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TRANSLATIO AND MEMORY AS CULTURAL METAPHORS. ANALOGIES, TOUCH POINTS, AND INTERACTIONS*

Abstract

The article discusses the interpretative and methodological potential inherent in the synergetic application of two categories paradigmatic for cultural studies and cultural literary theory: *translatio* and memory. It is argued that both categories, viewed as cultural metaphors and combined with each other, may serve as a complex model for the interpretation of cultural phenomena. The starting point for developing such a model is the insight that both concepts have undergone a similar semantic evolution in the discourse of cultural studies, and may now be represented as radial categories with a “prototypical centre” and metaphorical-metonymical extensions, *translatio* going far beyond interlingual “translation proper”. Next, some further contact zones between *translatio* and memory are outlined: firstly, their functional analogies, which are reflected in parallel metaphors depicting memory and translation (such as the “palimpsest” and the “devouring of the Other”). Secondly, the metaphor of the “dissemination of memes” is discussed as the most promising idea that brings together the discourse of translation studies with reflection on the mechanisms of collective memory, drawing attention to ethical and political aspects of both *translatio* and memory. The image of the “dissemination of memes” is also a point of departure for its derivative metaphors of “translation as memory transmission” and “memory as a space of *translatio*”. The conclusion is that the interactions between memory and *translatio* that engendered these metaphors could be

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put to use in comparative investigations. Finally, some representative research problems are formulated based on various configurations of literal and metaphorical meanings of both terms. It is emphasized that the coming together of divergent yet close pathways of translation and memory studies could be of mutual benefit to both fields of inquiry.

Keywords: *translatio*, collective memory, metaphors, translation studies, memory studies, cultural turn

1. Translation and Memory Studies and Their Respective Discourses: On Divergent Paths

Contemporary humanities have elevated *translatio* as one of the central categories of cultural studies and cultural literary theory.¹ Other categories, such as text, image, space, thing, translation, or memory, have also attracted greater scrutiny and deeper reflection from researchers. These categories are believed to have brought paradigmatic shifts (actual or potential) in the perceptions of phenomena of culture. These concepts have inspired a number of “turns”, which are now occurring or, rather, are being proclaimed in parallel and independently of each other. Each and every of these turns in the humanities has engendered its own methodology, which now encroaches on new territories, becomes dominant in the readings of “texts of culture”, and aspires to have universal applications (cf. Simon 2002: 225). However, no attempts have been made (a few exceptions aside) to combine different terminologies into a more complex model for the interpretation of phenomena of culture. In this article, I would like to emphasise the potential inherent in the synergetic application of two categories that are paradigmatic for cultural studies: *translatio* and memory. I am furnishing a theoretical proposal of my own, with a focus on a few selected aspects of *translatio* and *memoria*.²

Cultural studies in Germany recognised memory as a *Leitbegriff* (a key concept) a long time ago, and the theoretical investigations of Jan and Aleida

¹ *Translatio* (in italics) is used deliberately for translation in a broad sense. In my theoretical proposal, *translatio* is different from “translation proper”. The differences between the two concepts will be explained further in the article.

² I have described this model in more detail in the following monograph: Lukas 2018, where I have also tested its application in particular analyses focused on literature and translation.

Assmann were instrumental in the process.³ In practical terms, the “mnemonic” turn in cultural studies is well reflected in broad, often international and interdisciplinary research projects on the collective memory of various nations, communities, and regions.⁴ Sadly, publications resulting from these projects fail to touch upon translation at all. However, several proposals, in this respect, were furnished by comparative and translation scholars, who suggested that the combination of memory and translation is not only possible, but also promising. This is the right orientation because the focus on translation in memory studies and on insights into the selected aspects of memory in translation studies would open up new prospects for these two fields of inquiry.

The fact that both concepts have undergone a similar semantic evolution in the discourse of cultural studies may serve as a starting point for investigations into translation and memory. The two notions derive from different disciplines: translation initially belonged in the realm of linguistics and literary studies, whereas memory attracted scrutiny from psychologists, philosophers, and sociologists. Following the cultural turn in the 1980s, *translatio* and memory were exposed to metaphorical-metonymical rereadings⁵, and their respective semantic fields drifted markedly closer to each other. The examination of various semantic aspects of memory and translation can allow a more detailed understanding of the structural analogies and touch points between both concepts and the prospects for their interdisciplinary fusion,

³ According to Jan Assmann, “everything points to the fact that the concept of memory constitutes the basis for a new paradigm of cultural studies that will shed light on all the interconnected fields of art and literature, politics and sociology, and religion and law” (Assmann J. 2007: 11). Vera and Ansgar Nünning (2008: 13) described this prediction as “prophetic”. Similarly, Doris Bachmann-Medick (2016: 279) has noted the emergence of a mnemonic turn among other “cultural turns”.

⁴ The following research projects could be mentioned: “Cultural Memory and Cultures of Remembrance” (“Kulturelles Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen”, carried out in 1997–2008 at the University of Gießen as part of the Sonderforschungsbereich 434), a synthesis of “national sites of memory” (e.g. “Deutsche Erinnerungsorte”), also in bilateral configurations, e.g. “Polish-German sites of memory” (see Traba 2008: 18). In 2014, a seminal Polish encyclopaedia on memory, *Modi memorandi. Leksykon kultury pamięci* (Saryusz-Wolska, Traba 2014) was published.

⁵ As a result, a common word could become a scholarly term (see Bachmann-Medick 2016: 32). For the sake of accuracy, it must be noted that the metaphor of memory had been used much earlier: in the writings of the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs and the German art historian Aby Warburg in the 1920s. The cultural turn only sensitised historians and cultural scholars to this particular figure; it also made it easier to recognise and describe the notion of memory in the writings of the forerunners of contemporary memory studies.

which may also offer an opportunity for the rethinking and rearranging of various meanings of the concept of *translatio*.

2. Memory: Between Synecdoche and Anthropomorphisation

Memory is similar to translation in that it invites both literal and metaphorical interpretations. Scholars tend to focus on individual memory. However, the ability to remember and forget, in its fundamental literal meaning as something pertaining to the individual, is also attributed to various groups, be they families, generations, or nations. Currently, memory attracts interest from researchers in the humanities and social sciences (cultural studies, sociology, and psychology), medicine (neurobiology), and even technology (IT and machine memory). This only demonstrates the interdisciplinary character of the phenomenon, which transcends the boundary between natural and human sciences, as set out by Dilthey (see Erl 2011a: 94), or the distinction between the “natural” and the “man-made”.

In memory studies, three types of memory are distinguished: **individual** (organic and neural), **supraindividual** (social and collective, one of its types being communicative memory: memories transferred from one generation to the other in a family or other community varied in its age structure), and **cultural** (“external” to human beings because recorded in different types of media). Cultural memory is composed of texts, images, and rituals that are typical of a particular group and defining of its identity (see J. Assmann 1988: 15), i.e., knowledge objectivised in media and symbolic forms (see Bering 2001: 329). Aleida Assmann describes this type of memory as storage memory (*Speichergedächtnis*) as opposed to functional memory (*Funktionsgedächtnis*), i.e. symbolic practices which are intended to consolidate knowledge through its regular repetition (see A. Assmann 2009: 130–142). Therefore, apart from certain relatively stable content recorded in the “archive”, cultural memory may also contain certain culturally determined contexts and social forms intended to transfer this content (see Nünning 2008: 239). As such, it implies interpersonal communication. According to Aleida Assmann (2006: 34), cultural memory emerges through complex transformation: individual or generational experience must be separated from an experiencing self and penetrate transindividual cultural memory only to be internalised by subsequent individuals through media and symbolic practices.

Arguably, the concept of *memoria* and its semantic complexities (highlighted above) may be assumed to be a **cultural metaphor**, which can be represented as a **radial category** with a “prototypical centre” and metaphorical-metonymical extensions. This model is based on the findings offered by Astrid Erll, who points out that selected figures that try to capture the nature of memory are metonymies rather than metaphors.⁶

The concept of *memoria* has a prototype in neural memory, while phenomena related to collective memory are **metaphorical extensions**, or, as Erll would argue (2011b: 113), mental shortcuts. Expressions such as “the memory of architecture”, “the memory of a place” (likewise, *lieux de mémoire*, as defined by Pierre Nora 1989), and “the memory of literature” can also be treated as metaphors, or more accurately, as anthropomorphisations to a second degree. These expressions attribute quintessentially human qualities to spaces, natural phenomena, and artefacts, while suggesting that the images of the past and the past experiences recorded in these media belong in the “memory” of a community, an abstract set which is also exposed to anthropomorphisation.⁷ For the sake of accuracy, it must be mentioned that Nora’s “sites of memory” were challenged in their metaphorical qualities. Roma Sendyka (2013: 220) describes this term as a metaphor that “[has spun out of] scientific control”⁸ and penetrated into colloquial usage. However, the exemplifications of *lieux de mémoire* furnished by Nora are not metaphors, which are ambiguous by nature, but allegories, i.e., tropes that hint at one unambiguous reading (see Sendyka 2013: 222).

That said, “culture as a phenomenon of memory”, a formula inspired by Aby Warburg, is a metaphor (see Erll 2011a: 97). In this light, “cultural memory” would be an ultimate metaphor of a discourse focused on *memoria*, which engenders the following derivative metaphors: “the memory of literature”, “the memory of architecture”, or “the memory of images” (cinematic

⁶ Cf. a model by Erll (2011b: 112), who depicts “collective memory” in its two distinct meanings: metonymical and metaphorical. The model was adapted into Polish by Czachur (2018: 13).

⁷ This may sound paradoxical – for, how can one anthropomorphise a community, which by its very definition is already a group of people? This ostensible contradiction in terms was resolved by Aleida Assmann, for whom no community (or an institution, for that matter) is endowed with a human brain, which enables the very phenomenon of memory. Nevertheless, a group can develop a memory with signs, symbols, texts, memorials, rituals, etc. (see A. Assmann 2002: 186).

⁸ Unless indicated otherwise, quotations from Polish have been rendered into English by the translator (B.S.).

and painterly). This highlights the fact that mnemonic content is inextricable from the medium in which it is coded, while the properties of a particular medium (e.g. a photograph or film tape) co-shape the memory recorded in it.

Astrid Erll in turn offers a reading of Maurice Halbwachs's "social memory" as a **metonymical extension** (2008) of prototypical *memoria*, which she describes in literal terms as an individual memory shaped by socio-cultural determinants, the word "collective" hinting at its metonymical, or more accurately, synecdochical import. Incidentally, some terminological clusters featuring the word "memory" invite both metaphorical and metonymical readings. Accordingly, the notion of family memory may be considered a metonymy, as it is composed of memories that span several different generations. Suffice it to say, this kind of memory is not a sum total of the autobiographical memories of the parents, grandparents, and grandchildren, given the fact that intergenerational transmission fails to record each and every episode remembered by individual family members. Family memory is more of a shared space, or an intersection of various individual collections of memories. Conversely, individual memory is but a section of intergenerational memory, and it serves as its synecdochical representation. At the same time, metonymy is inextricable from metaphor in the notion of "family memory". This is because individual memories passed on to younger generations create a certain whole, which can be described only in metaphorical terms: as an abstract entity of a higher order and of a quality different than the autobiographical memory of an individual.

Presented above, the metaphorical and metonymical extensions of prototypical *memoria* usually defy easy categorisation as "pure" metonymies or metaphors: they harness both mechanisms for the purpose of categorisation and description of socio-cultural phenomena. Since different types of memory overlap and are intertwined with one another, they cannot be described as discrete categories. Accordingly, the derivative metaphors presented above ("the memory of literature", "the memory of film", etc.) expand the meaning of the original metaphor ("cultural memory"). "Sites of memory" are the function and manifestation of social memory, which in turn overlaps with national memory (according to Nora's monoethnic approach). The complexities of the semantic field of *memoria* and the vagueness of its particular categories are perfectly reflective of the multiple entanglements of family memory. This type of memory emerges exclusively through intergenerational transmission, which makes it communicative memory. As demonstrated by Harald Welzer and his colleagues (Welzer,

Moller, & Tschuggnall 2003: 97–98, 108), such transmission is based on the products of culture: symbols, stereotypes, and ready-made narrative and visual patterns deriving from popular literature, film, and other media representations, which makes this type of transmission cultural in nature. Whenever a family story is told over a photo album, one may easily notice how family memory and the memory of the medium overlap with each other.⁹ Moreover, memory processes are now progressing at different levels in a parallel fashion (cf. Saryusz-Wolska 2011: 85). Whereas Jan Assmann argues that cultural memory emerges whenever immediate oral transmission is no longer possible, the latest research suggests that, with the arrival of modern media, cultural memory often precedes communicative memory,¹⁰ which only blurs the boundary between individual, communicative, and cultural memories (cf. Horstkotte 2009: 22).

The metaphorical understanding and description of *memoria*-related phenomena produces a major methodological difficulty, which, according to Saryusz-Wolska (2011: 24), arises due to inaccurate terminology and overlapping boundaries in research on individual and collective memories. Saryusz-Wolska challenges the interdisciplinary nature of *memoria* (which is investigated by a number of independent disciplines, each of them having their own methodology and rarely engaging in a dialogue with one another, see 2001: 22–23); she also debunks the very possibility of “the mnemonic turn”: memory, as an inherent part of all existing paradigms (linguistic, pictorial, spatial, etc.), “is not really a new category that would help one to redefine the cultural realm and explain it anew” (2001: 67). Ansgar Nünning is sceptical about “the mnemonic turn” (2003: 3): “a new paradigm

⁹ The critics of Aleida Assmann’s early concept of cultural memory point out that, since different types of *memoria* are inseparable from one another, she may be producing more entities than is necessary. One case in point is Welzer (2011: 15), who contends that “collective memory” and “cultural memory” can be separated only at an analytical level, the two concepts actually overlapping with each other.

¹⁰ The way the events of September 11 “travelled” across various memory formations exemplifies the inversion of Assmann’s hierarchy of memories. Terrorist attacks, to which many New Yorkers can provide their eye-witness accounts, were immediately mediated and “translated” into visual symbolisations of cultural memory, well before entering the realm of communicative memory. As a collective trauma, these events soon grew to become “the site of memory” on a global scale and the object of common commemorative practices. In his novel, *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*, J. S. Foer shows how representations of the events of September 11 simultaneously function in several dimensions of collective memory, which function, through manipulation and censorship, to preclude individuals from remembering their individual harm (see Lukas 2018: 377–380).

of Kulturwissenschaft could well evolve around the concept of cultural and collective memory". In his forecast, the preposition "around" opens up a space around the issue of memory to be filled with categories that are yet to facilitate the understanding of mnemonic phenomena. Arguably, Nünning's and Saryusz-Wolska's insights into the interdisciplinary nature of *memoria* may encourage researchers to extend a range of disciplines within which to investigate memory. One such discipline is translation studies, as we know them after the cultural turn (more on the subject below). Tools developed by translation studies may prove useful in the analysis of the mechanisms which underlie the functioning of *memoria*. The metaphorical approach to translation, which I will present in more detail below, is a prerequisite in this respect. Doris Bachmann-Medick (2016: 175–211) describes translation accordingly: as a meta-theoretical concept that engenders the translational turn in cultural studies. In a nutshell, this turn adopts the tools of translation studies for the purpose of exploring other disciplines, which only strengthens their theoretical frameworks and interpretations of particular phenomena in their fields.

3. *Translatio* and "Translation-like" Transformations of Texts of Culture

Translatio is similar to memory in that it now functions as a cultural metaphor, thereby transcending Jakobson's division into interlingual, intralingual, and intersemiotic translation. In its broadest, metaphorical sense, *translatio* involves all kinds of transfer processes (see Stolze 2013: 25): between ethnolects, between variants of the same language, but also between different discourses, between a natural language and non-verbal codes, and even between communities. The metaphor of *translatio* figures in post-colonial, intercultural, and transcultural studies, where it describes both a dialogue between cultures and the process of negotiating hybrid "contact zones" that are shared by "the Self" and "the Other" (see Bachmann-Medick 2004: 162). The concept of cultural translation was used in cultural studies as a synonym of diaspora, dislocation, and migration, which only shifts the meaning of the word "translation" away from its prototypical centre, which is essential to linguistic approaches to translation (see Wolf 2012: 50). The fact that the metaphor of *translatio* is ubiquitous in areas as different as psychoanalysis, sociology, anthropology, medicine, genetics, and IT, which

was aptly pointed out by the Swiss literary and cultural scholar Rainer Guldin (2016), shows that *translatio* is but a metaphor even for translation studies and textual analysis. All these disciplines harness the metaphorical potential of the word *translatio*, which is inherent in its Latin etymology: they describe intellectual, natural, and technical phenomena and processes that involve the simultaneous transfer and transformation of content in space (real or virtual).

Some critics (e.g. Koller 2011: 5) argue that the very notion of translation has become vague even for translation studies. This resulted from the cultural turn and centrifugal trends within the discipline. Mary Snell-Hornby (2006: 65, 163) mentions two orientations that are now believed to have had the greatest effect on the redefinition of the concept of translation. Firstly, skopos theory (propounded by Katharina Reiss and Hans J. Vermeer) has given translators so much liberty in transforming the original, for the purpose of a translation that would be functional and acceptable for its target readers, that translators can now offer a free adaptation of the source text. Secondly, descriptive translation studies have championed the term *rewriting*, which encapsulates not only interlingual translation, but also various transformations of texts of culture: popular paraphrases of literary classics, adaptations for stage and screen, and anthologies and synopses for various audiences (also within one language), all of them resorting to manipulation that serves the existing centres of power. As such, the cultural turn in translation studies transcended the paradigm of philology: it shifted reflection on translation into the realm of politics and ethics, and ethnology and sociology, while supplementing traditional categories such as equivalence and fidelity with the notions of representation, transformation, otherness/alterity, cultural difference, and power (see Bachmann-Medick 2016: 176). In the end, as Magda Heydel succinctly puts it (2009: 23–24), “translation in its broadest sense is regarded as a key mechanism for the creation of culture, and translators as hardly innocent contributors in the creation of identity processes, power struggles, and military and cultural conflicts”.

The notion of *rewriting* inspired the Estonian semiologist Peeter Torop to offer the concept of **total translation** (2008: 70–71). Total translation involves all types of activities (both translation in its narrow sense and meta-communicative activities such as reviews, press articles, releases for the general public, etc.) that are intended to introduce a text into a foreign culture. As he elevates total translation as a universal model for culture-forming activity, Torop adopts prototypical translation proper as his starting

point.¹¹ The German translation scholar Lavinia Heller (2013) has a similar idea in mind. Her model of *translatio* (*Translation*) also accounts for reception, i.e. it goes beyond mere interlingual translation (*Übersetzung*), in order to cover the impact of a particular translation on its receiving culture. Heller argues that there is no need to develop this model from scratch, as it is implicit in the classical theories of Gideon Toury or Hans J. Vermeer. Similarly, the German-based Turkish translation scholar Dilek Dizdar derives translation in its broader sense from the twenty-first-century rereadings of Derrida, Vermeer¹², and even (and quite surprisingly) the Leipzig-school classic Otto Kade (see Dizdar 2006: 284). These suggestions only show that earlier findings of translation studies, including those adherent to the linguistic paradigm, offered budding insights into translation as we know it after the cultural turn.

Nevertheless, the discourse of contemporary translation studies features two opposing orientations. On one hand, German translation scholars (Jörn Albrecht and Werner Koller) champion the return to linguistic roots and the use of the term *Übersetzung* with an exclusive reference to linguistic phenomena.¹³ On the other, American translation scholars seek to expand the word “translation” onto a whole spectrum of phenomena, including not only language, but also discourse, culture, images, and mental processes and experiences that call for verbal expression. As pointed out by Bassnett (2011: 1) and Steiner (2004: 1), for hermeneutics, the very act of understanding is tantamount to translation, which makes each and every individual a translator, even if they are monolingual.

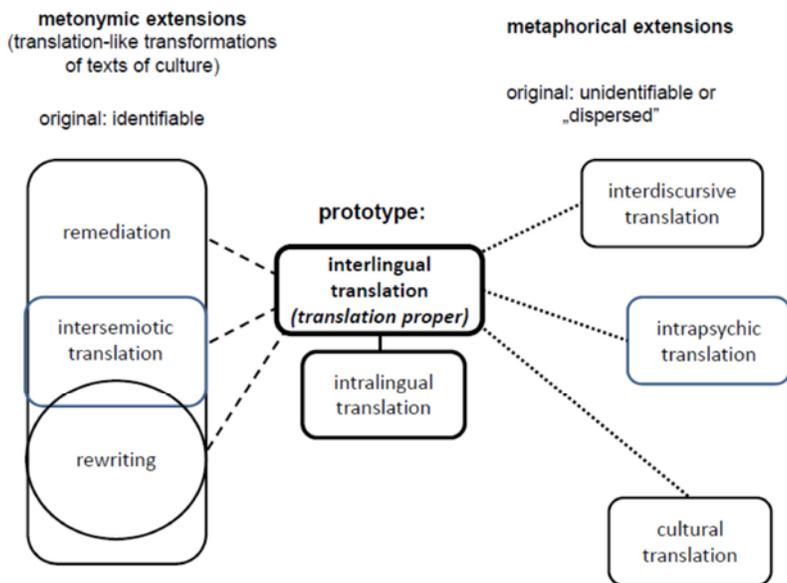
With multiple outlooks on and definitions of *translatio*, my contention is that it can be represented as a **radial category with a prototypical “centre” and blurred “edges”**.¹⁴ This is reflected in the following model:

¹¹ Dizdar offers a slightly different outlook (2009: 90). She challenges the opposition between “mechanical” and ostensibly imitative translation in its narrow sense, which would attract interest from translation scholars, and “creative” translation in its broader sense as an object of study of cultural scholars or sociologists.

¹² According to Dizdar, Vermeer was careful not to draw a clear boundary between what is and what is not translation (see Dizdar 2006: 302).

¹³ This view is also expressed by Jörn Albrecht (2005: 21), and most notably Werner Koller in his handbook (published many times). See an introduction to the eighth edition (Koller 2011), pp. 5–16.

¹⁴ The same outlook was offered by: Chesterman and Arrojo (2000: 153); Schreiber (2004: 269); Tymoczko (2006: 22–23; 2007: 83–100); Prunč (2012: 28).



In my model, the prototype of *translatio* is that of Jakobson's interlingual translation. I contend that this prototypical category should be called *Übersetzung* (translation proper in German), whereas *translatio* should be treated as a superior category and used in reference to metaphorical and metonymical extensions of the prototype.¹⁵ Intralingual translation could also be placed near the centre. Firstly, because intralingual translation involves language itself rather than non-verbal media or codes.¹⁶ Secondly, because

¹⁵ This distinction is implicit in languages such as Polish or German where native items of vocabulary (*przekład/tłumaczenie*, *Übersetzung*) coexist with borrowings (*translacja*, *Translation*). Admittedly, these double names can produce confusion and unnecessary ambiguity. However, they may also help to dispel some of the terminological inaccuracies. For the German language, this idea was offered by Alfonso de Toro (2003: 28). He suggests that the word *Übersetzung* should be used exclusively for translation in the traditional understanding of the word, focused on its linguistic, semantic, and pragmatic aspects, whereas the word *Translation* should be used for describing communication processes in the realm of anthropology, culture, philosophy, the media, etc. The English language offers no implicit distinction of this kind.

¹⁶ As pointed out by Marta Kaźmierczak (2017: 43–44), in his typology of intertextuality, Henryk Markiewicz already distinguished between "stylistic, intralingual, and interlingual translations". At the same time, he described intersemiotic translation as a distinct category, namely, that of "transformation" (see Markiewicz 1989: 222–223).

the translation of a dialectal or historical utterance involves a full rendition of the original, which is easy to identify.¹⁷

The original for the **metonymical extensions** of prototypical translation can also be identified. This group encompasses cultural phenomena that, in translation studies, are often given names with chiefly overlapping meanings. Furnished by descriptive translation studies, the concept of rewriting overlaps with Jakobson's intersemiotic *translatio*. Both categories are interlocked with the term remediation, which the translation scholar Siobhan Brownlie borrows from cultural memory theorists (Astrid Erll). Remediation is a transformation of a phenomenon, artefact, or historical event into a mediated form (e.g. a chronicle, literary text, translation, film, photograph, television broadcast, web-page, museum exhibition, but also historical reenactments), which are then "recycled" by other media, thereby circulating in the memory of a particular community (see Brownlie 2016: 76–77). Despite certain semantic differences between remediation and rewriting that Brownlie aptly pointed out¹⁸, the two terms may be considered complementary; they both represent slightly different perspectives on identical cultural phenomena: approaches deriving from translation studies (rewriting) and cultural and media studies (remediation) respectively. In my view, rewriting, taken at face value, elevates translators and accentuates their creative activity. Nevertheless, both terms equally connote a moment of "identity/repetition", which occurs in parallel with "difference/variation". This formula best describes the relationship between a translation or recollection and their "original". Emphatically, all remediations/rewritings are metonymical in nature. Firstly, they supplant the original, to which they are really (and, therefore, metonymically) linked. Secondly, they usually render their pre-text only in part (anthologies being the prime example), as they

¹⁷ Erich Prunč offers a different outlook (2004: 270), as he places intralingual translation at the fringes of the prototypical category of *translatio*. He points out that the boundary between inter- and intralingual phenomena cannot be objectively drawn, as the status of a particular linguistic system (ethnolect vs. language variant) tends to shift throughout history. That is why, arguably, intralingual translation should be placed not too far from the prototypical "centre".

¹⁸ Brownlie argues that in both these words the semantic components of "transformation" and "repetition" differ in emphasis: "[Rewriting] covers a narrower range of phenomena as compared with the multiple genres and media covered by the term 'remediation'. 'Rewriting' also has a different emphasis, as it more strongly connotes change, whereas the emphasis for 'remediation' is on multiple reiteration" (Brownlie 2016: 210).

accentuate some features and neglect others.¹⁹ Rewritings and remediations can be described as **transformations of texts of culture that are similar to translation proper**; this expression suggests that *translatio* may involve a shift in code or medium but it does not have to; it also highlights the shifting and dynamic nature of *translatio*.

The **metaphorical extensions** of the notion of translation share one particular feature: the original cannot be exactly identified, as it takes an elusive and dispersed form, which is not necessarily linguistic at all. Arguably, this category also comprises **intrapsychic translatio** such as the work of memory, that is, the process of remembering and (re)verbalising past experience, including trauma, which is visual rather than linguistic according to psychologists (see Veas-Gulani 2003: 28, 31). **Cultural translation** is located the furthest away from the prototype and is only loosely connected with it. One key question in relation to this phenomenon is who or what is “translated” in the sense of “transfer in space”: people? cultures? systems of values? worldviews?²⁰ This is also where **interdiscursive translatio**, or the transformation of discourse into a particular text, can be found, e.g. into a literary text or vice versa. It can produce a number of different actualisations: monolingual ones or forms that gain in complexity as they have to overcome a language barrier. **Interdiscursive-interlingual translatio** occurs between discourses that function in different ethnolects. A case in point is the transfer of German idealism (reflections by Schelling and Fichte) into French and English empirical philosophy (see Mueller-Vollmer 1998: 12). The difficulty it produces is due not so much to linguistic asymmetries (French and English actually feature the lexical equivalents of German philosophical concepts) as to poor “discursive equivalence”. In this case, the task of the translator is, therefore, to (co)create a relevant discourse in the public space of their target audience. In literature, an example of writing that features interdiscursive-interlingual *translatio* is that of Bruno Schulz, who “translates” the discourse of psychoanalysis (Jung’s theory of archetypes) into the poetic idiolect of his short stories. **Interdiscursive-intralingual translation**, in turn, does not have to transcend linguistic boundaries. It may just as well “translate” the elements of discourses within the humanities into the aesthetic of a literary

¹⁹ The metonymical nature of translation consists in the fact that it represents a source literature and/or culture in a target culture. More on metonymical translation, see Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz (2012).

²⁰ The matter was investigated into by James Clifford (1997), Chesterman (2010: 105–106), and Wagner, Lutter, Lethen (2012: 8).

work written in the same language. Thomas Mann's *The Holy Sinner*, where he offers a travesty of Jung's psychoanalysis, is a case in point (see Lukas 2018: 169–170). Günter Grass parodies Heidegger's phenomenology in his *Dog Years* in a similar fashion (see Majkiewicz 2002: 128–144). As demonstrated by Agnieszka K. Haas (2010: 242) in her analysis of Friedrich Hölderlin's poetry, the concept of intertextuality is insufficient to account for this kind of literary entanglement, since poetical allusions need no particular and more or less recognisable hypotext. *Translatio* may just as well find its original in a discourse "dispersed" in an infinite number of written and oral accounts that operate in a particular communicative community (cf. the entry "Diskurs" in Bußmann 2008: 141).

The metaphorical extensions of the concept of translation could well reach further into the centre, thereby including *translatio* between texts of culture that are entirely non-verbal in nature (e.g. *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a series of piano pieces by Modest Mussorgsky, as a *translatio* of watercolours and drawings by Wiktor Hartmann into a musical code). If Erich Prunč (2004: 267) excludes forms of interaction between **purely** non-linguistic signs from the semantic field of *translatio*, he does so in an attempt at providing an unambiguous definition of *translatio* as an object of study for translation scholars, which requires at least a rough demarcation of its boundaries. While linguistic-based translation studies, which focus on the interlingual prototype of *translatio*, refrain from the analysis of cases such as that of Mussorgsky, Anglo-Saxon translation studies, which are rather unorthodox about the linguistic nature of translation phenomena, accept non-verbal texts of culture as the object of their scientific inquiry.

The conceptualisation of *memoria* and *translatio* (in the linguistic understanding of the word) with a "centre" and metaphorical-metonymical extensions may serve as a starting point for further explorations into the contact zones between the two concepts. Apart from purely functional analogies, which are best reflected in parallel and independent metaphors depicting memory and translation, I would also like to investigate the dynamic between the two concepts. Arguably, one such touch point between *memoria* and *translatio*, a field where they can interact with each other, is provided by the metaphorical concept of memetics.

4. Functional Analogies of *Translatio* and Memory: Metaphors of the Palimpsest and the Devouring of the Other

The most distinct analogy between *translatio* and *memoria* is that either word can denote both a process (the activity of translating or memorising and reminiscing) and its result (a finished translation and a mnemonic trace). Emphatically, neither the translated text nor memorised content are mimetic reflections of the original, but its (re)constructions (of the text or past event) from the present perspective. Therefore, translation and reminiscing are capable of representing the absent. The formula of **repetition with a variation** seems to be their common denominator: both translation and memory are similar to and different from their “originals”.

An insight whereby the activity of translation and recollection consists in repeating the original content while ineluctably transforming it is reflected in a number of analogous metaphors, with which memory and translation have been described since antiquity. They are subordinate to overriding concepts: natural phenomena, abstract notions, or areas and products of human activity, which *translatio* and *memoria* are believed to resemble. Guldin (2016: 36) distinguishes the following source domains for translation metaphors: “art/craft” (e.g. the translator as an actor, conductor, magician, etc.), “space” (e.g. building bridges), “nature/body” (e.g. replanting, blood transfusion), “gender” (stereotypical *les belles infidèles*), and “power” (the translator as a humble servant, translation as competition).²¹ Memory in turn was depicted with the following metaphors: “spatial” (a storage house, library, archive, or

²¹ As pointed out by Balcerzan (2009: 168–172), some of these metaphors are axiological and others are epistemological in nature. The former are deeply embedded in the stereotype of deficiency, the belief in a purely imitative role of the translator, who will never equal the author of the original, their task, like that of the actor, conductor, or copyist, being “merely” to perform or reproduce somebody else’s work of art. These metaphors attach positive value to fidelity and suggest a critical outlook on deviations (“treason”, cf. the stereotype of the “translator-traitor”, deriving from the Italian pun: *traduttore – traditore*). Epistemological metaphors enhance the status of the art of translation (see Balcerzan 2009: 170); they highlight the creative and constructive role of the translator, who builds bridges between different linguistic communities, enriches the native culture with the most treasured elements of the “Other” (“blood transfusion”, “translator-alchemist”), and takes particular care to transfer value to foreign lands (“translator-gardener” or as a ferryman shipping precious freight across the river). Most of these metaphors emerged in the pre-scientific stage of reflection on translation, and they can be attributed to particular authors: writers (Cervantes: translation as the reverse side of the tapestry), philologists (Jakob Grimm: *traducere navem*),

attic), “literary” (a wax tablet, book, or computer), and “temporal” (memory as slumber and awakening, “freezing over and defrosting”, or the “revival” of recollections).²²

One of the images that brings *translatio*- and *memoria*-related discourses together is that of the **palimpsest**. If one has neural memory in mind, the metaphor of the palimpsest reveals the paradoxical nature of the human ability to remember new and erase old content (the latter nonetheless never fully disappears). This feeds into the notion of memory as a “space” with infinite storage capacity. Real places that are affected by traumatic collective memory, e.g. an urban fabric which accumulates the traces of both immediate and distant past (see Huyssen’s insights on Berlin, 2000), are also compared to the palimpsest. Rosemary Arrojo’s (1997: 33) suggestion to compare translation with the process of adding new text onto a fully covered parchment illustrates how a translation and the original showing through from underneath may coexist with each other.²³ The juxtaposition of *translatio* and *memoria* with the palimpsest proves to be extremely relevant and productive. This is best reflected in the fact that Genette’s concept of intertextuality, which draws heavily on the figure of the palimpsest, has become instrumental in a discussion on both translation²⁴ and literature as an “archive” of collective memory.²⁵

philosophers (Schopenhauer: the translator as a copyist, Voltaire: translations, like women, can be either faithful or beautiful).

²² These three types of metaphors were distinguished by Aleida Assmann (2009: 149–178). “Spatial” metaphors depict memory as a room where remembered content is stored in an orderly or chaotic manner. “Literary” metaphors (or “media” metaphors, to be more precise) emphasise the process of recording information. As described by Pethes (2008: 121), they are grounded in images of a communication medium that is contemporary to a particular era; as such, they reflect the way the technology necessary for content recording has developed over time. Those metaphors that Aleida Assmann calls “temporal” (with some inaccuracy) accentuate the effect time has on remembered content, the persistence of recurring memories, and the process of recollecting/reminiscing and its ineluctable distortion of past events and images.

²³ Arrojo’s suggestion was discussed by Snell-Hornby (2006: 61) and Dizdar (2006: 272–273).

²⁴ According to Kaźmierczak (2017: 47), Central and Eastern European translation studies have always been defined by their preoccupation with the intertextuality of translation (in its empirical and ontological aspects). She argues that the creative use of the intertextual paradigm in Central and Eastern Europe is analogous to and just as prominent as the cultural turn in Western translation studies.

²⁵ See intertextuality as “the memory of a text”, a concept propounded by Renate Lachmann (1997: 15) and inspired by the semiotics of culture.

Other joint metaphors for translating and remembering and reminiscing are expressive of an idea that both processes consist in “absorbing” foreign content and transforming it into new and nourishing substances. Hence the emergence of **nutritive metaphors** in translation and memory discourses. This line of mnemonic reflection was reconstructed by Günter Butzer (2005) and Aleida Assmann (2009), who demonstrated a similarity between the mechanisms of *memoria* (remembering, brooding, and forgetting) and metabolic processes (swallowing, digesting, and absorbing salutary and nutritious content and excreting unwanted and superfluous content). The image of memory as a stomach can be traced back to Saint Augustine and the polysemous qualities of the Latin word *ruminatio*. On one hand, rumination denotes the process of chewing food repeatedly and slowly (as by ruminant animals); on the other, it designates focus, meditation, and brooding over past events (see A. Assmann 2009: 166). The “digestive” metaphor emphasises the bodily aspect of organic memory and, as suggested by Butzer (2005: 20), highlights a moment when the self assimilates “the foreign” as “one’s own”.

The same notion feeds into the “nutritive” images of *translatio* as swallowing, chewing, and absorbing foreign content as if it were nourishing food.²⁶ This association emerged in the Renaissance, when the French poet Joachim du Bellay spoke about the “absorption” of ancient Greek literature by Roman translators (see Hermans 2004: 121). A similar insight was expressed by the French translator Marie de Gournay.²⁷ In more recent times, the digestive metaphor returned in a new form, which anticipated the postcolonial turn in translation studies. A case in point is the metaphor of “translation as anthropophagy”, which Haroldo de Campos drew from Oswaldo de Andrade’s cultural anthropophagy (see de Campos 2005; Borowski 2012). De Campos’s idea is embedded in Brazilian culture, a formation colonised, too, with translations from Western European literatures. The metaphor of the translator-cannibal was intended as a counterbalance for a Eurocentric and colonial stereotype whereby the translator is inferior and subordinate to the original author. The figure of anthropophagy subverts this hierarchy in that it highlights the autonomy of the translator and their resistance against

²⁶ This metaphor is briefly discussed by Guldin (2016: 38), based on the findings offered by Hermans (1985, 2004).

²⁷ De Gournay is cited by Bassnett in English translation (1998: 147): in translation, the works of ancient poets “have to be decomposed by profound and penetrating reflection, in order to be reconstituted by a similar process; just as meat must be decomposed in our stomachs in order to form our bodies”.

the colonising proclivities of the “centre” (see Guldin 2016: 40). In positive terms, cannibalism designates the devouring of the body of the Other, which provides the vital force to the cannibal (see Bassnett, Trivedi 1999: 4–5, Snell-Hornby 2006: 60). Accordingly, Brazil, just like other former colonies, would “devour” a literary legacy imposed by its colonisers and “digest” it in translation, which would foster the native and original culture of the country. Translation would therefore constitute an act of affirmation and absorption of the Foreign that is aimed at nourishing, strengthening, and enriching the Self.

The metaphors of the palimpsest and “the devouring of the Other” are different in nature, the former being more culture- and the latter more biology-oriented. The metaphor of cannibalism feeds emotions and value judgements into discourse; however, according to Snell-Hornby (2006: 63), it fails to reflect the creative aspects of the process of translation. The figure of the palimpsest proves to be more productive: it provokes questions about the social and cultural entanglements of translation, while focusing memory studies on the mechanisms behind the formation of the canon in native literature and translation.

5. A Potential Point of Interaction: The Metaphor of the “Dissemination of Memes”

Striking as they are, these joint metaphors of translation and memory chiefly demonstrate that the two categories operate in an analogous way in their respective research fields, with no necessary touch points or interdependencies. The image of **translation as “the dissemination of memes”**, which Hans J. Vermeer (1997) and Andrew Chesterman (2000) propounded independently of each other, offers a greater potential for interaction. The idea brings together the discourse of translation studies with reflection on the mechanisms of collective memory. This metaphor can boast no long-standing tradition like those of “the palimpsest” or “the devouring of the Other”, since the very notion of the meme emerged in the 1970s, when it was coined by the British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, when it was coined as a term analogous to “the gene” (see Dawkins 2006). Memes can be defined as “units of cultural transmission” (Majewski 2014: 222): patterns of information that are replicated and disseminated in the course of cultural evolution the way genes are in biological evolution. Single slogans, notions, inventions, and musical and

literary motifs can become memes (see Laser 2001: 365). They are combined into units of a higher order, namely, meme-complexes, such as scientific theories, ideologies, religions, and also languages (see Chesterman 2009). In contrast to genes, memes are not hereditary but instilled, i.e. acquired by individuals in social interaction through imitation: both in direct communication and by means of scientific knowledge, artefacts, or works of art. As such, they become the content of individual, communicative, and cultural memory. Memes are similar to genes in that they undergo selection and evolution in the process of intergenerational transmission. In this biology-oriented approach, culture in its entirety becomes a memosphere (see Vermeer 1997: 162), while the mechanism of collective memory development is nothing but the struggle of the memes for domination and possible replication (see Laser 2001: 365). Memetics, or “the study of cultural transmission from the evolutionary perspective” (Majewski 2014: 223), would therefore become the theory of collective memory of some sort.

Consequently, the touch point of memetics and translation studies could entail “transfer with modification”. For memes are never copied in direct proportion. Likewise, translation is both similar to and different from the original. The image of a chain of memes that multiply through repetition with a variation is very much akin to a translation series and the metaphor of “the tail of a comet”, which is quoted by researchers from the Göttingen group in their studies (Göttinger Sonderforschungsbereich “Die literarische Übersetzung”). According to memetics, translation studies would be one of the ways to study memes and the circumstances of their transmission, the translator becoming “the agent of memetic evolution” (cf. Chesterman 2009). For translators, as they overcome linguistic and cultural barriers, “spread” a particular type of memes such as texts (see Vermeer 1997: 163) and contribute to the evolution of the collective memory in the target audience of their translations. Accordingly, *translatio* and *memoria* elucidate and redefine each other. As suggested by Magda Heydel, the memetic approach engenders subsequent metaphorical extensions of the interlingual prototype of translation: **translation as memory transmission**. The interaction of the two concepts also works in the reverse order. In so doing, it engenders the metaphor of **memory as a space of *translatio***. As a result, translation would involve work with meaning-forming micro-particles of culture and their repetition, transformation, and propagation in a particular community, not necessarily speaking in a different language. If collective memory in turn is defined as a result of *translatio* practices, then the focus

of attention falls on the nature and purpose of the modifications affecting units of cultural transmission. This also provokes questions about the position of the translator in relation to the centres of power that construct and control collective memory. Is translation ancillary to memory, and if so, how much freedom do translators have to challenge this role? The metaphor of translation as the dissemination of memes allows a conclusion that since both *translatio* and *memoria* have ethical and political aspects to them, the touch point of translation studies and reflection on memory is that of hierarchy and power.

6. The Ethical Aspect of *Translatio* and *Memoria*: Power and the Sacred

The practices of translating and remembering (commemorating) both primarily belong in the realm of the sacred and they are both embroiled in the discourse of power. Translations from the Bible are the earliest, most commonly known, and most often discussed cases of translation practice. Admittedly, fidelity to the original as an overriding and unshakeable principle for translation practice and the ideal of translation as *mimesis* have been thoroughly revisited by translation studies²⁸, and yet these two ideas derive from the experience of translators and their dilemmas while communing with the Word of God (see Tymoczko 2010: 137), or “the sacred original”, which must be “dethroned” as propounded by the founders of skopos theory (see Snell-Hornby 2006: 54).

The sacred dimension of memory in ancient civilisations, especially those predating the era of writing, could be seen in the ways collective memory was cultivated in religious rituals performed by priests. In other cultures, shamans or bards, etc., acted as guardians of memory (see J. Assmann 2007: 54). They were all obliged, just like the translators of the Bible, to thoroughly reconstruct the (oral) tradition of their ancestors. For this reason, ancient religious rituals resembled ancient mnemonics in that they followed the principle of faithful imitation, a literal repetition of

²⁸ Philosophical inspirations, especially those of deconstruction, gave rise to the revision of the depictions of translation as *mimesis*, and they also debunked interlingual equivalence as a socially sanctioned illusion. Cf. a broad discussion of the issue by Pym (2010, chapters 2–3). He defines equivalence as a structure of a faith shared by the readers of a translation, who are confident that the work they are offered is equivalent to some other text.

the remembered “original”, often under threat of execution. At least in principle, ancient and mediaeval chroniclers as “experts on the matters of memory” were also obliged to follow the imperative of fidelity to historical facts. The imperative to remember (*zachor*) in Jewish tradition is also clearly religious in nature. Lee Klein (2000: 129, 141, 145) reveals a number of connections between memory and the sacred as he discusses colloquial words adopted by cultural scholars in their memory discourse and their religious connotations: “witnessing”, “testimony”, “piety”, “ritual”, “mourning”, or “redemption”.

The ethical aspect of memory comes to the fore in the realisation that the practices of recording and commemorating the past are selective in nature: some content is always selected and some other skipped, the latter being doomed to marginalisation and subsequent oblivion. Who and on what grounds selects this content? For collective memory is always pluralistic: it brings together memory discourses of various groups, including minorities, all of which are competing, contradictory, or dissident from official ideology (see Erll 2011b: 116). That is why cultural studies on memory focus on mechanisms whereby the memory of some communities are legitimised and some others’ excluded.

Similarly, translation as cultural practice that is selective in nature tends to be embroiled in politics and ideology. Literary translation often reflects the asymmetrical relations of power, and it enters the area of conflict between a dominant and subordinate culture, which has a bearing on the import and artistic form of a translated text. Either on purpose or purely inadvertently, translators can either perpetuate or challenge the hegemonic discourse in the target language²⁹, which was demonstrated multiple times by postcolonial translation scholars (see Bassnett, Trivedi 1999: 3, Niranjana 1992: 2).

The convergence of *translatio* and *memoria*, in the light of ethical dilemmas and the metaphor of “the dissemination of memes”, can be formulated as the communication of experience: the transformation of neural memory into collective memory through intergenerational accounts, or the *translatio* of communicative memory into cultural memory. The choice of symbolic practices suitable for the expression and recording of the content

²⁹ Translation can develop its subversive potential provided that in translation a translator gives salience to sociolects, historiolects, or other languages of groups that were marginalised, silenced, or doomed to extermination. Similarly, the very choice of a text from outside of the literary mainstream as the original can be read as an act of solidarity with a marginalised or dissident culture (see Venuti 1995: 148).

of archive memory may seem to be similar to the choice of translation strategies, which take account of the horizon of expectation in the target reader (or “the client”, as suggested by skopos theory) and their attitudes to the foreign (language, culture, or literature). Similarly, the process of building memory across generations requires “the translation” of the past into a language to be understood by the translator’s contemporaries. In the ethical and post-colonial context, it is self-evident that collective memory is exposed to manipulation to the satisfaction of its builders and administrators rather than its “target audience”. “The needs of the client” are hardly met by efforts at incorporating hitherto silenced collective traumas or events into official discourse on the past, since participants in those events would rather forget about them. The attitudes of the audience who defy or challenge such a *translatio* are yet to be fully described by translation studies. Nevertheless, few would disagree that collective memory within one generation is largely *translatio*-like in nature: it emerges in the process of negotiating the images of the past and creating a shared “space of translation”, where the contents (often conflicting) of individual memories coexist with one another.

7. *Translatio* and Memory: Touch Points, Interactions, and Synergy

Arguably, the image of “the dissemination of memes” as a starting point for its derivative metaphors of “**translation as memory transmission**” and “**memory as a space of *translatio***” is the most productive touch point of translation and memory studies. The interactions between *memoria* and *translatio* that engendered these metaphors could be put to use in comparative investigations. I will mention several representative research problems that are formulated based on various configurations of literal and metaphorical meanings of both terms. I will also touch upon several pioneering investigations. Their authors have already ventured into a territory shared by memory and translation studies.

The metaphorical understanding of memory seems to provide an inspiring research context for interlingual translation, most notably in its artistic form. For literary translation may be perceived as a process of mediating between cultural memories of different ethnic and/or linguistic communities (see Krysztofiak 2011: 34). *Translatio* as a research category in turn provokes

insights from historians and sociologists on the role of literary translation in the formation of a memory shared by different linguistic communities.³⁰

Translatio in a broader sense (transcending its interlingual prototype) as “a repetition with a variation” and the metaphor of the memory of literature encourage reflection on the way literature “remembers” the paradigmatic universe (Balcerzan 2009: 35) in which it is immersed; the way it “translates” languages and their variants, texts, images, and discourses into literary means of expression. One could invert this relationship and ask in what way a particular community “remembers” literature when they “translate” it into the language of popular culture or non-literary, scientific, and journalistic discourses? What strategies, both private and institutional, regulate the way literary works undergo remediation and circulate in public space? When intertwined with the figure of memory, the metaphor of *translatio* elucidates the mechanisms behind the formation of **the literary canon**: which texts are pushed into “the archive” as a result of metonymical transformations (including censorship, reduction, and devaluation); which are elevated into the realm of functional memory; and which spontaneously transform into sites of memory? What role are translators to play in the process of canonisation? To what extent are they willing and able to give voice to cultural and/or linguistic minorities? Siobhan Brownlie explores these questions in the only monograph to date that strives to bring together dispersed (as she calls them) findings from the interface of translation and memory studies (see Brownlie 2016: XIV). She reveals multiple and complex links between interlingual translation and different forms of individual and collective memory. Brownlie quotes examples from literary translation series, translations of non-literary texts and historical accounts, and written interlingual communication on the Internet. She highlights the productive and affirmative role of translation, which consolidates and strengthens shared memory.

The issue of (un-)translatability, which is one of the major conundrums in the theory and practice of translation studies, can also be transferred onto the realm of cultural studies and their investigations into memory. When applied to individual memory, the formula of *translatio* in a broader sense shifts the focus on the possibilities and limitations of intrapsychic *translatio* (e.g. the verbalisation of trauma) and the transformations of individual memories. For a long time, these issues have been present in psychoanalysis

³⁰ Cf. studies on *translatio* in urban space, e.g. works by Sherry Simon (2014) or the topical issue of *Translation Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2014), titled *The City as Translation Zone*.

and thematised in the relevant literature.³¹ When extending the prototype of memory, it is relevant to ask which contents of individual, generational, and national memories could be preserved in a *translatio* into memories of other individuals or communities and which must remain untranslated, since they capture tabooed collective traumas? Which elements undergo change in “intermnemonic” transmission and why? Where is the *tertium comparationis* for the collective memories of groups with completely divergent histories? Could the topos of untranslatability be also reflective of memory? These considerations are addressed in a monograph by the comparative scholar Bella Brodzki (2007), whose understanding of *translatio* is very much like that of Benjamin: as any activity that gives “an afterlife” (*Überleben*) in memory to the original, be it a text, personal experience, or historical event. Brodzki differs from Brownlie in that she gives salience to the negative aspects of translation: forgetting, bereavement, and trauma, either translated into oral narratives and autobiographies or transferred from one generation to the other.³² In Poland, similar suggestions were offered by Tomasz Bilczewski (2019), who drew links between *translatio* (in both the literal and metaphorical meaning of the word) and the work of traumatised (post-)memory. While bringing together concepts of *translatio* as divergent as that of Freud (*Übersetzung* as a mechanism of repression, or *Verdrängung*) and epigenesis (which accounts for war traumas inherited in somatic form), he uses *translatio* and memory (or more precisely, postmemory) to develop a model for interpreting literary texts that emerged in the shadow of the Holocaust.

Bachmann-Medick (2016: 248) advocates the category of *translatio* as a driving force behind any and all “turns” in the humanities. On one hand, the translational turn in cultural studies manifests itself in the fact that other disciplines benefit from methods “imported” from translation studies (contrary to translation scholars who tend to bemoan the fact that their dilemmas, ideas, and achievements have found little resonance in neighbouring disciplines (see Guldin 2016: 1). On the other, each and every reorientation in

³¹ More on the topic in my book: Lukas (2018), in Chapters VII, VIII, and IX, in which I discuss the literary images of the individual trauma of war in the writings of W.G. Sebald and J.S. Foer.

³² The touch point of the negative aspects of *translatio* and (melancholy) memory was elucidated by Ricoeur (2006: 10), who argues that the translator will always feel “mourning for the absolute translation”, namely, an acute awareness that translation will never be adequate but only equivalent to the original.

the humanities, as argued by Bachmann-Medick, boils down to *translatio* in the metaphorical meaning of the word. Accordingly, a particular term, often a colloquial word, is metaphorised and “translated” into a scientific category. As a result, what once used to be the object of study is now an instrument for research. Memory discourse followed this trend: memory, “translated” into a series of cultural metaphors, to which I would add “the space of *translatio*”, opens up new prospects for the interpretation of phenomena of culture. Arguably, the coming together of divergent yet close pathways of translation and memory studies could be of mutual benefit to both fields of inquiry. For translation studies, the “importing” of mnemonic issues such as different aspects of *memoria*: psychological, sociological, and cultural, etc., as well as the revision of *translatio* as “memory transmission”, could be an invigorating stimulus that reveals interdisciplinary components at the very heart of this discipline, which has always been open to external inspirations (see Bolecki 2009). Conversely, translation studies can contribute its most treasured possession to memory studies, namely, the very concept of *translatio*: precise when formulated in linguistic terms and wide-ranging and flexible when understood as a cultural metaphor.

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