Chapter 33

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MIGRATION, TRANSLINGUALISM, TRANSLATION

MIGRATION PROLIFERATES FORMS OF TRANSLINGUALISM, A term that I will define as the movement between and juxtaposition or synthesis of two or more languages. As migrants daily manage different languages, they often resort to such translingual practices as the use of loanwords and code-switching, transliteration and homophonic repetition, pidgins and creoles, as well as other hybrid forms that depart from standard usage and interrupt its drive toward homogeneity.

Translingualism arises out of a need to communicate, to survive economically, to secure political asylum, medical care, and legal aid. But its effects are more far-reaching, both politically and culturally. It redefines citizenship by creating heterogeneous identities that straddle originary and host countries. It challenges monolingual national cultures by forcing the standard dialect to alter its discursive forms. I prefer to use the term "translingualism" rather than "multilingualism" because the latter tends to represent the discrete coexistence of multiple languages and cultures, thereby reinstating a monolingual paradigm. The term "translingualism," in contrast, registers the struggle and on-going negotiation among them or, in Suresh Canagarajah's words, "the dynamic interactions between languages and communities" (Canagarajah 2013: 7–8; see also Chow 2014 and Liu 1995). To understand how translingual practices among ethnic groups allow for both difference and collaboration, we need to study how migrants communicate and make meaning. The time is ripe to question outdated equations of language, community, and place by exploring the actual practices that coincide with living between and among languages and cultures.

The literary representation of migration in contemporary prose fiction is a particularly rich field for such an exploration since it offers a delimited space of analysis. Unlike the conversations, pop songs, and classroom interactions that linguists and educators have begun to study, recent fiction both focuses on the theme of migration and showcases how different ethnic groups interact by blending, fragmenting, and recombining languages on the page. Examples of translingual practices can be found in a number of narrative traditions. Consider, for instance, the interaction of French

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and Martinican Creole in Patrick Chamoiseau's *Texaco* (1992), of German and Turkish in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei hat zwei Türen aus einer kam ich rein aus der anderen ging ich raus* (1992), of English and Spanish in Junot Diaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007), and of English and Chinese in Xiaolu Guo's *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* (2008). In such narratives, plots repeatedly set up diverse patterns of integration, ghettoization, and repatriation that are then visually and acoustically explored in terms of who says what to whom in which sort of languages where and when. This fiction self-consciously deploys translingualism to participate in and contest national and transnational institutions, while creating a place for new categories of identity that don't fit neatly into predictable slots of diasporic separatism and immigrant assimilation.

Contemporary fiction about migration reveals translingualism to be translational, informed by translation at different levels. Not only do migrants routinely engage in translating between languages, but their language use develops a translingual poetics that is rooted in translation. To move from one alphabet or writing system to another, to bring the sounds of one language into another, to calque, paraphrase, and annotate—all mainstays of diasporic literatures—are also tried and true tactics of translators. Just as translations traditionally involve changing a source into a translated text, translingual literature abounds with examples of similar crossings. Code-switching, such as the juxtaposition of a loanword to a definition so that it means something to a monolingual reader, is the most obvious case. The Greek American "fri pes" in the context of the sentence, "μας έστειλε τα εισιτήρια, φρι πες" ("mas esteile ta eisitiria, fri pes"; they sent us the tickets, free pass), makes it clear to the Greek speaker knowing no English that the railway company is going to pay the migrant's way. Translingual literature begins to redefine the more conventional notion of translation when spelling encompasses two or more languages in the same word or phrase. Another Greek American expression, Φτάσαμε τα μπελοζέρια ("ftasame ta belozeria"; it's freezing cold), creates a plural noun out of the words, "below zero." Transliteration, writing the sounds of one alphabet in another, and homophony, sharing sounds within and across writing systems and languages, collapse the source and translated texts into one another, fusing them in surprising ways that are at once radically translational and particularly demanding to the translator.

This kind of literature is generally viewed as impossible to translate (as noted by Meylaerts 2013: 521). The resistance to translating translingualism may issue from the widespread assumption of a narrow notion of fluency that adheres to the current standard dialect of the translating language (Venuti 1995: 1–6, 19–20). This assumption may in turn reveal a vernacular nationalism in the form of a systematic exclusion of difference from a language. Some translators, alternatively, may seek to indicate this difference by bringing to bear a concept of translation ethics, an effort to show respect for the source text and culture, whether by making the translated text a place where a cultural other is manifested (Berman 1992) or by interrogating dominant values in the receiving culture through linguistic and cultural innovation, an abusive or foreignizing effect (Lewis 1985; Venuti 2013). An ethical approach to translating translingualism might also combine these ideas by considering how the source text and translation share visual effects and soundscapes, creating both a place where the other can be seen and heard, as well as one that defamiliarizes the translating language by revealing the

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foreign as already available within or through it. This approach might be called one of unexpected collaboration. Whatever the rationale, the translational dimension of translingual literature allows translators to develop strategies that produce innovation. As cosmopolitan translingualism increasingly replaces assimilationist monolingualism in contemporary fiction, so that the presence not only of foreign accents and hybrid idioms but even of whole swatches of other languages is common practice, the boundary between what is and isn't a national language grows more tenuous. Given this development, to ignore translingualism when translating is an interpretive choice of no small import.

Minor languages and literatures are particularly open to the development of translingual practices (Lennon 2010; Wirth-Nesher 2006). Not only do minor cultures both send and receive migrants, but military occupations and forced migrations loom large in their histories and demand facility with other languages. Minor literatures incorporate foreign linguistic items from major languages as well as other minor languages in their struggle to develop communicative and expressive resources to compete in a global framework. Translingualism occurs because writers in minor languages look abroad for literary resources with the hope of being consecrated when translated into major languages (Casanova 2013). But it also occurs because of the proximity of minor literatures to each other. Their shared geographies and palimpsestic nesting of daily routines and idioms enable the elaboration of common themes and practices without minimizing or suppressing the importance of cultural specificity and historical differences. To explore translingual practices, therefore, it is particularly useful to compare narratives of migration in minor literatures with their high coefficient of creoles and pidgins as well as their attention to translation.

This project is especially enabled by studying two immigrant itineraries in contemporary Greek fiction. Thanassis Valtinos's 1972 novel, *Συναξάρι Ανδρέα Κορδοπάτη, βιβλίο πρώτο: Αμερική* (Sinaksari Andrea Kordopati, vivlio proto: Ameriki; The Book of Andreas Kordopatis, Part 1: America), follows a Greek who emigrates from his hometown in the Peloponnese to the United States during the first decade of the twentieth century. Sotiris Dimitriou's 1993 novel, *Ν'ακούω καλά τ' όνομά σου* (N'akouo kala t'onoma sou; May Your Name be Blessed), addresses the more recent migration of a boy with mixed heritage, born in Albania to Greek parents, who returns to Greece after the Albanian communist regime ends in 1991. Valtinos's narrative represents the interaction between a minor and a major language, framing an opposition between orality and literacy which foregrounds the translingual practice of transliteration. Dimitriou's narrative, in contrast, represents the interaction among minor languages and dialects, where different kinds of orality foreground homophonic practices of translingualism.

Although these novels represent different periods of migration and different outcomes for the migrant, their forms of linguistic hybridity have striking resemblances. In both, creoles such as Grecized English (Gringlish) and Grecized Albanian (Gralbanian) create shared spaces between languages that resonate for two or more communities. The possibility of clearly separating source and target languages is questioned since within the texts translation begins and ends in a place that is between languages and cultures. The English translations of these novels, furthermore, offer an opportunity to consider the problems created by the movement

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into a major language, revealing the difficulty of keeping a minor literature minor and strange so that through translation it interrogates the status quo in the major culture. Translingualism ultimately becomes a resource for rethinking the relations between translation, migration, and world literature, while stimulating the development of inventive translation practices.

Translingual literature as translational

The novels by Valtinos and Dimitriou provide different but interrelated answers to the question of how narratives of migration represent translingual practices that are themselves translational. In the first, the representation of Gringlish relies more on transliteration to point up issues of illiteracy and untranslatability. In the second, the representation of Gralbanian relies more on homophony to enable communication and translation. If in Valtinos's novel transliteration proves to be an obstacle to the concept of translation as assimilation, in Dimitriou's novel homophony allows for a concept of translation as cross-cultural cohabitation.

Transliteration, although it can be used to represent speech, gives prominence to the practice of writing. In linguistic terms, it is the substitution of a letter or sign from one alphabet for a letter or sign in another alphabet, such as the substitution of the Latin *s* for the Greek *sigma*. It connects two languages through similar sound and visual patterns so that a word or phrase can be said, repeated, written down, but not necessarily understood. For Anglophones, an example would be writing "σουβλάκι" as "souvlaki." Like translation, transliteration is a translingual process, but whereas translation generally involves finding a different word in the receiving language that corresponds in form and meaning to a word in the source language, transliteration stops at replicating the sound of the word in the new alphabet. It represents the confrontation of orality with literacy. When a transliterated word first appears in texts, it is not likely to mean anything except to those readers who know both languages or dialects. Over time, however, transliterated words can become meaningful for certain ethnic groups and, even more generally, for monolingual speakers of the transliterating language, most notably words for food like "souvlaki," "teriyaki," and "kimchi." As immigrants are accepted and assimilated, transliterated words are replaced by a more systematic idiom, culinary jargon, or creole. Yet what distinguishes transliteration is its initial lack of a signified in the receiving culture.

In *The Book of Andreas Kordopatis, Part 1: America,* transliteration is a central practice by which Kordopatis, the Greek migrant who narrates his story in Greek, tries to make sense of his host country, the United States. Through the alphabetic approximation of sound, English names of railway cities and towns like Salt Lake City and Pocatello are Greekified: "Σανλάικη Σίτι" (Sanleki Siti), "Ποκατέλι 'Αινταχο" (Pokateli Aidaho). The same practice occurs with words for things that seem to have no equivalent for the bewildered newcomer seeking work, such as "τάιμ τσεκ" (time tsek) for "time check" and "φορ μπλοκς" (for bloks) for "four blocks." Transliteration creates a translingual vocabulary that reflects the general problem facing Kordopatis, his own experience of misunderstanding as well as being misunderstood by the people he encounters.

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Kordopatis arrives by ship in New Orleans in 1907 only to be told that he can't stay because of trachoma, the contagious eye infection that dogged him from the start. It had previously blocked his migration to the United States when he tried to pass through Naples and an Italian doctor diagnosed the disease, sending him back to Greece. Now, at the very moment that the American doctor is examining him, Gringlish inserts itself into Greek and, with the help of Italian, recapitulates the inconclusive journey. Translingualism through the labor of transliteration captures the difficulties of getting through customs:

> Ήρθε ο γιατρός κι άρχισε να εξετάζει έναν έναν.
>
> Όποιος ήταν καλός του 'δινε μια κάρτα με μπλε μολύβι κι έγραφε απάνω *οράιτ*, αμερικάνικα. Όποιος δεν ήταν καλός του 'δινε *σκαρτ* με κόκκινο.
>
> (Valtinos 1990: 54)

> The doctor came and began examining one person at a time.
>
> To whoever was good he gave a card with blue pencil and wrote on it *orait* in American English. To whoever wasn't good he gave a *skart* in red.

I have translated the passage as closely to the Greek as structural differences with English will allow, italicizing the points of translingualism. Kordopatis's particular challenge is transliterating not merely English, but αμερικάνικα (amerikanika), American English. Greek readers can hear the American pronunciation of the word in the way that the Greek language transliterates the ubiquitous schwa, the uh-sound of the "a" in "*a*lright," with the Greek "o," while also leaving out the l-sound completely: "orait." The novel depicts an early twentieth-century moment before assimilation becomes the norm, when American English isn't yet available to the European migrant, especially Greeks with their different alphabet.

Transliteration not only figures in Kordopatis's inability to get through customs; it also demonstrates the inability of orality to pass seamlessly into literacy. The word "σκαρτ" (skart) is another Grecized English word that belongs to the process of migration to the United States. In nineteenth-century English, the word "scart" meant a scratch or an ink mark (*OED*), but for immigrants to America it had a special meaning: the feared red-pencil mark of rejection on their entry card. Successful integration involved a word written in the English alphabet, failure simply a dash. For the Greek reader, given Kordopatis's previous stop-over in Italy, the word "skart" had already accrued translingual references that reinforce the necessity of deportation for the sick and illiterate. The Greek word "σκάρτος" (skartos) is a loanword from the Italian "scarto," meaning "reject." The fact that the English "scart," the sign of exclusion, echoes "κάρτα" (carta), another Italian loanword signifying the immigrant's card or ticket to freedom, foreshadows Kordopatis's failure at the conclusion of the narrative. The s-privitive that creates negatives in Italian ("scarta" for discard, not "carta" for card), repeats his story of being turned back in Naples all over again. Transliterated translingual words perform the difficult, inadequate translation from English and Italian to Greek while posing the problem of untranslatability: clear eyes

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without trachoma, legibility, and literacy are acceptable; infected eyes, illegibility, and illiteracy are not.

Over the course of the novel, transliteration continues to challenge the American pressure to assimilate, whereby one language or culture is replaced by another so that the migrant can achieve success in the new country. Gringlish as well as Gritalian and other migrant creoles enter the story through the transliteration of words, but also through code-switching within sentences. While English is impenetrable to the migrant, Italian is viewed as more promising, at least initially, because it shares a history of geographical cross-fertilization with Greek.

After sneaking past the guards in New Orleans, Kordopatis asks an Italian in a "frutaria," a fruit store, for help finding a "Grik sala," a room with other Greeks. I have italicized the examples of translingualism, the Gritalian and the Gringlish in both the Greek and my utilitarian translation:

> Ιταλιάνο; μου λέει.
> *Νο, Γκρέκο*, του λέω.
> *Μπόνο Γκρέκο*.
> Ιταλιάνο; τον ρωτάω.
> *Γιες*, μου λέει.
> *Μπόνο Ιταλιάνο*, του λέω κι εγώ.
> Τον ρωτάω ύστερα, *γκρικ σάλα*, δωμάτιο ύπνου. Έκλαιγαν τα μάτια μου. Δεν μπορήγαμε να συνεννοηθούμε.
>
> (Valtinos 1990: 59)

> "Italiano?" he says to me.
> "*No, Greco*," I say to him.
> "*Bono Greco*."
> "Italiano?" I ask him.
> "*Yies*," he says to me.
> "*Bono Italiano*," I say to him.
> Later I ask him, "*Grik sala*, a room to sleep." My eyes were crying. We couldn't communicate.

The fruit seller's question, "Ιταλιάνο," transliterates the Italian, "Italiano?" (Are you Italian?), while the Greek immigrant's answer, "Νο, Γκρέκο" (No, I'm Greek), transliterates the code-switching between the English "No" and the Italian "Greco." The Greek alphabet imprints a Greek accent on both English and Italian. The English "yes," for example, becomes "yies," the Italian "buono," "bono." But drawing on Italian doesn't help in the end. Kordopatis and the shopkeeper can't understand each other. Like the lack of a meaning for a transliterated word, Greek and English remain disconnected and translation impossible.

Even though transliteration underscores the separateness of the Greek and American worlds, it facilitates the possibility of an alternative future. Transliteration as a translational practice emphasizes the impasse that inevitably accompanies learning a different alphabet, especially for the illiterate, but it cannot be completely subsumed

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under the category of untranslatability. Whereas Greek-English dictionaries and jail cells with combination locks in the English alphabet are impenetrable, transliteration gradually creates an in-between vocabulary that makes creole and the back-and-forth journey a viable way of life.

In the penultimate scene of the novel, Kordopatis awaits deportation at "Κασ-τριγάρι" (Kastrigari), which is the Gringlish name for Castle Garden, the New York entry port where migrants were processed before Ellis Island was opened. The fact that in 1910, when Kordopatis is deported, Castle Garden had not been operating as a processing center for some twenty years shows that he is relying on word-of-mouth in using the Gringlish word without explanation. "Kastrigari" means Ellis Island to him. For Greek migrants to the United States, what at first sounded like nonsense has become meaningful through context and community.

While transliterated words symbolize the inability to escape the alphabet and language of the source culture, they also prepare the ground for hybrid amalgams like Greek American culture. After arriving home in the Peloponnese, Kordopatis stops by the shipping offices to sign up again for the next boat back to the United States. Even if his migration fails because he can't understand the English alphabet, even if translation as assimilation isn't yet possible, transliteration has been given a generative role and Gringlish a future so that repatriation and untranslatability aren't foregone conclusions. By inscribing foreign words and accents, transliteration epitomizes the difficulty of arriving anywhere fully.

The translingualism in Sotiris Dimitriou's *May Your Name be Blessed* enacts a different yet related form of translation, one even more focused on sound. If in Valtinos's novel transliteration introduced the possibility of a creole that didn't yet exist, in Dimitriou's novel homophony relies on translingual idioms that have been centuries in the making. Here the translational hinges on hybridity as a given of linguistic communication rather than as the communicative failure of monolingualism. Transliteration involves homophony to the extent that it carries over the sounds from one alphabet to another, but homophony is a broader, more encompassing category: it exists interlingually, between languages with the same or different alphabets as well as between dialects and idioms that are purely oral, and it exists intralingually, within the same language. Like rhyme and alliteration, homophony emphasizes orality over literacy by signifying meaning through sound. Sonic sense is privileged not only over dictionary definitions but also over ethnic and religious divisions. A Bulgarian, a Greek, a Turk, a Macedonian, and a Serb, whether Christian, Jewish or Muslim, all claim the same song as their own in the popular 2003 documentary, *Whose is This Song?* (Peeva 2003; Boletsi 2010). Similarly, words and expressions common to two or more languages emphasize the cross-ethnic porousness of the Balkans (Cowan 1997; Empeirikos 2001; Rombou-Levidi 2016). On opposite sides of barbed-wire fences in different linguistic, ethnic, and religious communities, the words "gkremines" and "kazania" sound the same and refer to the same thing: impassable craggy mountain ravines and cooking pots.

Transliteration is distinguished from this homophonic continuum between languages not only by a cognitive dimension, whether literacy or orality is privileged, but also by a temporal dimension, when the language use becomes meaningful. With transliteration, sounds in one language often don't yet have a meaning in the transliterating language, and translation is postponed or blocked, whereas with homophony

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the same sounds mean something in different languages and dialects simultaneously, and translation has already happened, even if it is often unacknowledged.

The homophonic effects of migration are apparent from the beginning of Dimitriou's narrative. The two sisters who narrate the first two sections have set out on foot looking for food and work. The Second World War has put an end to the expectation that immigrants to the United States or Australia will be able to help support those who remain in the Balkans. The sisters' language recalls migration patterns closer to home:

> Αφ᾽ όντις κίνησε ο πόλεμος, κόπηκαν απ᾽ την Αμερική και την Αυστράλια τα λεφτά και τα δέματα. Πήγε ο πάππου-Σπύρος στο Φιλιάτι να ψωνίσει *βερεσιέ* και γύρισε καβάλα στο *γομάρι*. «Καμείτε τι θα κάνουμε, κόπηκε η θάλασσα. Θα μας πιάκει το *σκαφίδι* ανάποτα», μας είπε.
>
> (Dimitriou 1993: 9)

> Ever since the war began, the money and packages *stopped coming* from America and Australia. Grandpa-Spiros went to Filiati to shop *on credit* and returned on *a donkey*. "Do what we must, the sea is cut. They'll catch us with an upended *trough*," he told us.

The italicized translingual words indicate where the language does not belong solely to one people or culture. "Βερεσιέ" (veresie) for "credit," "γομάρι" (gomari) for "donkey," and "σκαφίδι" (skafidi) for "trough" mean the same thing for Greeks and Albanians on either side of the border. Although this novel is published by a mainstream Greek publisher, the language is full of the dialect that Greeks call Vóreia Epirótika (Northern Epirot) and Albanians Cham Tosk. To describe Dimitriou's writing as Northern Epirot, however, using a name that serves one national culture is misguided. The transnational force of the translingualism depends not on subordinating creoles to one national language, but on understanding them as homophonic passageways between languages.

The characters in Dimitriou's frontier novel inhabit a world of porous borders left over from the Ottoman Empire until they confront a newly created border between Greece and Albania (Maronitis 1997). The narrative relates the separation of the two sisters, Alexo and Sophia, because of this national division; only after Enver Hoxha's communist regime falls can Sophia's grandson leave Albania to retrace her steps back to Greece. Dimitriou's language, however, tells a different story, one of constant connection and linguistic blending. A common Balkan vocabulary, what I am calling Gralbanian, exists for agriculture, but also for things close to the heart of everyday sociability. In both Greek and Albanian "konak" means home, "kunata" sister-in-law, "marak" worry, and "kouvet" and "muhabet" talk and gossip. Turkish terms for authorities and land divisions, familiar to Greeks, Albanians, and Bulgarians due to centuries of occupation, show up repeatedly: "mouchtaris" for mayor and "machala" for settlement or neighborhood. Performative language, like "aye-deh" for calling someone or "aman" for a sigh, is another site of homophony. Repeatedly the pain of exile and separation is ameliorated by sounds that cross ethnic divisions. Working in the fields Sophia and her aunt hear a bell from a church in Greece and are reminded

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how, like the sound, they used to go back and forth freely (Dimitriou 1993: 57). Later, forced to live in an Albanian home, Sophia explains how she and her husband feel like a "family in a foreign family" ("Φαμίλια μέσα σε ξένη φαμίλια"; familia mesa se kseni familia [ibid.: 66]). She soon finds herself communicating with ease, however, in a mix of idioms that are both hers and theirs: "and we chatted as we would chat, and we laughed together" ("και κουβεντιάσαμαν, όπως κουβεντιάσαμαν, και γελάσαμαν αντάμα"; kai kouvendiasaman, opos kouvendiasaman, kai gelasaman andama [ibid.: 67]). The phrases, "familia, familia" and "kouvendiasaman, kouvendiasaman," exemplify two kinds of homophony, one intralingual insofar as each involves the repetition of the same sounds, the other interlingual insofar both signify in Greek and Albanian alike. Gralbanian, like songs and bells, recalls what is common even at moments of great tension.

Proper names, a particularly contested arena for migrants, also function homophonically in the novel, in both intralingual and interlingual terms. Often changed for or by authorities, they flaunt their mixed affiliations. When and how names move between alphabets and languages provides a gloss on translingualism more generally in cultural productions. The importance of homophony as a translational strategy in Dimitriou's novel is clinched, for example, when we finally learn the name of Sophia's grandson, the narrator of the third and last section, who returns to Greece seeking work.

Finding life in Athens tough, the boy contemplates returning to Albania. He hitches a ride to the bus station with a kid named Dimitris whom he thanks and wishes well using the titular phrase, "Na akouo kala to onoma sou, Dimitri" (May your name be blessed, Dimitri). The addition of the kid's name is important: it connects to the author's name, Dimitriou. Prepared by this obviously Greek name as a site of intralingual homophony, the much-anticipated revelation of the narrator's name in all its interlingual homophony is even more jarring. As he daydreams about returning to Albania, the narrator hears his sister calling out to their mother: "O mana, erthe, erthe o Spetim" (Oh, mother, he came home, Spetim came home [Dimitriou 1993: 117]). Spetim, the boy's name, is a Grecized version of Shpëtim, the Albanian Sh-sound being impossible to pronounce or write in Greek. Although the main characters identify as Greek, the quintessentially Gralbanian name of the narrator is what ultimately defines migrant subjectivity in the novel.

The invocation of the title turns out to be as much about literally *listening well* to the name (n'akouo kala t'onoma sou), a homophonic listening, as it is about blessing or wishing others well. In fact, listening homophonically is what enables people such as Dimitris and Spetim to succeed. To hear Dimitriou in Dimitris or Shpëtim in Spetim is to understand something important about migrant survival: often it involves sharing things even when the sharing is not conscious. The doubling of names with the intermixing of languages is even more meaningful if we consider the author's full name, Sotiris Dimitriou, and the fact that in Albanian and Greek the names Shpëtim and Sotiris both contain the root word, "savior."

Relating intralingual and interlingual homophony in words and phrases underscores the translational density of translingualism and acknowledges translation as a partial process in which the passage and residue between languages matter more than the final destination. Like Valtinos's novel, Dimitriou's ends with the migrant trying to figure out what to do next, but whereas in the American case

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Kordopatis is still determined to be either here or there, in the Balkan Spetim can be both:

> Δεν ήξερα τι να κάνω. Ήμουνα στα δύο. Να πήγαινα σήμερα στον μάστορα, μην χάσω το μερόκαμα. Για *παραπέρα* δεν ήξερα.
>
> (Dimitriou 1993: 117)

> I didn't know what to do. I was in two. Should I go to the builder's today, and not lose a day's wages? As for what would happen after that I didn't know.

Listening homophonically reveals that uncertainty is not necessarily bad. The Greek word "parapera," meaning "after that," sounds like the Albanian "perpara," meaning "further on," as well as "perparim," the Albanian word for "success." Only by risking what he "didn't know" can the migrant move on and do well for himself. The act of piling up languages as a sonic and semantic palimpsest reinforces the uncertainty of where he will end up but also allows the story to make a place for translation as cross-cultural cohabitation and unexpected collaboration.

Read together, the two novels with their interrelated strategies of transliteration and homophony offer approaches to translation that question the hegemony of monolingualism and monoethnicity. Comparing them helps us to see how translingualism dissolves the distinction between source and target languages so that the typical opposition facing the migrant, diasporic separatism vs. assimilation to the host culture, joins a spectrum of possible strategies for negotiating linguistic and cultural differences. The impenetrability of Gringlish, when juxtaposed to the porousness of Gralbanian, reveals how cooperation happens even when the plot insists on the opposite.

Although Valtinos's text is mainly concerned with miscommunication, it contains an important moment of interethnic cooperation, tellingly a Balkan moment, which becomes clearer after reading Dimitriou's novel. A few pages after the scene in the "frutaria," Kordopatis reunites with the friends he met on the ship in another Italian shop in New Orleans, this time a "grosaria," a grocery store. Coming from the Peloponnese, the Greek immigrants speak Arvanitika, an older Gralbanian contact dialect still spoken in parts of Greece and Southern Italy (Tsitsipis 1998). The Italian woman in the store understands what they are saying because she is also from an Albanian-speaking village. "Gka kou yeni" (Where are you from?), she asks, "Yam Kalavreze" (I'm Calabrian [Valtinos 1990: 67]). Homophony calls attention to the long history of cultural exchange between these countries. The Greek, Italian, and Albanian words share the same hard guttural consonants: "*gr*osaria," "A*rv*ani*tik*a," "Diplone *t*a *gl*i*k*a," "*Gk*a *k*ou yeni," "Yam *K*ala*vr*eze." By reading the American transliterative practice against the Balkan homophony, a moment of unanticipated understanding is found even in this tale that points so relentlessly to misunderstanding. Analyzing translingual migration narratives comparatively moves us beyond binary oppositions so that translational strategies, although historically specific, can be used to question and open up received expectations in other texts and periods. Dimitriou's novel helps us to read Valtinos's, as well as vice versa. The rustic utopianism of Dimitriou's homophony is put in check after experiencing Valtinos's more cynical tale of impermeable transliteration.

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(On not) translating translingualism

Translating translingualism is a complicated endeavor, both practically and ethically. To translate from Greek into English involves moving from a minor to a major language. To translate Gringlish, Gritalian or Gralbanian from Greek into English involves a double or triple maneuver, moving from a minor idiom or dialect in a minor language to a major language or to a minor idiom or dialect in a major language, devising different solutions for hybridity and cultural prestige. How translators deal with the power imbalance among different languages and dialects determines, in large part, what counts not only as world literature (Casanova 2013: 380), but also as ethical translation, where "ethical" is defined not as the maintenance of a one-to-one correspondence between the translation and the source text, but rather as the effort to register the various conditions that play into the relation between those texts.

Jane Assimakopoulos's version of *The Book of Andreas Kordopatis, Part I: America* and Leo Marshall's version of *May Your Name be Blessed* respond very differently to the multiple languages in the Greek texts, but both show the resistance of translation to the lessons of translingualism, especially as a political project. Assimakopoulos plays down the difficulty of decoding foreign words and phrases by defining or explaining them, while Marshall cultivates linguistic eccentricities without developing a narrative logic for their disorienting effect. Both minimize the significance of the in-between migrant world inhabited by these stories. Their expectation of equivalence shows that word-for-word solutions may not be the best measure of the efficacy of a translation, revealing the translators' unwillingness to view translation as an interpretive act that owes as much to the receiving culture as it does to the source culture. By paying attention to the blind spots in these existing translations, in particular to how they both erase translingualism, my aim is to develop new ways of thinking about both the problems and the possibilities that translingual practices offer translation.

Assimakopoulos shared with me the complete draft of her unpublished translation of Valtinos's text, as well as two charts that she prepared to guide her work and an introductory note that she drafted for prospective publishers. In the note she rapidly sketches an interpretation of the novel and outlines her translation strategy, including her approach to the proliferation of languages:

> It is an immediate, simply told, understated account in the plain, local-speak of an uneducated villager, peppered with expressions in English and Italian gleaned from his distant travels, conveniently translated by the narrator of the story for his readers. In my English version I have done the equivalent. I have peppered the English with Greek and Italian, giving the narrative a sometimes wryly humorous cosmopolitan overlay that contrasts with but does not detract from the charm of a local Odysseus in the making.

Assimakopoulos's note not only suggests an optimistically heroic reading of the novel, but also asserts a complete equivalence between her translation and the source text: if the English and Italian "are conveniently translated by the narrator," she has "done the equivalent." The fact is, however, that if Kordopatis is seen as "a local Odysseus"

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whose cosmopolitan translingualism can coexist with what Assimakopoulos calls in her note his "Sisyphean attempts to emigrate," then her interpretation is not quite coherent, and a significant departure has been introduced between the source text and the translation. Kordopatis can hardly be called an epic hero if we are mindful of his "attempts to emigrate"; on the contrary, he is an impoverished migrant whose transatlantic journeys end in failure. Similarly, Greek and Italian in English are different from English and Italian in Greek, not to mention Gringlish and Gritalian. The balance of power between minor and major languages ensures this difference. Assimakopoulos has, in effect, taken her interpretation of Kordopatis's migration and translingualism as true to the Greek text, as describing the formal and thematic invariants that it contains, and then compared her translation to this interpretation, whereupon she found, not surprisingly, that she has reproduced those invariants so as to establish an equivalence. Her conception of translation is fundamentally instrumentalist, as Venuti would point out (Venuti 2019).

The two charts that Assimakopoulos created before translating the novel further support her interpretation. One chart, with the telling title "Kordopatis: Travels," lists every place where the migrant journeys with the page number, date, and mode of transportation, intimating that narratives of migration and travel writing are much the same. The other chart, "Kordopatis: Foreign Words in Greek," presents columns of "Grecified words," "Eng[lish] words in Greek," and "Other languages," suggesting that foreign words are supplementary, not integral to the kind of Greek being spoken in the story. The separation of "Grecified" and "Eng[lish] words in Greek" into two distinct categories suppresses the translingualism of Gringlish, while grouping Italian and Albanian words under "Other languages" ignores the specific cultural histories as well as the translingualism at work in both Gritalian and Gralbanian. The purpose of the chart is clearly to isolate individual words so as to focus on what, not how, they mean. Word-by-word explication is privileged over an interpretation of the narrative that takes on board the politics of creoles.

The attempt to keep the tale "simply told" and therefore easy to understand is particularly striking in the translation of the passage where the doctor examines Kordopatis and gives him a skart. Assimakopoulos explains the transaction, eliminating the disorienting effects of the translingualism but also, importantly, dismissing the larger drama of illiteracy. The fact is that the only "desirable immigrants" were those who could read and write (Hall 1897: 401–402). Migrants without access to the Latin alphabet were particularly suspect. As a result, the status of Greek as a minor language in relation to a major language like English is elided.

> Ήρθε ο γιατρός κι άρχισε να εξετάζει έναν έναν.
>
> Όποιος ήταν καλός του ᾽δινε μια κάρτα με μπλε μολύβι κι *έγραφε* απάνω *οράιτ*, αμερικάνικα. Όποιος δεν ήταν καλὸς του *᾽δινε σκαρτ* με κόκκινο.
>
> (Valtinos 1990: 54)

> The doctor came and started examining us one at a time.
>
> Whoever was okay got a card with the words *All Right written* in blue pencil, in English. Whoever wasn't okay got *Unfit written* in red.
>
> (Valtinos 2004: 22)

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In the Greek, the Gringlish "οράιτ" is said to be "έγραφε" (egrafe, written) while the "σκαρτ" is said to be simply "΄δινε" ('dine, given), whereas Assimakopoulos's English treats both words as "written," thus omitting an indication of Kordopatis's illiteracy. Her translation also uses "All Right" and "Unfit" for the Gringlish words, eliminating altogether any sense of their translingualism (earlier in my exposition these words were transliterated as "orait" and "skart," although the transliterations were effectively translations). The Greek allows for the incommensurability between translingual migrant orality and monolingual bureaucratic literacy by using a mark for rejection, not a word. Assimakopoulos, however, turns Kordopatis into a reader, already capable of translating the new language, already on his way to successful assimilation. She seems to be mapping her translation onto a later Greek American moment when migrants no longer returned home (Saloutos 1956 and 1964). Regardless of what might have determined Assimakopoulos's interpretive decision, she has excluded the fact that Kordopatis's inability to read ultimately leads to his repatriation.

Still, the larger question is how her notion of Kordopatis "conveniently" translating his story for his reader develops over the course of the translation, how it relates to the translator's other aim to "pepper" the text with foreign words, and how such strategies are linked to source-text practices. More often than not Assimakopoulos's translation depicts a confident Kordopatis who intends to clarify confusion. "Free pass" replaces "fri pes" (unpublished draft). One meaning is chosen in the English when more than one is signified in the Greek: "I'm from Calabria" rather than "I'm Calabrian, Italian" for "Yiam Kalavrese Italida" (ibid.). Definitions are added where none appear in the Greek: "a *fruttaría*—an Italian fruit-shop"; "a *grossaria*—an Italian grocery-store" (Valtinos 2009). Thus the reader doesn't have to fathom the significance of the translingual practice. This result becomes particularly egregious by the end, since the source text has accumulated a Gringlish lexicon and a word like "Kastrigari" might be retained without comment to signal the poignant nexus between translingualism, illiteracy, and deportation. Assimakopoulos's translation, however, continues to add explanatory tags: "that's what we Greeks called Castle Garden" (unpublished draft).

The translation, moreover, is inconsistent, at times resorting to code-switching for no apparent reason. We get, for example, the faltering accent of the Greek migrant who omits English articles—"*grik sala*, room for night"—as well as transliterated Greek phrases interjected where no foreign words or phrases exist in the source text: "The boss tells him, *páre to palikári*—take this young man—and go to a hotel" or "*Vre, paidiá*—hey you guys, do you have a hotel?" (Valtinos 2009). The translation preempts the literary effects that might support the reader's understanding of the difficulties of translingualism and migration, not simply because Assimakopoulos's unsystematic explanatory strategies inscribe a different, monolingual interpretation that is assimilationist, privileging current standard English, but also because she is unwilling to accept that she has actually inscribed an interpretation instead of giving back the Greek text intact.

Leo Marshall's translation of Dimitriou's *May Your Name be Blessed* is more self-conscious about the literary project of bringing it into English as well as the implications of including or excluding unfamiliar words. Yet Marshall also expects his translation to relay the essence of the source text, so that he too winds up confusing his interpretation with that text itself. At the end of his preface, Marshall offers three possible

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solutions for how to translate the hybrid language of Dimitriou's novel: the first would use "some familiar English dialect," the second "some neutral form of standard English," and the third "forms of expression (both lexical and syntactical) that have no specifically regional characteristics, but which are nonetheless rural in character and in many cases no longer in widespread use" (Dimitriou 2000: xxiv). He rejects the first solution because of its close connection to Anglophone literatures ("any English dialect comes replete with a host of literary associations"), and the second because of its resemblance to the reader's present ("there would be no coherent world distinct and remote from our own, and no distant and lowering horizon on which it is setting" [ibid.]). He adopts the third solution because an unlocalized form "makes the language distinctive enough, perhaps even at times, like the Greek, difficult enough, to mark it out as belonging to a different and unfamiliar world" (ibid.). Thus Marshall's strategy transcends the real cultural context of migration represented in the novel: he develops a language that is not simply nonstandard, like Dimitriou's translingual Greek, but that is otherworldly, not from anywhere in particular. He considers Dimitriou's "rural dialect" to be "at some remove in its density and rhetorical poise from the diffuseness of *actual speech in any language*" (Dimitriou 2000: xxii; my emphasis). Again, as with Assimakopoulos's upbeat inflection on successful immigrant assimilation, Marshall's disinterested position erases the troubled politics of the Balkans.

In practice, however, Marshall's strategy does not produce the effects that he describes. From the very first page, we are in a world with a weird mix of linguistic forms that carry different regional, temporal, and class markers, including contractions ("ye'lls" as well as "'ds" for both "had" and "would") and colloquialisms ("tick," "Jenny," "nether-side up"). The opening paragraph is a typical example:

> No sooner'd war begun than the money and parcels from America and Australia stopped. Granfer-Spyro went to Filiati to shop on tick and came riding back on the Jenny. "Do what it is ye'll do. The sea is cut. The trough'll turn nether-side up on us."
>
> (Dimitriou 2000: 1)

For the most part, Greek words that are unfamiliar because they are regionally specific are replaced by English words that are no longer in widespread use. In a 2017 interview with me, Marshall clarified his method:

> Take this sentence: "'Leave the wench stop here,' she says to me, 'so's we can get her mended, and then come Eastertide you can fetch her home.'" It feels, I think, both archaic and rural, but there is no expression that doesn't still in some sense more or less survive in current usage. "Wench" is still used in some kinds of English and is certainly a very familiar, if old-fashioned, term. The suffix "tide" for time or season is still familiar in words like "yuletide," though it is no longer commonly attached to "Christmas" or "Easter."

Marshall doesn't want to notice that his choices, not unlike the regional dialect he rejects, also introduce cultural references beyond his control. "Wench" has overtones

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of wantonness and servitude (*OED*). Translating Greek ecclesiastical language into calendar terms used by the Church of England ignores significant cultural differences that resist the easy assimilation of the Orthodox to the Anglican rite. The reader is left scrambling to figure out why Marshall's use of "archaic and rural" items is any less misleading than an identifiable dialect or lack thereof.

By far the most serious problem with Marshall's translation is the randomness of its lexicon and hence its lack of a logical relation to the narrative. In the final passage, Britishisms situate the narrative in the United Kingdom, while transliterated Greek and Gralbanian situate it on the border between Greece and Albania, and neither set of choices secures the otherworldliness that Marshall claims to be creating. Instead the reader confronts a farrago of cultural references, both British and Balkan:

> I climbed onto the bus, I was feeling somehow better. That lad'd poured balsam on my soul.
>
> What was it made me think of Tsilo? I pictured her seeing me and not coming toward me, but running back to mam. "Look, mam. He's here. Spetim is here."
>
> I didn't know what to do. I was in two minds. Today I'd go to the blacksmith's, not to lose the wage. Tomorrow though I didn't know.
>
> (Dimitriou 2000: 84)

The use of the false cognate "balsam" for "βάλσαμο" (valsamo) makes something very English and archaic out of something Balkan and contemporary (Dimitriou 1993: 117). The phrase, "poured balsam on my soul," sounds vaguely Biblical, but it has nothing to do with the Balkan word "valsamo," which refers to the yellow-flowered shrub, "spathohorta" (St. John's Wort), whose healing tincture is still extracted and used today for cuts and bruises. Such a high register could work in favor of otherworldliness if it were not undercut by the familiarity of "lad." Immediately afterwards we get the Greek "mama," followed by the British "mam," both serving inconsistently as translations of the same Greek word, "μάνα" (mana, a colloquial form for "mother" [Dimitriou 1993: 117]). Any effort to evoke an unlocalized world is further derailed in the next paragraph where we get the Gralbanian names, Tsilo and Spetim. The translation reads too unpredictably to function as a literary text, whether in its own right or in relation to the source text.

If Assimakopoulos disregards Gringlish in the name of clarity and legibility, Marshall denies the importance of Gralbanian for the sake of sheer idiosyncrasy. He replaces a real, many-layered system of crisscrossing dialects with a combination of unidiomatic phrasing and nonstandard items. Maria Margaronis's review of the translation points to the gap between the series editor's attention to the history of migration in his introduction and the translator's disavowal of this history in his verbal choices. "A great deal is lost," she observes, "the texture of the words, and their historical and geographical specificity" (Margaronis 2002: 31). Not only Marshall's translation but others in the same series have been criticized for their unwillingness to engage with language politics (Katsan 2000). Not all critics are dissatisfied with Marshall's approach: Shomit Dutta refers to his "regional Esperanto" as "a brave attempt," while Ian Irvine takes the translator at his own word, discovering "a highly

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effective rustic, but unspecific, dialect for the three voices" (Dutta 2001: 13; Irvine 2002: 18). Yet these critics devote the bulk of their reviews to what Marshall leaves out, the political history of Balkan migration, as if to supply the omission.

In the end, the translations by Assimakopoulos and Marshall don't question the fiction of word-by-word equivalence or the capability of English to convey the Greek unchanged. Hence their writing suffers. The overt explication that Assimakopoulos substitutes for Valtinos's transliterated words and code-switching results in pedestrian language, while the concocted lexicon that Marshall substitutes for Dimitriou's intensified yet plausibly Balkan mix of dialects comes off as arbitrary. The translators' unwillingness to see their assimilationist moves as interpretations thwarts their attempt to create translations with their own convincing, creative drive. If migration and translation are understood as completed acts in which one language or culture is replaced by another in keeping with the logic of monolingual nation states, translations of translingual literature will always ignore translingualism. If, however, migration and translation are viewed as partial and contingent processes in which languages and cultures share images and sounds, other possibilities can emerge.

Translingual translation

To be clear, then, my point is assuredly not that the translations by Assimakopoulos and Marshall are inaccurate in the sense of failing to establish an equivalence to the Greek texts: within their stated terms, their translations are in fact equivalent. The problem is rather that the translators have developed interpretations which they understand as reproducing formal and thematic invariants contained in those texts, essentialist interpretations, but which actually foreclose interpretive possibilities that might address the cultural and political issues raised by migration by developing translingual practices such as migrants themselves deploy. Acknowledging, in other words, that any source text can support multiple and conflicting translations so that the value of any translation resides ultimately in the ethical stakes of the interpretation it inscribes, I want to challenge the translations by Assimakopoulos and Marshall by exploring the translational dimension of translingualism so as to imagine ways of living between languages and cultures with greater openness to differences.

What follows are experimental translations of passages from the Greek novels I have discussed. My aim is to show how their translingualism might lead to the creation of visually and acoustically arresting translations that take on the cultural and political task of representing migration. Engaging with the lessons of translingual literature involves learning from transliteration and homophony. This does not mean reproducing Gringlish for Gringlish, Gralbanian for Gralbanian: any such effort would only promote still more fictions of exact equivalence. Rather, if we selectively borrow translingual techniques and apply them in specific places for specific reasons, our writing can release compelling effects in the translating language and culture. It can recontextualize the foreign accent, code-switching, and hybrid idioms of the migrant as poetry, the stuff of literature, instead of failed attempts at fluency.

In order to think about how we might adapt transliteration and homophony in our translations, it is useful to rehearse how we experience them visually and aurally.

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If homophony is primarily about sound patterning, rhyme and repetition, transliteration is first and foremost visual, homo-iconic. It marks out what is and isn't ours by making what is different similar enough to become visible. The act of replacing one letter in one alphabet with another letter from another alphabet involves a material kind of meaning, one that comes from the surprise of seeing a foreign word in a new form, rather than from knowing exactly what that word means.

A transliterative translation of Valtinos's migration tale, therefore, might focus on spelling, punctuation, and eye dialect to reveal the tension between what looks or sounds similar in two different languages or registers. Instead of phonetically spelling foreign words and then adding definitions, as Assimakopoulos does with "a *fruttaría*—an Italian fruit-shop" and "a *grossaria*—an Italian grocery-store," one can provide the sense of discovery that often accompanies translingualism through unconventional spelling that includes familiar English words, "fruit" and "grocery," in a new configuration: "fruitaria" and "groceria." Such a transliterative translation would enable readers to puzzle out the unknown creole. One can call attention to cultural difference in places where misunderstanding is even more pronounced by using Grecized spelling: "skart" rather than "scart," "orait" rather than "alright." Punctuation that likewise puts forward meaning visually can then be used for emphasis. A dash, for example, signals something similar in Greek and English, but doesn't require the alphabet to signify. Such homo-iconic effects, when combined, make larger, thematic points. If in the source text "orait" is written but "skart" simply given, a transliterative translation can bring out the difference between acceptable literacy and unacceptable illiteracy by specifying that "orait" is written out and "skart," the red dash of rejection, is a mere mark, adding an em dash to concretize this meaning:

> The doctor came and started examining us one by one.
> Whoever passed got the blue pencil and *orait* written out in American on his card. Whoever didn't got a red mark—a *skart*.

The visual poetics of a transliterative translation also emerge if we map out how Gringlish, Gritalian, and Gralbanian interact on the page. Like the demographic maps at Hull-House in Chicago, which color-code the various ethnicities in migrant neighborhoods, the pages of translingual novels can be read for how they typographically chart who is speaking which language when (Residents of Hull-House 1895). When Kordopatis first disembarks in New Orleans, for example, he pretends to be reading an English dictionary to avoid detection by immigration officers. This scene can be connected to the Gringlish words farther down the same page ("No," "Yes," "Grik") while the Gritalian words ("Italiano," "Greco," "bono") form their own, linguistically distinct cluster. A transliterative translation can signal the relations between different creoles by inscribing foreign accents, "bono" for "buono" and "Yesss" for "Yes." This sense of the foreign might be intensified through the repetition of the Italian "o" and the Greek "s" in other places such as "some place to sleep":

> Not a word I understood. On the way I see a fruitaria, see a light on. With a man inside who sees me.

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"Italiano?" He says.
"No, Greco," I say.
"Bono Greco."
"Italiano?" I ask.
"Yesss," he says.
"Bono Italiano," I say.
"Grik sala, some place to sleep?" I add. My eyes well up. We don't understand one another.

Even in a text as structured by transliteration as Valtinos's novel, homophony plays a role. The shared sounds of Greek, Albanian, and other Balkan languages connect with those of English in my translation, both in the health examination scene when I half-rhymed "card," "mark," and "skart" and in the fruitaria scene through the plethora of o's and s's. The balance between the transliterative and the homophonic can be tipped even further towards the homophonic in the scene where the Greeks and Italians can understand each other because they all speak Gralbanian. Here the repeated sounds are the hard Balkan consonants, "r," "t," "k," "d," and "g":

We were talking Arvanitika. The woman inside heard us.
She was rolling out dough. At some point she said,
"Gka kou yeni, where are you from?"
We told her, "We're Greeks. You?"
"Calabrian. Italian."
We stayed awhile talking to her. The others went ahead.

The challenge is to introduce foreign accents so that they work persuasively in the translating language, establishing a different look and sound to destabilize the current standard dialect. Readers of the English version need not be able to trace the exact source of the foreignness. The idea is rather to make narrative sense in the receiving culture by shifting between a visual and an oral poetics. The use of transliteration and homophony, once again, does not reproduce invariants contained in the Greek texts, like Assimakopoulos's notion of a "local-speak" that is "peppered" with foreign words or Marshall's notion of a "rural dialect" that lacks "the diffuseness of actual speech in any language." The translingual practices in the translation rather function as a kind of motor that sets going the reader's experience of living between worlds in these texts, although in English.

Unlike the transliterative strategies that I invented to translate passages from Valtinos's novel, homophonic translation has a long modernist and postmodernist tradition that extends from the Zukofskys' Catullus to practices of poets such as Charles Bernstein, Olga Broumas, and Eleni Sikelianos (Bernstein 1998; Van Dyck 2013). At its most basic, homophony is the carrying over of sound to connect different languages, but it has also come to mean translation that then ascribes meaning to those sounds in the translating language. Luis van Rooten's French versions of English nursery rhymes are an often cited example. Thus "Humpty Dumpty" becomes "un petit d'un petit" (Van Rooten 1967: 1). If a transliterative translation focuses on visual poetics, the appearance of writing on the page, a homophonic translation puts more

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emphasis on the oral tradition and how we hear things inter- and intralingually. Apart from the micropatterning of vowels and consonants, one can create systems of alliteration that knit the language to itself by using words like "Oh" and "Mama" that participate freely in both languages and then by finding ways to enforce this shared practice through repetition, as with the vocative "Oh" in "Oh come," "Oh Lord," and "Oh my."

The repetition of idioms and proper names helps to make Dimitriou's novel evocative of oral history. A homophonic translation can employ intralingual patterning that ties different sections together. Idioms that use the word "καλό" (kalo, good), for example, can be translated so as to echo each other and build meaning over the course of the text. Marshall translates the adverbial form "καλά" (kala, well) in the title as "blessed." When "kalo" appears in other idiomatic phrases, he variously translates it as "better" and "right" ("She appealed to my better nature"; "that hadn't sat right with me"), and when the comparative form "kalitera" appears, he again uses "better." But the repetition of the Greek word can also be recreated in a series of English phrases that repeat "good": "Let's hear your name make good"; "She got on my good side"; "It didn't sit good"; "good as new." As a result, the sound of the word "good" serves to interweave different scenes in the narrative. Instead of trying to bridge cultural differences through a hybrid idiom that always risks a different ideological weight or sheer irrelevance, homophonic translation can create its own semantic field within the translating language.

A homophonic translation might learn from how proper names flaunt their mixed affiliations so as to make them work similarly in the receiving culture. An interlingual reverberation can be set up earlier in the translation with the Greek "Dimitris" and the Gralbanian "Spetim," thereby revealing how words carry meanings beyond any semantic correspondence. Phrases such as "Deem me worthy, treat me fair" that match the meaning of the Greek repeat the sounds of "Deemee-tree," while the jarringly unexpected sound of Spetim can be foreshadowed in a phrase such as "Spit him, kick him." The goal would be to integrate the sound of the names into the translingual texture so that on the last page rather than sending the reader simultaneously, and rather arbitrarily, to the Shropshire coal mines with "mam," "lad," and "blacksmith" and then to the Albanian countryside with "mama," "Tsilo," and "Spetim," the text itself would have already become a place where the experiences of Dimitris and Spetim coexist in a soundscape that makes sense in English. References to songs and other rhyme patterns (italicized below) can reinforce this effect:

> I got on the bus feeling good as *new*. That boy made me *swing low*. Brought *Tsilo* to mind. I saw her looking at me.
>
> Not coming toward me, but running back to *Mama*. "Oh *Mama*, he *came home*. Spetim *came home*."
>
> I didn't know what *to do*. I was split *in two*. Should I go to work today to not lose my pay? And then what? *No clue*.

My experimental translations address two different but interrelated cases of Greek migration, one involving the United States, the other Albania. Each case deploys different but interrelated forms of translingualism, one transliterative, the other homophonic, each of which requires the invention of different but interrelated

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ways of translating translingualism. The translation practices possess their own ethical value: the transliterative aims to foreground the visual separation of one language from another, the misunderstanding that derives from different alphabets, whereas the homophonic aims to foreground the acoustic connection between languages, the unexpected collaboration made possible through sound. For the Anglophone reader, patterns of transliteration and homophony in translations can give access to the interconnected messages of impenetrability and collaboration, although without indicating how American and Balkan migrations comment on each other in Greek and Greek American literature. Transliterative and homophonic translation practices can't return us to the historically specific relation to orality and literacy or to the United States and the Balkans as represented in the novels, but they can foster a responsiveness to the issue of which languages exert pressure on which other languages, when, where, and how. The crucial question, of course, is whether readers, untrained in thinking about translations as interpretations, will be inclined to interpret experimental translations to arrive at such insights. Will they approach a translation in the same way that readers approach, say, James Joyce's or Henry Roth's polyphonic antics? Will they consider the translation as relatively autonomous from the source text and therefore as requiring its own kind of attention?

Translating translingual literature invites us to think at the microlevel about how to move within and between languages and cultures. It provides lessons in how to calibrate small differences, how to read the social text of migration from the perspective of the minor and the in-between. It questions a prevailing tenet of Translation Studies, namely that languages and cultures are discrete entities such that the source text and the translation belong to distinct systems. If original compositions cross borders and share lexicons, syntactical structures, and referents, then surely translations can do the same. To perceive and make sense of such translation practices, however, we must accept that translations are interpretations that maintain a resemblance to the source text but simultaneously transform it. An ethical approach to translation that rests on this assumption involves not only making visible the minority status of minor languages and literatures so as to alter our own expectations of what is possible in translation, but also acknowledging what we already share, the unexpected collaborations between languages and cultures that transliteration and homophony make possible.

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