Changing the Terms
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Published by University of Ottawa Press

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Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era.

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Cognitive Accountability and Courage

The postwar world has managed to build a postcolonial system. At the very least, this is a system of states that does not officially endorse the desire that groups with a temporary geomilitary advantage have to wear proudly all the chauvinisms that come naturally to them, with no awareness of the obvious laziness and cowardice involved in such an exhibition. It has taken a lot of courage to build even this. We now need to learn how to live here and keep building the kind of world this logically leads to. And that effort is going to take as much courage as we can muster. For modernity itself—which I construe postcoloniality to be a specific instantiation of—crucially involves the exercise of courage in the pursuit of knowledge. A culture is modern to the extent that its thinking does business with a question of epistemic courage that can be stated as:

(1) Popper’s Question
As you work to develop and understand the place of your proposal in the body of knowledge, are you fearlessly exposing it to critical scrutiny from as many sources as you possibly can?

It takes courage to want to live a life that takes this question seriously in the practice of science. For a society to imagine a collective life that accepts
such living as its core commitment, which is the Enlightenment proposal characteristic of modernity, takes even more courage, of a special kind: the courage of accountability. Justice must not only be done, but also be seen to be done. Science, also in the Science Writ Large routinely proposed in all versions of the modernity project, must grapple with this seeing, and with the "spectators" to whom this statement must apply in any real implementation.

If in fact every serious society must invite universal participation in seriously seeing that justice is done and accounts settled, then it follows that societies striving for modernity or even claiming to be modern must be brave enough to begin to make themselves cognitively accountable. There is perhaps a beginning of this courage in science at its best. But the "muscle tone" of the courage of the community of scientists seems to be way below the levels one would have hoped for on the basis of the Galilean inheritance. Such a matter is too important to be left to the scientists. The community of thinking men and women as a whole must find a way to take over the task of working toward greater cognitive accountability. This may involve inventing either some new form of interdisciplinary and socially responsible labour that brings cultural studies people and scientists together, or other hitherto unimagined ways of breaching barriers.

I shall argue here that cognitive accountability requires that modernity constitutively needs to invite translation of the discourses that claim to present knowledge; that knowledge is usefully characterized in terms of creative continuations of action types; that this characterization leads to models that make the power-knowledge nexus optional and contingent; that pursuit of these themes can help us out of the missionary predicament we are trapped in; and that the missionary and industrial readings of our cognitive predicament are mutually convertible.

**Serious Respecification**

For cognitive accountability, it is necessary to ensure that what is said in initiating cultures does not remain fossilized in the first telling of the story. Stories have to be retold in new and different cultures, and the retelling has to seriously respecify the terms of the stories. Only then can the real content of the stories, as opposed to contingent features locking them into the initial context, become available for the record—and for one's delectation. Serious respecification becomes an especially interesting activity, deserving rigorous attention, if the stories being retold crucially use conceptual terms, and if their retooling calls for actually reimagining the ideas in cultures radically different from the original context. I am especially interested in the retelling of scientific stories.
To flesh this out, consider the following example: the French terms cytogénétique and cytologie are defined in Le Petit Robert as follows:

**CYTOGÉNÉTIQUE.** n.f. (1855; de cyto-, et génétique). Biol. Partie de la génétique appliquée à l'observation microscopique de la cellule et notamment des chromosomes.

**CYTOLOGIE.** n.f. (1890; de cyto-, et -logie). Partie de la biologie générale qui étudie la cellule vivante, sous tous ses aspects (structure, propriétés, activité, évolution).

Now, here is a bureaucratic way to “do” these terms in the Eastern Indic language Bangla: *kosh* is the standard equivalent for *cellule*, and the tacking on of normal suffixes yields the words *koshjanonbiggean* and *koshtatto* for *cytogénétique* and *cytologie*, respectively. Of course, if terminological retooling involved only this, then the activity should only be discussed in the privacy of terminology creation cells of Third World monasteries under the tutelage of a mindless developmental mission, and neither scientists, nor the informed segments of the general public in industrialized societies should reasonably wish to pay any attention thereto. It becomes more interesting if scientists and sensitive craftpersons of words, working together, attend to the service that the Greek terminological inheritance continues to perform in the metropolitan languages, and how or why one proposes to respecify concepts taken from these sectors when moving into what I call Less Equipped Languages (LELs) to prefigure discussions of where the formalization of such Equipment might intersect with other types of formalization.

Under such promising conditions, it becomes possible to keep in mind the relationship between *cytologie* and another use of -*logie*, in *ethnologie*, for example, which Le Petit Robert tells us is the “Étude des faits et documents recueillis par l’ethnographie (couchant le domaine de l’anthropologie culturelle et sociale),” in contrast to *ethnographie*, which is defined as: “Vx. Classement des peuples d’après leurs langues. Mod. Étude descriptive des divers groupes humains (ethnies), de leurs caractères anthropologiques, sociaux, etc.” It is reasonable for a consistent terminology in Bangla to propose *tatto* to render -*logie*, even if the real life of the First World’s anthropology and biology departments discourages or prevents direct or virtual contact between the users of these two sets of words. Now, if we render -*graphie* as -*biddaa*, and decide to maintain *ethno-* as is—a decision that carries over, in principle, to any other term which might strike users of non-metropolitan languages as for some reason not requiring reconceptualization, as it is unclear if it represents, in its present form, more than a dressing up of some opaque object or some unexamined preconception about realities—this yields the Bangla terms *ethnobiddaa* and *ethnotatto* for *ethnographie* and *ethnologie*, respectively.
Once such respecifications of conceptual terms across radical cultural gaps take place in non-bureaucratic (i.e., non-missionary, non-industrial) ways, on the basis of increasingly symmetric conversations, it will become possible to identify what comes out as invariant or universal, on defensible grounds, across cultural gaps. Then one can evaluate the familiar Western-industrial claim—the OECD claim, to give it an opaque designation that does not invite reconceptualization, but rather describes local realities—that the content of the hard sciences is “universal” and robust under cultural transmission. Only if such an experiment is performed will we indeed find out which elements of the sciences, if any, survive cultural transplanting carried out with seriousness on both sides.

The picture emerging from these considerations forces me to conclude that a scientific translation enterprise which takes serious respecification as part of its core program must form an obligatory constituent of a society that wishes to build a culture around the pursuit of science and other forms of rational discourse and practice. If scientists are not going to check or respond to this conclusion themselves, it becomes the responsibility of the general public in their societies to do it for them, instead of spending their time applauding the rationality of the sciences. But let me scrutinize the status of the inquiry I seem to have embarked upon: does this material perhaps not enter into the core considerations of how to pursue scientific work in the modern world? Is such a discussion entirely a matter of the optional, local concerns of culture specialists? Scientists are certainly convinced it is. They have inherited an abridged version of the Enlightenment in which they have sealed off their compartment from the general space of public discussion, convinced that the public culture as a whole is optional. Scientists believe that they are already working hard and successfully to ensure that the knowledge they are accumulating is a rational construction; they believe that certain objective factors have helped them to succeed in doing this: one is the quantitative revolution that helps them to keep tabs on numerical and other formal devices in their writings. The wide use of formal devices in exposition and reasoning brings about a greater comparability of results and proposals across researchers and disciplines, making it possible to try to work across barriers within science. The second is the procedure of repeatedly checking experiments against external reality in laboratory after laboratory to ensure continuity with the outside world. A third factor is the custom of going through the due process of critical scrutiny formalized as refereeing and post-publication criticism of scientific contributions. Do these factors in fact ensure only a self-congratulatory appearance of success?

To provide one possible approach to these issues, I would like to argue that a culture can sustainably claim to be modern to the extent that it remains in touch with Popper’s Question. A modern culture must consist-
ently take risks and encourage criticism from as wide a range of participants as possible. If potential scrutiny of a proposal is available across language barriers, then one must, as a fearless seeker of criticism, actively cross those barriers and go halfway to find it. It thus follows from these principles that a civilization seeking to implement the scientific program will pursue the possibilities of cognition into every language. This involves actively encouraging locally rooted and accountable scientific activities in all communities in their own languages. This argument makes translatability a constitutive factor of modernity. For a culture to sustain the claim that it is modern, it must be relocatable in some completely different set of practices. This is tantamount to saying that if an experiment exemplifies a real effect, it must be replicable in some other laboratory.

Therefore (here I will put forward some arguments that may require further reflection and stimulate controversy):

(2) A complete network of scientific idea production and exchange must, for science-internal reasons, include arrangements to ensure not only (A) that work done in each language is translated into other languages—an old imperative that has been allowed to lapse after the take-over by English, a hijack that the scientific community has welcomed with unexamined glee; but also (B) that scientific work is indeed done, and in fact flourishes, independently, in many languages.

(3) A complete network in the sense of (2) above must also work on the details of the actual translation done under (2A). In particular, (X) one needs to keep monitoring the cultural health of the way in which specific concepts from a Source Language (SL), in which a given piece of research is done, are respecified in the Target Language (TL); and (Y), task (X) is inseparable from that of monitoring the independent health of scientific inquiry traditions in the local context of the TL communities.

(4) These considerations are—apart from being motivated by issues in cultural studies, a point that need not be laboured here—also science-internal. For one thing, (P) a scientific community that keeps in touch with its Popper's Question will need to do these things to maximize its criticism-inviting function. For another—and this accountability issue forms part of the question of courage—(Q) the mathematical care that led to a great leap forward in the sciences urgently needs to be followed up by replicating that care for the verbal, non-quantitative parts of the written and spoken messages whereby scientists practise their disciplines. Call that replication (Q), the Qualitative Revolution, which is yet to come; working for (Q) is a matter of accountability in the sciences. (R) We have learnt that we
need to work in healthier laboratories, industries and societies for physico-chemical reasons. We will learn that we also need to work in culturally healthy communities, whose conversations are run on local energies, and are not drugged on long-distance imports for all matters. The moment we let ourselves learn this is the moment we pay rigorous attention to issues of cultural health. Sick cultures produce sick research.

I would like to hypothesize, in continuation of the arguments just proposed, that the key conceptual terms in which the rough and ready initial formulations of scientific conjectures and their theoretical neighbourhoods are packaged in the contexts that inaugurate particular fields and subfields of inquiry need to be respecified in the conceptual contexts of other cultures. And I say need, not in the sense that the Third World wants such aid for its own existence—this may or may not correspond to verifiably felt desires—but in the sense that, to meet the obviously unmet epistemological conditions on the validity of the scientific enterprise in the metropolitan or industrialized world, it is necessary to perform this cross-cultural task.

One way to look at this metropolitan or science-internal need is to ask if we have any direct grasp of the conceptual content of particular bits of formal or verbal machinery in scientific research writings. In particular, do we know what they mean, apart from the set of interchangeable equivalents in the metropolitan languages in which scientific writings are taken seriously as primary productions? We do not. All that we have is glossaries in the metropolitan languages, but these languages are culturally very close to each other; they use similar or identical metaphoric systems. Serious respecification obliges scientists to rethink what they thought they understood. Then they wonder if they were right when they claimed something was “understood” in the sense that they had obtained firm results that were tightly connected with the rest of the fabric of inquiry. Out of this wondering on the part of scientists might come a revitalization of the sense of wonder that one had always associated with one’s identity as a scientist. Why should the revitalization of scientists’ sense of wonder be a matter of more than vicarious concern for the cultural studies researcher, to reverse the direction of the question that occupied us earlier on?

From Conceptual Politics to Perceptualist Strategy

If anything is important in the postcolonial space of discussion, it is the question of the power-knowledge nexus. Centralization is more problematic than most other things. One issue, then, is how not to throw the knowledge-baby out with the power-bathwater. My response to this goes
through the standard Foucauldian equation: Power = Action/Action, which means that power is exercised to the extent that the actions performed produce effects on other actions rather than on entities. Assuming this characterization of power as a starting point, I propose that one way to delink knowledge from power first in theory, and later in practice, is to visualize knowledge in terms of the equation:

\[
(5) \text{Knowledge} = \text{Action} \rightarrow \text{Action} \rightarrow \text{Action}
\]

A prose rendering of this equation might run: knowledge is the creative continuation of an action series. Whenever Plato’s Socrates wanted to exemplify knowledge, he considered cobblers. Let us therefore consider the transmission of knowledge in the cobbler’s trade: Master Cobbler makes master shoe; Apprentice watches; Apprentice makes trial shoe; gets rebuked; responds by moving closer to model; performs creative modification; Master accepts tribute from creative Disciple—or appreciative customers do, if Master too perverse. This leads to a politics of the industrial, for it should be possible to centrally standardize a state of the art for the entire trade, and a sufficiently generalized market, with optimal information flowing through all satellites, would ensure at any given moment that customers can force all producers to either perform at that moment’s state of the art or go out of business. To pursue this scenario, cobblers and their mediators (who sponsor production or distribution of the ideal shoe) are of course quite frightened of the chaos that such a market mechanism might unleash, forcing them to keep responding to unpredictable vicissitudes. They therefore try to save the labour of having to keep paying Attention. To do this, they set up a system based on a Code, whose principle is Memory rather than Attention. The move is to create a bureaucracy that aggregates all shoe producers, or all shoe sellers, or all cobbler trainers, into a single system working on the basis of Concepts. These moves, made by producers of all types, and seen as optimally parallel, lead to a Politics that makes Concepts the standard way to standardize. Thus the threat from truly open exchanges is obviated, and no one has the trouble of paying Attention. In other words, the Code with its Concepts is a machine that saves Perceptual labour.

To put it differently: in and as the Code, the Emperor tries to speak with supreme intelligence, built for Him by state of the art satellites and those who compute for them. If the Emperor can centrally speak with full accuracy, nobody has to take the local trouble of listening. Whatever can be listened to is already one of the utterances that the Emperor can utter and for which he therefore has a structured representation. One will never have to improvise on the basis of listening. In the same way, the Chef already knows how to cook any dish that any local simpleton might come up with, for all the Subchefs have agreed to hand over their surplus knowledge to the Chef.
The decision by the producers of knowledge to let hijackers appropriate their product is quite visible in the sciences, whence my worry about revitalizing scientists' sense of wonder. Ever since particle physics became fundamental, it has been clear that cottage-industry thinkers sitting in their little privacies cannot be particle physicists. They have to wangle Emperor-funded research projects to even begin to get training, and learn how to ask intelligent questions in the field, let alone find and defend answers to them. So they correspondingly sell their answers to the Emperor as well. At no point do they face the public in this business; they regard the public discussion space, and culture, and accountability, and the pursuit of criticism as optional. If this is how they are structurally obliged to visualize even their fellow citizens of the industrialized societies, imagine how much more marginal the proletariat of the Third World must seem to them. Now, perhaps, it is becoming clearer why the moribund state and possible revitalization of the sense of wonder in the circles of science becomes an issue for cultural studies. The basic question is how to retrieve the Cognitive from its hijack by the Industrial. Science is a special case of the codified centralization of knowledge, handing over all knowledge to machines that save perceptual labour; scientists are bound to fall for such a labour-saving device as if it were a form of rationality, trained as they have been to regard formalization as a device that beneficently helps them to escape from... words!

One might wish to argue that scientists should be persuaded to revisit mathematically the non-mathematic expository devices in their texts, namely, words; and to work for a qualitative revolution that would make them aware of the potentials of these devices and how they interact with the fruits of the quantitative one. I am deliberately not making that argument, which if made would in my opinion reinforce the bureaucratic codification of cognition into inappropriately industrial forms. Language does indeed have something to do with the retrieval of the cognitive from its hijack by the industrial. But this cause is not best served by asking scientists to add some linguistics to their basic mathematical training. The problem lies deeper. The scientization of knowledge as a whole has encouraged and intensified the process of robbing cognition of its local action lines, striving to derive them without residue from potentially global forms of force. Call this process the Politics of the Conceptual. We have seen why the process of Code-setting inevitably produces the political as an effect, as a device for saving local perceptual labour.

As in other cases of inappropriate, premature and excessive industrialization, the natural response is to devolve some energies to locations where their application is needed, and thus to deindustrialize. In other words, one tries not to save perceptual labour by ceasing to teach the supremely
intelligent Chef how to cook everything for every place, by pausing to notice that women and other nurturing agents ubiquitously, but differently, produce locally needed nourishment locally anyway. In listening to and responding to what is heard, one’s actions change, and the Emperor refrains from some of the mega-speaking he would do to keep proving that he is globally cleverer than any local proletariat can be locally clever. This means that some of the Emperor’s centrally controlled global speaking—the Politics of the Conceptual—must be replaced by what I shall call the Strategy of the Perceptual, which involves a method of listening to local realities without insisting that what all the sensitive listeners hear add up, without insisting that all small-time listeners hand over their surplus listening to some supremely intelligent big-time ear. It is this transition that we are struggling to find enough courage to negotiate, in our difficult times.

The Post-Missionary Condition

We are living at a time when it is possible to put forward the following arguments, and expect most of our readers to agree:

(6) Translation was born under the mark of the Missionary moment, in the sense that that type of translation has become the kind that codifies and organizes other kinds. Users agree that missionary translations are grossly infelicitous.

(7) Semantically based accounts of translation, that is, translation theories, arise under the aegis of second-wave missions that are corrected by the apparatus of knowledge, and can be called secular. Users agree that translation theories grossly overspecify semantics.

One way to characterize the time when these are nearly default opinions, is to call this collective state of mind the Postmissionary condition. Missionaries proper, representing classical scriptures that they believe must be transmitted to everybody before real history can begin, often failed in their mission because they worked for a bureaucracy that was directing their actions. Their naïve fundamentalism has given way to today’s sophisticated foundationism in the mainstream agendas of development. The foundationists sponsor translation theories with knowledge of, and sometimes in response to, the failures of the first-wave translation enterprise. If these theories seem to overspecify certain details and thus fail at the level of characterizing the task—despite some acknowledged successes in the translation itself—then we cannot treat this failure as identical to that of fundamentalism. Foundationism has been trying to get too much “right,” too systematically. Systematization of this kind inevitably leads to bureaucracy, which was what was wrong with the missionaries in the first place. More
specifically, the problem with this second wave of systematic translation is that translators are encouraged to be very careful with their tools, with the authorial intentions they do or do not wish to respect, and with other items. Being very careful involves trying to be technical with respect to some technique. The work of ensuring that that body of technique is maximally—and increasingly—excellent is centralized in some team of academics and potential translator trainers. Consequently, it turns out that what translators are giving their audiences, even when it appears to be in ordinary language and thus not to be technical, is mediated through the precision-ensuring external authority of a bureaucracy of technique managers. The translator’s use of language thus becomes indirect in the way that technicalesse does: it creates a care-induced distance, somewhat akin to communicators speaking loudly to overcome the barrier of physical distance. It is these specific effects that concern me here.

Some have been scapegoating linguists for the failures of the second wave of translation, and trying to steer translation studies away from linguistics-using paths. Sophisticated versions of critiques of the second wave will no doubt identify its failure in terms of bureaucracy and system-building. We all, linguists included, would like to deal with the problems of the second wave; but to do this, we need at least a viable diagnosis and some alternative proposals to try out. The diagnosis that I am offering says in more detail that the missionary methods are conceptual in principle: they assume that there is some teachable, right way to do things that can be made to work for “other cases” in advance, without having to negotiate them with the perceptions of new populations. This politics of mobilization (of translation trainees) and of concepts (that provide the content imparted to these victims) is shared by both the developmental second wave and the fundamentalist first wave. It is convenient to visualize all the believers in this politics as being missionaries, old and new.

The package of alternative proposals that I wish to offer focusses on the idea that translators are trying to serve the cause of Reperception. Given the foregoing, we cannot afford to prepackage any systematic recipes for the work of translators; the alternatives must explore other useful avenues: how to help translators cross barriers without falling into a centralizing trap? Translators have to find ways to listen carefully to what the SL text is saying to its audiences listen again to how various TL texts work with their audiences and gently—keeping in touch with the way they have been finding their own place in both societies (never a completed task)—make room for the translation as a text that audiences can Perceive. Translators want their audiences to Perceive the original Perceiving also, or the range of earlier Perceivings of the SL text. This is what I mean by Reperception. Translators’ labour is thus interlocal. The issue is not whether translators should be
encouraged to write a text that is verbally different from what some current school of translatology would encourage them to produce as an appropriate translation, but how to help them further this Reperceptual mode, and avoid the Conceptual one. I am not arguing in favour of translations differing from what any ideal recipe would cook up; I am more concerned with the question of the choice of focus for a translation enterprise. A lot of energy and theoretical effort is expended on translation from LELs into MELs. My argument, if on the right track, proposes a need to bring about some balance of trade for other than commercial reasons. The translators' craft needs not to be retooled, but detooled so that translators rely less on recipes, and more on taste or sense. They need to mediate between the two listenings—to the SL text and to the TL text—and not between the SL Emperor's speech as they think the first elite would have it and the TL Emperor's speech as they think the second elite would have it. A conceptual politics of mobilization is an utterance, a directive of some sort; the translators' task is to be perceptual, they must be preconception-fighting listeners who are constantly discovering preconceptions to fight.

The basic cultural act of living as a member of a community is also the one that enables us a space elsewhere, across relevant barriers: it is the act of explicit reciprocal guesthood, where each of us gives space to the other in a transaction, and adjusts to the way the other gives space to us. This continuous adjustment depends crucially on reciprocal perception, which must include Reperception in its constitutive movements, and which can be called Reciprocal Attention. In attending to each other's needs and wishes, we stop regarding some elements of what we hear as crucial and others as simply irrelevant, for listening works on several planes of relevance and finds ways to treat everything we hear as relevant on some plane or other. This causes a displacement out of a rationality that idealizes, that is impatient about interruptions or distractions, into a different reasonableness. The moment this basic cultural act fails, we lapse from understanding into gestures that lead toward bureaucracy. For activities constituting the cultural to stay alive as they cross barriers, a practice of undistractable attention is needed. Bureaucracy is a Memory system, it is a labour-saving device that enables one to avoid having to pay Attention!

Reperception is a useful notion for the operation that needs to be performed in the traffic between metaphoric systems that make perception possible within the space of a text's key terms. This labour is best carried out in the public domain that concerns all communities, but belongs to no specific culture. Such a public domain exists at least because the ethic of science presumes that everybody is trying to pool their percepts, as empirical and conceptual material, for a universal cognitive project. The labour of Reperception is best carried out in the negotiative discourse of the public
wearing the hat of Universal Public, not in the nationalist moment of pledging allegiance to a particular cultural flag, coded under some specified or specifiable bureaucratic system of concepts. In fact, codes, in the relevant sense, tend toward the patriarchal, hierarchical form that all bureaucratic institutions are patterned on. They presume that the relevant concepts in a given, specific domain will be just that, sitting next to each other in conceptual space, uninterrupted. This picture resembles the usual idealization of a specific labour as a set of connected activities that add up, uninterrupted, to the ends for which the means are being rationally and specifically deployed; any distractions that would get in the way are excluded from the idealization. And the usual idealizations, and the idea of rationality they rest on, are patriarchal. This mode of seeing sees only the connected labour that rational producers put in, and ignores the necessary interruptions associated with the daily and other routines of nurture, domesticity, leisure and sleep, and of having people (typically women) outside a given work process clean up and tie loose ends to “help,” to Supplement producers, who are conceptually construed as men, even if they now empirically include a large number of women. Any alternative to codes has to take a clear look at this pattern of seeing and work a way out of this “common” sense toward a different sense equally rooted in the common practices of our living. The term Supplement signals a place where the uncommon sense of certain theoreticians can usefully intersect with this task.

A politics of Reperception has to work at the level of discourse, a flow of spoken and written activity where the performers are explicitly each other’s guests, taking and giving space and aware that this is the fundamental act of culture. Once all the interruptions and the essential reasons for them are put back in the image of productive labour, it becomes possible to see that the ongoing task of looking after the labour, normally left to the hierarchy of institutions, can only sustain itself as a Discourse, not as a mere practice subordinated to an extra-practical Code that tells those under the Code what productive acts to perform. If the public space is a Discourse in this sense, which resists the Code and does not accept the proffered role of merely Supplementing it, and if the idea that it is a public space can hook up with the public-constituting function of science as a generalized knowledge-discourse claiming to have the neutral means to cut across irrelevant cultural barriers, then the problem of how to characterize translators’ labour of Reperception performed in this public space to cross barriers can be placed in our more general exploration of the role of courage in the construction of a postcolonial living space.

At this point it becomes useful to revisit our diagnosis of what is wrong with the missionary mindset and put these considerations in touch with the problematic of accountability:
(8) The prototypical Missionary condition is a case of non-accountability, the kind that traps itself in a web of recipes.

The first-wave failure of practice stems from a bureaucracy's inability to perceive and cope with detail. The second-wave failure of theoretically careful systematicity reflects a knowledge-system's excessive effort to get it right. This effort leads to overprecise technicalizations, which, I shall argue, are loud. My argument is part of an attempt to address these two failures of accountability, both of which are still active in our theoretical inheritance. This attempt can usefully begin with the question of why the field of translation studies continues to pursue pedagogical theories that codify such practices. My provisional answer is that a plurality of sectoral practices in today's traffic gives rise to a plurality of theories. For example, life keeps throwing up charismatic figures whose texts must, for their adoration industries, be scripturally rendered into the world's languages. Hence the survival of fundamentalist methodologies asking how the charisma can be maintained or otherwise made available for foreign worshippers. In another sector, the boy scouts of industrial development still believe in a foundational exactitude needing to be fed by the myth of accurate translatability. This is why some semantically oriented translation theories keep asking what the author would want done if he/she could read the TL texts to check how scrupulously the translations respect his/her intentions. These sectors of practice nourish these types of theory as codifications.

Notice that this discussion uses the terms Practice and Codification, which presume that the form of labour is centrally controlled by a codified theory and a pedagogy that specifies it for the practitioners. Only a practice that is organized in a way that lacks self-sufficient relay systems needs such a set-up. The idea of a technicalization is that you and I do not have enough in common to be able to get across to each other, so we hand over part of our talking time to the voice of authority emanating from some expert segment of the community. We let the experts tell us on what basis, and with what words, we should address each other. When we do this, throwing technical terms at each other like practised wielders of weapons, we announce to each other, and to eavesdroppers, that you are so distant from me, and I from you, that we have to SHOUT. It is in this sense that technical terms are loud. Loudness is a thread that runs through both phases of the world's missionary history, from the preachers who had to project their voices, right down to the development preachers who have machines and verbal equipment do it for them. As a counterpoint to this, we are here getting ready to learn how to be quiet and slow enough. Only if we are mutually hospitable across cultural barriers will real and sustainable perception be possible. Bureaucracies do not have guests because they cannot be guests; they can only provide asylum, and asylums are intrinsically hierarchical institutions,
bound by the rules of loudness. A discussion of how not to get trapped there would use the alternative terms *Praxis* and *Discourse*. A Praxis is a way of acting that has the courage to set its own rules as it goes along and does not systematically leave to some external expert subcommunity the task of holding the rules for this practice. A Discourse is a Praxis which, to ensure accountability, self-consciously and bravely includes its own talking about itself—not leaving “irrelevant” things out, not editing its “civilian” deshabillé into some “official, mobilized, military” costume embodying somebody’s norms of correctness. Only the discursive accountability imperative, if taken seriously, will help us out of the bureaucratic trap that all methodologies tend to push us into.

We who wish to outgrow the missionary mindset must part company with the standard assumptions surrounding scientific activity as currently visualized. For scientific work takes mobilization for granted; it assumes that rationality must take a mobilized form. Certain dissidents have of course found Understanding, which they sometimes call *Verstehen* even in English, to be incompatible with the assumption that rationality must mobilize. These dissidents argue that the pursuit of *Verstehen* must do business with the business of civility that precedes and surrounds the scientific component of civilization. The problem with science as standardly visualized—though its practice often tacitly improves on these visualizations—is that it is committed to centralizations that leave the makers and users of the verbal Equipment that is supposed to deal with local realities completely undistracted and undisturbed, consequently unaccountable to the local populations, which, through their daily residency in the relevant locations, have knowledge that would make them excellent interactive critics of such Equipment if it were not insulated from their discourses. This problem spills over into language planning and terminology standardization activities which are designed to give LELs a share in the precision available to MELs.

It is very hard for an industry to keep trying to be brave or accountable: one tends to surrender one’s courage to the superior officers in the army, and let them worry about whether the armed forces as a whole are being brave about anything at all. The question I wish to raise is whether scientists, in the real conditions under which they work today, can afford to even imagine being accountable, and whether, given the answer to that question, they can continue to see themselves as fearlessly, criticism-facingly trying to find true, sustainable answers to hard questions. My query also addresses the rest of us, other members of industrial societies and their satellites, to the extent that our patterns of explicit or implicit cheering lock the scientist-athletes who perform on our behalf into demonstrably inquiry-destroying mindsets.
What I am suggesting is that the appropriate response to the post-missionary condition is working a way out of the missionary mindset by striving for greater accountability. We can begin by requiring accountability from ourselves in dialogue with our friends and colleagues who, in complicity with the military-industrial complex that holds inquiry hostage, have been taking part in actions that reduce or destroy the possibility of courageous mental labour in the pursuit of the types of knowledge, including especially science, that seem to interest users across cultural boundaries—and thus to intersect with the enterprise of translation. This leads, on reflection, to a certain danger: if I work my way out of memory-laden systems of recipes and become free-floating, do I end up trying to catch the Attention of some public in the mode of advertising? Does my escape from the ancien régime’s Archive leave me in some equally courage-undermining modern Arcade? As an advertiser of wares one is indeed initially caught in the Arcade mode, and needs to square this with the earlier self-image as an Author of a Text whose web of Concepts is intended—for eternity—for an Archive embodying the social Memory. Nothing quite cancels that self-image. A Perceptual overlay shapes the way any of this can function; it is only when some imagined merely Perceptual level of our work is exaggerated that we lapse into ephemerally quotidian copywriting. If we resist that, we can see the Perceptual as the material richness that it is, as the situated reality of our conceptual intervention as a translator. How then can our Perceptually conscious Arcade generations spontaneously resisting bureaucracy retrieve and reachieve the standards of the Conceptually visualized Archive? How, in other words, can a strategy of reperception make its problematic—initially given as a here and now grappling with a particular dyad of texts—more general? Is it possible for interlocal labour to generalize? Is there a way that generalization does not turn one into yet another bureaucrat who grows impatient with distractions or interruptions that are contingent matters of any situation? Can we avoid imagining that contingent cases are inappropriately tempting us to take their local problems too seriously? And can we also manage to work freely with our locations, without lapsing into the Arcade mode, servile to the mercenary exigencies of the moment? To put the question more concretely: is there some rigorously interlocal way to reinvent a figure like the ancient Indian materialist Cārvaka, who affirmed perception and denied even inference? As an Indian who would like to claim that inheritance, it seems to me that there is, if we can learn—and work with parts of the public that are brave enough to try to learn—how to perceive conclusions in premises, instead of performing bureaucratically computed steps to formally arrive at deductions that the problem solver cannot personally see.

The considerations outlined above are best read as a succession of images with captions designed to present, in a journalistic mode, the
possibility that patriarchal code-like arrangements in prevalent institutions may be impeding the cross-cultural traffic whose universality continues to be posited in the rhetoric associated with science and its industrial concomitants. I would like to suggest that the biggest enemy of universal cognitive traffic, and of the local cultivation of cognition presupposed by the image of such traffic, is industriality itself, the principle of centralization and the bureaucratic rationality that conceptually organizes groups of relevant entities to the exclusion of the irrelevant interruptions that supposedly distract our attention from them. My point is that these well-founded interruptions form an essential part of that which a reasonable perceiver would wish to perceive, with full local detail; that a sustainable rationality would look very different from this; and that patterns of real and potential attention should be on the agenda of translation studies, as translators have the job of modifying the objects and patterns of people's attention.

Notes

1. I wish to thank the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute for providing me with a fellowship, which helped make this article possible.

2. But there is no reason to confine one's notion of real life to the occurrence of such social contacts. That both disciplines are using the same Greek resource in the same way—following paths which seemed separate during what may look to the future like a temporarily overspecialized and tool-oblivious phase of the history of scientific pursuits—is also a reality of the discursive life of metropolitan scientific inquiry today, even if its participants choose irrationally to ignore this reality.

3. That such a question cannot be discussed with scientists in the context of scientific research itself seems an irrelevant sociological fact, one that has no bearing on the issues themselves, which are important enough that thinking men and women in general should focus on them even if scientists do not wish to.

4. Such rethinking of scientific representations is unfortunately not brought about by the routine teaching of More Equipped Languages (MELs) to LEL speakers who become scientists.

5. Notice that (5) allows local action lines to continue independently of centralized modes of aggregating local knowledges into Codes; however, it is understood that that option exists. When it comes into play, (5) works with the Foucauldian equation and becomes Power/Knowledge, oversimplifying somewhat. In that scenario—which really invites a Platonic essentialization of the cobbler's trade for all cobblers of every time and place—the Concept of the Cobbler is produced.

6. This formulation I owe to a discussion with Rajendra Singh, professor at the Université de Montréal.

7. This section need not be read as completely dependent on the foregoing. My argument here is based on what I believe to be independently confirmable feelings shared by many of us in the house of translation. However, this section may also be considered a core, and the preceding material a theoretical preamble. De gustibus non disputandum est.
8. At this point, it becomes important that scientific explorers discover that their universal inquiry cannot sustain itself, but needs a surrounding universal culture whose assumptions and practices make sustainable inquiry possible.

9. Some aficionados of dissident traditions, who may be reading these words, will develop pragmatic characterizations of technicality and mobilization to improve their own understanding of matters brought up here. When they do, I look forward to seeing the results, which I cannot arrive at unaided.

10. The terms *Less Equipped Languages* (LELs) and *More Equipped Languages* (MELs) enable me to place on the agenda the task of examining the equipment standardly assumed to be valuable. This standard assumption reflects the unexamined industrial ways of science.

11. Recall that (6) and (7) unpack a tacit consensus characteristic of the entire post-missionary generation.

12. There is the risk that a certain type of shift away from the Memory-Archive may tend to lead to some equally centralizing, market-driven Attention-Arcade. Do we know how not to move into that third-wave bureaucracy? Can the cultural turn in translation studies, which would glibly like to give up on linguistics, resist that slide?
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