

Translation and Classic American Literature: A Prospect for the Future of American Literary Scholarship

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[Abstract]

This essay overviews the recent development of Translation Studies, exploring the possibility of applying some translation theories to the studies of American national literature, whose origin we can trace back to Goethe's age of World Literature in the early nineteenth century. In so doing, this paper also offers a prospect for the future of American literary scholarship potentially open to other cultures, languages, and people.

Key Words: 19th-C American Literature, World Literature, Translation Studies, Nationalism, Multilingualism

Theorists of nationalism have argued that the establishment of national language is a prerequisite for the building of modern nations (Hobsbawm 51-63; Anderson 67-82). In his now-classic study of nationalism, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, E. J. Hobsbawm stresses that national languages are "almost always semi-artificial constructs and occasionally, like modern Hebrew, virtually invented" (54). In the case

of the United States, English became the most dominant language very early on. From the earliest colonial time through the period of Independence, English-speaking settlers established dominance over non-English-speaking natives and incomers. As a result, English came to be perceived as the virtual national language. The history of the expansion of US territory has roughly coincided with that of the spread of English language.¹⁾ And, in the making of a national language, translation often served as a means for the domestication of indigenous and immigrant languages, literatures, cultures, and peoples.

It may sound ironic that the founding of classic American literature and culture was inseparably tied to translation activities. But translation was demanded and provided at varied occasions and locations in antebellum America. Since the so-called discovery of America, translation had been always a crucial tool for European settlers to communicate with aboriginal people as well as other groups of Europeans. We can consider all the texts on indigenous people written by the Europeans to be a sort of translation. In their cultural tradition, Native American people did not use alphabetic writing systems (Woodsworth 81-3). The translation of indigenous languages into English and other European languages often involved the problematic politics of assimilation and domestication.²⁾ “Virtually all examples of recorded Native American literature prior to the twentieth century were,” Eric J. Sundquist argues, “a combination of transcription and translation, with the attendant potential for misrepresentation, intentional or not, that those processes imply” (*Empire and Slavery* 89).³⁾ In a similar vein, Eric Cheyfitz even claims that “translation was, and still is, the central act of European colonization and imperialism in the Americas” (*The Poetics of Imperialism* 104).

We can also see the prevalence of translation in the sphere of nineteenth-century popular culture. The first half of the century saw the rise of US political and cultural

nationalism and imperialism, later labeled as American exceptionalism. But, on the international level, English was still a minor language, and the United States a minor country. The present-day status of English as a lingua franca grew gradually visible along with the expansion of the British colonies through the nineteenth century, sealed by US economic, military, political, and cultural hegemony in the twentieth century. The situation of the international circulation of literatures and languages was not nearly the same as that of today. There was a significant imbalance in the international trade of publications between languages. The translation of foreign texts into English exceeded by far in quantity that of English texts into other languages. This is almost entirely opposite to the present situation. Translations of foreign texts were popular cultural products for the then-emerging reading public in English-speaking countries. Due to the absence of international copyright laws, numerous European literary works were translated into English, imported oftentimes via Britain and sometimes directly to America (Hale 64-72; Venuti, *Invisibility* 1-42). Colleen Glenney Boggs estimates that “translations from languages other than English and reprints of English works jointly held a market share of 70 percent in 1820 and 30 percent in 1850” (*Transnationalism* 32).⁴⁾ To establish American cultural identity by means of translation was a vital mission in the nation-building project under the still strong foreign influences.

It is, thus, no coincidence that many nineteenth-century American literary writers started their literary careers as translators and critics of foreign literatures. Under the strong influence of German Romanticism, for example, the New England Transcendentalists actively participated in the cultural task of translation. Through his entire life, Ralph Waldo Emerson habitually translated miscellaneous texts from Latin, French, Italian, and German in his journals and used numerous quotes in translation in his writings. *Representative Men* marks his answer to the question of

how to confront prevalent foreign influences, a question with which he had long wrestled since “The American Scholar.” Margaret Fuller was also an avid and able translator. Thanks to her father’s enthusiastic homeschooling, she acquired excellent translation skills and a profound knowledge of the classic languages. She also translated various texts from contemporary German works, including Goethe’s, and wrote a number of reviews of translations of historiographical and literary works, publishing them in the *North American Review*, the *Dial*, and other journals (Zwarg 59-96; Boggs, *Transnationalism* 91-111; Dimock 52-72). Later in her life, she translated Italian newspaper articles to make reports on the state of affairs in Italy and published them as *Dispatches from Europe* in the *New York Tribune*. Her lost last work was said to be titled *The History of The Roman Republic*, which should have been the culmination of her work as a translator, historian, and literary author. Henry David Thoreau edited and translated Eugene Burnouf’s *Introduction a l’Histoire du Buddhisme Indien* and published part of it as “The Preaching of Buddha” in the *Dial*. He had a life-long interest in world literatures, religions, and philosophies, reading numerous translations about them. He is also said to have attempted some translations from Sanskrit himself (Dimock 23-4). Nathaniel Hawthorne, who was outside but close to the Transcendentalist circle, also read many foreign works of history and literature both in the originals and in translation. His collections of juvenile stories, such as *A Wonder Book* (or *Wonder-Book*) *for Girls and Boys* and *Tanglewood Tales*, were adapted from English translations of classical myths. Later in his life, he crossed the Atlantic to stay in Britain, France, and Italy for over six years and was exposed to foreign languages, cultures, and people. Hawthorne’s works indicate his deep-seated ambivalence about the questions of linguistic and cultural translation. Elizabeth Peabody, another influential figure in the literary Transcendentalist movement, the early feminist movement, and the

educational reform in the US, also played a crucial role in translating numerous works of European educational theories, helping the establishment of the modern kindergarten system in America. Herman Melville, a self-educated novelist who did not go to college, was introduced to translation through a somewhat different channel. While his avid reading introduced him to numerous contemporary translations of European works, his journey to the South Seas as a seaman offered him an invaluable opportunity to have contact with a variety of foreign languages and cultures. From his first publication *Typee* to his unfinished last work *Billy Budd*, many of his works register his fascination with foreign languages, cultures, and peoples.

But, unfortunately, I cannot go into a detailed analysis of specific texts in or about translation in American literature, which I must save for another opportunity. In what follows, instead, I will explore the possibility of applying recent translation theories into the study of classic American literature.

I. Translation Studies and American Literary Studies

The recent development of translation theories could allow us to shed a new light on the function of translation in the formation of classic American literature. Translation Studies for the past few decades have illuminated the ways in which translation functions as an agency of ethnocentric, nationalistic, colonialistic, and imperialistic monolingualist ideologies. Lawrence Venuti among others traces the dominant discourse of fluency in English translation back to the seventeenth century, revealing the invisible workings of Anglo-American ethnocentrism, nationalism, and

imperialism in various literary translations into English. He claims that “the translator’s invisibility at once enacts and masks an insidious domestication of foreign texts, rewriting them in the transparent discourse that prevails in English and that selects precisely those foreign texts amenable to fluent translating” (*Invisibility* 17), adding: “The translator’s invisibility is symptomatic of a complacency in Anglo-American relations with cultural others, a complacency that can be described—without too much exaggeration—as imperialistic abroad and xenophobic at home” (17). From a similar but more specifically feminist and postcolonialist perspective, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls our attention to the colonialist and imperialist ideologies implicit in today’s quick and easy translations from third world women’s non-English writings, which often ignore the cultural, linguistic, and rhetorical particularities—“the mark of *untranslatability*” (*Teaching Machine* 195)—of those texts.⁵⁾

Against this violent translation of other languages and cultures, some translation theorists have explored the possibility of what they call the ethics of translation. In the oft-cited essay “Des Tours de Babel,” which is based on Walter Benjamin’s influential essay, “The Task of the Translator,” Jacques Derrida likens translation to marriage, saying that “a translation espouses the original when the two adjoined fragments, as different as they can be, complete each other so as to form a larger tongue in the course of a *sur-vival* that changes them both” (190-91). Drawing on Benjamin, Derrida, and the German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher, Antoine Berman defines “bad translation” as that “which, generally under the guise of transmissibility, carries out a systematic negation of the strangeness of the foreign work” (5). But “the ethical aim of translating,” which he claims is “the essence of translation,” is “to be an opening, a dialogue, a crossbreeding, a decentering” (4). Based on Berman’s concept of ethical translation, Venuti also distinguishes “a domesticating method [of translation], an ethnocentric

reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values” from “a foreignizing method, an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (*Invisibility* 20). Following Berman’s lead, Venuti claims that “insofar as foreignizing translation seeks to restrain the ethnocentric violence of translation, it is highly desirable today,” and “[f]oreignizing translation in English can be a form of resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism, in the interests of democratic geopolitical- relations” (20).⁶

But to simply categorize literary authors and translators in antebellum America as ethically right or wrong from our present point of view would not benefit our current study of translation, language, and literature in a time of globalization. Nor does it seem easy to make a clear-cut distinction between domesticating and foreignizing translations in theory or practice.⁷ While Venuti’s concepts of foreignizing and domesticating translations seems a good theoretical model for critiquing the political and ethical issues of linguistic and cultural translation, we should also reemphasize the importance of the Benjamin-Derrida line of argument. We tend to consider translation to be a simple act of translating a language into another. In this definition of translation, we presuppose the existence of self-evident differences between one language and another. On the Benjamin-Derrida model, on the other hand, translation comes before linguistic differences. Translation is a performative act that actually invents the differences between languages, making those differences look as if they have originally and essentially existed. Translation is the very site for producing differences. In this vein, Homi Bhabha’s call for rereading Benjamin’s above-mentioned essay, “The Task of the Translator,” as “a theory of cultural difference” (*Location* 235), can help expound the meaning of translation here. The ultimate aim of translation in Bhabha’s reading of Benjamin is to “makes all cultural

languages ‘foreign’ to themselves” (235): “In the act of translation the ‘given’ content becomes alien and estranged; and that, in its turn, leaves the language of translation Aufgabe [task], always confronted by its double, the untranslatable—alien and foreign” (235).

What seems more promising and productive is to reconceive translation as a textual space of conflicts and tensions between different languages and cultures—a “translation zone,” in Emily Apter’s term, a site “in-translation,” “belonging to no single, discrete language or single medium of communication” (*Zone 6*). Tracing back to its early conception, indeed, we can review translation as a phenomenon that goes beyond a mere linguistic act. According to Noah Webster’s *An American Dictionary of English Language*, the first comprehensive dictionary of American English, the verb “translate” is defined as: 1) to “bear, carry or remove from one place to another”; 2) to “remove or convey to heaven, as a human being, without death”; 3) to “transfer; to convey from one to another; 4) to “cause to remove from one part of the body to another; as, to translate a disease”; 5) to “change”; 6) to “interpret; to render into another language; to express the sense of one language in the words of another”; 7) to “explain.”⁸⁾ The latitude of Webster’s definition of translation suggests that the general concept of translation in the early nineteenth century was not as limited to the mere linguistic transference of words from a language into another as in the present day.

For the past few decades, we have also seen the upsurge of new Americanist literary studies conducted from transnational, transatlantic, postcolonial, postnational, hemispheric, planetary, and world-literary perspectives.⁹⁾ But, despite (or because of) our ever-increasing interest in the borderless literary studies, we still do not have many studies focused on classic American literary works in terms of translation.¹⁰⁾ In *European Revolutions and the American Literary Renaissance*, one of the earliest

examples of transatlantic American literary studies, Larry Reynolds illustrates the ways in which the European revolutions in 1848-49 influenced the shaping of the American literary Renaissance. He argues that “the critical tradition in American literary studies has emphasized the national features of the literature it has treated, thus obscuring the substantial international influences” (xii). Reynolds’s point here resonates with above-mentioned translation theorists’ complaint about the nonexistent status of translations and translators in modern literary histories. In *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, one of the earliest works of contemporary translation studies, André Lefevere argues that “[l]iterary histories, as they have been written until recently, have had little or no time for translations, since for the literary historian translation has had to do with ‘language’ only, not with literature,” which exhibits “another outgrowth of ‘monolingualization’ of literary history by Romantic historiographers intent on creating ‘national’ literatures preferably as uncontaminated as possible by foreign influences” (39). It still strikes us as surprising how long American literary scholarship has ignored the crucial role that translation must have played in the formation of American national literature, culture, and history. The problem is that classic American literary authors, the object of our study, are in some ways the very “Romantic historiographers” who contributed to the invention of national cultural identity. Consequently, we have recurrently ended up in a tautological celebration of American cultural exceptionalism. And the obscuration of translation—the monolingualization of a nation’s (literary) history—is a necessary process for the obliteration of omnipresent foreign influences.¹¹⁾

While scholars of comparative literature have been active in translation studies, few Americanists have paid attention to the issue of translation in classic American literature. Eric Cheyfitz’s *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan* is one of the earliest studies on the crucial role that

translators played in the colonization and imperialistic expansion of the United States. In investigating a variety of texts from *The Tempest* to *Tarzan*, Cheyfitz emphasizes how US imperialism “historically has functioned (and continues to function) by substituting for the difficult politics of translation” that encourage dialogues between different cultures “another politics of translation that represses these difficulties” (xxii). Wai Chee Dimock’s *Through Other Continents: American Literature across Deep Time* also deals with a similar topic, though from a perspective different from that of Cheyfitz. Dimock traces the influence of foreign literatures on American literature, and vice versa, back to ancient world histories, proposing the new concept “deep time” to highlight “a set of longitudinal frames, at once projective and recessional, with input going both ways, and binding continents and millennia into many loops of relations, a densely interactive fabric” (3-4). Dimock is right in pointing out that American transcendentalists, like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau, are all enthusiastic translators of foreign literatures. But she does not consider the role that their translation activities may have played in the promotion of American nationalist and imperialist causes. As Paola Gemme suggests, it would be hard to ignore the correlation between Fuller’s version of the history of the Italian Revolution portrayed in her *Dispatches from Europe* and her nationalist idea of the United States as the vanguard of universal world history, which Sacvan Bercovitch calls “American Jeremiad” (Gemme 89-106; Bercovitch 3-210). Nor does it seem possible to entirely deny the affinity of Emerson’s universalist view of world histories and religions with the antebellum expansionist discourse called Manifest Destiny. Some of us may well have a misgiving that Dimock’s repositioning of American literary authors as part of world literature might be a new model of cultural imperialism that seems to come hand in hand with the expansion of global capitalism. This reminds us, for example, of “world music,” a

music genre popular in the US music industry since the 1980s. It is true that American writers created their works under the strong influence of other world literatures and cultures. But she quickly bypasses the problems of domesticating translation possibly inherent in any cultural encounter, especially in an asymmetric power relation between one culture and another.

I am not alone in addressing an objection to Dimock's method of study. Trish Loughran, for example, writes: "But does [Dimock's] model of transhistorical, deterritorialized community differ from the nineteenth century's own faith in the ability of texts to erase the claims of spatial and/or temporal distance—and if so, how? On this question, Dimock is quiet, and she is quiet in large part because she is not measuring the distance between diverse sites so much as teleporting between each one instantaneously" ("Transcendental Islam" 59). Paul Giles's comment, which Loughran also mentions, summarizes the problem of the excessive optimism prevalent in recent "hemispheric" literary studies, which is indeed "simply replacing nationalist essentialism predicated upon state autonomy with a geographical essentialism predicated on physical contiguity" ("Commentary: Hemispheric Partiality" 649). Giles's statement also resonates with Emily Apter's comment about the recent revival of World Literature, that she has "serious reservations about tendencies in World Literature toward reflexive endorsement of cultural equivalence and substitutability, or toward the celebration of nationally and ethnically branded 'differences' that have been niche-marketed as commercialized 'identities'" (*Against World Literature* 2).

In this connection, it should be noted that Dimock's use of the word "planetarity" significantly differs from that of Spivak, from whom Dimock originally borrows the term. Spivak says that "planetarity" is "perhaps best imagined from the precapitalist cultures of the planet," and "[the planet's] alterity, determining experience, is mysterious and discontinuous—an experience of the impossible" (*Death of a*

Discipline 101-2). The scope of Spivak's argument is no less planetary than that of Dimock. But as her reading of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* suggests, Spivak's study is rather focused on the continuity between varied traumatic historical events in the diaspora that happen in different times and spaces.¹²⁾ Spivak also claims that a "death in the birth of a story" in a diasporic experience "is not to translate or pass on," and is, "therefore, an aporia or unbridgeable gulf," going on to say: "Yet it is passed on, with the mark of untranslatability on it" ("Acting Bits/ Identity Talk" 792). With this attention to the untranslatable, Spivak's view of translation makes a stark contrast with Dimock's cosmopolitan optimism, which presupposes the possibility of the easy transcendence of language barriers in translation.

Colleen Glenney Boggs's *Transnationalism and American Literature* will be a good example of the application of recent translation theories to American literary studies.¹³⁾ Boggs claims that "American writers conceptualized and practiced translation as American literature, and vice versa, that they understood American literature as a form of writing that was always in translation" (6). While her main argument seems convincing, I disagree with her statement that "English did not take precedence over or erase those other languages, but functioned as a *lingua franca* that facilitated their coexistence in a fractured transatlantic nation" (6). We might well wonder if there might not be many indigenous languages that have already disappeared as a result of English linguistic imperialism in America. It is worth noting that her argument about the *lingua franca* status of English in America seems almost identical with the nationalist-cosmopolitan rhetoric of World Literature that Goethe in Germany and Emerson in America employed. By highlighting the multilingualness of some relatively unknown works and the monolingualness of some canonical works, Boggs implicitly privileges multilingualism over monolingualism. Consequently, she ends up reifying the differences between one language and

another, falling into linguistic essentialism, which her argument initially intended to avoid.¹⁴ When it comes to language, we cannot escape the fundamental contradiction between what we say and what we do, which Joshua Miller calls “the tautological conundrum that the only way to problematize language is with language itself” (“American Languages” 127).

II. A Prospect for American Literary Studies in the 21st Century

What, then, can we do if, realistically, English is the only common language available for our study of American literature? What I think is necessary and possible for us to do is to deconstruct the self-same identity of a language and illuminate the process of the identification, pointing out the violence inherent in the differentiation of one language from another through the task of translation. What is at stake is, therefore, not necessarily the distinction between the multilingual and the monolingual. Eventually, there is no great difference between multilingualism and monolingualism in that both positions tend to presuppose the identity of a language as something natural and essential. To think beyond this multilingual-monolingual dualism, we might draw on Gilles Deleuze’s concept of “a foreign language within language,” which is “neither another language nor a rediscovered patois, but a becoming-other of language, a minorization of this major language” (*Essays Critical and Clinical* 5). At several crucial moments in Deleuze’s (and his sometime co-author Felix Guattari’s) concept of what literature is and does, works of American literature—most notably of Herman Melville, an American counterpart of Franz Kafka—figure as an exemplar of “minor literature.” But Deleuze’s numerous fragmentary texts on

American literature have been rarely mentioned in American literature proper. While some Deleuzian terms, such as “deterritorialization,” have been widely used for the past few decades, the name of the French philosopher still remains relatively minor in today’s American literary scholarship. What perplexes American literary scholars, especially in the US, is perhaps Deleuze’s (and Guattari’s) idea of the minor. In *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, Deleuze and Guattari ask:

How many people today live in a language that is not their own? Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to serve? This is the problem of immigrants, and especially of their children, the problem of minorities, the problem of a minor literature, but also a problem for all of us: how to tear a minor literature away from its own language, allowing it to challenge the language and making it follow a sober revolutionary path? How to become a nomad and an immigrant and a gypsy in relation to one’s own language? Kafka answers: steal the baby from its crib, walk the tightrope. (19)

For Deleuze (and Guattari), the status of a minority is something one becomes, not necessarily something one is. This would sound hardly acceptable in the US cultural context in which a minority people (in terms of race, gender, sexuality, and so forth) are identified as essentially and ontologically a group of minorities. To be a minority is always a matter of being, not of becoming. The identity politics, or what is otherwise called the politics of recognition, is infiltrated into every corner of American culture, not to mention American literary scholarship. While Deleuze’s homage to American literature can slightly flatter American people’s nationalistic pride, many US scholars of American literature might be perplexed about how to respond to the French philosopher’s peculiar comment. Deleuze himself did not extend his contemplation of American literature as a “minor literature” to any

thorough analyses of actual American author's works.¹⁵⁾ It seems more fruitful to explore for the traces of foreign languages within language "always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed" (*Essays Critical and Clinical* 1) that haunt American literary works, to foreignize American literature from within the demarcation of it, than to wish to erase national boundaries in literary studies (or in the actual world) at one magic brush.

Having argued against linguistic essentialism, I do not mean to ignore the earnest efforts to preserve minor languages disappearing on an everyday basis or to rediscover already extinct languages.¹⁶⁾ Neither do I intend to denounce any minority groups or individuals fighting for their linguistic, cultural, or any fundamental human rights in the US or elsewhere. Unfortunately, I cannot suggest any possible solutions to the difficult problems of endangered languages, cultures, or peoples in the world. But I do hope that the study of translation, language, literature, and culture side by side with US monolingualism, nationalism, and universalism will be a case study for considering the ideal conditions under which the preservation of the minor might be possible. Here I borrow linguist David Crystal's words: "I believe in the fundamental value of multilingualism, as an amazing world resource which presents us with different perspectives and insights, and thus enables us to reach a more profound understanding of the nature of the human mind and spirit" and "I believe in the fundamental value of a common language, as an amazing world resource which presents us with unprecedented possibilities for mutual understanding, and thus enables us to find fresh opportunities for international cooperation" (*Global Language* xiii). I also agree with Crystal that we "need to take both principles on board if we are to make any progress towards the kind of peaceful and tolerant society which most people dream about" (xiv), which the authors of American literature sometimes dreamed about in their unique ways. As an American literary scholar who was born

and lives in a foreign country and rarely speaks English in everyday life, I believe that writing about all these issues in English—the most common language in the world as of now—as well as in Japanese—my mother tongue, whose status is relatively minor—will be a small contribution to the envisioning of the world supported by the two principles that Crystal advocates.

Notes

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- 1) In *Imagined Communities*, a classic study of nationalism, Benedict Anderson claims that there is “an almost perfect isomorphism between the stretch of the various empires and that of their vernaculars” (77) in the nation-building projects in the Americas.
- 2) For example, see Todorov, *The Conquest of America*.
- 3) In a similar vein, Joshua Bellin claims that “it is imperative to recognize that Indian ‘voices’ in American texts exist in translation,” and “they have been transmitted in an alien modality and languages” and “shaped by the visions and ideologies of Euro-America” (*The Demon of the Continent* 6).
- 4) Also see Boggs, “Translation in the United States” 20. For a sociolinguistic study of the diffusion of English over the world, see Crystal.
- 5) Also see Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* 179-200; and Spivak, “Acting Bits/ Identity Talk.”
- 6) In *Scandals of Translation*, Venuti also uses the term “minoritizing translation,” based on Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of “minor literature,” saying: “Good translation is minoritizing: it releases the remainder [of the foreign] by cultivating a heterogeneous

discourse, opening up the standard dialect and literary canons to what is foreign to themselves, to the substandard and the marginal” (11).

- 7) Some scholars have criticized Venuti’s dualistic formulation of foreignizing and domesticating translations. For example, see Boyden, “Language Politics, Translation, and American Literary History”; and Delisle and Woodsworth 229-44. Venuti himself admits the difficulty of applying such a simple differentiation to actual cases, saying: “Whether the effects of a translation prove to be conservative or transgressive depends fundamentally on the discursive strategies developed by the translator, but also on the various factors in their reception, including the page design and cover art of the printed book, the advertising copy, the opinions of reviewers, and the uses made of the translation in cultural and social institutions, how it is read and taught” (*Scandals* 68).
- 8) There are numerous versions and editions of Webster’s *American Dictionary*. In this dissertation, I refer to the first edition published in 1828 in two volumes.
- 9) Paul Giles’s works have shown how productive American (and British) literary studies can be by introducing transatlantic perspectives to analyzing literary texts. See especially *Transatlantic Insurrections*; *Virtual Americas*; and *The Global Remapping of American Literature*. Dimock’s monograph *Through Other Continents* and her coedited book *Shades of the Planet* present a much larger-scaled and less specific reconsideration of American literature from planetary perspectives.
- 10) Lawrence Buell also emphasizes the importance of reading antebellum American literature in terms of what he calls “postcolonial anxiety” (“Melville and the Question of American Decolonization” 217). For a recent example of the study in this vein dedicated to a single author’s works, see Berthold, *American Risorgimento*.
- 11) For the contribution of translators in the development of national identities in the Dutch Republic, Ireland, Scotland, Argentina, Cameroon, and other African nations, see Delisle and Woodsworth, *Translators through History* 67-100.
- 12) See Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* 88-90.
- 13) For another example of discovering the multilinguality of nineteenth-century American literary history, see Rosenwald, *Multilingual America*. In Ch.1 of the book, he analyzes the translation strategy in Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*.
- 14) What is even more ironic in Boggs’s argument is that she presents only in English her

critique of English monolingualism in some American literary authors' works. Boggs writes: "The efficacy of Hawthorne's linguistic construct depends on the transparency of his language, which does not acknowledge the presence of competing languages in the American scene and thereby naturalizes English as *the* language, that is, as the *only* language of American literature" (10). You could easily rewrite the passage: "The efficacy of Boggs's linguistic construct depends on the transparency of her language, which does not acknowledge the presence of competing languages in the American scene and thereby naturalizes English as *the* language, that is, as the *only* language of American literary scholarship." And the same goes for my argument, which is presented only in English here.

- 15) For examples of Deleuze's analysis of some American literary works, see Ch. 8 on Whitman and Ch. 10 on Melville in *Essays Critical and Clinical*.
- 16) For an example of the recent attempts to rediscover multilingual literatures of America, see Shell and Sollors (eds.), *The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature*. Sollors, one of the editors of the book, encourages us to reconsider what "American literature" is, saying: "The disappearance of non-English texts written or published in the United States is a loss of more than antiquarian significance. Reading, rereading, studying, and discussing these works should bring about a much-needed reorientation in historical consciousness and, both in popular debates and in the specialized approaches of many academic fields, a contemporary understanding of the United States as a multilingual country" ("Introduction" 10). My argument clearly overlaps with Sollors's point.

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국문초록

번역과 미국고전문학: 미국문학연구의 전망

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본고는 최근 번역이론의 발전과정을 조망하여 미국 국민문학 연구에 적용 가능성을 탐색하고자 한다. 미국 국민 문학의 기원은 괴테가 언급한 세계문학 시대인 19세기 초로 거슬러 올라간다. 흥미롭게도 세계문학의 시대에 미국문학도 번역에 적극적으로 힘입어 발전한다. 미국문학의 기원과 발전과정이 시사 하는 바와 같이 미국 문학 연구도 다른 문화, 언어, 인종들에게 열려있는 미래지향적 가능성 속에서 모색될 수 있음을 본 논문에서는 탐색한다.

키워드: 19세기 미국문학, 세계문학, 번역연구, 국가주의, 다언어주의

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