reader as Klotz translates: "Bald kannte man / den Comet von den Bananenplantagen bis zum Flughafen" (125).

How centrally important the sea is for the poem becomes evident at the end as the very last lines read: "A full moon shone like a slice of raw onion. / When he left the beach the sea was still going on." (325) Greenwood argues that "the ending of *Omeros* launches the poem's afterlife: like the sea, the poem will continue to re-sound." (2005, 132) Molesini writes in some detail about his difficulties in translating these lines which in Italian read

'La luna piena brillava come una fetta di cipolla cruda. / Quando lasciò la spiaggia IL MARE era ancora IL MARE.' The most difficult thing here was to capture the beauty

of the final hemistich: *the sea was still going on*. The sea continued regardless, murmuring as if to itself. It was this sense of the waves [sic] constant unfurling that had to be translated. That S curled like a breaker, which then unfurls over the following repetition of O. In the Italian – *Il mare era ancora il mare*: there are four Rs combined with A-E-O; but above all, there is the sequence ARE-ERA-ORA-ARE and the repetition of *il mare*, which reproduces the sound image of one wave curling over the next, rendering the idea of the perpetual, monotonous movement which makes the sea the god of unbroken respiration – a gentle god that can also kill. (2006, 28f.)

In the German translation, the closing lines read: "Der Vollmond ging auf, eine rohe Zwiebelscheibe. / Als er vom Strand wegging, rauschte das Meer weiter." (341) As in many other instances, Klotz replaces the simile with a metaphor equating the moon with the slice of onion. Perhaps to make up for the missing monosyllabic word "like" and thus save the metre of the line Klotz has the moon rise instead of shine. The fact that both lines contain a caesura in the middle supports this hypothesis. Considering the importance of prosody for Walcott, this appears to be an adequate approach. One effect is that the image of the moon becomes kinetic rather than static like Walcott's. As a result of Klotz's omission of the temporal adverb in the poem's final line readers of the German translation cannot appreciate Greenwood's reading. She argues that

> by ending with a line whose sense resists the formal closure of the poem, Walcott reminds us, through his use of the past continuous tense and the temporal adverb *still*, that works of art persist in the absence of their authors, and that literature and the literary tradition continue, oblivious to mortal generations. (2005, 132)

Localization vs. foreignization

According to Molesini,

> the difficulty of accommodating the meaning of so many of the images was purely cultural rather than linguistic: one need only think of place-names, or of the names of the plants and fish which are not part of the Italian flora and fauna. (Molesini 2006, 27)

Equally difficult to transfer into another language and thus into another cultural context are references to specific historical events and cultural traditions that a translator may not be familiar with. Although one cannot always expect a translator to obtain extensive knowledge in these areas, its lack can cause major shifts and the loss of crucial implications.

Translating references to the Middle Passage in Walcott's works is one such case in point. Wilson points to what she considers a "serious inaccuracy" in Malroux's French translation of "The Schooner *Flight*." Section 5 of the poem is entitled "Shabine encounters the Middle Passage" which Malroux translates as "Chabin affronte le Passage du Milieu." Wilson argues:

> 'Middle Passage' (*La Traversée Atlantique*) is a term which in the collective memory of anglophone Caribbean people is charged with emotional associations: oppression, horror, extreme cruelty, degradation. 'Middle Passage' is not used in any context

except that of the Slave Trade. The historical context is obvious in the lines that follow in the poem. '*Passage du Milieu*' fails to evoke the connotations of Middle Passage […]. (2000, 22)

In the German translation of *Omeros*, there is a similar case: When Achille is diving for conch shells he discovers "corpses / that had perished in the crossing" (45). Later when he is about to suffer a sunstroke he remembers "the nameless bones of all his brothers // drowned in the crossing" (128). Although Klotz's translation "auf einer Überfahrt" (52; 135) is quite literal it does not convey the reference to the Middle Passage to the German reader. In another instance, Klotz completely omits the reference. Walcott describes how Achille is "studying a heaven whose cosmology had been erased / by the crossing" (114). Klotz merely translates "Achilles [studierte] den Himmel: nicht mehr dieselben / Gestirne." (121)

In another crucial passage of *Omeros*, the persona engages in a reflection upon the English Major Dennis Plunkett who by his national heritage is a member of the colonizing group. Plunkett decides that "Helen needed a history, […]. / Not his, but her story. Not theirs, but Helen's war." (30) In his translation, Klotz renders *their* wars as World Wars: "Helenas Krieg und nicht die Weltkriege." (36) In this case, the translation is more specific than the original, but at the same time more exclusive. England has fought in many wars besides the two World Wars. In the context of St Lucian history, it is important to know that the island changed hands between England and France thirteen times which got her the name "Helen of the West Indies." (cf. White 1996, 173f.) This fact is central for the understanding of the poem, as well. Klotz's translation of the passage implies that Plunkett aims at writing a history for Helen that has 'world status,' as it were. What this example illustrates is the complexity of the cultural aspects of a translation and the importance of retrieving a broad knowledge of the source culture in order to gain the tools to adequately work with the literary text.

It is not only the collective memory based on specific historical experiences which affects the kinds of associations that members of one cultural group may have as opposed to another. As Reichert points out correctly, it is also the literary tradition of a language community which opens up a unique collective memory and culture specific associations (cf. Reichert 2003, 10). Sometimes, these connotations and associations do not only differ, but get lost completely for the target language reader without certain background knowledge. In some occasions, this problem can only be resolved with the help of explanatory additions either within the text itself, or in footnotes that offer information which is indispensable for the understanding of a certain passage.

Translating uniquely Caribbean forms of literature such as calypso, a form of oral literary competition of African origin, can therefore be equally challenging.[156] The call-and-response pattern between singer and audience as well as a refrain with a certain kind of rhythm are characteristic features of calypso. In the Caribbean as in Africa it was originally performed by two singers improvising lines in French Creole. Its themes usually

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[156] In the following I will refer to Breitinger 1999.

referred to current issues from politics, public life, and town gossip. The importance of the subject is exaggerated, the moral of the content of the performance treated with irony. Walcott points to an important aspect of calypso in contrast to written poetry: "Whereas the poet writes to be read, speaking for and often to himself, the impulse of the calypsonian is 'not personal but collective'."[157] (qtd. in Hamner 2002-2003, 222)

In *Omeros*, there are various references to calypso: it is mentioned explicitly, recited by the blind guide in praise of St Lucia (286f.), and applied in the poem's structure. At the end of the second canto of chapter XXXVIII, Walcott alludes to the call-and-response pattern when he writes "one hand up in response / to a question raised in the House" (196). Klotz omits the word "response" as he translates: "eine Hand, hochgestreckt auf / eine Frage im Parlament" (207). The syntactical pattern of the questions and answers that follow are translated without much difficulty. What is a much greater challenge is the question how to make the African origin of this verbal communication form comprehensible to the German reader. Geneva Smitherman defines "call and response" as the "spontaneous verbal and non-verbal interaction between speaker and listener" in which the speaker's utterances are referred to as "calls", the listener's as "responses." (1977, 104) Since the pattern is dialogic, the presupposition is that there is one who gives and one who receives. However, receiving is not a passive act, but an interactive part of the process. The important difference between the African and Western concepts of communication, according to Smitherman, is that "Black Talk requires dialogue between 'A' and 'B' not 'A' lecturing 'B.' The idea is that constant exchange is necessary for real communication to take place." (1999, 403)

Farrier detects calypso in another passage. He writes: "Walcott casts Odysseus in the role of the slave trader, and his crew as Caribbeans who sing a calypso against both the trade in African slaves and the Trojan war." (2003, 30) The passage he refers to opens with an explicit reference to the Caribbean art form; it is anapaestic and relies very much on rhythm:

This is we Calypso,
Captain, who treat we like swine, you ain't seeing shore.
Let this sun burn you black and blister your lips so

it hurt to give orders, fuck you and your war (202f.)

According to King, the rhythmic thud of the bass is crucial for calypso as one "cannot improvise without a beat behind you." The rhythm of Klotz's translation is less regular:

Das is unser Calypso,
Kap'n, Ihr behandelt uns wie Schweine, nie kommt Ihr an
Land. Die Sonne soll Euch schwärzen und die Lipp'n so

sengen, daß Euch das Befehl'n vergeht. Hol der Teufel Eure
Kriege. (214)

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[157] Derek Walcott. "Kaiso, Genius of the Folk." Sunday Guardian 9 Feb. 1964. 13.

4.3.3 Intertextuality

The names of the protagonists alone invite an intertextual reading on the backdrop of the Greek classics, especially Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as well as Sophocles' *Philoctetes*. However, apart from the fact that *Omeros* includes numerous non-Greek references, as well, some are so subtle that it takes either an extremely well-read audience or much research to appreciate the full spectrum. There are various reasons for Walcott's extensive use of intertextual allusions. The most obvious is that they broaden the implications of his poetry for a well-read audience. However, Hamner's description of the poet's practice reveals another purpose. He poignantly writes:

> Walcott's literary enterprise operates in two directions. He appropriates the life witnessed by various cultural texts – Greek, Roman, Spanish or British. At the same time, he textualises the life out of which he has grown – in standard [sic] English, West Indian Standard English, Creole, and Caribbean mixed vernacular. (2002-2003, 231)

Accordingly, Walcott objects to a simplistic reading that is merely based on classical references. He has repeatedly stressed this point in interviews and at public readings. In an interview with Luigi Sampietro, for instance, he explains that the relationship between *Omeros* and Greek literature is not based on a scholarly kind of knowledge. During an introductory talk preceding a reading from *Omeros* at the University of California, Walcott says that what he finds Odyssean is "a sail at sea in a huge expanse," "a sail either coming from or going to a harbour." (2007, YouTube) The persona in *Omeros* admits that he has never read Homer's epic "all the way through" but adds: "I have always heard / your voice in that sea" (283). Hamner argues that "[t]he basis for [Walcott's] West Indian epic is islands, the sea, weather, sails, local people" (2002-2003, 223). For the critic it is therefore crucial that the persona does not speak of hearing the sea in Homer's voice. Thus, Hamner concludes that "[i]t is the reaction to a people and environment, more than classical sources that must be translated." (ibid)

Although the Greek names of various protagonists and the title itself appear to be rather obvious references to Homer's classics, Fumagalli is right to emphasize the deviations: Achille does not slay Hector and Philoctete is not excluded from his people because of his stinking wound, but remains part of the community. Fumagalli argues that these differences are what make the characters round because in this way they are not merely "Homeric associations" but "St. Lucian villagers," as well (2001, 213). On a similar note, Burnett argues that "the apparent Greek parallels are never straightforward, and in the last analysis function always as secondary to the world of the poem's immediacy, its dimension as Caribbean mimesis and mythopoeia" (2005, 172). For translators of *Omeros*, their task becomes even more complex for how are they supposed to account for intertextual references that appear obvious at first sight but are deconstructed by the author at the same time? The references would have to remain detectable, yet the reader of the translation has to be able to comprehend that a literal reading is just as important.

On many occasions, intertextual references are more subtle and remain unaltered. Farrier parallels the very beginning of *Omeros* in which Philoctete tells the tourists how the

fishermen of St. Lucia cut down the trees to turn them into canoes with a passage from *The Odyssey*. In this passage, the goddess Calypso takes Odysseus to "the place where the trees were the tallest [...] // Odysseus began to cut down the trees." (qtd. in Farrier 2003, 30f.) While numerous such motifs from *The Odyssey* are detectable throughout *Omeros*, sometimes they may conjure up a number of different sources. In the course of *The Odyssey*, Odysseus repeatedly receives baths in cauldrons, first from Calypso (Homer 2003, 5.262-268), later from the maids of Arete (ibid, Book 8, 433-455), and finally from Circe (ibid, 10.348-363). Accordingly, one may read the bathing scene in the first canto of chapter XLIX in which Philoctete receives the healing bath from Ma Kilman in an old sugar cauldron as an allusion to the Homeric work.

However, this is not the only possible reading. Especially German readers may be reminded of the *Nibelungenlied* as "[t]he lime leaves leeched to [Philoctete's] wet / knuckled spine like islands that cling to the basin / of the rusted Caribbean" (246) much like a leaf fatally "leeched" to Siegfried's back when he bathed in the blood of the dragon he had slain. Fumagalli, on the other hand, sees a connection between Philoctete's entering the "gurgling lava" of the bath and Dante's *Inferno* (2001, 200). She detects another analogy with Dante in Ma Kilman's response to Philoctete's attempt to leave the cauldron: "with a rag / sogged in a basin of ice [...] [she] rubbed his squeezed face / the way boys enjoy their mother's ritual rage" (247). In the *Comedia*, Fumagalli continues, "Virgil purifies Dante after his passage in hell by washing his face in dew" (2001, 200).

Moreover, she points out that the "grizzled oarsman" (285) to whom Omeros takes the persona near the end of the poem is reminiscent of Charon in Dante's *Inferno* (2001, 221). In accordance with this Dantean image, the persona of *Omeros* is taken to an underworld and reaches the "Pool of Speculation" in which the "souls who had sold out their race" (289) are punished. For some German readers, Klotz's literal translation – "die sündigen Seelen, / die ihre Rasse verraten hatten" (305) – may be irritating as the word "Rasse" has a negative connotation due to its use during the Third Reich. King writes that in Walcott's much earlier poem "The Schooner *Flight*" "Walcott is using 'race' as had James Joyce in *A Portrait of the Artist* to mean a blurring of ethnic and national cultures rather than 'color' or 'blood'." (King 2004, 377) This seems to hold for the context of *Omeros*, as well. Therefore, a more neutral term should be sought out for the German translation.

In the passage that follows, Walcott juxtaposes intertextual references with the reality of St Lucia as he criticizes the invasion of foreign investors to profit from the tourism industry. Walcott has repeatedly and strongly spoken out against this development which receives support from the government (cf. Mason 1986, 247; Thomas 1980, 24). However, few German readers would know about this and therefore could not appreciate the pun when Walcott writes:

the ancient forge

of bubbling lead erupted with speculators
whose heads gurgled in the lava of the Malebolge
mumbling deals as they rose. These were the traitors

who, in elected office, saw the land as views
for hotels and elevated into waiters
the sons of others, while their own learnt something else. (289)

It is interesting to take a closer look at Klotz's translation of the last two lines of these stanzas: "Ihre eigenen Söhne wurden / was Besseres, die Söhne der anderen lernten zu dienen" (305). Whereas Walcott uses a concrete image based on the reality of the present day, in which becoming a waiter surely is a common kind of employment for uneducated young St Lucians, Klotz remains abstract. Using the German word for "serving (someone)" instead of "waiting (on others)" there is a shift from the present to a past, from waiters to servants.

In the first canto of Chapter XXXVI, Walcott even quotes directly from Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*. He indicates this quote by using italics and refers to the title of chapter 42 "The Whiteness of the Whale" from which he cites: "Heah's Cap'n Melville on de whiteness ob de whale – / *'Having for the imperial colour the same imperial hue ... // giving the white man ideal mastership over evey dusky tribe.'*" (184) One option for the translator would be to quote directly from a German translation of Melville's novel. A quote from the 1944 Swiss translation by Fritz Güttinger of the corresponding excerpt would read: "ist Weiß die kaiserliche Farbe ... und macht den Weißen von vornherein zum Herrn über alle dunkelhäutigen Rassen." (1944, 323) In this edition, the chapter is entitled "Die Weiße des Wals." Klotz opts for his own translation, instead, and omits the reference to the title of the chapter when he writes: "Hier is' Käpt'n Melville un' der große weiße Wal – / *'Da er als Hoheitsfarbe die gleiche imperiale Farbe hat, // ist der weiße Mann ermächtigt zu herrschen über die / dunklen Rassen.'*" (194)

In a metapoetic passage Walcott even reflects on the fact that intertextuality can be both a blessing and a curse:

All that Greek manure under the green bananas,
……………………………………………………
glazed by the transparent page of what I had read.
What I had read and rewritten till literature
was as guilty as History. When would the sails drop

from my eyes, when would I not hear the Trojan War
in two fishermen cursing in Ma Kilman's shop?
When would my head shake off its echoes like a horse

shaking off a wreath of flies? When would it stop
the echo in the throat, insisting, "Omeros";
………………………………………………………..
But it was mine to make what I wanted of it (271f.)

In the beginning of this passage, the attitude of the persona towards the influence of the Greek classics is clearly negative. It mirrors the "Homeric shadow" (271) that hovers over the Caribbean and that needs to be shed in a liberating act. The turning point occurs in the end where the Caribbean poet considers it a privilege to use the classic texts to create fresh metaphors in a place where "every line was erased // yet freshly written in sheets of exploding surf" (296).

Many critics have commented on this canto. Burnett draws a connection to Gates Jr.'s concept of "signifying" (2005, 171f.). Gates Jr. differentiates between a white and a black signifier (1988, 46). The former is ascribed to Ferdinand de Saussure. However, according to Gates Jr., these terms really have their origin in an African tradition: "These neologisms in the academic-critical community are homonyms of terms in black vernacular tradition perhaps two centuries old." (1988, 46) In contrast to the concrete meaning of the Standard English term, signifying in the African oral tradition is characterized by indirection. The use of indirect expressions was preserved by African slaves who could not speak openly. Thus the indirection of signifying became a vital part of spoken discourse. Burnett argues that the central point of this passage of *Omeros* is "the freedom to use literature in his work to make it signify, in whatever way he pleases." (2005, 171)

Walcott himself talks about yet another kind of freedom that is specific to Caribbean writing. He compares the aesthetics of Caribbean writing with those of the carnival. Because carnival is "a Caribbean thing," Walcott argues, it is

> based on error, misconception, association. Because that is our aesthetic. […] It is illogical, but that is Carnival. […] Carnival aesthetic […] is the instinctual and very confident genius of Caribbean writing […]. That central confidence that says, I can do what I want […] I can put things in apparent disorder. And I think that that is the great freedom that is in Caribbean writing […]. (2006, 101)

Baugh argues that a pun in the first line of the same canto indicates that the poet persona's attitude is ambivalent right from the start: On the one hand, the Greek classical texts are "only so much faeces cluttering the earth around the roots of a fresh, green culture." On the other hand, "manure" is also "nourishment, contributing to the growth of a young, green culture." (2006, 194) Although the expression "that Greek manure" takes on a negative connotation, the word "manure" itself is neutral. In his translation, Klotz's use of the German word "Mist" (285) meaning both "manure" and "crap" makes the beginning of the passage appear more disparaging. Klotz could have avoided this by using the word "Dung," instead.

On numerous instances, readers who are familiar with Walcott's poetic oeuvre leading up to *Omeros* may detect allusions to his own poems in this work. Greenwood puts it succinctly: "[T]he present poem is added to the wave sequence of Walcott's poetic oeuvre; it echoes Walcott's earlier poetry, as it in turn will be echoed in subsequent poems." (Greenwood 2005, 132) This fact is particularly difficult to account for in translation. Using the same term repeatedly or applying it differently in individual works may add implications and alter its significance with regard to the oeuvre as a whole. Once

a translator has decided to render a certain word in a specific way, however, it can rarely be altered retrospectively.

A prime example are references to the mongrel in Walcott's oeuvre. For a long time, the poet has considered the issue of mongrelization and hybridization. Although he does refer to mongrels in *Omeros*, they play only a marginal role. Klotz decides to use the disparaging word "Köter" (153) which can only refer to a dog. After *Tiepolo's Hound* (2000), however, in which the mongrel is the central epiphanic motif around which the whole book-length poem revolves, a more suitable translation may have been the word "Mischling" which indicates a dog of mixed breed but can also refer to a person of mixed blood. Since the German translation of *Omeros* appeared five years prior to the publication of *Tiepolo's Hound*, though, this development cannot be accounted for.

Being able to trace certain recurring images only in retrospect places later translators in a difficult position, as well. They have two choices: Either to translate "mongrel" – to stick with the example – as "Mischling" thus weakening the link to the translation of *Omeros*, or to translate it as "Köter" like Klotz does, in order to account for the leitmotif. Whereas the first choice would be closer to Walcott's meaning of the word, the second gives the reader of the translation the opportunity to recognize it as a recurring motif of the poet's entire oeuvre. Another question translators have to ask themselves is, whether the implications of the word are even the same in both source texts. Publishers, on the other hand, have to decide whether to follow a piecemeal approach or aim at translating an oeuvre. If they decide in favour of the latter, one would need at least one copy editor to work with the different translators. Although in Germany Walcott's works in translation are published with one publishing house, the various translators worked with different copy editors.

For readers of the German translations it is more difficult to detect echoes of Walcott's earlier works in *Omeros*. Accordingly, when Achille studies the night sky, "trying to trace the armature / of studs and rivets where the constellations are placed" (113), one inevitably thinks of "Europa" which ends with the image of the bull's "studded armature, / […] / the hooves and horn-points anagrammed in stars." (*FT* 34) In "Map of the New World, [I] Archipelagoes," Walcott describes how "[a] man with clouded eyes picks up the rain / and plucks the first line of the Odyssey" (*FT* 25), in *Omeros*, a "cloud-eyed singer / [...] pluck[s] the sea's wires" (203).

In both cases, the differences in the corresponding passages in Martens's and Klotz's translations are significantly. Hence, the connection between the poems is not noticeable. In the first example, Klotz translates quite literally: "Er versuchte im Netzwerk ihrer / Nieten und Nägel, die Konstellationen abzulesen" (121). Martens, on the other hand, renders "the studded armature" as "die über und über bewehrte / Rüstung" (*KdS* 64f.) in his translation of "Europa." In the second example, Klotz writes: "der trüb blickende Sänger, der die Saiten / der See zupft mit einer Hand" (214). Martens translates: "Mit wolkenweißen Augen ergreift ein Mann den Regen / und zupft die erste Zeile der *Odyssee*." (*KdS* 61) Had both poems been translated by the same translator, it would have been more likely that he recognized the "echoes" – to use Greenwood's term – enabling him to account for them.

What does remain recognizable in the different translations are specific motifs: In "Europa" the moonlight alters the shapes of the natural surroundings turning "the black hump of a hill" (*FT* 33) into a bull. Similarly, in *Omeros* "[t]he late summer light / squared the carpet, moved from the floor to the sofa, // moved from the sofa, which turned to a hill at night." (171) Martens's and Klotz's translations both convey this image. The same holds for the image of "the swift note of a swallow on the staff / of four electric wires" (*M* 19) in *Midsummer* IX which recurs in *Omeros* in the image of "the black notes of sparrows on telegraph wires" (261). While Schrott's translation reads "die achtelnote einer schwalbe auf dem mast / mit seinen vier drähten" (*MM* 25), Klotz writes: "schwarze Notenzeichen auf Telegraphendrähten, Spatzen" (274).

A metaphor that is difficult to translate into German is that of marriage as "[t]he artist's pact with the vocation of writing" that Walcott applies in "Jean Rhys" and *Omeros* (Breslin 2005, 16). At the end of the "Jean Rhys," he describes a moment of epiphany in which the Dominican born writer – still a child in this poem – imagines "her right hand married to *Jane Eyre*, / foreseeing that her own wedding dress / will be white paper." (*FT* 68) In *Omeros*, the poet persona is advised by the ghost of his father to "'[d]o just that labour / which marries your heart to your right hand'" (72). While Martens translates "die rechte Hand an *Jane Eyre* vergeben" (*KdS* 68), Klotz writes: "'Verrichte bloß / die Arbeit, die dein Herz mit der rechten Hand verbindet'" (78). Whereas Martens's verb choice at least implies a wedding vow, Klotz uses a subtler word that only indicates a connection in general.

There are other cases in which Klotz seems to draw on the translations of his predecessors: Like Martens, he replaces Walcott's "dogfights" with "cockfights" when Hector and Achille clash over "an old bailing tin" (17). The sea mirrors their fight: "The surf in anger, gnashing / its tail like a foaming dogfight" (16). Klotz translates : "Die Brandung sträubte den Schweif / wie wutschäumende Kampfhähne" (22). In "The Star-Apple Kingdom," Walcott describes how "the dogfights / began in the cabinets as to who had first sold / the archipelago for this chain store of islands." (*SAK* 53) In Martens's translation these lines read: "in den Kabinetten begannen darauf die Hahnenkämpfe / darum, wer denn als erster das Archipel / für diese Kettenläden aus Inseln verkaufte." (*KdS* 40)

In this way, the German translations occasionally even reinforces a motif. For instance, when Walcott introduces the character Seven Seas, he writes about his blindness: "It was not a palm-tree's dial on the noon sand" (12). Without explicitly mentioning the sundial, Walcott implies that the tree's shadow may function as such. Klotz puts it thus: "Sie war keine Schattenuhr, keine Palme im Mittagssand" (17). Schrott uses the same word in his translation of *Midsummer* XXVI.

Apart from references to a vast array of literary texts, one can trace various cinematic features in *Omeros*. Antoine-Dunne attests Walcott "a definite affinity to the montage practised by the Soviet school" of which he finds proof in Achille's "blatantly cinematic leap into the past of his ancestors," for instance (Antoine-Dunne 126). Baugh goes even further when he writes:

The geographical sweep of the poem, cutting across large expanses of historical time, the visual excitement of physical action, landscape and vivid, sensuous detail, the kaleidoscope of voices, the interweaving of stories – the amalgam of these features is reminiscent of cinematic élan. (2006, 187)

There are numerous passages in which Walcott's employment of distinctly cinematic elements is quite obvious. In the second canto of chapter XXXIII, for example, there is a passage reminiscent of a film script in that it appears to give instructions for the positioning of a camera. Through the eyes of the persona, the reader 'watches' a woman get off a bus. The passage starts with a description of the 'set': "Hot concrete pavements, storefronts with watery glass" (172). As the lyrical I recalls the figure of the woman "same hair, same shoulders, same compact, cynical ass // rounding the aisle" of a supermarket, the woman on the bus yanks the cord and the bus audibly glides "with its bell to a stop." The reader watches her blend into the masses while the bus

                            picks up slowly
and passes her confident hair, gathering speed,
past faces frowning at the sunlight as she,
walking backwards with the crowd, begins to recede. (172)

Walcott briefly cuts to the lyrical I watching the woman's elbow at a florist, before cutting again "back to the sunstruck pavement." Klotz's translation does not immediately convey this sense of a film script although he renders the words quite literally:

Heißer Asphalt, Ladenfenster mit feuchten Scheiben,
im Supermarkt ihr Rücken hinter einem Einkaufswagen,
gleiches Haar, gleiche Schulter, gleicher

Hintern, zynisch in die Gänge einschwenkend, vor lau-
ter Angst, man könnte etwas fragen. Ihre Hand zieht
an der Schnur und der Trolleybus hält, sie steigt aus

zu ihren Verabredungen. (181f.)

Since Klotz omits the bell, the sound is missing in the translation. The brevity of the third quoted line is striking. Perhaps Klotz separates the attributes that Walcott uses to describe the woman turning into an aisle in favour of creating assonance with the first quoted line. However, by doing so, he loses some valuable space that he could have used to keep the sound image of the bell. While Walcott's description of the ass "rounding the aisle" relates to the movement and its round shape, Klotz shifts the emphasis to the first implication by translating "zynisch […] einschwenkend" (181). Another difference, minute as it may appear at first sight, but one which alters the way we 'see' the scene, is that "*as* the car picks up slowly // and passes her confident hair" (172) is translated as "*als* der Bus an ihr vorbeigleitet" (182). With this apparently minor alteration, Klotz compresses a stretch of time into a brief moment in which the woman notices the bus driving by and intentionally

alters her stride. Three lines later, Klotz translates the same English temporal adverb as "während" which would have been more suitable in the first instance, too.

That Walcott had been working on film scripts around the time of writing *Omeros* also becomes evident in the kind of terminology borrowed from this medium. For instance, the river "unreels" images to Achille which "flickered into real mirages" and remind him of "the African movies / he had yelped at in childhood" (133). When the poet persona returns to the island and a taxi driver informs him of Hector's death, Walcott unreels images from Hector's life before the reader's inner eye. Each image is separated from the other by the word "cut" which occurs eight times within five stanzas. The final image of this cinematic sequence is that of the comet being retrieved by a crane: "Cut. A crane hoisting a wreck. / A horse nosing the surf, then shuddering its neck" (230).

4.3.4 Translating characters

When Walcott talks about his translation and adaptation of Tirso de Molina's play *El Burlador de Sevilla* (1630), he notes that what changes most in the process are the characters rather than the plot. He explains this with the different mind sets, attitudes, and temperaments of languages, in this case Spanish and English. According to Walcott,

> whatever a poet can bring in his language to another poet, his line of thinking is not the same. You can't think Spanish and translate English. You have to think English and do a parallel. So that alone begins to make the text change. It may not alter // meaning. […] [I]f you are altering the language, but not altering the meaning of the action, you, in some way, may begin to be altering the characters. I mean in the selection of the language. (Walcott 1986, 9f.)

Burnett observes that one reason why readers of *Omeros* perceive its characters as individuals owes to Walcott's capability to equip each of them with a unique voice. She describes it thus:

> Walcott creates narratorial voices, such as that of Seven Seas, […] as well as quasi-dramatic voices. Helen, for instance, does not say much in *Omeros*, but in her memorable phrases she emerges with her own voice, and her own life. The voice of Dennis Plunkett, by contrast, is completely different, a particular history and subtle social positioning exactly captured. (2006, 27)

The same holds for the other characters: For instance, only Maud can convincingly think of "that Madonna bathing her baby // with his little shrimp thing!" (29) In the process of translating *Omeros* in its entirety, the sum of apparently minor alterations can thus lead to a transformation of characters which may range from a subtle shift in connotations to a considerable change of meaning.

Some of the most significant shifts can be traced in the translation of the highly symbolic character of Helen whom Collier describes as a "beautiful, passionate yet elusive woman" (2002, 255). Metaphorically, she represents the wild, natural beauty of St Lucia, but also the surrounding sea. Hence, she is compared with a liner at sea in various passages. Allegorically, Helen stands for the island itself. In addition, she is both a

Homeric figure and a Dantesque muse of the vernacular similar to Beatrice in the *Divine Comedy*, yet in the end Walcott urges the reader to see Helen without "Homeric shadow" (271).

Helen makes her first physical appearance in the last canto of Chapter IV. Right away she is characterized with many of the above mentioned attributes: She is a panther padding on the beach, a mirage dissolving "into a woman with a madras head-tie, / […] the head proud, although it was looking for work" (23). All heads turn as she approaches the restaurant in which the speaker is seated as well. Whereas Lawrence the waiter "frown[s] at a mirage" (23), the poet persona feels like "standing in homage to a beauty // that left, like a ship, widening eyes in its wake" (23f). When a tourist wants to know "Who the hell is that?" (24), a waitress answers deprecatingly: "She? She too proud!" (24). Next, the beautiful but statue-like woman unwraps her "carved lids of the unimaginable / ebony mask" (24). In Klotz's translation, the ways in which the people at the restaurant respond to Helen's appearance are less ambiguous. Only the waitress disapproves of Helen while Lawrence's reaction is more neutral: "Da erstarrte unser Lawrence // vor einer Erscheinung." (29) In addition, Klotz turns the mirage into an apparition, i.e. not a natural phenomenon. Instead of emphasising Helen's connection with nature Klotz stresses her unattainability.

Unusual as it is, the comparison of Helen with a liner is resumed several times in the course of the poem. In the second canto of chapter LXIII, Helen goes to Ma Kilman to buy margarine. When she leaves the shop, in which some locals are gossiping, "[t]he dividing air / closed in her wake, and the shop went into shadow, / with the map on the floor, as if she were the sun" (318). Again, Klotz depletes the image of the wake, the air merely closing behind Helen, however, the shop sinks into shadow. He writes: "Die zerteilte Luft / schloß sich hinter ihr, der Laden versank im Schatten, / mit Mustern am Boden, als wäre sie selber Sonne und Duft." (334) While he extends the ship metaphor he only implicitly connects it to Helen. The map on the floor merely becomes a pattern, but Helen not only seems to be the sun itself, but also fragrance as Klotz adds the reference to the olfactory sense in order to rhyme "Luft – Duft." Therefore, the translation implies that apart from looking awe-inspiring Helen's scent is intoxicating, as well. However, this distracts from the idea that Helen is the sun which is a variation of the rhetorical question: "Why not see Helen as the sun saw her […]?" (271)

Even more frequently, Walcott describes Helen in terms of the island's natural environment: Her waist and "lissome calves" sway "like a palm" and she lowers "her voice to match [the] muttering waves, / the deep sigh of night that came from [the palm's] starlit leaves" (123). In Chapter LX, Achille goes out to sea with Philoctete in search of "some cove he could settle like another Aeneas, / founding not Rome but home" (301), only to discover that there was "no cove he liked as much as his own / village, […] no inlet / spoke to him quietly, no bay parted its mouth // like Helen under him" (301). In a scene that mirrors an earlier passage in which Major Plunkett addresses a lizard asking whether "the greatest battle // in naval history, which put the French to rout" was "fought for a creature with a disposable tail / and elbows like a goalie" (92), it is the lizard's turn to ask:

Was that immense enterprise on

the baize tables of empires for one who carries

cheap sandals on a hooked finger with the Pitons
for breasts? (312)

For Walcott the question is whether battles were fought for this woman "with the Pitons /
for breasts;" Klotz, on the other hand, divides the question into two and has the lizard ask:
Galten die mächtigen Vorhaben an den grünen
Tischen der Imperien einer Frau in billigen Sandalen,

welche sie an gekrümmtem Finger trug? Waren die Piton-
berge ihre Brüste? (328)

There is a significant shift in the translation as the lizard asks whether the Pitons of St
Lucia actually were breasts.

The analogy with her namesake Helen of Troy is evident in many passages in
which the local woman physically appears or is the subject of the different narrative
threads. Near the end of the poem, a lizard concludes that the two Helens "are different
creatures, // one marble, one ebony," one unknotting "a belt of yellow cotton," the other "a
cord of purple wool." Whereas "one lies in a room with olive-eyed mosaics," the other
sleeps "in a beach shack with its straw mattress" (313). Nevertheless, they share the
gesture of slowly drawing an elbow over the face, one as the other offering "the gift of her
sculptured nakedness, / parting her mouth" (313). The analogy of the two Helens' different
skin colour with the material in which their statues would be hewn – white marble and dark
brown ebony – is resumed in their "sculptured nakedness." Klotz shifts the emphasis to the
perfection of Helen's body when he writes of their perfect nakedness instead: "aber beide
[…] / […] machen ihre vollkommene Nacktheit zum Geschenk" (329). Turning her from a
sculpture into flesh and blood decreases the unattainability making her more tangible.

Fumagalli goes to great lengths to point out numerous analogies with Dante's
Divine Comedy, a vernacular poem in which Beatrice replaces Dante's former guide Virgil.
According to Fumagalli the latter "mirrors the function of Latin which, being the source of
the vernacular languages, stands as godfather to them."(2000, 21) Therefore, she goes on
to argue, this shift from one guide to the other represents "the shift from Latin to the
vernacular. Beatrice, in fact, can be regarded as the muse of the vernacular." (ibid) Helen
can be considered such a muse for the persona in *Omeros*, as well. This becomes most
evident when in Chapter LIV, he and Major Plunkett, "compelled by [Helen's] diffident
saunter up the beach, / sought grounds for her arrogance" (271). However, the moment the
lyrical I reflects the dynamics behind both the historian's and his own attempts of
idealizing Helen and the island, he realizes that they had merely "used two opposing
stratagems" and that "in her head of ebony, / there was no real need for the historian's /
remorse, nor for literature's." (271) This realization culminates in the central request to
"see Helen / as the sun saw her, with no Homeric shadow" (271).

If one considers Helen a Dantean "muse of the vernacular," her speaking non-standard English throughout the poem is an essential part of her character. As this is one of the most difficult parts to account for in a foreign language, it is what affects her character most in translation. Especially the humour based on word plays with the vernacular is bound to get lost. One such case in point occurs in a scene in which Helen goes to Maud to ask her for money. When the Irish woman addresses Helen with the question: "So, how are you, Helen?" (124), she answers: "I dere, Madam." What Maud thinks, but does not say out loud is:

> You dere. Of course you dare,

> come back looking for work after ruining two men,
> after trying on my wardrobe, after driving Hector
> crazy with a cutlass, you dare come, that what you mean? (124)

Klotz can only convey Maud's anger, but not her twisting Helen's words. Helen explains her reason for coming to see Maud, with the words: "'What I come for this morning is see if you can borrow me five dollars. I pregnant'" (124). In an attempt to convey the dialect, Klotz employs very slight deviations from Standard German in the direct speech part, such as incomplete sentences in which the subject is missing: "'Möcht fragen, ob Sie mir fünf Dollar leihen könnten. Bin schwanger'" (132).

Walcott's Helen is sensuous with an attitude: When white tourists grope her, she loses her temper, walks up to the cashier and says "that wasn't part of her focking pay" (34). Klotz's translation implies that if the pay was better, she would not mind if the tourists touched her: "so hat sie genug, plötzlich, von ihren Frechheiten und sagts dem // Kassierer, das gehört nicht dazu, bei der Scheißbezahlung" (39f.) In accordance with his tendency for euphemisms, Klotz often describes Helen in less sensuous terms than Walcott. In Chapter XIX, Major Plunkett realizes that "the harder he worked, the more he betrayed his wife" (103), because edging a magnifying glass over a historic map of St Lucia only

> […] magnified the peaks of the island's breasts

> and it buried stiff factions. He had come that far
> to learn that History earns its own tenderness
> in time; not for a naval victory, but for

> the V of a velvet back in a yellow dress. (103)

Klotz omits the sensuous image of Helen's soft ebony back by simply speaking of the velvet V-neck of a yellow dress: "der samtene V-Ausschnitt eines gelben Kleids." (110) Similarly, when Helen returns from a night out in the third canto of chapter XXI, she skilfully drapes her "silk slip on a hanger" (114), Klotz translates: "Sie hängte den Seidenunterrock […] / […] an einen Bügel." (122)

Maud is infuriated when she hears "[t]he cackle of [Helen's] laughter" in the kitchen where "she joked with the gardener" (123). As a response to Maud's appearance in the kitchen in order "to quiet her," Helen "would suck her teeth and tilt that arrogant chin / and mutter something behind her back in patois, / and when Maud ask her what, she'd smile: 'Ma'am, is noffing'" (123). The German translation does not fully convey Helen's attitude and its effect on Maud. Helen's laughter is described as the bleating laughter of a goat: "Das entnervende Meckergelächter" (131). Maud goes to the kitchen to rebuke her, rather than to quite her and Helen in turn does not suck her teeth, but plucks something out of them: "wenn man / die Küche betrat, um sie zurechtzuweisen, pflückte // sie was aus den Zähnen mit arrogant aufgeworfenem Kinn" (131).

Thomas is right to argue that "Walcott's central anchored project [is] to dignify and 'illustrate' in the sense of 'make illustrious' the lives of his own people." (2002-2003, 294) This becomes most apparent in the character of Achille. One of the first things the reader learns about the local fisherman is that he misspells the simple word "trust" as "troust." Achille defiantly replies to the priest who smiles at the mistake: "Leave it! Is God' spelling and mine." (8) In the German translation, Achille's attitude is different as he answers: "Lass das! Gott hat das Sagen und ich." (13) Von Lutz considers this a translation mistake as he argues: "[I]n der deutschen Fassung[…] findet sich […] ein Übersetzungsfehler (es geht eben hier um Rechtschreibung – 'spelling' – und nicht darum, wer das 'Sagen' hat)." (1995) Klotz's translation makes Achille appear rather pious and confident at the same time.

However, there are many scenes in which he is shown to be a sensitive, emotional, and thoughtful man. In a crucial scene in which these character traits become apparent, Achille keeps to himself studying the night sky while Helen mingles with villagers and tourists alike at the blockorama. Achille knows those stars that are necessary for night-fishing, however, he does not know their names. Instead, he refers to them as "the one that sparkled at dusk, and at dawn the other" (114). Klotz's translation is more specific and less touching, the mood less solemn as he refers to them by their German common names: "den Abend- und den Morgenstern." (121) Only a few lines further, the poem continues: "He knew others but would not call them by their given / names, forcing a silvery web to link their designs" and although he tries to, he is not able to "distinguish their pattern, nor call one Venus, nor even find / the pierced holes of Pisces, the dots named for the Fish; / he knew them as stars" (114). It is ambiguous whether Achille does not know the names of the stars or whether he refuses to call them by their "given names." However, the important point is that the fisherman does not know their names.

Naming and loosing the knowledge of certain names are central themes of the poem. In the very first canto, Walcott introduces this theme when he describes how "an iguana hears the axes, clouding each lens / over its lost name" (4). The theme is obscured in the German translation which reads: "hört ein Leguan die Äxte, wobei er die Augen schließt / über seinen versunkenen Namen" (10). When Achille meets his ancestor Afolabe, they engage in a discussion about the meaning of names and Achille speaks of "the gift / of this sound whose meaning I still do not care to know." (138) Afolabe responds to this answer by renouncing their lineage. Again, Klotz alters the meaning

significantly when he translates Achille's answer: "beschenkt / mit dem Laut, dessen Bedeutung ich nie erfahren habe." (146) He does not convey the important fact that Achille does not want to know the meaning of his name which he was never told or taught.

With regard to Achille, Klotz's tendency to employ archaisms to keep the length of the lines moderate often results in a tone that seems inappropriate for the characters. When the reader sees the night sky through Achille's eyes, prenominal genitives distract from the simplicity of the moment: "Er sah eine Sternschnuppe ihren Bogen ziehen und folgte / des Kometen Niedergang, als dieser zischend verglühte / in des Horizonts Schale, gleich einem Stück Kohle" (119). The omission of an auxiliary in the scene in which Achille recovers from sunstroke has a similar effect: "Der Schiffsgehilfe schöpfte das Boot aus mit dem rosten- / den Eimer, als die Schwalbe zurückkam, ein sonniges Zeichen, / jene Freude wiederbringend, die er an seiner Arbeit verloren." (133) When Achille remembers "the tribal sorrow" of those who drowned during the Middle Passage, the use of inversion makes the tone of the translation more solemn: "Nicht vergeßlich wars wie der Meeresdunst" (136). In the beginning of the second canto of chapter XXX, Achille and the mate are on their way home. Walcott clearly links Achille's return to that of Odysseus when he writes: "so strong gusts favoured the sail, until he could shout / from happiness, except that the mate would have heard." (159) Whereas in the English version Achille's bursting with joy is conveyed in very simple words, Klotz uses a more elevated style and diction that makes it sound more classical. He writes: "solch starker Wind blähte das Segel, / er hätte gejubelt vor Freude, wär nicht der Gehilfe im Nachen." (167) The simplicity of the people that Walcott wants to pay tribute to thus often gives way to a more classical feel.

5 Conclusion

A primary aim of this study was to explore the ways in which the Caribbean poet Derek Walcott's work is changed and transformed by translating it into a European language, especially German. In his case study on the translation of Longfellow's epic poem *Evangeline*, Klaus Martens writes:

> [Übersetzungskritik] erfordert eine minutiöse Neu-Lesung des Ausgangstextes und ebenso minutiöse Analysen der Übersetzungstexte. Abweichungen zwischen Übersetzungs- und Ausgangstext können zu neuen literaturkritischen Erkenntnissen auch in bezug [sic] auf den Ausgangstext führen, indem sie als übersetzerische Interpretationen verstanden und auf ihre Begründung im Vergleich zum Ausgangstext befragt werden. (1989, 6f.)

I agree that it is crucial to engage in a meticulous reading of the source and target texts. For if we think of a translation as a piece of art in its own right, it must itself be considered as an effective literary text and an aesthetic object. Otherwise, a translation would be nothing more than an interpretation, a paraphrase, or a critical commentary in another language. Accordingly, a significant part of this study involved the analyses of the source and target texts followed by a detailed comparison of various aspects in which the two differ.

It is illusory to think that a study like the one at hand can cover all aspects that change in the course of translation in their entirety. Therefore, my aim was to point out tendencies and illustrate their effects on the translated text and, as a result, on Walcott's reception by a German audience. For a more objective perspective on differences in the perception and reception of Walcott by an Anglophone and German readers, I consulted academic criticism and compared reviews of the source and target texts. However, in the vast majority of cases, reviews of the translations only confirmed the "translator's invisibility" as they tend to focus on Walcott and the source texts rather than on the translators and the target texts.

Yet the role of the translators is crucial for they are the mediators between the two language cultures (cf. Hewson and Martin 1991). Therefore, another central aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which the different translators' personal and professional background, their conception of poetry, as well as their own creative writing affect their translations. In the course of my research, significant differences in the ways they worked became apparent: Whereas Martens and Schrott both did their translations in rather short amounts of time, Klotz spent months on his translation of the first half of Walcotts's "The Star-Apple Kingdom" and years on *Omeros*. In contrast to Martens who made noteworthy changes to only two poems of his selection *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* for the Coron edition, Schrott revised every single poem of *Midsummer* for the later bilingual edition. William Weaver writes: "Once a translation of mine is published, I never re-read it. I know that, if I did, I would soon be reaching for a pencil, to make further additions and subtractions, in the futile pursuit of a non-existent perfection." (1989, 124) While this may explain the comparatively few changes Martens made, Schrott apparently cannot refrain from "reaching for [his] pencil." This may well be yet another trait he shares

with Walcott who has frequently published different versions of his poems (cf. Goldstraw 1984).

The translators also differ widely in their approaches. Braun describes them thus:
Nach Klaus Martens und Konrad Klotz, die sich in sehr texttreuen, zuweilen ein wenig prosaischen Übersetzungen Walcotts Poesie genähert haben, hat nun der Schriftsteller Raoul Schrott eine sehr eigenwillige Nachdichtung Walcotts vorgelegt. (1994)

At first sight this seems to confirm Greiner's hypothesis that it is difficult, if not impossible, for a poet-translator to dissolve the tension between expressing his/her own creativity, style, and tone and 'submitting' to that of the poet to be translated. Apart from the fact that the process of literary translation is similar to that of creative writing, Greiner offers another explanation as to why authors translate literary texts by other authors: "der übersetzende Schriftsteller findet in dem zu übersetzenden Werk kongeniale Entsprechungen, denen er als Übersetzer seine Reverenz erweist" (2004, 112). This certainly holds for Schrott who told me that when he first read Walcott's *Midsummer* poems this was the kind of poetry he wanted to write, himself.[158]

Of all three translators who are authors in their own right, Schrott's oeuvre is the most recognized and the best known. As a poet-translator he approaches a text in a playful manner rather than with too much respect for the source text. Nevertheless, Braun is only partially right with his claim of 'fidelity' in Martens's and Klotz's translations for both also share a tendency for archaic and overly poetic language that lacks correspondence in the source text. This especially holds for Martens's translation.

In his discussion of Mandelbaum's translation of Ungaretti into English, Venuti makes two observations concerning this very practice and concludes that Mandelbaum's use of "syntactical inversions [...] amounted to poetical archaisms in English" (2000, 478). In addition, he notes: "Sometimes the poeticism deviated from the otherwise simple language of the context" (ibid, 479). In this way, Venuti argues, the translation directly links Ungaretti to Homer and Dante, as well as to Tennyson, Shakespeare und Marlowe (ibid, 480f.). In case of Martens's selection, a German readership gets a distorted first impression of Walcott's poetry. However, a tendency to eliminate inversions and pronominal genitives is not only evident in Martens's revision of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels* for the Coron edition; in his selection of Walcott's poetry *Erzählungen von den Inseln* Martens rarely employs them at all. While Klotz's *Omeros* confirms the impression made by Martens's earlier translation, he changes the emphasis of Walcott's intertextual method, as the style and language of the translation reinforce the connection with Homer and Dante.

Such differences are often the result of the translators' focus on one specific aspect of the source text. In Martens's case, his focus on reproducing the structure of a poem including the length of the line is often the reason why he resorts to inversion and pronominal genitives. In Schrott's translation, many shifts result from his priority of rhyme

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[158] Raoul Schrott. Telephone interview. 20 Aug. 2013.

even over imagery. Klotz strives for semantic equivalence within the tercets and even within single lines while putting great emphasis on prosody.

Closely connected with the role of the translator are external factors that may impact a translation. These include pre-textual aspects such as the socio-economic situation of the translator, as well as publishing processes. Although it can be difficult to retrieve such information, my own investigations of the networks of publishers, editors, and translators proved very fruitful: I gained important insights about the publishing industry from talking to Michael Krüger, the former head of Hanser, and, most notably, from extensive conversations with Hans-Jürgen Balmes who also provided me with valuable contacts to the Swiss literary scene to which Konrad Klotz belonged. A telephone interview with Raoul Schrott not only deepened my understanding of his strategies and made me aware of additional translation problems, e.g. having to decide how to treat imprecision in the source text. On the other hand, he confirmed the assumption that translators do not usually approach their task with a specific theory in mind, but rather treat each translation problem individually. Moreover, he confirmed the importance of external factors on a translation when he said that the meagre payment caused time pressure and that the editor provided virtually no support in form of proofreading. Similarly, Martens wrote that the publisher did not make the corrections he had asked for before the publication of *Das Königreich des Sternapfels*.[159] This accounts for some blatant errors that were highly criticized in reviews of the selection. A similar case in point is Klotz's *Omeros*.

This study has, I hope, demonstrated the complexity of the translation process in general, and specifically of translating the works of the Caribbean poet Walcott. Due to the multiple layers that constitute his works, his translators must apply a number of different and sometimes contradictive strategies. Hence one focus of this thesis was on cultural specifics of Walcott's place of origin, as well as on the various literary traditions in which the poet feels at home. The natural environment of Walcott's Caribbean home is particularly important. The great difficulty for the German translator lies in finding a balance between conveying foreign and exotic aspects which make Walcott's imagery so unique, while making references to Caribbean plants, animals, and geography as well as Caribbean history and politics accessible for a German audience. This difficulty holds true for translations into many languages, as Wilson says:

> Translations interpret one culture to another. […] Translators always have to make choices which are sensitive to the cultural context. In the case of Caribbean texts, the task can be daunting, for Caribbean culture [is] a complex of syncretisms. Every image, idea, cultural artifact, is overlaid with layers of accretions and resonances. […] Perhaps the choices made do not greatly affect the denotative value of the text, phrase or word but what may suffer is the connotation, the multi-layered associations which are the

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[159] E-mail to the author. 6 Apr. 2014.

substance of literary text. The cultural, psychological, emotional impact may sometimes be attenuated or lost altogether. (Wilson 2000, 19)

However, deviations from the source text are not necessarily negative. As Ingold asserts: "Abweichungen gegenüber dem Original, gewollt oder ungewollt, können die Zielsprache bereichern, erweitern deren Imaginationsraum." (2004, 218f.) Similarly, Walcott recognizes the creative potential even of typographical errors as he considers them "one part of the poetic process, accident as illumination, error as truth, typographical mistakes as revelation."[160] (qtd. in Hamner 2002-2003, 220). The validity of this idea becomes apparent when comparing source and target texts as well as different versions of one poem. Sometimes, alternative interpretations only become apparent in this process, which is proof of the hermeneutic value of translation analyses.

Seemingly specific case studies of translations can thus provide new impulses for the study of a writer's oeuvre by proposing new interpretations, suggesting different approaches, and offering fresh perspectives. In this way, considerations from an outside perspective, i.e. from someone who is not part of the language culture of the source text, can lead to the reconsideration of established 'truths.' Essays on Claire Malroux's translations of Walcott's poetry into French, for instance, raise intriguing questions for postcolonial studies since the French influence in the Caribbean continues to be strongly felt. It would be fascinating to further investigate the reception of Walcott's works in countries that had a great impact on the region and to explore how his works change when rendered into the respective languages.

In Germany, there continues to be a grave discrepancy between the sheer amount of literary translations published annually and their status. The reviews discussed in this study range from 1989 to 2002 and vividly illustrate that translations are still considered inferior to the original. One tendency of reviewers of poetry is to compare source and target texts in order to verify the correctness or incorrectness of a translation. Often, the bilingual edition is described as the most transparent form of poetry in translation. This illustrates the strong scepticism that prevails toward translated literary texts. In an academic context, literary translations also play a minor role outside the field of comparative studies. I hope to provide some impulses for further studies in a fascinating field that continues to offer a vast variety of research topics.

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7 Appendix

7.1 List of abbreviations

SAK = The Star-Apple Kingdom

FT = The Fortunate Traveller

KdS = Das Königreich des Sternapfels

TA = Der Traum auf dem Affenberg

M = Midsummer

MM = Midsummer/Mittsommer (bilingual edition)

7.2 Interview with Raoul Schrott. 20 Aug. 2013

Allgemeines zum Übersetzen von *Midsummer*:

1. *Welche Probleme / Schwierigkeiten treten im Allgemeinen bei einer Übersetzung Walcotts ins Deutsche auf? Wie sind Sie dabei vorgegangen? Welche Entscheidungen haben Sie auf welcher Grundlage getroffen?*

Schrott:

Eine Übersetzung ist ja die Realisation von bestimmten Prozeduren, die es gilt zu identifizieren und wirkungsästhetisch – das ist hier das Stichwort – kongenial umzusetzen. Was mir an Walcott gefallen hat, ist die Flüssigkeit seiner Diktion, eine scheinbare Umgangssprachlichkeit, die Bilder, das Allegorische, das ja ganz zentral ist, und die diskrete Art des Reimens, welche die gesamte Architektur des Gedichts aufbaut. Die ersten Zeilen sind bei ihm meist der Einfall, der dann über die Reime entwickelt wird. Die Prinzipien dieses Aufbaus gilt es im Deutschen nachzubauen. Ich habe mich dabei bemüht, nicht nur die Reimarchitektur, sondern auch die Art der Reime wiederzugeben, die Flüssigkeit der Diktion, die Bilder zu verstehen – denn die müssen ja erst einmal verstanden werden.

Ich habe auch Walcott kontaktiert, aber keine Antwort bekommen. Auch nicht als ich in St. Lucia war. Damals gab es auch noch kein Lexikon wie das *Dictionary of Caribbean Language Usage*. Das kam erst später bei Oxford raus. Es gab auch noch kein Internet. Schwierig war also auch spezielles Vokabular. Bei "chattel house" weiß ich heute noch nicht, wie man das am besten übersetzt. Und auch "stick villages" und "rifling" in "rifling his easle" sind problematisch.

Außerdem finden sich auch in der zweisprachigen Ausgabe noch Flüchtigkeitsfehler: In diesem Gedicht in dem ein Pub in England vorkommt, habe ich z.B. anstatt "drawn bows" "drawn boys" gelesen. Das habe ich einfach immer wieder überlesen. Das ärgert mich heute noch.

Die Bilder muss man erst einmal sehen und kapieren. Z.B. "primordiales Rückgrat" – treffender ist da sicher "Rückenmark." Da ist auch Walcotts Vorlage nicht ganz präzise. Heute würde ich mich eher trauen, Walcott da auch zu verbessern. Der ist manchmal auch richtig schlampig: Z.B. bei dem Bild der Straßen, die in der Hand anschwellen, also die Lebenslinien. Das passt auch nicht ganz. Die Handballen können zwar anschwellen, aber nicht die Lebenslinien.

2. *Haben Sie Martens' Übersetzungen einiger Gedichte aus Midsummer angesehen und in irgendeiner Weise für Ihre eigene Übersetzung fruchtbar gemacht? Wenn ja, hat das Ihre Sichtweise beeinflusst?*

Schrott:

Martens' Übersetzungen habe ich gelesen. Ich finde sie schlecht und falsch. Martens trifft den Duktus nicht, er baut alles um, vertauscht die Reihenfolge von Subjekt, Prädikat, Objekt, die bei Walcott einem natürlichen Abfluss folgt. Vielleicht damit er am Ende der Zeile Substantive hat, die sich im Deutschen eher reimen als Verben: dennoch aber reimt

sich bei ihm nichts. Da fragt man sich, was das soll. Martens macht teilweise Fehler, weil er die Bilder nicht verstanden hat. Gleich im ersten Gedicht schreibt er "geschoren" für "tonsured," als wäre er ganz kahl. Dabei hat er eben nur eine Tonsur wie ein Mönch. Oder Walcotts "Traffic flows in slow coils, like the doors of a baptistry": Das Bild soll eigentlich transportieren, dass der Kreisverkehr schneckenartig fließt wie so ein Ornament an einem Baptisterium. Martens übersetzt da irgendwas mit "Schlieren." Auch idiomatische Ausdrücke macht Martens falsch: Im Hotel "betritt" er den Spiegel. Das geht idiomatisch nicht.

Klotz ist zwar besser als Martens, aber immer noch sperrig und eng. Koppenfels' Übersetzung von den *White Egrets* dagegen finde ich klasse!

3. *Sie sind von Haus aus u. a. Komparatist. Haben Sie Ihrer Übersetzung einen bestimmten theoretischen Ansatz zugrunde gelegt?*

Schrott:

Nein. Ich habe mich gefragt: Wenn ich Walcott wäre, wie würde er das auf Deutsch schreiben? Eigentlich ist das ja die wielandsche Übersetzungsmaxime – oder die luthersche. Am Ende muss wieder ein Gedicht herauskommen. Das ist eigentlich auch die größere Texttreue: die Architektur, die Tonlagen, die Bilder zu übertragen, als was in welcher Zeile steht. Das wünsche ich mir auch, wenn meine Gedichte übersetzt werden.

Umstände der Übersetzung:

4. *Wie kam es zu der Übersetzung?*

Schrott:

Ich habe ganz zufällig das Buch entdeckt im Lyrikkabinett in München. Die Gedichte haben mir unglaublich gut gefallen. Ich habe bei Hanser angerufen und gefragt, ob ich sie übersetzen könne. Michael Krüger hat dann ja gesagt, aber für "Akzente." 1994 erschienen die Gedichte also komplett in Akzente. Als Bezahlung gab es 20 Mark für eine Seite, auf die eineinhalb Gedichte gepasst haben. Die Gedichte erschienen zunächst also nur auf Deutsch. Das hätte sonst den Rahmen gesprengt.

5. *Wie lange haben Sie sich mit dem Text beschäftigt? Wie sind Sie vorgegangen? Haben Sie sich ausschließlich mit dem Text selbst beschäftigt oder auch Sekundärliteratur hinzugezogen?*

Schrott:

Das ist das erste, was man bei einer Homer-Übersetzung macht: Die Sekundärliteratur ansehen und die Kommentare. Daraus besteht ja auch der erste Teil einer Übersetzung. Sekundärliteratur zu Walcott bzw. *Midsummer* gab es damals nicht.

Ich habe die Gedichte in 3 Monaten im Sommer übersetzt. Parallel habe ich noch an meinen *Hotels* gearbeitet. Ich habe damals viel von Walcott gelernt. Ich weiß: Heute ginge es flüssiger. Übersetzung ist ja eine Dichterschule. So habe ich dann auch die eine oder andere Zeile aus *Midsummer* für meine *Hotels* "geklaut," die so Eingang in meine *Hotels* gefunden hat. Das machen ja alle so, auch Walcott, der sich in der ganzen Weltliteratur bedient.

6. *Warum wollten Sie gerade Walcott und Midsummer übersetzen? Um für das eigene Werk zu profitieren? Aus Nähe, Ähnlichkeit oder Verbundenheit zu dem eigenen Werk oder der eigenen Ästhetik?*

Schrott:

Als ich die Gedichte gelesen habe, wusste ich: Das war die Art von Poesie, die ich machen wollte.

7. *Haben Sie unter Zeitdruck gearbeitet? Wodurch entstand dieser Zeitdruck?*

Schrott:

Zeitdruck entstand durch die schlechte Bezahlung.

8. *Was passiert im Lektorat?*

Schrott:

Da passiert gar nichts. Das gibt es ja heute so gar nicht mehr. Die Fehler, die noch in der Ausgabe enthalten sind, wurden da auch übersehen.

9. *Was für Vorgaben gibt es von Seiten des Verlags?*

Schrott:

Da gab es keine Vorgaben. Ich habe einfach hingeschrieben: Ich würde gerne Walcott übersetzen.

Zweisprachige Ausgabe:

10. *Hat das Bewusstsein, dass die Übersetzung parallel zu den englischen Gedichten veröffentlicht wird, Ihre Vorgehensweise beeinflusst? Befreit diese Vorstellung den Übersetzer oder schüchtert sie ein?*

Schrott:

Das ist eine große Entlastung. Ein Gedicht ist ein musikalisches Ereignis mit einer bestimmten Art der Diktion und Form, die man rekreiren muss. Das ist kein rein philologisches Vorgehen. Das Original daneben zu wissen, erleichtert die Legitimation der Nachdichtung.

Praxis:

11. *Ich habe einige Gedichte aus Midsummer in meinen Seminaren zu karibischer Literatur gelesen. Ist Ihnen, der Klang der Gedichte wichtig, wenn sie laut gelesen werden?*

Schrott:

Ja, selbstverständlich! Da sind beispielsweise die Silben: Die Sprachmelodie ist relativ zu den jeweiligen Möglichkeiten der Sprache. Walcotts Tempo steht relativ zum Tempo des Englischen. Das muss nun entsprechend an das deutsche Tempo angepasst werden. Da gibt es kein absolutes Metrum – jedes Adagio steht relativ zum Rhythmus der jeweiligen Sprache: daher halte ich silbenzählende Übertragungen, die alles 1:1 wiedergeben wollen, für naiv. Bestätigung habe ich auf der gemeinsamen Lesungsreise mit Walcott bekommen,

bei der erst Walcott vorgelesen hat und dann ich, immer im Wechsel. Da habe ich gesehen, dass ich es richtig getroffen habe. Diese Bestätigung bekommt man nur sehr selten.

Als ich Walcott auf seine Reime angesprochen habe, hat er so getan, als hätte er das gar nicht bemerkt. Aber es kann ja gar nicht sein, dass die ganz zufällig entstanden sind, bei der Anzahl von Reimen. Das ist vielleicht auch ein Stück weit Eitelkeit.