‘Geldshark Ares god of War’: Ideology and Time in Literary Translation

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Introduction

Literary source texts, the translator’s raw materials, are often crucially time-marked. A text may have aged so much that its language, the content and allusions of its text world, or even its genre strike the translator as markedly non-modern, thus creating an ‘external’ time-gap between source and target text (translation). Or the source writer may deliberately use language, content, or genre to allude to or site the text world in a previous time, thus creating an ‘internal’ time-gap within the source text. Thus, when a translator reads the Watchman’s speech at the opening of Aeschylus’s *Agamemnon*, she or he knows that, externally, the language is distinct from Modern Greek, long-distance communication by signal-fires manned by watchmen was a feature of the pre-modern world, and a music, dance, and recitative retelling of a well-known legend was a standard literary genre of the time. She or he also knows that, internally, Aeschylus in the fifth century BCE is telling a story set eight or nine centuries earlier.

Time-marking, therefore, can be central to a source work’s textuality, which means that translators must choose how to reflect this marking in the target work. Translators’ choices can be seen as forming a spectrum from extreme archaization (ageing) to extreme modernization (updating). The most common are:

- ‘Time-matched archaization’: target language and text world are of a similar time to those of the source. For example, an English translation of a Dutch Renaissance poem might use language and imagery from Herbert and Donne.
- ‘Superficial archaization’: retaining the past text world; linguistically, inserting occasional ‘past’ signals (such as *verily*) in an otherwise modern target idiom.
- ‘Minimal modernization’: retaining the past text world; target language and often genre are broadly present-day, without being marked for a specific year/decade.
- ‘Violent modernization’: using linguistic signals and even text-world items that are specifically marked as present-day. For example, James Holmes translates Charles d’Orléans’s fifteenth-century ‘amoureux nouveaux’ (li-

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..."new lovers") as ‘rockers’, and ‘chevauchent’ (lit. ‘ride’) as ‘revving their engines’.

Such decisions prompt readers to construct representations of translated texts that are both temporal and cultural. Thus when Holmes translates ‘amoureux nouveaux’ as ‘lusty yonge bacheleres’ (time-matched archaization), he sites the poem in a medieval love-poetry tradition familiar to target readers; and when he translates them as ‘rockers’, he signals its modern cultural relevance. Moreover, translation norms (that is, culture-specific conventions governing literary translation) prompt translators and readers to prefer certain representations and disprefer others. For recent English translations of older literary works, for example, minimal modernization is the most favoured strategy; archaization is largely disfavoured, and violent modernization meets with a mixed reception. In other words, the main UK/US norm advocates concealing time-markings, rather than highlighting them by foregrounding the historicity or present-day relevance of the translated literary text. This is only a convention, however: no discourse, even minimal modernization, can stand outside time.4

Some choices which translators make may be random and ungrounded. Others, however, may be based on a socially shared system or systems of ideas, values, or beliefs. These we term, with no pejorative undertone, ‘ideologies of translation’. They may convey translators’ attitudes towards the source text and writer, towards the source and target culture, towards their own role as mediators, and more besides. Moreover, literary communication via translation is affected not only by translators’ ideologies, but also by those of others in the writing, publishing, and reading process. And ideologies of translation can have wider cultural and even social effects: for example, in helping shape attitudes between countries.3

Investigating ideologies of translation, therefore, can give important insights into the nature of literary communication, as many studies attest.4 Time-marking in translation, however, remains remarkably under-researched (a fact probably linked to the stigmatization of strategies that highlight it). Hence there has been little analysis of how ideology might influence translators’ strategies for tackling time-marked literary works and readers’ opinions of the resulting target texts. This is the aim of the present study. It first assembles data from theory and previous research; there follows a case study of seven English translations of Aeschylus’s *Agamemnon*; finally, implications for a model of translation ideology and time-reference strategies are discussed.

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4 See, for instance, *Apropos of Ideology*, ed. by Calzada Pérez.
Ideology and the Time Factor

This section lays a grounding for the interaction of ideology and time-reference in the translation of literature. It draws on two types of source: published translation scholarship, and analysis of the ideological implications underlying fourteen randomly selected ‘metatexts’ (reviews, essays, and translator statements) which discuss time-reference strategies in the translation of verse, song, and drama. The latter were gathered via a Google search using the algorithm (translation or translating) AND (archaisation or archaising or modernisation or modernising).¹

Ideologies, being socially shared systems, are created and maintained through discourse: with ideologies of literary translation, for example, by making and performing, reading and hearing, promoting and discussing translated works. This discourse takes place within tighter or looser social networks, such as those involving source writer, translator, publisher, critics, and general readers. And as individuals and groups have multiple ideologies, ideologies may stand in dominant, subservient, or transgressive relationships with one another.

Ideologies informing the use and reception of translators’ time-reference strategies appear to fall into three types, closely interlinked though they may be: the socio-political, the intercultural, and the aesthetic.

The socio-political encompasses politics proper, gender, sexuality, etc. For example, in his English translation of the Bosnian poet Mak Dizdar’s Kameni spavać [Stone Sleeper] for a bilingual edition published by Kuća Bosanska in Sarajevo in 1999, the present author saw clear political motives in his decision to reproduce Dizdar’s alternation between modern and medieval diction. Just as Dizdar’s ‘polychrony’ aimed to site 1960s–1970s Bosnian identity in a single medieval heritage, so the translating and publishing team saw themselves as defending a unitary model of Bosnian identity against extreme nationalist threats in the 1992–95 independence war. However, the archaized elements of the translation (e.g. ‘Therefor he never ne soghte him deth’) were specifically singled out for negative comment by most English-language reviewers.

As for the metatexts, only one refers to socio-political ideologies. According to Patrick Rourke’s review of a 1994 staging of Aeschylus’s Agamemnon in Robert Auletta’s translation, Agamemnon ‘arrives on the scene in a chariot shaped like a Gulf War Humvee [. . .], steps down and roars to the chorus “put away your cameras: you’ll have to find another photo opportunity”’.² This presumably translates his appeal to Clytemnestra μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην ἡματαιετὲς βόαµα προσχάνης ἐµοί (‘nor like a barbarian man I mouth a grovelling cry at me’

¹ A subset (excluding texts about liturgical translation) of the metatexts interrogated in Jones and Turner, where the focus was on pragmatics and translation norms. Spelling variants with ‘-iz-’ were also searched. Most texts occurred in the first thirty hits; after sixty hits, the few new relevant texts gave no new insights, and searching was stopped.
Unlike another critic he cites, Rourke sometimes admires such violently modernizing techniques. However, he rejects this ‘throwaway line’ not because he disagrees with the parallel between the Greek attack on Troy and the first US attack on Iraq, but because the original speech ‘is centered more on Agamemnon’s self-portrayal rather than the Chorus’ distortions of him’.

In both these cases, when marked time-reference strategies (those other than the minimally modernizing norm) aim to convey socio-political context, critics judge them in aesthetic terms. Stone Sleeper appears to transgress a modern English literary norm that stigmatizes archaization, whereas Agamemnon appears to transgress a translation norm stipulating that the target text should be faithful to the source’s underlying dramatic intent. As systematized, value-laden belief systems, aesthetic norms are of course ideological in their own right: an issue we return to below.

Translation is an intercultural act: theorists stress its role in constructing, supporting, or contesting, images of other cultures and power relations between cultures. Images of the source culture are also bound up with those of the source writer. Thus reproducing Stone Sleeper’s polychrony aimed, in his translator’s eyes, to promote Dizdar as a major, highly individual voice in European poetry, and hence Bosnia as a country of high culture rather than genocidal barbarism.

Though the metatexts focus on representations of the writer and work, these also have intercultural implications. Minimal modernization, even if this involves deleting or radically changing source-text discourse features perceived as archaic, is usually favoured because it stresses the writer’s universal appeal. Equally, however, it may be seen as an assertion of intercultural power, valorizing the image of the artist favoured by the target language/time at the expense of that favoured by the source language/time. Sheila Murnaghan, for example, uses a Western late-modernist aesthetic critique of an ancient text to reconstruct Homer in the Romantic/modernist image of lone genius. She describes Fagles’ minimally modernizing translation of the Iliad as ‘paring away verbal excesses and tedious formal conventions that hamper the drive and momentum’ of Homer’s discourse, thus ‘stressing the monumental composer as an autonomous genius who, rather than being constrained by the conventions of traditional oral poetry, mastered and transformed them’.

Dominic Keown, discussing his team’s English translation of works by the medieval Catalan poet Ausiàs March, reports how they also initially favoured minimal modernization and other simplification techniques, but for another purpose: to ensure that this unknown and stylistically forbidding poet was

8 'Throughout this article, source text and line-numbering are from Aeschylus, Agamemnon, ed. by Eduard Fraenkel, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950). Word-for-word English glosses, with syntax normalized where necessary for comprehensibility, are by the present author.


10 Sheila Murnaghan, ‘Homer, Iliad, Translated by Robert Fagles’, Bryn Mawr Classical Review, 02.01.05 (1991) [http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/bmcr/1991/02.01.05.html] [accessed 6 March 2002].
read. Thus they aimed to give March a foothold in a powerful target culture (English) that is notoriously resistant to accepting translated poets, no matter how respected they may be in their own language. Later, by contrast, they adopted superficial archaization and other fidelity-based techniques (for example, reproducing March’s idiosyncratic syntax), for the opposite purpose: to stress March’s individuality within his own culture and time.¹¹

A post-structuralist argument holds that writers’ and readers’ internalized models of aesthetics and literary communication are shared social constructs, and therefore ideologies, specific to the times, places, and power groups within which they were made.¹² In the metatexts, for example, a commonly voiced belief is that ‘plain communication’ is the best way to make an older text acceptable to a target audience. Involving minimal modernization and other techniques of textual simplification, plain communication privileges accessibility and fluency, whether or not the source text is accessible and fluent to a modern source audience, or was so to its original past source audience.

Central to any aesthetic/communicational ideology of translation held by translators or readers is a model of equivalence. Equivalence is a notoriously slippery term, potentially encompassing the many different ways in which a source and a target text may resemble each other: hence any model of equivalence prioritizes some types of similarity and downplays others. The ethic of plain communication in the translation of older literary texts prioritizes similarity between semantic/pragmatic content as received by the original (rather than the modern) source audience and the modern target audience. Conversely, it deprioritizes what Venuti calls ‘the remainder’: that is, those aspects of textuality which are not part of the bare semantic/pragmatic message, such as dialect, slang, internal or external archaism, literary style, and poetic form.¹³ Of course, deprioritizing such features fits in with a Western late-modernist aesthetic which recommends that the differences between literary and non-literary language should be reduced to a minimum. Therefore plain communication should almost certainly be seen not as a neutral reflection of the source text, but as an assimilation of the source text into the ideological framework of late-modernist English-language literary norms.

As seen with Dizdar, Aeschylus, and Homer above, aesthetic/communicational considerations often interact with socio-political and intercultural considerations in influencing translators’ strategies and readers’ opinions of these strategies. This interplay of ideologies is stressed by Venuti, who sees ‘domesticating’ translation into English, which prioritizes plain communication as defined above, as reinforcing the global hegemony of modern English-language cultural norms. Thus adapting Homer to fit modern Anglo-American norms would confirm the native English reader’s sense of cultural supremacy in two ways: by preventing the reader from experiencing alien cultural forms and discourses (such as the oral bardic tradition), and by presenting Anglo-American

¹¹ See Keown, ‘Some Reflections on the Translation of Ausias March’.
forms and values as universal because they are seemingly used by one of the
greatest Ancient Greek poets. Instead, Venuti advocates a deeper literality
(‘foreignization’), particularly at the level of the stylistic remainder, and/or ex-
ploring the non-standard resources of the target language (‘minoritization’) to
produce a different but analogous remainder. Here, archaization, archaizing-
modernizing polychrony, and violent modernization are among the techniques
at the translator’s disposal. In such a way, Venuti argues, the target text can
subvert the hegemony of the UK/US target culture and open readers to the
foreign Other.¹⁴

Venuti’s model has also been sharply criticized. In that foreignizing ap-
proaches might make reading more difficult, they have been characterized as
elitist.¹⁵ Another criticism is that paralleling domestication/foreignization with
hegemony/resistance is simplistic: ‘No single translation strategy can be asso-
ciated with the exercise of oppression or the struggle for resistance.’¹⁶ In order
to assess these claims, and others made above, let us now turn from secondary
to primary sources: from theory and criticism to translated texts themselves.

‘Agamemnon’

Rourke’s review of Aeschylus’s Agamemnon has indicated that classical drama is
a potentially fruitful genre for investigating the interaction between translators’
time-reference strategies and ideology. Here we explore seven other, randomly
chosen, mid-twentieth-century English translations of the same work.¹⁷ We
focus on one song by the Chorus, the collective backbone of any ancient Greek
drama.¹⁸ Here the old men of Argos bemoan the deaths in the Trojan War, now
that Clytemnestra has told them Troy has fallen and Agamemnon is returning.
The source version and a literal gloss of the lines supplying quotes for our
analysis run as follows:¹⁹

\[ \text{ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ᾿ Ἄρης σωµάτων} \]
\[ \text{καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν µάχηι δορὸς} \]
\[ \text{περιωθὲν ἐξ Ἡλώο} \]

See Lawrence Venuti, The Translator’s Invisibility (London: Routledge, 1995); id., ‘Transla-
Maria Tymoczko and Edwin Gentzler (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press,
(p. xx).
¹⁷ Randomly chosen in that they comprised the recent editions available on the researcher’s
library shelf, they are: The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, trans. by Louis MacNeice (1936) (London:
Faber and Faber, 1967); Aeschylus, Agamemnon, trans. by Philip Vellacott, in The Oresteian Trilogy
(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1956), pp. 41–102; Agamemnon, trans. by Robert Fagles (1966), in
The Oresteia (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), pp. 99–172; Agamemnon, trans. by Hugh Lloyd-
Jones, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970); Frederic Raphael and Kenneth McLeish,
Agamemnon, in The Serpent Son. Aeschylus: ‘Oresteia’ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
1979), pp. 1–52; Tony Harrison, The Oresteia (first performed in 1981), in Theatre Works 1973–
¹⁸ Oliver Taplin, ‘The Chorus of Mams’, in Tony Harrison: Loner, ed. by Sandie Byrne (Ox-
¹⁹ Omitted line numbers follow Fraenkel’s edition. Normalization of English syntax means that
source and target lines do not always map onto each other.
As in the last section, we begin with the socio-political, where the source extract may be interpreted as voicing two clusters of issues. One is overt: anger at the slaughter of war, resentment that this is brought about by one’s rulers, and a sense that this injustice will be righted in the end. The other is implicit: the gendered subtext behind the male Chorus’s complaints that soldiers have been slain ‘through another’s wife’, and their fears that the news of Troy’s fall may be a brief and unreliable women’s rumour. Aeschylus, by assigning these ideologies to the Chorus, constructs them as popular (and male) opinion. But by using an archaized, liturgical, and high-poetic remainder ‘altogether remote from ordinary speech’, he sites them in a mythic past that is distanced ‘far from the world of ordinary reality’, though this may well also have lent them universal rather than local significance.

Predictably, minimal modernization is the most popular overall approach at
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the level of vocabulary and grammar. It is used by five of the seven translators, such as Hugh Lloyd-Jones (ll. 445–48):

And they lament them, praising this man
as skilled in battle,
and that as having died a noble death amid the slaughter—
‘for the sake of another man’s wife.’

This tends to stress the modern relevance of the ideologies mentioned. However, the claim mentioned earlier, that minimal modernization also stresses the work’s universality, also appears justified. This seems to be not only a question of norms, i.e. that present-day English readers and listeners conventionally regard minimal modernization as transparent and timeless. Readers/listeners of literary translation are usually aware of its dual status as a text that reports on another text; and language is only part of the dramatic experience. Thus the modern audience’s knowledge that Aeschylus, his characters, and his events are of the Ancient Greek world, particularly if encouraged by costumes and props, could well replicate the mythic distancing experienced by an Ancient Greek audience. In other words, the external time-gap between ancient text world and the modern outer world may compensate for the loss of internal time-effects from the target text. The cumulative effect may well indeed be to stress the universality of the overt socio-political ideologies in the text: war as evil and social justice as inevitable. Equally well, however, it would absolutize the male characters’ stereotypes of women as femme fatale or gossip.

A sixth translation, part of Eduard Fraenkel’s bilingual scholarly edition, uses superficial archaization, as in ‘For the gods are not unwatchful of those who cause much bloodshed’ (ll. 461–62, emphases added). The distancing this gives, however, can lessen both the modern and the universal impact of the pity-of-war and social-justice messages, particularly if archaized target-text forms (which may, as argued earlier, include calques of source-text discourse) give different pragmatic signals from those in the source text. Thus, in modern English, ‘much’ in positive statements is a feature of highly formal register, and the standard implicature of the calqued litotes ‘not unwatchful’ is ‘fairly watchful’, as compared to ‘very watchful’ in ancient Greek. Contrast here Frederic Raphael and Kenneth McLeish’s minimally modernizing ‘The gods’ eyes are open while the butchers sleep’ (p. 16): though formally different, this replicates the pragmatic intensity of the source. As the overt ideological messages (pity of war and social justice) are as much a matter of pragmatics as semantics, Raphael and McLeish are almost certainly more effective in conveying the ideological subtext to modern audiences.

Distancing through archaization often also holds true for the gendered subtext, as in Fraenkel’s ‘fast-dying does a rumour voiced by women perish’ (ll. 486–87). Sometimes, however, archaization may introduce generic-male forms that actually strengthen the target text’s gendering, as with Fraenkel’s ‘kinsmen’ for φίλοισι ‘loved ones’ (l. 441).

The seventh translator, Tony Harrison, uses both violently modernizing and superficially archaizing techniques as part of a radical translating approach that also involves strategies such as expansion (writing significantly more than in
the source) and explicitation (making explicit what is implicit in the source). Violent modernization is less prominent than archaization in the play as a whole, but the following excerpt (pp. 200–01) shows how the two techniques interact with each other and with other elements of his dramatic style:

Geldshark Ares god of War
broker of men’s bodies
usurer of living flesh
corpse-trafficker that god is—
give to war your men’s fleshgold
and what are your returns?
kilos of cold clinker packed
in army-issue urns
wives mothers sisters each one scans
the dogtags on the amphorae
which grey ashes are my man’s?
they sift the jumbled ashes and cry:
my husband sacrificed his life
my brother’s a battle-martyr
aye, for someone else’s wife—
Helen, whore of Sparta!

The play was first performed in 1981, at a time of increasing Cold War confrontation. Harrison’s violent modernizing creates associations with two contemporary wars then widely seen as bloody and futile: Vietnam (‘army-issue’, ‘dogtags’) and Iran–Iraq (‘battle-martyr’). Significantly, ‘army-issue’ and ‘dogtags’ are expansions to Aeschylus’s text rather than interpretations of it, indicating that Harrison is deliberately highlighting and augmenting the present relevance of Aeschylus’s anti-war message.

Harrison’s explicitations of the historical and religious background mentioned earlier, as when expanding ‘Ares’ into ‘Ares god of War’, could also be seen as violently modernizing strategies, in that they aim to compensate for the modern audience’s assumed ignorance of the ancient text world. This, like Louis MacNeice’s minimally modernizing conversion of Ares into ‘War’ (p. 27), also appears anti-elitist in intention: knowledge of Greek mythology is by no means lost in the modern-day West, but is acquired through education rather than popular culture. Here, the ideology is aesthetic/communicational rather than socio-political per se, and confirms earlier claims that modernization is often part of a wider anti-elitist drive.

In the case of gender, however, ideologies of socio-political content, source-text representation, and literary communication combine to interesting effect. By adding ‘wives mothers sisters’ and marking the following quatrains as quotes, Harrison introduces female voices at this point, where the other translators retain Aeschylus’s gender-neutrality or even add male markers. This might be seen as a modernizing vs. archaizing contrast, between Harrison’s post-feminist deconstruction and the other translators’ confirmation or even strengthening of the play’s gendered subtext: that of the generic male’s fear of the socially

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unfettered feminine, as personified by Helen and Clytemnestra, vamp and harridan. Harrison’s deconstruction, however, is undermined by his addition of the misogynistic ‘Helen, whore of Sparta!’ to these purportedly women’s lines.\textsuperscript{22}

Harrison also makes marked use of superficial archaization. Unlike Fraenkel, he bases this not on the conventional references to Early Modern English now characterized as Victorian, but on more idiosyncratic references to Old English. Harrison uses two techniques: neologized compound nouns built on Old English patterns, such as ‘fleshgold’, and Old English alliterative lines such as (ll. 462–66):\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{align*}
\text{Furies the trackers} & \quad \text{fulfilling the bloodgrudge} \\
\text{trip the transgressor} & \quad \text{tread him into the ground} \\
\text{blown up and bloated} & \quad \text{rubbed out into nothing}
\end{align*}

This appears to push Harrison’s text world, and thus its ideological messages, into an atavistic literary myth-time in a manner that parallels Aeschylus’s original text.

At first sight, this might seem to corroborate Woodcock’s criticism that ‘the timeless verities of existence elegantly elaborated in his beloved classics’ rob Harrison’s ‘snarling invectives against an unjust and unequal society’ of modern-day impact.\textsuperscript{24} Significant for Harrison’s style, however, is the combination of archaizing and modernizing techniques, even in the same lexical item. ‘Geldshark’, for instance, creates a formally Old English compound using the Old English element ‘geld’ for ‘gold’ (as in ‘Danegeld’) and the modern vernacular ‘shark’ (as in ‘loan shark’). Similarly, ‘battle-martyr’ couples modern Islamic reference with Old English compounding, thus providing a modern cultural context for the archaic ideology, lost to the West since the First World War, of death in battle as a social honour. The overall result is a powerful merging of modernity and distant past which both updates and mythicizes the ideological messages in the text.

The above discussions have already touched on representations of the source culture and writer, again showing how different ideological drives are often interlinked. Modernization (especially violent modernization, as with Harrison’s use of ‘dogtags’) domesticates the ancient Greek culture to a certain extent by representing it as having crucial points of similarity with the audience’s culture. Significantly, however, Harrison also explicitates concepts such as ‘Ares’ and ‘someone else’s wife’; and ‘dogtags’ is followed by the qualifier ‘on the amphorae’, which immediately foreignizes the image as a whole by explicitly signalling its Ancient Greekness.

This ideology of validating the foreign culture in its own terms, in fact, applies to all seven translations: even the minimally modernizing translations which, from earlier discussions, might have been expected to impose target-culture


\textsuperscript{23} Jones and Turner, pp. 163–64; Spencer, p. 50.

values. ‘Erinyes’ (l. 462), for example, which few modern theatre-audience members would recognize, is left unchanged by two versions (Fraenkel and Lloyd-Jones); as both are study texts, this is perhaps unsurprising. The other five convert them to the more common ‘Furies’; but no translator explicates them, even though they are probably less widely known than ‘Ares god of War’.

At the most, three translators expand the original text with an allusion to the Furies’ behaviour: for example, ‘The Furies swoop’ (Raphael and McLeish).

As for the images of Aeschylus himself, the modernizing translations (including Harrison’s modernizing-archaizing hybrid) do not disconfirm the observation made earlier: that modernizing strategies universalize the source writer’s status. The discourse of the only consistently archaizing translation (Fraenkel), by contrast, has echoes of Milton: ‘Ares [. . .] sends from Ilion to the kinsmen what has felt the fire’, for example. This validates Aeschylus’s status by stressing not so much his universal appeal, but his place early in the historical grand narrative of Western literature, by alluding to an English literary canon seen as forming a later phase of that narrative.

Turning finally to aesthetic/communicational ideologies, the minimally modernizing translations seem broadly driven by the ethic of plain communication with the target audience, as predicted earlier. There is a tension between this and the opposite ethic, however: that of representing the texture of Aeschylus’s poetic discourse. Indeed, all translators attempt the latter. With two versions (Raphael and McLeish, Lloyd-Jones), this is merely a matter of text layout (shortened lines, with or without capitalization). Lloyd-Jones also explicitly marks the play’s speech/song-and-dance structure by means of italic/plain text and headings (‘strophe 3’, ‘antistrophe 3’, and ‘epode’ for the passage analysed here). This archaization at the level of theatrics, coupled with normalization at language level into non-poetic, minimally modernized discourse, may again be seen as reflecting a drive to bring the target reader/listener (in Lloyd-Jones’s case, the English-reading college student) to the text rather than vice versa. Three other translators poeticize the text using conventional features of the late-modernist armoury, such as alliteration and vowel rhyme (MacNeice, Fagles) or full rhyme (Vellacott). Only two translators (Fraenkel, Harrison) attempt to reflect something of Aeschylus’s internal archaization at a linguistic level. With both these translators (even Fraenkel), as the quotes above show, archaization is part of a wider poeticizing drive. Only Harrison, however, appears informed by the ideological aim of letting the audience ‘return to Aeschylus’s Greek poetry’, via minoritizing features such as the Old English discourse described earlier.

Conclusion

Finally, it is worth summarizing what general indications may be drawn from the theoretical claims and translation examples examined here. Any model of time-reference strategies and ideology in translation would consist of several factors, as follows:

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- Internally, a source text refers to one or more historical and/or contemporary times; externally, there may be a significant time-gap between source and target text.
- The translator uses strategies along the archaization ↔ modernization spectrum to allude to the resulting 'diachronic context' (Jones and Turner, p. 163): any time or times between the internal 'time before' the source text and the precise year/decade of translating. This may result in complex and multiple reference (as in Fraenkel’s *Agamemnon*, where a twentieth-century CE translation uses seventeenth-century CE diction to portray a fifth-century BCE play describing events of around 1200 BCE).
- These strategies may affect some or all aspects of textuality (vocabulary, grammar, discourse, text-world content, etc.).
- Various agents participate in the act of literary communication, such as source writer, translator, editor/publisher, reader/audience.
- Agents’ writing strategies and interpretations are partially conditioned by ideologies, which appear to fall into three interlinked groups: the socio-political, the intercultural, and the aesthetic/communicational.
- Some ideologies (particularly aesthetic/communicational) may have norm or non-norm status, influencing how writers, translators, and readers/audiences write and/or interpret text.
- Underlying relationships and power gradients between target and source culture/writer/work vary: for example, whether the source culture is seen as unknown and alien, or as part of the target culture’s wider literary heritage.

The different factors in this model interact in complex ways. Hence any generalizations are likely to be tentative; and the claims of some theoreticians that there is a simple correlation between strategies and ideological effects appear unfounded.

Minimal modernization, for example, is seen by its proponents as stressing the universality of the text and writer. But how far it forces the text into the aesthetic/communicational norms of the target culture and time (i.e. domesticates, in Venuti’s terms) or validates the text and writer’s place in the source culture and time (i.e. foreignizes) appears to depend on other factors. Among these are the underlying relationship between the cultures concerned, and the aspects of textuality modernized. Thus, as we saw with some *Agamemnon*, when vocabulary and grammar are updated but devices such as poetic discourse are not modernized away, and the source text/writer/culture carries high status in the target culture, audiences appear to be guided into the source-culture world rather than have their own world confirmed. However, the more an ideology of plain communication leads translators to delete aspects of the stylistic remainder which they see as archaic (e.g. conventional bardic phrasings in Homer’s *Iliad*), the more the source-culture world or its writer will actually have been reshaped to fit the norms of the target culture and time.

Archaization, it seems, can validate the source work, particularly (as Venuti’s theories predict) if it is part of a minoritizing drive to reproduce the source’s textual richness while keeping a clear semantic/pragmatic message, as with Harrison’s *Agamemnon*. But archaization of syntax and grammar alone may make
the semantic/pragmatic message harder for an audience to grasp, thus weakening the impact of the source text’s socio-political ideologies. By calquing target discourse on earlier target-culture works (as with Fraenkel’s Miltonian *Agamemnon*), archaization can stress the common ground between both cultures. But again, the status of the source text/culture in the target culture is important: UK/US readers/audiences may be readier to accept archaized translations of already canonical writers (such as Aeschylus) than of writers who are unknown or seen as outside the grand narrative of European and English literature (such as Mak Dizdar and Ausiàs March).

Moreover, translators rarely use just one strategy. Thus Harrison’s *Agamemnon* uses violent modernization together with superficial archaization, where the former stresses the modern-day relevance of the text’s socio-political messages and the latter stresses their timeless, mythic quality. And time-reference strategies may reinforce, complement, or oppose other strategy types (such as explicitation or expansion in Harrison’s *Agamemnon*) in terms of their ideological underpinning or effects.

The three subaspects of ideology also interact in complex ways, reinforcing or countering each other’s effects. Thus, as we saw with ‘put away your cameras’ in Auletta’s *Agamemnon*, an aesthetic/communicational norm that allows the updating of stage works permits a translation strategy of violent modernization. This can stress the source text’s own socio-political ideologies and/or add socio-political references to the target text world. But the intercultural positioning this implies (validating the source culture and/or reimaging the text as a target-culture artefact respectively) is often judged in aesthetic/communicational terms: as to whether it meets a translation norm of underlying fidelity.

Moreover, just as one strategy may have various ideological effects, depending on other factors in the context of literary communication, so one ideology may underlie various strategies and even various approaches on the domestici-ating ↔ foreignizing spectrum. Thus most of the translators examined here seemed driven by the translation ethic of validating source writers in their own right, whether by ‘releasing’ them from the context of their space and time or by stressing this context. To many translation scholars, ‘partiality [. . .] is a necessary condition of the act’ of translating (Gentzler and Tymoczko, p. xviii), and the same may said of the act of reading translations. As we have seen, it is relatively rare that this partiality, and the ideologies that may underpin it, lead to the source text and writer being betrayed or misunderstood. Far more often, translators and readers/audiences appear committed to literary translations that communicate effectively while conveying what they see as the essence of the source work and writer.