# Below the Surface

*Translating Ironies in Stephen Fry's Making History*

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## Preface

"Reading irony *is* in some way like translating, like decoding, like deciphering, and like peering behind a mask" (Booth 33).

Although working on this thesis was not an easy task for a perfectionist who didn't really know where to start, it has proven to teach me a thing or two about irony. Not only did I learn a lot about the different shapes irony can take on, I have felt its elusive character first-hand. Seeking out the different forms of irony and its cultural context, reading up on what critics had to say about irony in all its forms and rereading Stephen Fry's novel *Making History* still could not jump-start me into interesting observations. Though some cases of verbal irony struck my eye, I did not feel like I could get at the heart of the ironic meaning of the book. It was not until I read the Dutch translation by Joost Mulder right next to the original English novel that I felt I had understood the irony of the novel as a whole. This thesis will discuss the different types of irony the novel has to offer and shed some light on why some forms of irony might be easier to detect, but are not necessarily the most interesting ones.

Looking back, the realisation of this thesis has been a long – and maybe not so efficient – process, but it has brought me interesting observations. And, after all, "this story, which can start everywhere and nowhere like a circle…never could be anyone else's but mine…" (*Making History*, p. 3). Isn't that ironic?

## Introduction

Irony is an elusive phenomenon, it's meaning being derived from what lies beneath the surface meaning. According to Muecke in *Irony – the Critical Idiom* "irony not only takes very different forms but also, conceptually speaking, is still developing" (10). With this in mind, it is an undoubtedly fascinating phenomenon, but understandably not the easiest one to encounter during a good read. Picking up on an ironic novel's different levels of irony can be very gratifying, because it renders us the most nuanced and intense literary experience a reader can have. It is not a given, though, that every reader will in every instance pick up on irony, for it is a veiled message and culturally defined. Translating irony takes these complexities to a next level. A translator, as a reader, has to be able to grasp instances of irony and, as a creator, has to be able to render the ironic content in the target text. But how does one render with a literary device that is so elusive? And is it a translator's flaw when irony is not translated? This thesis will look upon the ironical content of the novel *Making History* by Stephen Fry and will try to isolate the different levels of irony and the peculiarities of the translation of these different ironies.

When looking at the reviews cited in Arrow's paperback edition of Stephen Fry's *Making History*, words that especially catch the eye are 'wit', humour', 'pace', 'suspense', 'serious' and 'surprising'. These words together are rather special, because they form a juxtaposition of topics: Stephen Fry's humour is combined with the serious topic of Nazism and, according to the *Times Literary Supplement*, the novel contains passages of "genuinely researched historical concern". It is rather unusual for a history book to be written in a humoristic way. But, like Spiegelman's comic *Maus*, it is not unusual in novels to deal with the serious historical topic of Nazism in a stylized manner to help coming to terms with the grave reality behind it. In *Making History*, Fry knows how to alternate or even intertwine historical passages with passages of funny, high-pace writing. He alternates between parallel

storylines and even interweaves a story within a story in his book. The tension resulting from a serious topic combined with humour and wit creates irony as do his, in the words of the *Evening Standard*, "jokes…[hinging] on inverted political correctness".

The **first chapter** deals with the irony-related topics of wit, humour and sarcasm. Their relation to irony is looked upon so as to establish a clear view on what irony actually entails. Next, the cultural context of irony: the history of irony and English culture and irony in Dutch culture are examined. **Chapter two** will offer a discussion of several critics from the issue *Translating Irony* of *Linguistica Antverpiensia*, which will shed light on the current views on irony and translation. In conclusion a brief discussion on the constraints on translating irony is offered. The **third chapter**, offers the outlines of Stephen Fry's relation to irony and a brief summary of *Making History*. Next, a report on the findings of irony on macro level reveals the overall ironic structure of the book. A last preparation for the comparison of the Dutch translation with the English source text can be found in the detection of micro level irony in **Chapter four**. The last chapter contains multiple examples of micro level irony, connected to the macro level: it will compare the solutions of the published 2005 Dutch translation *Geschiedenis Maken* with the source text. Inferences linked to the previous chapters and alternate solutions per example are offered. Finally, the conclusion incorporates the micro analysis with the macro analysis and will reveal a pattern in the translations which corresponds with the earlier discussed cultural findings.

# 1. Irony in Literature

## Forms of Irony and other Linked Forms

First, the outlines (in as far as is possible with a phenomenon that is still being conceptualized) of irony will be set out through discussion of some views on irony. Next, humour will be described along with other linked phenomena, like wit, satire and sarcasm, based on descriptions offered by Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* and lastly the different forms of irony will be discerned.

"In most of the modern critical uses of the term 'irony', there remains the root sense of dissembling, or of hiding what is actually the case; not, however, in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects" (Abrams 142). The classical definition of irony as a *trope* (a foregrounding mechanism), according to Short & Leech is: an "obvious violation of, or departure from, the linguistic code" (Short & Leech 63). In the case of verbal irony, a speaker says one thing, but means something contrastingly different (but not necessarily the opposite) and the contrasting meaning can be inferred from the 'overall speech-situation' or the context. The speaker and the reader (if the reader is sensitive to the implied meaning of the ironic intention) understand each other and this helps the appreciation of the irony (Short & Leech 236). Coromines i Calders in her paper "A proposed methodology for analysing the translation of prose fiction texts with a narratively bound ironic component" takes Behler's idea of "irony as a tacit agreement between narrator and reader" as a starting point (63). According to Short & Leech irony is a case of conversational implicature. "Much of what we learn comes from inferences from the language, rather than from what is openly said" (Short & Leech 236). Sometimes the author's ironical intentions are oblique and the utterance that evokes irony is subtly formulated. For the reader to find out about the irony of the statement can feel like being in cahoots with the author and it can stimulate self-esteem. This way, irony forms a bond, a group. De Wilde, in her article "The analysis of translated literary irony: some

methodological issues" focusses on a freer approach towards irony and addresses Hutcheon's notion of irony as a construct made possible by the ironist and the audience together; the conclusion of which is that different kinds of irony are created by different discursive communities or groups, instead of irony creating groups (28).

Wit used to signify intelligence and nowadays it still takes a sharp mind to be witty: "Wit…now denotes a kind of verbal expression which is brief, deft, and intentionally contrived to produce a shock of comic surprise" (Abrams 339). Furthermore, this surprise is brought about by the "connection or distinction between words or concepts" which explains the listener's frustrated expectations. The latter are, in turn, satisfied in an unexpected way. According to Abrams, Freud distinguishes between 'harmless wit' and 'tendency wit', the latter being derisive and derogatory (Abrams 339).

The word humour is derived from one of the 'four humours' each a type of personality that can combine in a human being. One character was particularly what we now see as 'humorous'. "As we now use the word, humour may be ascribed either to a comic utterance or to a comic appearance or mode of behaviour" (Abrams 340). Wit is always intended to be funny, humour can be unintentionally funny and does not necessarily have to be conscious and aimed. Furthermore, the premises of humour stretch farther than the oral or written form, unlike wit. "Humour is a 'harmless' form of the comic" (Abrams, 340). But, according to Freud, there is a form of comedy called 'tendency comedy' which ridicules a person or situation. This form "serves as a weapon against its subject" (Abrams, 340) and can be said to contain elements of malice and/or contempt, which makes it satirical. Much irony is humorous, and much humour depends on irony. In her article "Explicitations and other types of shifts in the translation of irony and humour", Hirsch underscores the idea that "irony is inherently critical, whereas humor is not" (178). At the point where irony is less about joining the speaker and hearer (through the understanding of covert messages) and more about

excluding or ridiculing, it becomes satire. Booth, in his book *A Rhetoric of Irony* states: "Irony is used in some satire, not in all; some irony is satiric, much is not. And the same distinctions hold for sarcasm" (30). Sarcasm can be seen as ironic, but it contains a negative value judgment while the surface meaning is positive, where irony doesn't necessarily do so. The word irony comes from 'eiron', the dissembler, an understating, deliberately dumbed down character in Greek comedy and the word sarcasm originates in 'sarkazein', to tear flesh (Abrams 142-3). Sarcasm is often more angry, be it understated or not, just like the (implied) tone of voice accompanying a sarcastic comment usually sounds. The written variant of sarcastic or ironic content might be accompanied by stylistic clues. According to Booth parody is a form of irony because a reconstructed meaning lies beneath a surface one (72). The stylistic clues are obvious and mockingly imitate a subject (Booth 71).

There are different forms of irony. Structural irony is not a single case of verbal irony, but offers a structure throughout a work that, as a whole, serves to ensure the echoic meaning and evaluation intended by the speaker. Abrams gives examples of structural irony with the naïve hero and the fallible narrator. The first is a naïve person who does not foresee the consequences of his actions. The second is a lot like the hero, but subtler and in the position of the narrator (Abrams 143). In *Making History*, the smart but naïve narrator does not know what his good intentions will create, while the reader might know more of the grave consequences ahead. This is dramatic irony: the author and the reader are in the know while the narrator is not, which immediately bonds the author and reader, while with verbal irony this bond depends on the reader understanding the irony of the speaker.

In Socratic irony one assumes (Like Socrates in Plato's dialogues) the role of the naïve, respecting person, but questioning other's opinions and seemingly by chance prove them to be false or absurd. In dramatic irony the author and reader share knowledge the protagonist is unaware of and he will make choices that, to the knowing reader, are

inappropriate or awkward. According to Muecke's *Irony - The Critical Idiom* the drama is enhanced when a character (or more) other than the victim shares this knowledge while the victim doesn't know. (Muecke 43). Another name for it is tragic irony. Cosmic irony portrays a universe or god which frustrates the protagonist by manipulating him and crushing his ideas. Booth calls this stable infinite irony in *A Rhetoric of Irony* as will be described below. In romantic irony, the author creates the illusion of a reality only to destroy it by making himself known as a sort of puppeteer. According to Abrams irony is used as a "general criterion of literary value" (Abrams 144) by New Critics. A work that only portrays a single outlook, instead of a nuanced outlook with different layers, is seen as susceptible to ironic scepticism. Works that "already incorporate the poet's own 'ironic' awareness of opposite and complementary attitudes" are invulnerable to external irony (Abrams 144).

Booth speaks of four preliminary traits of stable irony in his book: the irony is intended, the meaning of it is covert, the irony is stable or fixed and it is finite, meaning the reconstructed meanings are closed, limited to a subject ( 5,6). According to Booth, the literal meaning of an ironic statement should be rejected and alternative interpretations (at some level incongruous with the literal statement) should be entertained. The implied author's intentions (or the work's intentions) must be reconstructed and finally the reader can construct a new meaning (Booth 11, 12). This meaning can be constructed by looking at all the possible different attitudes the author assumes in his work. Booth defines meaning as something that is put in the work by the author, and significance as what a reader distils from the work through their own eyes (20). The latter being coloured by their accompanying horizon of time, place and culture, one can assume that "reconstructions of irony are seldom if ever reducible either to grammar or semantics or linguistics" (Booth 43). Implicit knowledge, whether from the context of the book, or tacit personal knowledge are necessary for the constructing or understanding of the ironic. Booth states the central ironic meaning is fixed while the

significance might be different for different readers (91). Stable ironies are unambiguous. Relevant context is a whole in which "every detail refer[s] reciprocally to every other in the work" (Booth 99) and the wider context contains the readers (literary) expectations and beliefs. He claims that irony is an economical and dense way of communicating, impossible in any literal mode (Booth 104). But to understand and reconstruct the ironic meaning we rely on the context: information about the author and the genre (Booth 175).

He discerns finite irony and infinite irony, the latter having a chaotic effect: ridiculing everything, ridiculing the universe. Also, he discerns overt and covert: the author is visible or invisible. His most obvious distinction is between stable and instable ironies: the latter being undermined by further ironies. Instable ironies can bring home the message even without "the puzzles being solved" (Booth 266). The meaning of infinite unstable irony is not always the only thing conveyed. Poems can speak to other, maybe less conscious parts of us. We are asked to jump in a "bottomless abyss" (Booth 268) and even if everything turns out to be meaningless, we will be superior for knowing that. In the case of stable infinite irony, there is a Supreme Ironist who ridicules mankind for thinking they know anything, but in the end the efforts to understand are still worthwhile. Stable irony offers a meaning to be reconstructed without being undercut by further ironies. As with many distinctions, borderline cases do exist.

## Irony in Literature as a Cultural Phenomenon

So far, a definition of (the different kinds) of irony has been given. What is furthermore important in describing irony is the concerning meaning, and how we as cultural beings deal with it, since looking at the different theories surrounding it; irony is not a clear cut phenomenon. Teesing in his rede *Ironie als literair spel*, talks of the traits of the ironist. He mentions the subjectivity of style, and the author's counterbalancing need for authenticity in his writing. Irony can therefore be found in candour (Teesing 10). He also talks of how a point

can decisively be made, but can lack logic nevertheless (11). Booth also speaks of this: "…general fashions of belief (or even conventionally held errors) are more useful in reading irony than esoteric but solidly grounded knowledge" (Booth 59). And also: "Every reader will have greatest difficulty detecting irony that mocks his own beliefs or characteristics". The opposite is also possible: "…Taking straight talk for irony, is most probable where an author's beliefs differ most from the reader's" (Booth 81). One has to look for meaning within a work and in the context of knowledge of the author, his personality and personal logic. Also a context of other works of the author and of the culture and time it belongs to are necessary to detect and understand irony. Self-knowledge is also a necessity when one wants to refrain from misreading something for irony or the opposite. Not in the last place some degree of training is necessary: one has to read different works with different styles of irony to become susceptible to detecting it. The meaning of irony can also shed some light as to why and when it is used. Teesing describes irony's function as a playful way to keep the mind constantly occupied. Changing foregrounds gives us glimpses of unexpected backgrounds (Teesing 16-20). The ironist sees the relativity of everything, even himself, because he creates the tension between reality and his attitude (echoed in the irony) towards it. Within this tension lies the ironist's playground of words in which he can be deep, meaningful and frivolous at the same time. Another tension lies between the hurt and the amusement which can be found in it (Muecke 34). Putting painful subjects into perspective gives a sense of control (Muecke 35). This is an important motive for using irony. Different cultures, or sub-groups as a matter of fact, can react differently towards these situations, though, as a result of irony not always being understood the same way. This will also be discussed by De Wilde. An example of the cultural implications surrounding the irony of *Making History* can be found under the header Cultural Framework.

## Irony: History and the English Culture

The word irony found its way, according to Muecke, into the English language in 1502 and was not used on a grand scale until the beginning of the eighteenth century. The concept of irony developed haltingly in England, as in the rest of modern Europe, and it continues to develop to this day (Muecke 10). As a verbal strategy and a mode of behaviour irony was known to only a handful of writers during the first half of the eighteenth century. Irony was foremost regarded as a figure of speech and defined as saying the opposite of what was meant (Muecke 16). The nineteenth century saw the introduction of Dramatic Irony (Muecke 17), an irony which involves a knowing (and thus privileged) audience which is in contrast to the knowledge of the character. In Germany and, according to Muecke, probably in surrounding countries, during the beginning of this century the concept of irony began to entail a number of new meanings, among which the meaning of the Irony of Events, Irony of Self-betrayal and the balancing of the comic and the serious (18). Of course, irony in all its forms goes way back to the Socratic dialogues and maybe even further, but different forms were conceptualized over time.

English bishop Connop Thirlwall, introduced German ideas on irony (like those of Schlegel and Solgar) into the English culture (see Dane *The Critical Mythology of Irony* 126). He didn't stop there, for in his article in 1833, Thirlwall distinguished a form of irony called Practical Irony, which occurs in life and in literature (though it is independent of all forms of speech) and can be seen as a contrast between events and their interpretation and between what is expected and what actually happens. He also distinguishes Dialectical Irony (or Socratic Irony) and Verbal or Rhetorical Irony which depends on a contrast between word and thought (Muecke 21, Dane 126-8). These three concepts of irony can be found in a multitude of ironic forms. For instance: Tragic Irony, which portrays beliefs and doubts combined, may consist of both practical and verbal irony and can include Irony of Fate and the idea of the

Poet as a God, the last being the writer creating his/her own universe when writing (Dane 125, 129)

Thirlwall coins the concept of irony without an ironist: the Irony of Fate, which is a significant development (Muecke 21). This Dramatic or Tragic Irony was not popularly known as a concept until the twentieth century, though. The New Criticism began to form in the middle of the twentieth century, demanding 'objectivity' from a writer, who should portray a universe of different characters and points of view in a novel that is a universe on its own. He should then adopt a distanced view to prevent subjectivity. After that, the concept of Romantic Irony began to form when the idea that being an artist was ironic by itself began to enter the collective consciousness. The task of depicting contradictions seems impossible and therefore ironic in itself and it is "ambivalently both art and life" (Muecke 20). This is echoed in Stephen Fry's position as a writer, as will be seen later on. Romantic Irony seems to be a concept that is hard to grasp, especially for American literary critics (Muecke 21). Thirwall's new conceptualizations of irony have been followed by articles which may have subdivided some categories but none of them was as renewing as his, according to Muecke (23). These concepts have been formed via the thoughts of mainly German philosophers to Thirlwall's examination of plays. The meaning of irony as resulting from a cultural practice becomes apparent: "Dramatic Irony is only as dramatic or even ironic as are our own literary-critical objects and interpretations" (Dane 130). The more modern discussions surrounding the detachment of the ironic find their roots in Thirlwall's discussion of the conflict of irony combined with the godlike status of the writer/poet (Dane 128).

Irony has travelled a long way: from philosophy to examining plays to forming applicable concepts for literature. According to Linder, "Leech was one of the first to depart from the classic definition of irony in literature…and one of the first to attempt to define literary irony as a linguistic mechanism" ("Translating Irony: *The Maltese Falcon*" 122).

Leech's foregrounding by occurring tropes "irregularities of content" (Short&Leech 66) can be used in the instance of irony. Next, according to Linder Grice's maxims claimed the stage: when flouting them one aims for an effect like irony (122-3). And Sperber and Wilson, as will be discussed later under the heading Irony in Translation, reduced all the maxims to one: the maxim of relevance. They move further away from the classic definition of irony by defining it as "an instance in which a speaker "echoes" either an utterance previously mentioned or an utterance not specifically mentioned but attributable to a type or a person" (Linder "Translating Irony: *The Maltese Falcon*" 122). In this way, the writer disassociates himself/herself from the utterance. It is notable that all these critics, with the exception of Sperber, are all British. Irony, though having German roots in philosophy, does indeed seem to be literally at home in Britain.

It is not strange, then, that the English have a preference for irony, a form of humour which is, according to Bakas, strongly connected to the use of language (28). Understatement and irony are important factors in British comedy, often brought to the audience with a placid face and a well-known *tongue in cheek* (Bakas 33). The user of irony seems unaware of the paradox of the (under)stated, but the audience knows this to be untrue. In Britain this sense of irony is ubiquitous, in contrast to other countries where this sense is missing or not as highly developed. Because the English speaking community worldwide is growing, but the seemingly built-in cultural trait of irony is mainly a British trait and not a global phenomenon, irony and sarcasm are less and less used within the English speaking population. Absurdism and wordplay are also well known forms of British comedy. The use of slang like Cockney can make British humour appear less accessible to an audience for whom English is a second language (Bakas 33). Sarcasm and black comedy are other examples of British comedy, often directed at the establishment and high culture. Making fun of the pompous and snobby becomes less and less popular because class distinctions are less and less a social

phenomenon. Stephen Fry in his autobiography *The Fry Chronicles* tells us of his doubts whether his (and colleague Hugh's) jokes will still be appreciated by the audience since a new wave of punkish, working class comedy which was directed against the middle-class was beginning to gain in popularity. He states: "I am not by nature a pessimist but I did wonder if the door had closed on types like us." (207). This was during the eighties. Rioting against the establishment is on the wane nowadays.

British humour is still about class distinctions, though less than in the past. The ridiculous, the witty and the wordplay are also still alive. The influence of Thirlwall's conceptualisation of the irony of fate might have made the British more susceptible to recognizing and using irony than other cultures. How much *Making History* is in line with British humour will be sought out.

## Irony and the Dutch Culture

The concept of Dramatic Irony is familiar in England, even ingrained nowadays. This is less so the case on the Continent (Muecke 23). Irony as a figure of speech is more known there, as stated above, but the dramatic form is most typically English. The Netherlands as a small country has been naturally open to business with other countries and the influence of the English language and the cultural forms make the Dutch more aware of the workings of irony than in the past. More rural areas in the Netherlands might be less susceptible to irony, because of the sober-minded attitude of the people, but modern culture and knowledge is spreading faster than before due to modern media.

When Bakas tells us (from a Dutch viewpoint, for the writer and writing are both Dutch) about British humour and irony he explains that this concept is hard to grasp for people for whom English is a second language. Because irony, and also sarcasm, depend on a well-developed linguistic competence and cultural knowledge for the subtleties to be understood (Bakas 33). This could prove to be affecting the translation of *Making History*, as

will later be seen. According to Bakas, the Germans don't seem to make much Dutch-oriented jokes. But the Dutch seem to make lots of jokes at the expense of Germany, because of the latter's impressive size. Thinking about *Making History*'s theme, maybe the shared history of world war II also attributes to this. Irony is a way of dealing with difficult topics for the 'victims' and might correct the collective self-esteem. But, Bakas says, The Dutch make jokes at the expense of all their neighbouring countries, a way of making yourself feel superior (92). The jokes are usually in good taste, though. In times of war these jokes are less common (Bakas 95). Though the Netherlands might be a small country, variety exists in the form of regional jokes; these jokes work in the same way countries make fun of their neighbouring countries. Traits that are seen as virtuous by a region are twisted into negatives by their neighbouring region and made fun of. All in good taste, usually. The sense of humour in Amsterdam, for example, is direct and witty. It is a common form of humour in the Netherlands for urban citizens to joke about rural citizens (peasants). This might be seen as a Dutch variant on the class distinction English jokes which, though, is still popular. According to Dutch cabaret performer Freek de Jonge English humour is disappearing in our modern society because of the gradual disappearance of class differences (Bakas 20). Also, the Dutch don't seem to pay as much attention to politicians as in the past and have less respect for and/or interest in them, so jokes on that subject became less interesting and as a result less frequent. The English wave of 'fresh comedy' in the eighties Fry refers to, was a figurative middle finger to establishment, breaking with the class distinctions and focusing on the establishment. Now, because of less class distinction the establishment doesn't seem so interesting anymore. This is no different in the Dutch culture.

Irony, especially the English situational irony (as coined by Thirlwall), might not be ingrained into the Dutch culture, and especially rural areas might be less attentive to it, but the social media and Dutch open mentality make it more and more likely for irony to be

understood. Though relatively decent speakers of English, the Dutch might never be as nuanced as the English when it comes to irony and might need some help picking up on it. This can be of influence on the translation of irony in *Making History*.

## 2. Irony in Translation

Before setting out on a quest for irony in *Making History* and how it is treated in the Dutch translation by Joost Mulder, we need to know how to look for this elusive phenomenon. *Linguistica Antverpiensia* published a special named *Translating Irony* in which several critics shed a light on irony in translation. These multiple angles of five critics are covered here in a concise form, next to some other critics not featured in this special. Coromines i Calders offers a methodology while treating the whole of the narrative universe of a book as being "ironically determined" (63). De Wilde's reasoning brings us to a methodology centralised around *the ironic*, applicable on multiple levels, in which she takes the interpretive factor into account. Feltrin-Morris humorously warns about the translator's ego and misinterpretations; she examines the worth of cultural knowledge, language knowledge and respecting ambiguity when treating "humorous devices" (213). Haapakoski vouches for extra information in translations when it comes to irony, because the audience changes. Linder discusses irony as a hidden message, a subtext and why this is gone in translations. Next, a few more critics are examined outside of the special: Linder again, discussing a novel in which the linguistic irony of repetitive phrases is lost and how this affects the dramatic irony. Next, Hirsch is being discussed, who offers us an examination of the 'differences in the use of explicitation strategies when translating irony and humour' (178). Lastly, while Coromines i Calders focusses on the narrator, Puurtinen offers us a paper which is helpful in treating irony in dialogue: she examines the dynamic use of tenor, how this is used to produce an ironic effect and how it is treated in translations.

### Diana Coromines i Calders

Diana Coromines i Calders, in her text "A proposed methodology for analysing the translation of prose fiction texts with a narratively bound ironic component" considers irony to be an

attitude more so than a figure of speech, like Behler. In this way, it is possible to look at the whole of the narrative universe as "ironically determined" (Coromines i Calders 63). This approach is linked to literary modernity and Romanticism. This is in accordance with Teesing's words on irony: intratextually, what is important in detecting irony is looking at the style and writing, for syntax, rhythm and rhyme can be inadequate to the actual meaning (7). Coromines i Calders looks at irony on a micro level by only selecting the ironic passages that are important to the macrostructural irony of the narrative. According to her, irony is a "tacit agreement between narrator and reader" and the reader "not only decodes the core information but receives an extra added value of surprise, unexpectedness, and even suspense" (Coromines i Calders 63). She believes a "descriptive and comparative analysis at a microstructural level" (Coromines i Calders 64) can give important information "about a hypothetical macrostructural impact on the translated text" (Coromines i Calders 64) and presents a methodology aimed to provide insight into the narrative qualities of the text. Coromines i Calders asks us to focus on intensity (as discussed in psycholinguistics) and the narrator to detect narratively ingrained or macro level irony. It should back up intuitions of irony with proof (64).

In her methodology she first analyses the narrative universe of the source text with the help of Bal's proposal: at the three levels of fabula, story and text (Coromines i Calders 65). Second, she selects the representative ironic linguistic expressions by only selecting the narrator's ironic passages (based on the Theory of Polyphony), because the story is seen and told through him/her. The other ironic utterances are redundant. Third, she analyses the selected expressions in both the source text and the translation with use of a provisional taxonomy of irony-dependent translation strategies used to express irony in original text and in translated texts (Coromines i Calders 66-83). In the taxonomy Diana proposes, she distinguishes between "irony mechanisms", which are general, abstract linguistic strategies, and "irony

techniques", which are the more specific, discourse-bound strategies. Fourth, and lastly, she evaluates the results of the analysis (Coromines i Calders 83). She describes irony-dependent translation shifts as being irony-reducing or irony-intensifying. It is possible that the two options balance each other out in a translation or that no shifts are noted at all. Extreme compensation, when five examples of irony-reducing and five irony-intensifying shifts balance each other out, breaks the regularity necessary for a text to have "narratively ingrained irony" (Coromines i Calders 83). This method will be used on the translation of *Making History* to find out if the irony is narratively ingrained.

## Julie de Wilde

De Wilde speaks of conceptions of irony which are not value-free in her paper "The analysis of translated literary irony: some methodological issues". She is for a "dynamic pragmatic approach to literary irony" (De Wilde 25) and elaborates to explain why the view that irony "happens" rather than "exists" (26-27) makes for a better basis for descriptive empirical TS research. She opposes Booth (1974) and Hutcheon (1994). The former believes the ironic message to be put in the text by the ironist and the interpreter's job is to decipher it as if "literature [is] a conscious act of communication where meaning is transferred from a sender to a receiver" (De Wilde 27). One could say irony "exists". It is a "rhetorical device by means of which one rejects a surface meaning to reconstruct a real, covert one" (De Wilde 27). The reader has to decode the meaning. Hutcheon believes this ironic message to be constructed by both the ironist and the interpreter. Intentionality is an act of both sides, leaving more space for interaction. One could say irony 'happens' when an interpreter makes ironic attributions (De Wilde 27). Her pragmatic approach, according to De Wilde, shapes her definition of irony. She quotes Hutcheon's definition: "'a discursive strategy [that] depends on context and on the identity and position of both the ironist and the audience'" (De Wilde 27). This context asks for different factors to be considered when treating irony in a text. De Wilde concludes

her summary of Hutcheon's theory: "irony does not create groups – for instance the privileged public which has fully understood the irony as opposed to the victims of the irony – it is rather because of the existence of a plurality of discursive communities that some interpreters create some kind of ironies whereas others do not" (28). This view puts irony in another perspective compared to former models like Booth's model.

Understanding the cultural background of each model, De Wilde favours the dynamic approach. It allows for working with target-oriented research and "assigns a much greater role to the translator" (De Wilde 28) who is also a reader and a creator. Of the three "orientations in descriptive, target oriented empirical research" (De Wilde 28) the dynamic approach allows for, namely "target-side functional investigations", "historical-descriptive oriented analyses" and "translational interpretive analysis" she focuses on the latter, which she "loosely base[s] on the proposals of Koster and Naaijkens who define this kind of analysis as the specific vision that a translator has on the ST as is apparent from the TT" (De Wilde 28). Translations can differ according to differences in individual translators, text type and space and time. Translators are not "neutral carriers of meaning across textual boundaries" (De Wilde 29), but also products of their own culture and time. But, she warns, an "exclusively (or radically) target-culture oriented analysis…avoids a series of questions regarding comparative procedure" and small-scale linguistic choices may be important next to metatexts and contextual analysis (De Wilde 30). De Wilde, when searching for an answer to the question of what the unit of comparison must be when translating irony, argues that irony's inherent interpretive factor makes it that a list of ironic clues can only function as a point of departure in her method: "Such a list...cannot account for the relevance, or irrelevance, of certain formal clues for the ironic interpretation of a literary work in a specific discursive community" (31). Irony can only be found when interpreted and cannot be solely found in " isolatable linguistic units" (De Wilde 32). This is why De Wilde puts "a superior textual level triggering –

potentially – the ironic happening of the literary text, or *the ironic*", in a central spot. It solves the problems of the unit of comparison, the degree of differences looked upon and the criteria according to which the comparison will be carried out (De Wilde 30). When investigating the repertory method, de Wilde finds out that it cannot work to identify all instances of irony and can only serve as a point of departure (33). Though working with above-unit level, textual features, the method does not account for interpretative processes having to do with intra- or intertextuality, nor could it predict " all possible triggers of emotive responses able to generate the perception of the evaluative edge or axiological nature associated with irony in almost all the literature on irony" (De Wilde 33).

Another point is the value or meaning of shifts. De Wilde quotes Koster: when considering a shift as " a deviation from a potential rendering, rather than a deviation from a maximal or optimal rendering" (37), they carry meaning. Not the shifts themselves, but the how and why of their application can be seen as normative. The ironic is an invariable, and it consists of "formal signalling which is, if irony happens, combined with a series of emotive responses generated through framed interpretive processes" (De Wilde 37). When de Wilde wants to distinguish and evaluate shifts according to the ironic, she "artificially isolate[s] three criteria included in the establishment of the invariant as a heuristic construct': (1) irony's semantics, (2) its cutting edge an (3) its formal markers and framing making the irony come into existence" (38). This construct offers two advantages. First, the unit of comparison can be established on multiple levels, like the (inter)textual, or linguistic level. Second, it can "account in one single concept for very divergent elements, such as formal signalling, interpretive/evaluative processes and the semantic mechanisms underlying the ironic phenomenon" (De Wilde 41). The ironic can be taken as the invariant factor (De Wilde 39). Shifts can be indicative of how the translator interprets and should not be "formulated in evaluative terms", because translators have more factors to take into account when translating

(De Wilde 40-41). What constitutes a shift is dependent on the describer, de Wilde says when she mentions Koster again (39). The discrepancy between the translator's general focus and the scholar's microscopic one "reveals fundamental aspects regarding the specific way in which certain features of the ST have been interpreted" (De Wilde 41). De Wilde mentions an unavoidable normativity, the one inherent in the studying of cultural products and practices (40).

## Marella Feltrin-Morris

According to Marella Feltrin-Morris in her paper "the stuff irony is made of: translators as scholars", "puns and other humorous devices closely tied to language structures and sounds… [and] irony…ingrained in the source culture [which] require[s] knowledge and understanding of it that is rarely found in a reader who is unfamiliar with the source language" (213) make for a difficult finding of effective correspondents in target culture. She discusses the Italian humourist Campanile who, in his ironic pieces, points out how interpretation and communication are coloured by the desire of the speaker or writer and the translator (213-218). Feltrin-Morris discusses Campanile's 'Ramses's Letter' in which a young Egyptian boy sends a love letter in hieroglyphics. The receiver interprets very differently than the boy, which is very ironic. Centuries later a scholar discovers the ancient love letter and interprets it yet very differently, according to his own longings. The irony, according to Feltrin-Morris is not resulting from a surprise effect, but it is resulting from the fallibility of the scholar/translator (217). Feltrin-Morris suggests that Campanile's Ramses's Letter teaches us that language is elusive and that instinct, though necessary, can also bring with it the risk of misinterpretation, especially when the ego seems to be involved (218). The ambiguity of the text forbids the ideal "to render…in its only possible form" (Feltrin-Morris 219). The irony in 'Ramses's Letter' especially lies in the seemingly random switches in register, portraying the young Egyptians unsteady artistic skills, which make him more honest in his

misinterpretations than the scholar. Feltrin-Morris gives her own translation of the letter (219-220).

### Seija Haapakoski

Haapakoski discusses irony in children's literature and how it "is not only a matter of comprehension, but also a matter of learning" (135) for the target group of children and adolescents; the recognition of it is a learning process.

Haapakoski, like De Wilde, also discusses Hutcheon's view on irony: ironic meaning is a result of the said and the unsaid (135-136). Ironic meaning can be described as having three semantic characteristics: irony is inclusive; the said and the unsaid together create something new, it is differential; it contains an essential 'critical edge of judgment', and it is relational; irony takes place not only between the said and unsaid, but also between "the ironist, interpreters and targets" (Haapakoski 136): in short between meanings and between people. Haapakoski adds to this last category the role of the translator, who acts as an interpreter of the source-text and as an ironist in the target text (136).

Haapakoski's stance in her paper is that irony is close to humour, though it is not always humorous, and also that the differentiation between irony and sarcasm can be impossible. She then discusses the translations of Nöstlinger's books. She sees the closely followed source text model by the Finnish and Swedish translations not as the best way to communicate irony to young readers.

Discussing Kümmerling-Meibauer Haapakoski points out children need to have a metalinguistic awareness; being able to understand how language can behave and that what is said is not always what is literally meant (137). Also, drawing on Hutcheon, she explains that children need to have the right contextual information, according to their discursive community, to understand irony. And lastly, according to Haapakoski's study of O'Sullivan, the influence of today's world (like adult TV shows) can bring children into contact with

irony from an early age on (137). Lastly, Haapakoski discusses the implications target-culture norms can have. Not every culture finds irony suited for children, or see the importance of it for that specific audience (138). According to Lehtonen in her online article "Translating Irony in Children's and Youth Books. Christine Nöstlinger's Books *Ein Mann für Mama* and *Luki-live* as an Example" Haapakoski, building on Zohar Shavit, suggests that the English translation of Nöstlinger's books, which omitted al lot, shows the "peripheral position" children's literature has in the closed English language. Translated literature, and especially children's is adapted to the norm, for English language is translated more than the other way around (5th paragraph).

When irony is to be transferred to a target text, additions are often needed for the target audience to understand the irony which was originally intended for another audience; a shared background knowledge is necessary (Haapakoski 138). Haapakoski investigated the translations of Nöstlinger's books to see how the additions were helpful. First, they served as extra irony markers. They "can be words or fixed phrases which have the potential to evoke ironic interpretations" (Haapakoski 140). These include stylistic choices like alliterations, understatements and typographic markers and also "elaborate semantic choices" which clarify the ironic intent (138, 143). Also, they included elements which explicated the implied tone of situations or utterances of persons, like discourse particles, epistemic adverbs or even added commenting expressions which help in interpreting the tone. Third, they provided extra information, like encyclopaedic knowledge. According to Haapakoski "the additions…not only focused on the textual elements that create irony but also on larger textual units that support the ironic context in its entirety"(139).

She concludes that irony arises within the framework of the source culture and is meant for that source audience particularly. Because background information is not automatically shared across cultures, new target audiences often need additions to make up

for the gaps of knowledge. This was done by adding irony markers, implying the tone of the said and extra information (Haapakoski 147). Haapakoski, like Hirsch, also notes that "translations tend to be more explicit than source texts" (147), though she doesn't distinguish between humour and irony here.

## Daniel Linder

Daniel Linder, in his paper "Translating Irony in Popular Fiction: Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*", discusses the ironic reading of this book. In this case, ironic reading means second reading: the theme of homosexuality is hidden behind a more obvious, surface meaning. In Hammett's time, the social issue of homosexuality was not to be talked about publicly (Linder 119). The early translations of this novel failed to pick up on the hidden meaning, or failed to want to recognize it (Linder 120). They only translated the more obvious meaning without the tension of the second reading. The translations therefore lose this extra ironic message. Linder finds the 'echoic' linguistic forms (used by the narrator Sam Spade) can be interpreted differently from the surface meaning (121). The ironic meaning is left to be interpreted by the reader when the narrator's voice "disassociates itself from what he says" (Linder 121-122).

Linder sets out to explore the verbal mechanisms of irony and examines how this "communication pattern" behaves "across language borders through translation" (122). He refers to Leech's tropes, the first step in moving away from a classic definition of irony, Grice's maxims and Sperber and Wilson's relevance and echoic meaning, when discussing irony before setting off to start his investigation into Hammett's The Maltese Falcon (Linder 122-123). He shows us through examples from the text that the narrator Spade uses "highly stylized" language (123). He also shows us the irony of the veiled message: by his choice of words the narrator Spade disassociates himself from his utterance and room is made for "alternate implications" (124).

Linder refers to Sperber and Wilson again, this time in reference to translation: the difficulty of successfully interpreting irony is apparent when "even the best hypothesis may turn out to be wrong" (Linder 126). He discusses a test with native and non-native speakers which shows us that irony is much less perceived by the latter category when they are confronted with a text in the language they study. Linder also speaks of the difficulty of detecting irony in another text of his: "Translating Irony in Popular Fiction: Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep*" in which the words 'cute' and 'giggle' are foregrounded by repetition in crucial parts of the novel; these ironic clues are not picked up on by the translators ("Translating Irony: *The Maltese Falcon*" 126). In this text, Linder explains how verbal irony enhances dramatic irony, by connecting a foregrounded word with the situation in the co-text. Irony can pivot on a single word ("Translating Irony: *The Big Sleep*" 101). Linder not only speaks of the problems with the detection of irony, but also of the problems arising when irony is reproduced in a translation: Linder gives three reasons for not translating irony: the first is the misreading of the source text, the second the "limited store of words and expressions available in the target language and culture" ("Translating Irony: *The Maltese Falcon*" 122) and the third the limitation by the expected norms in the target culture (127, 132). He suggests a solution by quoting Hatim and Mason: "'Translators may feel the need to provide additional cues for recognition of ironic intention'" (Linder 127). Linder supports the homosexual sub message interpretation through giving us information on Hammett (119-120, 132) and intertextual examples of The Maltese Falcon (129-132) and suggests a few translations himself (131).

### Galia Hirsch

Hirsch, in her article "Explicitations and other types of shifts in the translation of irony and humour" points out that "irony is inherently critical, whereas humour is not", strengthened by the fact that in translation irony is often explicitated, while humour mostly is not (178). A

little help in detecting irony doesn't necessarily take the fun out of it because the critical aspect is still intact, while the explicitation of humour defeats the purpose of the joke. This difference has consequences for Hirsch's model. She applies a "model for distinguishing between irony and humour in the context of literary texts and their translations" to nine literary works (Hirsch 179). She follows Dascal and Weizman's concepts of cue and clue, explaining that a 'cue' is "context used for the detection of an interpretation problem" (181), while a 'clue' "contribute[s] to the reconstruction of an alternative speaker's meaning" (181). These two together activate contextual knowledge.

She focuses on the several cues facilitating the detection of irony and while doing so she makes use of concepts from different sources. One of the cues is the 'flouting of maxims', as coined by Grice. They are cooperative principles, a "tacit agreement to cooperate conversationally towards mutual ends" ( Short & Leech 236) and they can be violated for effect, as in the case of irony. Though all flouted maxims could be pointers towards irony (in combination with more cues), Hirsch mentions that Grice himself describes irony as the flouting of the maxim of quality in particular (182). So the rhetorical principle "do not say that for which you lack evidence or which you believe to be false" (Short & Leech 236) is broken with for the sake of irony.

Another possible cue for irony Hirsch presents is 'echoic mention', as coined by Sperber and Wilson. According to their book *Relevance – Communication and Cognition*, irony involves "no departure from a norm, no transgression of a rule, convention or maxim" (242). They argue that there is not a strict dividing line between ironical and other echoic utterances, that it is more a question of gradualism and that expressing oneself ironically and understanding irony "follows from very general mechanisms of verbal communication rather than from some extra level of competence" (Sperber and Wilson 242). They suggest that irony is not a trope , because it does not behave differently from non-figurative utterances. "Irony plays on

the relationship between the speaker's thought and a thought of someone other than the speaker" (Sperber and Wilson 243). The attitude towards the thought that is echoed can be complex and does not necessarily have to be simple rebellion. Echoic utterance in general can convey a whole range of emotions and attitudes and also a subtle blend of them. That is why Sperber and Wilson disapprove of the standardized Gricean notions and leave just one standing, the maxim of relevance. Not all ironic utterances mean the opposite of what is stated. What Sperber and Wilson agree upon is that irony is echoic (echoes a thought of someone other than the speaker) and that it ridicules the thought echoed (243). This ridicule might remind of wit, but with a critical quality as an extra added. Irony includes criticism.

Linder quotes Hatim and Mason who affirm Sperber and Wilson's view on interpreting irony: it is done by '"matching the view apparently expressed with any discordant view expressed co-textually"' ("Translating Irony: *The Big Sleep*" 101). The implicit information is expressed through a derogatory or critical attitude (Hirsch 184). Hirsch also notes that a clue can already be found in the target of the irony, "since Sperber and Wilson's theory also assists in finding [this] target" (184). The 'originators, real or imagined, of the utterances or opinions being echoed' are the target. The cues of the flouting of the maxims and echoic mention are used together with some more in Hirsch's model to combine the best of multiple views on irony.

According to Hirsch, humour can be detected through the cues word play, non-sense, a punch line, script opposition, and the violation of expectations. Note that it is possible that these cues can coexist with cues for irony in a text, which gives the utterance subtlety (Hirsch 182).

Hirsch offers a set of steps to be taken (in random order): first the looking for "divergence from expectations and incongruity, or the existence of two compatibly opposed scripts" (182). Then the "structure of the humorous or ironic utterance is examined" (Hirsch 182). Humorous

utterances will come in a different form (like the classic pun, or non-sense) than ironic ones. Next, the utterances are studied with the cues the flouting of the maxims and echoic mention in mind and remembering that criticism is more typical of irony than of humour (Hirsch 182-3). Following Sperber and Wilson, the "identifying [of] the target of the criticism implied by the utterance" (Hirsch 183) can be a clue to an ironic interpretation of the utterance.

Hirsch then switches to the topic of translation of irony and humour and explains how 'explicitation' makes the implicit of the original text explicit in the target text (186). She focuses on the "differences in the use of explicitation strategies in translating irony and humour"(186). Using many sources, she ends up with a classification of shifts. The non-explicitating shift comes in two forms: the obligatory, or language-pair-dependent shift, and the non-obligatory, or norm dependent shift. The explicitation also comes in the forms of the language-pair-dependent obligatory shift, and the norm-dependent non-obligatory shift (Hirsch 189-90). She explains that the distinctions are gradual ones and that it is the shift that is obligatory, not necessarily its form, which explains the relative freedom of choice of the translator (190). Next, Hirsch shows us a table of the findings of her analysis of the nine literary works according to these types of shifts and it becomes obvious that explicitations are more manifest in ironic passages, and humorous passages contain more non-explicitating shifts (191). "Another cue for irony would be an explicitation detected in the translation, while another cue for humour would be a non-explicitating shift" (Hirsch 191), she sees the cues all combined together as a tool for detecting irony and humour. Because of the implied criticism, explicitation does not cancel irony's function, where it would cancel humour's function. This is why in the case of irony, explicitation can help achieve the same effects in the TT as are stimulated in the ST (Hirsch 191). Hirsch gives examples of each of the four categories of shifts mentioned. Similar examples will be examined for *Making History*.

## Tiina Puurtinen

According to Puurtinen in her article "Tenor in Literary Translation", irony or humour can be produced by a dynamic or marked tenor (159). The level of formality and politeness are not appropriate to a given situation, as would be the case in static or unmarked use of tenor. The focus on tenor makes her text useful in discussing irony in literary dialogues. She also discusses the translation of tenor in her article.

Puurtinen explains that "literary and non-literary meanings are created not only by what is said but also by how it is said" (159). To create a special effect, conventions of how to formulate a message according to the situation are violated, so that room is made for alternate interpretations and implications. To explain the origins of tenor, Puurtinen starts at describing register, originating from Malinowski's ideas, which is about language in relation to the situational context. Tenor, as part of register, "reflects the relationship between discourse participants, and also the attitude of the speaker or writer to the text and subject matter" (Puurtinen 160). According to Halliday "tenor is related to the interpersonal function or interactive meaning, enacting social relationships between discourse participants" (Puurtinen 160). Puurtinen discusses Bell's distinction of four levels of tenor. First she discusses formality, which "reflects the attention the speaker or writer gives to formulation" (161). Second, she discusses politeness, which "reflects social distance" (161) be it horizontal, between social groups, or vertical, in terms of authority or status. Third, she discusses impersonality, referring to the extent the producer of the text avoids reference to receivers or to himself. The last to be discussed is the level of accessibility, which "refers to the comprehensibility of a text and to characteristics which go beyond linguistic formulation" (Puurtinen 161). The accessibility of *Making History* is determined by references to history events, literature and culture-specific items (see Puurtinen 161-2). The first is shared knowledge for most readers in European culture and only the last can be a demanding task for

the translator. Puurtinen only discusses the first two levels of formality and politeness and hereby automatically covers the third level of impersonality (162). Tenor makes a conversation lifelike: it is an imitation of an authentic conversation. Also, it can be an important tool in portraying literary characters. Third, it paints a picture of a type of situation or a type of relationship in a novel. The fourth function is a "superordinate category" (Puurtinen 162): the marked or dynamic use of the tenor, whereby discrepancies are exploited to produce a special effect like irony or humour.

Difficulties in translating tenor are multiple: "The connection between a given situation and tenor is culture-bound" (Puurtinen 163). Rules on when to be (in)formal or what is (im)polite differ not only from situation to situation, but also from one culture to another. And if a translator retains the tenor or not depends on norms which regulate language use in translated literature. These norms also differ with every literary genre. Puurtinen draws on Even-Zohar and Toury when explaining that "translated literature is assumed to lag behind the development of contemporary original target-language literature, and to adhere to norms and models which are no longer operative in original literature" (163). This could explain translations being conservative and markedness being normalized in translation.

Puurtinen explains the translational choices for a few children's books. In her examples the tenor is treated differently according to age and status of the translation and different translational norms for different translations. Children's books are a genre where changes are better tolerated or even expected. Expectancy norms are formed by the reader's experience of similar target texts. What is expected of the Dutch translation of English source text time travel novels can give a perspective on the choices of translator Joost Mulder of *Making History*.

## Forms of Irony and Translation

In short the main forms of irony to be distinguished are: verbal irony, irony as an attitude and dramatic or situational irony (like irony without an ironist: irony of fate). These forms are not always sharply distinguished from each other and co-exist in the novel *Making History*. Irony of Fate is the main form of irony in the novel, because it is fate that seems inevitable, even when human action tries to change it. It can be argued, based on the novel, though, that human effort even deteriorates the very conditions that were supposed to be improved by it. And it is human effort in the end, that also proves to be of an ironic nature by undoing its former actions. The precise goings on of the novel will be discussed under the header 'Making History: a quick overview of its story and irony' and where the macrostructure of the novel is discussed. The story's irony of fate and protagonist Michael's ironic attitude will be discussed in the last chapters of this thesis.

Where verbal irony depends on intonation and situation to work, irony in written form depends on (stylistic) clues and context. But it is possible for irony not to be maintained in translation at all. The when and why of translating irony depends on multiple factors. These factors are important when looking at irony in *Making History*, for they can reveal how a translator operates. A framework of what to expect and not to expect will be formed by the findings of formerly discussed critics.

Linder gives three reasons for not translating irony ("Translating Irony: *The Maltese Falcon*" 122). The first is the misreading of the source text, the second the "limited store of words and expressions available in the target language and culture" (122) and the third the limitation by the expected norms in the target culture (132).

The constraints on translating tenor Puurtinen talks about in her text can be placed under Linder's last two norms: tenor is language specific, realized in different ways in different languages, also the connection between tenor and a given situation can be different for

different cultures (163). Also, “different literary genres and subsystems tend to have different norms” (163) and also the status of translated literature within the literary systems affects translational choices. Often it lags behind compared to non-translated literature in the same target-language and translation tends to be conservative in some cultures. “Markedness in the source-text tends to be normalized or standardized in translation” (163). An old classic wouldn’t be manipulated as easily as children’s literature, for the latter genre it is much more common to be adapted, so expectancy norms also dictate translations (Puurtinen 163-4). Feltrin-Morris explains translating irony and humorous devices can be difficult because they are often “ingrained in the source culture… [and] closely tied to language structures and sounds” (213). De Wilde speaks of “the reader’s horizon of expectations on the one hand and…marketing strategies and budget policies of the editorial apparatus on the other” (29) when explaining why some works are translated in a certain TT market and others are not. The type of irony in a ST can also play a big role in this process.

De Wilde also speaks of the effects on the translated text by the translator him/herself. As a product of his/her own culture, they interpret a text according to their own view on translation, their own ideologies, previous readings and the aforementioned reader’s horizon of expectations. She impels us to bear in mind that “a shift in *the* ironic does not entail a better or inferior translation but can reveal indicative factors of the way(s) a translator has interpreted a specific (un)ironic excerpt” (De Wilde 41).

Taking into account the restraints by cultural aspects, the expected norms, the limitations of a language, the rules of the editorial apparatus and the knowledge of the idea that translation is always normative because it is a cultural practice: maybe a pattern can be found in the choices of the translator of *Making History*. But even with these restraints in mind, let us not rule out the possible misreading of the source text. “The historical fact of what the author intended” (Booth 193) is very central to Booths theory and it is in contrast with Hutcheon’s view, where

different ironies are created according to different discursive communities, as De Wilde discusses in her article. What does this mean for the looking for cues for irony? The further away we move from irony as a figure of speech, via irony as a linguistic mechanism, tropes, Grice's maxims and echoic mention, the further away we move from the ironist's clues and the more space there seems to be for multiple interpretations. It is not strange, then that Hutcheon's view suits the more modern forms of irony better. De Wilde, quoting Crisafulli, suggests that when we look at ST – TT comparisons and understand the target-side contextual features we are given access to '"factors impinging on translation behaviour"' (De Wilde 39) but we must not overdo a focus on the target side. Keeping *the ironic* as an invariant, the only normativity left is the normativity of translation description, De Wilde explains expanding on Koster, and this is natural, since this practice is a cultural practice (40). "A shift in *the ironic* does not entail a better or inferior translation but can reveal indicative factors on the way(s) a translator has interpreted a specific (un)ironic excerpt" (De Wilde 41). Let's keep this in mind when evaluating translational choices, while not giving too much power to the target-side investigations and bear in mind that it is possible for a translator to overlook irony, just like any other reader could misread it.

# 3. Irony Translated: the Case Study of *Making History*

## Stephen Fry and Irony

Stephen Fry openly tells us, in his autobiography *The Fry Chronicles*, of the juxtaposition that is created by his outward appearance and his true feelings about himself. In this book he recounts his history, from when he was a student at Cambridge up to his successful career in comedy with Hugh Laurie. He tells the story of a young man who is never satisfied in life and thus has to prove himself. He speaks of a man who actually attains the status of a succeeding comedian, actor, writer and so much more, who can buy lots of cars and a nice house, wine and dine with high-class society and is still incurably insecure. He explains his strivings as follows: "…cowardice cast me long ago in the role of entertainer…Wanting to be liked..." (*The Fry Chronicles* 1). The BBC documentary *Stephen Fry: The Secret Life of the Manic Depressive* shows a man who is struggling with a manic depressive nature. And also his autobiography speaks volumes of his imbalanced disposition: "Maybe it's just me. Maybe other people have greater control over their appetites and less interest in them. I seem to have been driven by greedy need and needy greed all my life" (*The Fry Chronicles* 64). In his writing, Fry is thankful for the opportunities he got throughout his life and also for his natural drive to get where he is today. But the downside, the depressions reveal a man who is highly insecure and never satisfied with himself, in spite of his many accomplishments.

As a young man Fry worked as a teacher, around the time when we was studying at Cambridge, and took on the image of the distinguished, pipe smoking Englishman in his tweedy outfit. Maybe he tried to compensate for his self-consciousness, insecurity and youthfulness by taking on this image. In his adolescent years he even stole a credit card and was caught while smoking luxurious cigarettes in a classy bar. He liked and adopted the Oscar Wilde (he even played Wilde in the movie *Wilde*) bon vivant attitude.

Earlier in the book he explains: "Since my earliest years I felt nothing but shame for the

useless cashing of flesh I inhabit…I had nothing to recommend it beyond its function as a fuel cell for my brain and a dumping ground for toxins that might reward me with rushing highs and reasons to be cheerful" (*The Fry Chronicles* 5). Fry was addicted to sugar as a child, and later on to cigarettes, always trying to dampen his nervous longings. He managed to pour his energy, which he himself considered to be manic in the aforementioned documentary, into what he liked and what gave him a feeling of being liked or even of belonging: into theatre. He tells us of his Cambridge years and how he took his extracurricular, theatre, more seriously than being an English scholar. He doubted his abilities as a comedian because of his physical awkwardness and his stern and mature features, but in practice he seemed to make up for it by being typecast in stern or royal roles and, especially, by his way with words and sense of humour: "I like words – strike that, I love words – and while I am fond of the condensed and economical use of them in poetry, in song lyrics, in Twitter, in good journalism and smart advertising, I love the luxuriant profusion and mad scatter of them too" (*The Fry Chronicles* 2). In his autobiography he explains that he prefers radio to television. He relates on how he used to sit under his mother's chair listening to the radio and feeling so much at home with the subjects, the timbre of the voices and he seems very nostalgic (*The Fry Chronicles* 326).This preference for radio above television seems to be in line with his physical awkwardness and his pace. Unlike contemporary comics like Rick Mayall, Stephen doesn't possess physical high energy comedy or expressiveness that captures nicely on camera. Of, course that didn't stop him from succeeding on screen too. Fry's strength comes from verbal skills, demanding subtler physical expressions which actually serve an understated effect. His high-energy and speed are not physical: he is astute and witty with words. Fry, being a comedian, actor, writer, presenter and a journalist, certainly attained a reputation for his way with words, in a myriad ways possible. In his book *Making History* he shows his linguistic skills through the intricate use of different chapters in different and

parallel time lines, story lines and even different formats. At certain key parts of the novel he writes entire chapters in the form of stage directions. Fry seems to love writing on multiple levels, being a writer of poems, plays and even journalistic articles. A recent letter to the Prime Minister and the International Olympic committee asking for a ban on the Russian Olympics shows a very communal man, trying to use his words and influence for a good cause. His idealist attitude might be the exact reason why he wrote *Making History*. In his open letter he relates: "I am gay. I am a Jew…Every time in Russia (and it is constantly) a gay teenager is forced into suicide, a lesbian "correctively" raped, gay men and women beaten to death by neo-Nazi thugs while the Russian police stand idly by, the world is diminished and I for one, weep anew at seeing history repeat itself". In *Making History*, ironically, history 'repeats' itself with even graver consequences when idealism is acted upon. The subject of a minority being repressed seems to be a recurring theme in Fry's work and life. The contradiction between his negative self-image and his successful career is as ironic as the very tough and very real subjects of anti-Semitism and anti-gayness captured in the abstract world of words, be it in the form of a novel or a journalistic piece. Fry shows us the irony of (re)making history through narratology. In spite, or maybe because of his personal knowledge of darkness, me manages to give words a power of expression which is not less real or meaningful than actual history.

## *Making History*: a Quick Overview of its Story and Irony

At the fabula level (see Coromines I Calders using Bal's analysis) *Making History* is a novel about idealism and the focusing on certain achievements to attain happiness. Michael Young is the young protagonist who thinks he will attain a desired academic position when he finishes his thesis on Hitler's youth. But his thesis, partly written in the unorthodox form of a novel, actually evokes the disdain of his supervisor Fraser-Stuart and he is laughed away. Until he, by chance meets professor Zuckermann, who stumbles upon his story and is

fascinated by it. Zuckermann is obsessed by Hitler and shows Michael his secret project, a machine which can 'see' into the past in the form of colours on a screen, each colour and shape represents someone or something in the past in real time. The professor visits Auschwitz time and time again. First Michael assumes Zuckermann is a Jew because his father was in Auschwitz, but soon he finds out his dad was an SS officer who saved his wife and son by giving them Jewish identities near the end of the war. Michael seems to want to make history by literally changing it, when he cannot make history with his thesis. He comes up with an ingenious plan to undo the birth of Hitler. This taps right into Zuckermann's feelings and they decide to embark on a project together. When the two of them manage to alter the past by sending birth control pills back in time into the well which was used by Hitler's parents they actually create another universe in which there is, or was, no Hitler.

In this newly created alternate universe, Michael's memory of the old world is not erased however and the new world in which he finds himself has a stricter regime and a more terrible past than he could have ever imagined. In this parallel world he lives in America, instead of England, with American friends and matching American personal history. He only gradually remembers his history of the 'former universe' and doesn't remember his 'new' history. Everyone has memories matching this new universe, except for Michael, who slowly remembers memories of the world before his meddling with the past which created a different, and ironically worse, future. This irony slowly creeps up on Michael while the audience already knows. With the help of his new friend Steve, who wants to live in the 'old world' when he hears of how it used to be, he sets out to find Zuckermann to change the world back to what it used to be. In the end of the novel he is literally done with making history, for he stops being a history student and he is done with the workings of history and meddling with it. He seems to let go of his ego, letting go of his need to control the future (and his future) and he finds his happiness elsewhere, thanks to Steve.

At the story level, Fry interweaves the main storyline of Michael with chapters of Michael's thesis (the parts of his thesis that are severely mocked by his tutor and on which grounds his thesis is rejected). These chapters contain the history of Hitler's parents and his origins. Later on, these chapters describe Hitler's service in the first world war. After the event of the undoing of Hitler's conception, this history line alters: a young man named Gloder is successful in these chapters, instead of Hitler. The main storyline of Michael's narration changes also and he is in America now. The story within a story (Michael's thesis chapters) turns into actual history, for it changes when Michael and Zuckermann change history. Also, these thesis chapters contain echoic mention and relate to later parts in the novel which prove they are real. This proves the story to be circular and a time-travel novel. These alternated storylines are divided into two books: the alternated storylines before the changing of history and the alternated storylines after the change.

At text level, irony is created when Michael breaches the fourth wall and includes the audience by his use of direct address like "we" (*Making History* 5) or "you" (*Making History* 29) multiple times in the book. Michael is an I-narrator and narrates his circular story with a sense of humour. His descriptions, like those of his tutor professor Fraser-Stuart (*Making History* 83), are also sometimes witty and ironic. Also, his ironic attitude can be seen in the dialogue between these two men (see example 11 of this thesis), though not all instances of dialogue in the novel reveal an ironic attitude. Another device Fry uses in a few chapters is writing in the form of stage directions, as will be discussed later on, adding action to the story after Michael is disappointed in his thesis, this is another breach of the fourth wall.

## Irony and the Title:

The title of *Making History* has been translated as *Geschiedenis maken*. At first glance, this translation seems off. The standard expression in Dutch would be 'geschiedenis schrijven' (writing history). The translator's choice for a literal translation seems an easy solution and is

obtrusive. But the latter, at a further glance, reveals a purpose: the explicitation (see Hirsch) of a double entendre in the translation. The original English title does not only refer to Michael Young's confidence in his thesis (he believes he will make it with his thesis), but it also echoes the more literal sense of the alteration of history (he and the professor prevent Hitler from being born). In this way, 'Making History' refers to both the figurative and the literal meaning. The bravura with which Michael believes in his thesis, not to say arrogance, doesn't even match the nerve with which Michael and Zuckermann set out to change the course of history (with terrible consequences as a result). Not only is the thwarting of Michael's career plans ironic in itself, also the positive connotation of making it in the world juxtaposes with the terrible consequences of altering the (history of the) world. These opposing scripts can be a cue for irony. The flouting of expectations can be another cue. Michael's idealism and his can-do attitude haven't quite prepared him for ultimate disaster. Hence the outcome is a grave heartfelt critique on his decisions and naïve attitude; another cue for irony. Furthermore, the can-do attitude ironically echoes the terrible consequences; all packed into the two title words. Booth also mentions the title, in his book *A Rhetoric of Irony*, as a means of the author to hint about the position of the narrator (Booth 53). This is certainly the case with *Making History*.

The literal translation 'Geschiedenis Maken' might not be the standardized expression in Dutch, but doesn't sound too weird. It draws enough attention to itself by foregrounding the use of 'maken' to hint at an alternate interpretation. It can still be traced to someone making history in the sense of succeeding in life (the end of the book is a positive one for the world and for Michael), but mostly it refers to the actual changing of history. The title therefore sounds more active and underscores the literal meaning. This explicitation underscores the irony in the Dutch, seemingly literally translated title, and can ironically, on second glance, be seen as a very good translation of the original title.

## Irony and Macro Structure

The ironic macro structure of the novel *Making* History is forged by different means. Socratic Irony is one of them, next to ironic attitude and Irony of Fate. Without assuming to give an exhaustive description of all the forms of irony, a rough macro structure will be offered before setting out to investigate micro level examples of the translation.

When reading about irony in Abrams's Glossary of Literary Terms, the variance of *Socratic irony* (143) rings a bell. In *Making History* like the philosopher, Michael assumes a pose of ignorance at some level. Hindsight, he decided that his actions were born out of stupidity and cowardice ass we will see later on (see translational analysis). Though not a stupid young man, he seems to entertain an unorthodox way of thinking considering his thesis. His idealistic way of thinking tends to skip important steps when making decisions, as it turns out. He doesn't foresee that certain sentiments in the world are channelled when the 'right' person comes along with the 'right' propaganda. Like Michael says in *Making History*: "There was still a vacuum in Germany waiting to be filled" (368). Michael finds this out after his own mistake of attempting to change destiny and he learns the world is worse off. Still, Michael had his doubts right before making the decision to change the world. Another form of ignorance lies in the fact that Michael assumed Zuckermann to be the child of a Jew who didn't survive Auschwitz, while ironically Zuckermann was the son of a SS officer, as Michael finds out later on in the story. Also, like Socrates in Plato's dialogues, Michael seems eager to be instructed, in his case by the professor whose personal feelings of guilt are a strong catalyst when it comes to his project. Professor Zuckermann also doesn't foresee the consequences, which are, in Socratic style, going to be quite absurd. Ironically, in the end, it is Michael who is in the know and he has to save the world and Zuckermann alike. The roles between Zuckermann and Michael are reversed, for it is Zuckermann who will never be (completely) in the know after their first meddling with fate. He is even completely unaware

of the time from the moment he met Michael after they change the world 'back'. Lastly, it is Steve who is ironically not in the know, together with everybody inhabiting the 'new' changed world, for they have no memories of the 'old' world except for Michael. In the end, though, when Steve is informed and helps Michael together with the partially informed Zuckermann to change the world back, he and Michael are the only ones in the know. The rest of the world, including Zuckermann have no clue as to what happened. So far, the discussed irony is Dramatic Irony, which forms a macro structure of irony in the book.

As Muecke states in *Irony: The Critcal Idiom*, the awareness of one or more characters in the story, together with the author and the reader knowing, while the protagonist is unaware, enhances the dramatic irony (Muecke 43). Because Michael got caught in the event horizon when changing history for the first time (when he and Leo Zuckermann send the birth control pills back in time to prevent Hitler from being born) he still has his memories of the old world which now didn't happen because of his doing. Because of this, Michael knows and later on when he learns that the 'rewritten' world only got worse because of his actions this knowledge of the old world now brings out the irony of his actions. Michael only has to juxtapose the two parallel histories to understand the irony of his (and the professor's) actions. Zuckermann has no memory of this old world (that now didn't happen), just like everybody else in this new world. So now Michael is in the know, together with the reader and the author. Zuckermann's destiny is sharply ironic indeed: not only because he knows less in the end of the story than in the beginning (his mind is altered both times history is altered), but also because in both worlds his father Doctor Bauer has helped eradicate the Jews. First as an SS doctor and in the alternate universe as a scientist copying the sterilizing water. Ironically, the birth control pills Michael and Zuckermann send back in time are not just preventing Hitler from existing, but also form the basis of a sterilizing water used to eradicate the Jewish people. Worlds might change but people tend not to. Furthermore, the lack of freedom in the

whole world is even worse and there is not a single Jew left in Europe in this new world. When Zuckermann finds out, because Michael tells him the story before setting out to 'correct his mistake' with the professor (sending the dead smelly rats back in time to prevent the sterilized water from being used), he acts obviously curtly and cold towards Michael which suggests that he holds Michael accountable for the decision they both made in the past. This is in itself ironic, because in both worlds Zuckermann helps Michael change history and is thus as much responsible as him. The first time he helps to stop Hitler from being born, the second time to let Hitler be born to stop Gloder (the bigger evil of the two führers) from being born and get everything 'back to normal'. This blunt stance towards Michael is ironic and should be maintained, or even enhanced for the Dutch reader, in the translation of *Making History*.

" 'You, I should say, are a coffee man.' " (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 46)

" 'You look like a coffee man,' he said." (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 540)

After altering the past (and accompanying present) two times Michael meets Professor Zuckermann a third time 'for the first time', meaning he knows it to be the third time, but Leo doesn't remember anything. Michael is tempted to tell Zuckermann what he "absolutely must not do" (*Making History* 541) referring to the huge unforeseeable implications connected to changing history, but eventually he doesn't, he bends it to a comment on what chess move not to make and leaves it at that. The meeting is echoic of the former two meetings and a lot of what Zuckermann says is a literal copy of what he says in former first meetings in the story, like the example above. These little, at first sight insignificant scenes and utterances, about things like chess and drinking coffee, help dramatic irony by their repetition throughout the book (see Linder, (see Linder, "Translating Irony: The Big Sleep" 100-1). Also, the fact that Michael is in-the-know and Zuckermann is not at the end of the book, adds to the dramatic irony. Zuckermann's memory belongs to the altered world every time the world is altered,

while Michael seems to carry his original ('oldworldly') memories with him every time.

Dramatic Irony forms a macro structure in the novel: Michael's being not in the know is dubious, because being a history student, he generally knows how power works. His looking for guidance in the form of professor Zuckermann is just a fase before proving them both wrong and having to save the world and guiding Zuckermann in turn. This resembles Socratic Irony. Also, Irony of Fate proves Michael's decisions to have a very ironic effect indeed. Whatever human effort, fate seems to strike back. Michael and Zuckermann's intentions and actions juxtaposed to the huge worldwide consequences are very ironic. Echoic mention also adds to the overall Dramatic Irony of the novel.

Also, the novel's interwoven storylines are abundant with different, parallel happenings and still fate seems inevitable. The more things are different, the more they stay the same. Even when everything seems back to normal, when Michael shows his best intentions by changing fate back, he still seems to unintentionally obliterate his favourite band in the end, proving him it is best when people do not meddle with fate. The irony of the alternate storylines and the chapters written in the form of stage directions will be discussed below. If the narrative universe of *Making History* is also ironically determined will be sought out with the help of Coromines i Calders' methodology in chapter 4.

### The Stage Directions Chapters

As mentioned before, the book *Making History* consists of two books. The chapters of the first book tell the story up to the moment history is altered, and the second book covers the chapters about the world (and its history) after the change. All chapters in the first book begin with the word 'making', beginning with "Making coffee" in chapter one and closing with the last chapter named "Making History", and the apparent irony of the discrepancy between making coffee and making history is already a sign of what is to come. The focus here lies on action and book one contains two chapters written in stage directions.

The second book begins with the chapter “Local History” and all subsequent chapters end with the word ‘history’ reinforcing that the action of the first book resulted in the annihilation of a lot of things in the second book. Furthermore, the last chapter before the epilogue is called “Making History” again, echoing the final chapter of book one and the title of the book. The circularity of ending both book one and book two with “Making History” on the story level reflects the circularity of the story on the level of fabula. Michael himself already mentions this circularity in the beginning of the story: “This story, which can start everywhere and nowhere like a circle” (*Making History* 3). He mentions this concept of a circle a few times more in his novel, making it echoic and adding to the overall irony of the book (see Linder, “Translating Irony: *The Big Sleep*” 101). In book two Michael has to slowly remember history again. His history, which is not of this new world, so he can change the world ‘back’ again. The focus in this chapter lies less on action: the only action that is of importance is the undoing of his former decision to change the world. In this second book, there is also just one chapter in stage directions, instead of two.

“Making Movies” is the first chapter of book one written in the form of stage directions (text level). It is a chapter fairly at the ending of book one. Michael looks Zuckermann up in his laboratory to tell him of a great idea that he had. Knowing Zuckermann’s device can look into the past in real time Michael formed in his head the idea that maybe Zuckermann’s device could also transmit. He shows him an orange pill and tells him he wants to stop Hitler from being born. Next, Zuckermann and Michael make all kinds of arrangements and preparations to make this happen. Michael, in his zeal, forgets appointments with his girlfriend Jane and at the end of the chapter (she doesn’t know what he is up to) she has left him for good.

Why would Fry tell this part of the story through the use of stage directions? First of all, this part of the novel contains the pivotal idea of Michael finding a way of stopping Hitler

from being conceived and also his girlfriend leaves him. The way in which Fry chooses to express this important part of the novel has the advantage of immediate expression, which draws us right near the action, as though we were right there, and ironically, there is the safe distance of being an onlooker from another plane (reality versus the alternate reality of the stage). Muecke in his book *Irony. The Critical Idiom* mentions the sympathy we experience in watching a play, while at the same time we experience detachment (40). Dramatic irony is created by these chapters, expressing action and distance alike, giving the audience the time and space to consider what is happening. This position invites an ironic reading (see Linder, "Translating Irony: *The Big Sleep*" 104). And at the same time dramatic irony is created by a few comebacks of this device, the chapters echo important decisions being made and links them together.

We are not watching a play here, but the stage directions Fry presents to us here, whether we like it or not (not all critiques by readers were positive about this device in the book), makes us act the scene out in our heads (at least if we want to know how the story continues). So Fry actually mimics a play here. The immediacy of this form of literature heightens the tension. Something exiting is discovered by Michael and when the scene evolves we tag along when preparations for the planned un-conception of Hitler are being made and we feel for Michael as we gradually see his girlfriend slip through is fingers. Drama is felt while at the same time we are very aware of the marked form of the stage directions and with that our position as onlookers, the latter making us invulnerable because we cannot be affected by a story on another plane than ours (reality). The "tightness of construction" and "economy" (Muecke 44) help keeping up the pace and the tension of the dramatic. At the same time, where the rest of the novel might "relate, in the past tense, actions already completed" (Muecke 44) the story to us, the stage directions "present an action being fulfilled," they say: "Watch what is going to happen" (Muecke 44). This also contributes to

the immediacy and high pace of this part of the story. It seems to be immediate and ‘in the now’, which presents another irony, next to the past and the future which seem to be fighting for a spot in the novel.

“Making History” is the second chapter of book one also written in stage directions, it forms the ending chapter of book one. It is a chapter full of nervousness, for first Michael has lost the contraceptive pill and then he sneaks into his ex-girlfriend’s lab to steal new pills. Also, Michael doubts his decision before deciding to go through with the plan. Michael and Zuckermann send back the stolen pills and alter history and create a different timeline.

“Movie History”, the third last chapter, is the first chapter of book two and the last chapter of the whole of *Making History* written in stage directions. Michael and Steve try to find Leo Zuckermann, who has no memory of the old world, and his memories are made of the memories belonging to the new world. They succeed and make an elaborate plan to get Zuckermann to help them change history back. They are being shadowed by some FBI agents though, who suspect Michael to be an enemy of the state because they heard him utter knowledge of the ‘old world’ which is only known to a few in this new world. The tension in this chapter is enormous, because the fate of the world depends on Zuckermann’s help.

Stage direction chapter “Making Movies” is about the idea of changing the world and contains the preparation for the stage direction chapter “Making History”, where history is changed. Stage direction chapter “Movie History” cancels out the former two stage direction chapters. The changing of the world is reversed (with some minor changes which could not be avoided, like the obliteration of Michael’s favourite band). The movie, as Michael called it, has stopped. His preference for action has disappeared. It is striking that the second chapter to be called “Making History”, near the end of book two, is not written in stage directions. The actual changing back of history is written in normal prose, while there are very dramatic episodes in this chapter which could do with some stage directions alluding to action. Steve is

shot dead by the FBI agents and history is changed back just barely in time before the agents could stop them. But the absence of stage directions herald the beginning of a new peace. Action is not needed anymore. “Movie History” cancels out the plans of “Making Movies”, which neutralised the former stage direction chapter “Making History” into the second “Making History” which is written in normal prose. Michael has lost the urge to have to be active and carry the world’s fate on his shoulders. The Epilogue brings a new ‘old’ world and Michael and Steve back together.

# 4. Translations under the Microscope

## Irony in Passages (Micro Level)

"Other things being equal, one should always accept the reading that contributes most to the quality of the work" (Booth 184). This system is not without trouble, according to Booth, but can function as a final clue of irony, so together with other clues. The clues discussed by Haapakoski can help us or our way: irony markers, implying the tone of the said and extra information. Also, clues like the ones Linder discusses can be pointers towards the detection of irony: echoic phrases can help us detect (dramatic) irony and disassociation can reveal an ironic attitude. Hirsch also speaks of echoic mention and adds some more to this, like the flouting of Grice's maxims, the breaking of Haverkate's sincerity condition and looking for explicitations (in the case of translation). Coromines i Calders asks us to look for irony in the narrative by using her taxonomy and Puurtinen's marked tenor reveals irony in dialogue. Relevant context is a whole in which "every detail refer[s] reciprocally to every other in the work" (Booth 99) and the wider context contains the readers (literary) expectations and beliefs. Genre conventions and the author (implied and real) are also clues. (Booth 84-5). De Wilde's concept of *the ironic* allows us to look at irony on different levels. All these bits of information on micro level, when adding them up, can reveal something of the macrostructural irony. This chapter investigates the microstructural translational choices and tries to put the microstructural irony and the macrostructural irony into perspective.

## Cultural Framework

July de Wilde's preference for a 'dynamic approach to irony' sheds a light on the why behind the choices of the translator. Instead of a simple right or wrong, the translator might have had more complex reasons for his choices. Descriptive-historical oriented investigations, which de Wilde mentions more briefly than translational interpretive oriented analysis, might be

interesting when looking at the German translation of *Making History*, *Geschichte Machen*, because of the relative sensitivity of the subject of the Second World War in Germany. The German critic Jürgen Wimmer, as discussed on the Niederelbe-forum, wrote:

„Für Stephen Fry ist das Unheil also nicht an ein bestimmte Person gebunden. Hitler, so die These des Buches, war nur Platzhalter. Entscheidend sind nicht einzelne Personen, sondern geschichtliche Rahmenbedingungen... Fry setzt das in seinem bitterbösen Roman glaubhaft um.. Dabei gibt es haufenweise allerschwärzesten britischen Humor, für den man einen deutschen Autor bei diesem Thema kreuzigen würde." – Jürgen Wimmer

Gloss: For Stephen Fry the mischief is therefore not tied to a specific individual. Hitler, according to the thesis of the book was just a placeholder. The decisive factor is not an individual, but historical framework ... Fry sets this forth credibly in his sardonic novel .. There are tons of the blackest British humor, for which one would crucify a German author in this topic.

It is interesting that Wimmer says that Hitler was just a placeholder. Indeed, the novel shows us that historical framework is a decisive factor, but Michael does not dismiss responsibility at all. Consider the next excerpt taken from *Making History*:

Maybe I was the cunt. If America hadn't been facing off against Europe all these years, maybe Todd/Ronnie/Scott would be a different person. I had done that to him.

What was I saying? It was genes. It was genes, genes and nothing but genes. I mean, look at Leo's father, Dietrich Bauer. A son of a bitch who goes to Auschwitz to help wipe out Jews in one world, and a son of a bitch who goes to Auschwitz to help wipe out Jews in another. And his son, a decent man in both worlds, but a little inclined to take his guilt very personally.

Yet this was predetermination either way you sliced it. The will of history or the will of DNA. What happened to the will of man? (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 438-9)

So it all seems to come together: The vacuum to be filled by Hitler or Gloder, individual responsibility and mass responsibility. Michael puts responsibility first at the end of his argument, not the will of history. Seen from this light, Wimmer's choice of words "Hitler, so die These des Buches, war nur Platzhalter" is very interesting. People are also products of their culture, critics not excluded. This German critic focusses on the will of history and this might be a preferable focus for a German, considering the weight of the historic topic of the Second World War for Germany (which Wimmer underscores himself in the last line of his quote). This doesn't dismiss the fact that Michael does indeed discover that there was a gap to be filled by Gloder when he stopped Hitler from being born. But this is not the sole focus of the book. This critic offers a good example of how the cultural framework might be of influence on the reading of a cultural product that is a novel.

Having established a framework for discovering macrostructural irony and having investigated the tools needed to detect irony on microlevel, the last to investigate are the actual passages of *Making History* that reveal the ironic content *and* the traces of the translator.

## Translational Choices

1. And the smell. Oh my god the smell.

   Klara clapped a hand to her mouth and nose. But to no avail. Vomit leaked from between her fingers as her body tried to force out the reek, the terrible, terrible stench. Death and corruption filled the air. (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 18)

   En toen was er die lucht. Mijn God, wat een lucht.

   Klara sloeg een hand voor haar mond en neus. Zonder resultaat. Er sijpelde kots tussen

> haar vingers door terwijl haar lichaam probeerde de geur terug naar buiten te persen, de verschrikkelijke, verschrikkelijke stank. Dood en verderf vervulden de lucht. (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 24)

This text is from a chapter which can be seen as part of Michael's thesis: the story within the story, the part his supervisor Fraser-Stuart considers to be a crappy novel (Fry, 1996/1997 p. 87). Michael spiced up his thesis with chapters of a narrative kind to give it a certain context, not to the liking of his supervisor. But this 'made up' context also works as a signal of what is to come in the actual fabula of the novel. The word 'corruption' echoes what Michael will do in the novel later on. Michael will alter history (and the present with it) by tampering with the water supply in Braunau. First he will send birth control pills to it to prevent Hitler from being born and the second time he will send dead rats to it to prevent the former prevention. This last tampering is what is incorporated into this piece of Michael's thesis. This tampering hasn't happened yet in the fabula, but the words 'death and corruption' herald (and echo) these coming events. The water is literally corrupted at two occasions later on in the novel. Fry interweaves the story within the story with the fabula in this way.

The Dutch translation by Joost Mulder reads 'dood en verderf', the latter word meaning something like moral corruption or downfall. This has a stricter meaning than the English original, the latter can also be speaking of a tampering or unsettling of some kind. The Dutch translation is good in the sense that it could be seen as a foreboding of the even worse moral corruption that was going to follow the 'undoing' of the birth of Hitler. But the text reads about the second corruption of the water, when the dead rats are sent to the well, and when this corruption is ironically supposed to be lessened by the 'undoing of the undoing' of the birth of Hitler. The focus on moral corruption might not be a good one, at this moment in the novel. But if the translation is seen as a comment on the coming of the complete story of moral corruption and downfall still waiting to happen in the story (not the fabula), it is not

a bad translation though, for the reader has still to read all about it, because the text is an echo of past events still to come at this point in the novel. Such is the difficulty with time travel-science fiction. Still, the translation fails to encompass the ironic meaning of the corruption of the Braunau-water and just forebodes (echoes) the moral corruption waiting to happen at story level.

According to the model of Hirsch (see Hirsch) this extract contains an obligatory non-explicitating shift. The ironic double reading of 'corruption', cannot be translated with a similar single word in Dutch, so there is a loss of ironic meaning, namely the meaning of the tampering with the water, which makes the shift non-explicitating. Also, the semantic field is different due to language differences, therefore the shift in the translation is obligatory. In this instance, irony is non-explicitated; something that happens to humour more often than to irony according to Hirsch in her paper. This might steer to the conclusion that the translator didn't pick up on the irony or he might have chosen another solution. On the other hand it might have been a conscious choice since it still echoes the horror caused by the first tampering of the water.

**2.** Not like poor Frieda Braun who had miscarried just that afternoon after pumping the water from the cistern and smelling that awful stench and seeing a torrent of maggots stream into her pail. (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 48)

Niet zoals arme Frieda Braun die juist die middag een miskraam had gehad nadat ze water had opgepompt uit de cisterne en die afschuwelijke lucht had geroken en een stroom maden haar puts in had zien plenzen. (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 49)

Though early in the novel, the hint towards the (second) manipulation of the Braunau-water is already there, like an echo of what still has to happen, although the reader is still unaware as yet. This text is also from a chapter which can be seen as part of Michael's thesis. But, again,

at the same time this passage is also a clear hint of what will happen later on in the actual novel: the water is tampered with and history will be altered. Ironically, as a sideline story, Mrs. Brown (from the story within the story) turns out to be the ancestor of the obliterated lead singer of Michael's favourite band Oily Moily. The fact that Michael 'undoes' his own favourite band in an attempt to rectify the 'undoing' of Hitler to prevent an even worse world can be seen as a small tragedy compared to the big tragedies of the novel. The irony of the case lies in the fact that Michael ironically seems to lose again, even when he rectifies the huge irony of the worse Hitler-free world. One mistake rectified, another one appears. As a writer, Fry seems to be able to interweave small tragedies and big tragedies, small ironies and big ironies and even story within story-lines and the storyline.

The translator seems to fail to notice the importance of the foreboding word 'the' in the phrase 'the water' and simply translates with 'water' without the meaningful word 'het'. Would he have written 'het water' he would have helped to create extra awareness for the ironic aspect of the word, with the chance of loss of subtlety and understatement which is also of importance in Making History. But he didn't even go as far as to translate with 'het water', which would have created the same level of irony as the source text. It is possible Joost Mulder overlooked the foreboding hint since the water was not tampered with yet at that point in the novel and even the fact of the story within story-chapters being alternated with (and even being interwoven with) the story can prove to be complex and confusing. Still more is expected from a translator than from a 'regular' reader.

**3.** I was allowed to kick and scream just once as I watched the dazzle and brilliance of youth cloud over.

Like I say, I don't half think some crap sometimes.

(Fry, 1996/1997 p. 111)

Ik mocht toch wel één keertje stampvoeten en schreeuwen omdat ik zag hoe er een wolk trok voor de schittering en fonkeling van de jeugd?

Zoals ik al zei, soms komt er een hoop onzin in me op.

(Fry, 1996/2005 p. 102)

In this example, Michael's 'novel parts' of his thesis, the parts where he describes Hitler's childhood, had just been rejected by Fraser-Stuart. In a "self-righteous, puritanical little outburst" (Making History, 102) Michael asks for a little understanding while ridiculing himself. He was always a top student and now at age twenty-four everybody has caught up with him.

The translator added typographic markers as extra irony markers (see Haapakoski 136). He made the sentence a question and put stress on the first word of the expression 'één keer' (one time). Also, he added the modal particle 'toch', meaning 'surely' stressing the ironic tone of Michael's question (see Haapakoski 140). It is possible the translator chose this way to make the detection of irony easier, because he failed to translate the expression 'kicking and screaming' with an equal known expression in Dutch. The literal translation is not a standard expression and doesn't read as smoothly in Dutch as the original English expression does. The last sentence indicates Michael ridicules his former comment (or question, in Dutch). His attitude is one of self-irony. The Dutch translation chooses 'een hoop onzin' 'a lot of nonsense', which is more outspoken than the former sentence than the understated original comment, making the irony more explicit and again, more easy to pick up on for the reader.

**4.** "Darling Trudi, My God this is a dreadful place. The steadfastness of the men in their work is frankly heroic. More Jews arrive every day, always so much to be done. You would be proud if you could see how little complaint the guards and officers make as they go about their tasks in the camp". (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 188)

> “Liefste Trudi, Mijn God, wat is dit een vreselijk oord. De standvastigheid waarmee de mannen hun werk doen is bepaald heroïsch te noemen. Elke dag komen er nieuwe joden, er is altijd een massa te doen. Je zou trots zijn als je kon zien hoe weinig de bewakers en officieren klagen bij het uitvoeren van hun taken in het kamp.” (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 167-8)

This excerpt is a piece of the war diary of Professor Kremer, Dietrich Bauer’s old teacher. Leo Zuckermann is telling Michael that his name is actually Bauer and that his father Dietrich was an SS doctor in Auschwitz, instead of a Jewish prisoner. Near the end of the war, his father saved him and his mother by giving them the identities of Jewish prisoners. Dietrich didn’t keep a diary, but his old teacher Kremer did. Leo, in his grief, tells Michael of the horrors of Auschwitz and reads him a part of the diary.

This part contains a translation choice which enhances the irony. The phrase ‘so much to be done’ is translated with ‘een massa te doen’ or ‘a mass to do’ which refers to the Jews. The mass destruction of the Jews clearly echoes through this Dutch translation of ‘so much to be done’. The said and the unsaid together create the irony. The SS doctor is being genuine in his speech, but the unsaid, the goings on of Auschwitz make his words very ironic, and the translator makes the unsaid a little more ‘said’, he takes on the role of the ironist (see Haapakoski 136) and chooses a word that enhances the sharp irony of the diary excerpt. Although this excerpt is, again, not meant to be ironic from the point of view of the original speaker, it is written from and SS doctor point of view, it is because it is read by a victim of the war: the troubled son of a SS doctor. Moreover, for (almost) anyone who reads this novel it is sharply ironic, for the wounds of this war belong to west European culture.

**5.** Steve stopped and considered for a moment. ‘Here’s what we do…We pick up some pizzas and some donuts and some soda…and we take it back to your place. Then you tell me everything that’s in your mind. Deal?’ (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 355)

> Steve hield even halt en dacht hierover na. ‘Weet je wat?...We halen een paar pizza’s en wat donuts en frisdrank…en dan gaan we naar jou toe. En dan vertel je mij alles wat je op je lever hebt. Afgesproken?’ (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 311)

This example relates to the moment in the novel just before Michael will tell Steve of his past actions. Steve doesn’t just think Michael is crazy and really opens up for his explanation of why Michael is sounding so British and doesn’t remember his American past. The common use of something ‘being in your mind’ mostly relates to intention, or memory and even imagination. It is therefore an ambiguous word, because it echoes Michaels intentions later on in the story. He will change the past (and future) again. Also, Steve could unintentionally relate to Michael’s memories, which are his British memories of the ‘old world’, instead of his American memories of this universe. Steve undoubtedly still feels ambivalent about the fact that Michael changed so thoroughly from one day to the next, and wonders what it might be that Michael is imagining. Ironically, Steve is unintentionally right on multiple levels, for there are foreign (to Steve) memories in Michaels head and certain intentions of colossal importance. The Dutch translation chooses a fixed phrase (see Haapakoski to make the interpretation easier. ‘Iets op je lever hebben’, which means ‘having something on one’s mind’ (or literally ‘on one’s liver’) and this actually usually entails worry, or wanting to ask or say something. The irony of the implicit multiple meanings are gone in the translation, but the reading of the difficulties still to come has become easier, which might help adolescents reading the translation of *Making History* prepare for what is to come in the novel. The ‘Dutch Steve’ clearly echoes the troubles that are behind the two boys and the troubles that might be ahead, making it easier for the Dutch reader to pick up on the irony of the situation that Michael created. The contrast of Michael’s secret of universal proportions and especially the danger in entails, to the casual buying of some junk food shines clearer through in the Dutch translation.

In the passage below, Michael just confessed his actions to Steve, who finds out he is living in the alternate storyline Michael created by undoing the birth of Hitler. Obviously Michael wanted a better world, but this world is ironically worse. Though Michael is sincere in telling this story, the circumstances are all too ironic.

**6.** ‘You generated one of your own and you’re stuck in it.’

‘That’s it,’ I said. ‘But in my arrogance I thought I’d generated a better one. I thought if Hitler wasn’t born the century would have less to be ashamed of.’ (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 368)

‘Jij hebt een eigen eeuw gegenereerd en zult het daarmee moeten doen.’

‘Dat is het’, zei ik.

*Gloss: ‘You generated your own century and you will have to make do with it.’ ‘That’s it,’ I said.*

‘Maar ik was zo arrogant te denken dat ik een betere eeuw had gecreëerd.

*‘But I was arrogant to think I’d had created a better century.*

Ik dacht dat, als Hitler niet was geboren, we een eeuw zouden hebben waarover we ons minder hoefden te schamen.’

*I thought, if Hitler wasn’t born, we would have a century we would be less ashamed of*’. (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 321-22)

The first sentence is a comment from Steve. The ST shows the situation plainly as it is: Michael is stuck in this century. The Dutch translation ‘zult het daarmee moeten doen’ shows a possible reaction to this: resignation. This translation does not echo the attitude Michael will possess, because he will ‘set things straight’ later in the story. The translator goes beyond the original text and takes a wrong turn for it echoes the wrong attitude.

The next sentences are Michael’s. The last sentence contains an obligatory explicitation (see

Hirsch). In Dutch, the abstract use of a ‘century being ashamed’ is not common, except maybe for poems. The possibilities in this prose text are therefore limited. This is why the shift in the translation is obligatory. The translator was forced to make the passage less abstract and chose the subject ‘we’, turning the century into the object to be less ashamed of. This explicitates the object and subject of the shame and explicitates the irony of the matter; there is more to be ashamed of than in the world before Michael’s decision and this is more clearly stated in the translation.

The utterance isn’t breaking Haverkate’s sincerity condition (see Hirsch 181-2), or any Gricean notions. Michael is being sincere, he sees the mistake of his former thoughts and therefore understands the irony of the situation. This former thought (‘If Hitler wasn’t born the century would have less to be ashamed of’), though is now echoed by Michael in his sincere conversation with Steve and, according to the principle of Sperber and Wilson (Hirsch 184), Michael himself is the target of the irony. Also, in the end, this former thought proves to flout Gricean notions, for it is not true – the opposite is true – but Michael was sincere in his thoughts when he decided to change fate, though he questions his intentions later in the novel, as will be clear. This sentence of the passage contains an obligatory explicitation, and although cues for irony can be found, it is not all that clear cut as Hirsch describes in her paper. Irony also lies in the relationship to the context.

In the next example Dietrich Bauer (father of Axel Bauer, or Leo Zuckermann) is a scientist working on the secret that is the Braunau-water. He and a friend scientist have to discover what it is and why it makes people sterile. This story is part of the changed past Michael created. In the ‘old world’, the world before the creation of a parallel new world, Dietrich Bauer was a Nazi who helped eradicate the Jews in Auschwitz. And in this parallel world, in the changed past, he was a scientist helping Gloder eradicating the Jews by means of the production of more sterile water. He discovered the chemical compounds of the water and

made it possible to mass produce it for Gloder. In this example he gets a phone call from his wife, who hands the phone to their son Axel (Leo Zuckermann when he was young in the parallel world). Axel just speaks a few words. He mainly repeats ‘milk’ and ‘fox’ and his mother explains why he speaks of these things. This is when Dietrich answers:

**7.** ‘Ah, that explains it.’ (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 378)

‘Ah, nu begrijp ik het.’

Gloss: ‘Ah, now I understand.’

(Fry, 1996/2005, p. 330)

Professor Bauer being a very scientific man with a lot of discipline was successful enough to discover the components necessary for the reproduction of the sterile water, but he doesn’t have a lot of empathy. Multiple times in the book this is apparent and this sentence summarizes this: “A son of a bitch who goes to Auschwitz to help wipe out Jews in one world, and a son of a bitch who goes to Auschwitz to help wipe out Jews in another.” (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 438). As subtle a cue as Dietrich’s answer of one short sentence might be, it is nonetheless ironic. As a scientific man, it is logical for him to use the word ‘explains’, which might not be the warmest choice of words since he is speaking to his wife about his son. In the surrounding text he is feverishly looking for an answer as to what it is in the water that makes the men sterile. A man who at all cost wants things explained. The Dutch translation chooses the word ‘begrijp’ or ‘understand’ which indeed sounds warmer. But it is less an indication of the personality of Dietrich Bauer, scientist and destroyer of the Jewish race in both timelines or worlds.

According to Hirsch’s model (see Hirsch) this shift is a non-obligatory non-explicitation. There are other possibilities to translate this sentence, like ‘Ah, dat verklaart het’ which is a literal translation of the original. The irony is lost, because Bauer is not talking

in scientific terms about his cute little son anymore. The Dutch Bauer sounds warmer towards his son, not echoic of the ruthless scientist or Nazi he is in the two different timelines. Again, the context is important in understanding the irony.

**8.** And me? It was one hell of a Big Wednesday for Keanu Young, PhDude. The history surfer, hanging nine on the point break of yesterday. Tubing it through the big rollers of tide and time. Why had I agreed to help Leo in the first place? Cockiness? A desire to feel big? No, it was simpler than that, I decided. Stupidity. It was just plain Stupidity. Or perhaps, at a pinch, stupidity's sweet baby brother, innocence. Maybe even cowardice. The world I lived in was too scary for me, so why not make another? …Somehow I knew it just had to be. (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 423)

En ik? Het was me de topdag wel voor Keanu Young, PhDude. De geschiedenissurfer, met zijn tenen over de voorpunt gekromd, surfend op de golven van gisteren. In de pijp onder de reuzenrollers van tijd en getij. Waarom had ik eigenlijk beloofd Leo the helpen? Was het arrogantie geweest? Wilde ik me de grote jongen voelen? Nee, het lag simpeler dan dat, stelde ik vast. Het was stupiditeit. Doodgewone stupiditeit. Misschien, als ik mazzel had, het schattige kleine broertje van stupiditeit, onschuld. Of misschien was het wel gewoon lafheid. De wereld waarin ik leefde boezemde me teveel angst in, dus ik kon net zo goed een andere wereld creëren…Op de een of andere manier wist ik dat het niet anders kon. (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 368)

When questioned by Hubbard and Brown (see example **9** for more context), Michael has to think of a reason for his knowledge of the terms the men had heard him utter to Steve. The terms 'Braunau' and 'Adolf' and 'Hitler' are just known to a few in this world. This excerpt gives us a peek into his thoughts at that time in the story.

Michael ridicules himself and this becomes apparent by how he talks about himself.

First he talks about himself in the third person twice, first ‘Keanu Young, PhDude’ and then ‘the history surfer’, a disassociation which provides some space to make a second reading easier (see Linder, “Translating Irony: *The Maltese Falcon*” 124).

Under pressure, Michael seems to be sorry for some actions and this causes him to see responsibilities in another perspective. Originally, in *Making History*, it was Michael’s idea to stop Hitler from being born with the help of the orange pills and Leo’s machine (see chapter Making Movies), even though Michael has his doubts just before going through with the plan while Leo is very much convinced. The phrase ‘agreed to help Leo’ tells us Michael seems to think he consented to Leo’s idea, instead of the other way around, which is very ironic. Michael’s thoughts echo what has really happened and make them ironic. The maxim of quality is flouted, it is not true what Michael thinks, though he might truly think it to be true at the moment he thinks it. Also Haverkate’s sincerity condition seems to be broken with (see Hirsch 193). The translation is more explicit. For the original term ‘agreed’, the translator chose the term ‘beloofd’, ‘promised’ in English. This translation goes beyond the original term, beyond giving an ok, it promises an ok. This stronger expression makes Michael’s thought even more ironic than it was in the ST, for it seems now that Michael even had to promise Leo to help. According to Hirsch’s model, this excerpt contains a non-obligatory explicitating shift, because ‘beloofd’ is an explicitation and the translator had other options available. Moreover, the explicitation is not language-pair dependent. The irony is less subtle. The rest of the excerpt shows how Michael nervously seems to look for a hindsight reason for the choice he and Leo made. He tries to lighten the burden of his now sorry choice and guilt and good intentions seem to fight to come out victoriously. His thoughts echo the doubts he had earlier when making the choice (see chapter..). He chooses the words ‘I decided’ when he fills in the gaps of unconscious reasons, which sounds more unsure and ad hoc than the Dutch translation ‘stelde ik vast’ (‘I determined’) which sounds more scientific and sure. This also

increases the irony, using scientific terms in times of pressure and uncertainty of reason. At last, Michael seems to find his sense of responsibility and settles for cowardice. Just before he opens his mouth to tell Hubbard and Brown the reason for his knowledge of the terms (a made up reason) he feels like everything falls into place and sees a chance to set things straight again by means of an elaborate plan. He feels 'it just had to be'. The Dutch version reads 'dat het niet anders kon', 'it couldn't be another way', which sounds even more firm. This seems to be in line with the firmness throughout this TT excerpt which is responsible for the strengthened irony.

**9.** 'Well, you know,' I said. 'I've been thinking about this and I guess I must have met him.' … 'this guy…' (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 423)

'Nou, weet u,' zei ik. 'Ik heb erover nagedacht en ik denk dat ik hem ergens moet hebben ontmoet.'…die figuur…' (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 369)

'For the Lord's sake, Michael. How many times must I tell you to speak properly? Why is it always "stuff" and "weird" and "neat" and "guys"? You're a Princeton man, can't you utter a single coherent sentence in decent English?'

'My kid's the same,' said Hubbard. 'And he's at Harvard.'

'He's at Harvard and he can *speak*?' I said with incredulity. 'You must be very proud, sir.'

The tension was easing a little, I could sense that. (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 426 –7)

'In godsnaam, Michael. Hoe vaak moet ik je nog zeggen om correct te spreken. Waarom is het de hele tijd van "stuff" en "weird" en "neat" en "guys"? Je bent een Princetoniaan, kun je niet één samenhangende zin in beschaafd Engels produceren?'

'Mijn kind is precies zo,' zei Hubbard. 'En hij studeert aan Harvard.'

'Hij studeert aan Harvard en kan spreken?' zei ik ongelovig. 'Dan zult u wel heel trots

op hem zijn, meneer.'

Ik merkte dat de spanning iets af begon te nemen. (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 371)

Michael's thoughts show that the situation in which he finds himself is one of 'comic absurdity' (399). His questioners have a 'soft-spoken cowboy image' and are being 'Gary Cooper-like eccentric' (533). The situation is grave enough, though, for Michael has to save the (old) world. When he tries to convince Hubbard and Brown (their slang is seldom maintained in the Dutch translation) of some false reason as to why he knows about Hitler and Braunau and other terms, Michael adopts another persona and accompanying voice. He explains he must have heard Axel Bauer (Leo Zuckermann in the 'old world') talk of these things in his sleep. When doing so, he adopts the persona of the all American college boy, complete with American slang and short sentences. This juxtaposes with his own true voice in that it is less sharply ironic. Even when the American Mikey is ironic, it is a kind of simple, harmless American irony which has the function of relaxing his questioners. This example of text contains the mechanism of *Contrast between two voices* Coromines i Calders mentions in her paper *A proposed methodology for analysing the translation of prose fiction texts with a narratively bound ironic component*. Here, it is found in the form of British Michael's own sharp, ironic and witty voice versus American Mikey's simpler irony and clean cut American slang.

Throughout the excerpt where Michael is telling Hubbard and Brown the (secretly made up) story of how he heard Axel Bauer talk in his sleep on a train bench across him, Mikey repeatedly uses a lot of words like 'guy', 'weird', 'stuff' and 'neat' and terms like 'and all', 'anyhow', 'you know', 'I mean' (*Making History* 423-429). So much so, that his father (still alive in this parallel world Michael created, while in the 'normal' world Michael's father died when he was very young) buys this American act and criticizes Mikey for not speaking 'properly' (426), which is ironic in its own right because the real Michael doesn't like the all

American guy his American mates Ronnie and the gang represent, and now he had to adopt this persona to save himself (and the old world). The voice of this American persona is ironic at multiple levels. Michael doesn't like the type of person he seems to be in this new world, he even makes fun of his "damned pair of chino shorts" (*Making History* 430) at multiple occasions in the novel, and now he has to embrace what he actually detests. And secondly he makes up this persona and story to actually save the (old) world, so there is a hidden agenda behind this airy masquerade. These two reasons form a contextual irony which can be seen as the "irony as attitude rather than a figure of speech" Coromines i Calders is talking about in her paper (63).

In the translation on pages 369-373, 'guy' is translated with 'figuur' (figure) most of the time, which sounds a bit archaic, and once it is translated with 'man' on page 369, and once with 'kerel', which comes closer to 'fellow', or 'guy' on page 371. When Michael tells his questioners he 'got wasted with some of the guys' (426) a more modern translation occurs: 'met een aantal gasten' (with a few guys) (371). The expression 'I mean' is translated inconsistently; once with 'want' (because) (369) and twice with 'ik bedoel' (I mean) (370). 'Stuff' seems to be consistently translated with the word 'dingen' (things', which sounds understated enough for Michael's American persona). But 'weird' is also translated inconsistently. On page 426, when Michael tells the men 'I bang my head on a wall and my mind goes all weird' it is translated with 'Ik klap met mijn hoofd tegen een muur en *mijn geest komt overhoop te liggen*' (my mind is in a jumble), while a few sentences later 'I remember all this weird stuff clearly' is translated with 'herinner ik me al die *maffe dingen* glashelder'(daft things). When using American expressions in sentences like 'didn't mean diddley to me' (426) (note, without the object 'it' to begin the sentence), Michael expresses his cool all American student persona fully, trying to pull Hubbard and Brown into his story of how he heard Bauer utter words he didn't understand and how he built an exciting story

around them. At the most exiting point, the point where Michael really needs to convince his otherworldly, unemancipated American questioners with a solid sounding explanation, his persona seems the thickest, using American expressions in a convincing manner. So much so, that his father gets annoyed with him for not speaking 'properly' (426). The translator used the expression 'hoewel ik er geen jota van snapte' (though I didn't understand a thing about it),the expression 'jota' (thing) being foreign to me, a native Dutch woman. If the expression is not clear to (younger) native speakers of Dutch, it is not a good translation. The expression seems to be out of date, and maybe that's just the flavor the translator wanted to give to it, because the America Michael finds himself in after the time warp, is still not very emancipated, like in 'our' America of the 1950ies. Still the choice to historicize this expression in Dutch while at the same time naturalize most slang words (except when his father talks of them, here the translation exotizes by putting them in the text untranslated) is very confusing. The flavor of the culture Michael finds himself in doesn't come across all that clearly in the Dutch translation and the outdated expression only further confuses by giving an old fashioned Dutch flavor. Though the translator at times seems to understand the language of a student, giving the American Michael the demeanor of a somewhat understated student, he fails to bring across Michael's nervous need to convince by being overtly American. Slang words, also the ones mentioned by Michael's dad, weren't translated consistently throughout the excerpt, expressions weren't translated in the same demeanor of ST Michael. Maybe Mulder tried to capture something of the unemancipated time by translating an expression with a Dutch out of date translation, but mostly he translates the American expressions with neutral ones. Although the "key textual function of dramatic irony [is intact because] "it stems from the action, not the words" (see Linder, "Translating Irony: *The Big Sleep*" 106), the pivotal words expressing Michael's ironic attitude are not translated consistently and with that the linguistic irony which helps the dramatic irony is lost. Whatever the reason behind the

translational choices, the result is the same: he misses out on the flavor of the exact time and place of the story, the juxtaposition of Michael and his adopted persona being weakened. And the American persona should have been there especially at the time where all hell could break loose if Michael is exposed (as an un-American) by uttering one wrongly chosen word, so a very important level of irony is lost. The genre of the novel doesn't seem to fit this translator, considering his inability to capture the parallel world American context.

Next to his choice of words, Michael makes an ironic joke at the expense of Hubbard's son in which American Mike exerts a kind of simpler direct irony to lighten the mood (427). This simple irony, together with the usage of shorter sentences, underscores his indifferent attitude. The contextual irony entails that it is ironic that Michael uses such simple irony as his American self, but it is an act he has to stick to. The translation loses the italics (the clue for ironic comment in this case) in 'spreken' (371) and the sentence following it is longer than necessary, making the comment lose pace and wit and making it less understated and less ironic. When Hubbard states that Michael said that Bauer's eyes really got to him, Michael simply answers with 'Really bugged me' (427). These American style short sentences lose their flavor in the translation because the deliberately missing objects (like 'It' or 'they really bugged me') of the original are there in the translation: 'die lieten me niet los'(they didn't lose my grip). The translation fails to capture Michael's demeanor in his speech. He speaks in short, sloppy sentences with empty words like 'and all', contradictory to the real (British) Michael who speaks in more intricate sentences with less expendable words and sharper irony. Even though the real Michael also speaks in slang, even these words seem to carry more meaning and he frequently uses them to deliver sharp ironic meaning. In the case of 'And me…of yesterday' (see example **8**) he criticizes himself with slang words charged with sharp ironic meaning just before setting out to make up a reason for knowing Bauer and aforementioned terms. 'Keanu Young, PhDude' (423) is an echoic term and a reference to the

film Johnny Mnemonic, as Michael tells us on page 295. On page 423 he indirectly refers to the film Point Break (he doesn't use capital letters to refer to a movie title), another film starring Keanu Reeves which is about surfing and Michael uses surfing metaphors to mockingly speak lightly of his practices of surfing 'through the rollers of tide and time', ironically a seemingly easy way (but potentially dangerous) to treat time travelling (423).

Maybe the translator couldn't fully penetrate the parallel universe of the book, couldn't grasp the otherworldly American culture, not to mention the narrative universe Coromines I Calders speaks of. Maybe he wanted to translate as neutral as possible for future generations. At any rate, Mulder didn't maintain the differences in demeanor and speech of the American Mikey versus the British Michael, and thereby didn't seem to fully grasp the importance of the irony of Michaels American persona's attitude.

**10.** 'Somehow mein fine Führer,' I said to him, 'I let you live. What does that make me? And somehow, because of you Rudolph Gloder never rose to prominence. What did you do to him? Did he Perish in the Night of the Long Knives? Did he turn up with you at that meeting of the puny little German Workers' Party in the back room of the Munich brewery? Was he about to speak when you rose to your feet and stole his thunder? Did he creep away, ambitions frustrated? Perhaps you never met him at all. Oh no, you were in the same regiment in the first war, weren't you? Maybe you got him killed somehow. Maybe that was it.' (Fry, 1996/1997, p. 544)

'Op de een of andere manier, mein fijne Führer, heb ik je laten leven. Wat betekent dat voor mij? En op de een of andere manier, door jou, heeft Rudolf Gloder nooit een prominente positie bereikt. Stierf hij in de nacht van de Lange Messen? Woonde hij met jou die bijeenkomst van de pietepeuterig kleine Duitse Arbeiderspartij bij, in het achterzaaltje van die brouwerij in München? Zou hij net gaan spreken toen jij opstond en hem de wind uit de zeilen nam? Kroop hij weg, zijn ambities gefnuikt? Misschien

> heb je hem wel nooit ontmoet. O nee, jullie zaten in de Eerste Wereldoorlog in hetzelfde regiment, was het niet? Misschien heb je er op de een of andere manier de hand in gehad dat hij sneuvelde. Misschien was dat het.' (Fry, 1996/2005, p. 474)

In this excerpt, Michael is contemplating his actions and how they might have affected the world. He fully understands the necessity of the fact that he let Hitler be born, but he obviously had mixed emotions about this and expresses this through ironic language. Michael questions himself for letting Hitler live, though he knows his own reasons. Therefore, he seems to be contemplating the irony of fate. The adverbs in this excerpt are all adverbs of manner. The translator translated the adverb (of mode) 'somehow', which occurs three times, consistently with the phrase 'op de een of andere manier'.

The irony expressed through alliteration (see Haapakoski 138, 143) is maintained. The 'i-sound' of the first and second word and the 'f-sound' in the second and third word are maintained in the translation. This alliteration also underscores the irony of the use of a title and adjective. The title of Führer in this excerpt is used in an ironic manner. The politeness a title suggests is, in this case, of course not a serious politeness. The dynamic or marked tenor lies in the ironic use of a title combined with the – at first sight – flattering adjective 'fine' and it is used to criticize Hitler (see Puurtinen on tenor). But the irony of Hitler being a 'fine Führer' not only lies in that Michael states the opposite of the truth (Hitler would not seriously be described as 'fine' by anyone with a sane mind), but it also lies in the fact that Hitler (in this novel) was actually a 'fine Führer' compared to Gloder, for the latter was even worse and his impact on the world more devastating than Hitler's was. This second irony is even more intricate than the first, because the expectations of a shared knowledge of Hitler are flouted.

After the first sentence Michael still isn't fully aware of his decision being a good one, hence his question 'What does that make me'. It is only after this first question that he adds

plausibility to his choice: he understands that Gloder is stopped now. Next, he puts the focus of responsibility on Hitler's shoulders. What did he do to Gloder? Let's consider the first question 'what does that make me?' Michael questions his own morale here. The gloss of the translation reads 'what does that mean to/for me?' It is more ambiguous, because now Michael seems to be contemplating the meaning of his decision for him, or what effect it might have on him, while the original wording expresses more sense of responsibility and self-criticism. The source text shows a Michael more concerned with his own morale, the translation shows a Michael more concerned with fate. Also, the ST shows more action, Michael asks what he makes himself into. After Michael asks himself this question, he reminds himself of Gloder and what he brought along, and the question of responsibility is passed on to Hitler: what did he do to Gloder? The second question 'what did you do to him' echoes the first one, resolving Michael of blame. Mulder decided to remove this question, for it summarizes the sentences following it, so at first glance information-wise it is a redundant sentence. Understanding the limited space a translator has to work in word-wise it is not a bad option, though the translator might have missed the importance of the echoic meaning of the sentence: a responsibility being passed on. The responsibility of taking fate in your own hands by meddling with people's lives is given back to where it rightfully seems to belong, to Hitler. So the first question could be ironically answered with 'a hero' for Michael seems to have prevented worse things from happening by allowing Hitler to exist. Also, the second question suggests that Michael doesn't know how Gloder never rose to prominence and if or how Hitler got him killed. This means that the two chapters with the subtitles *The Frenchman and the Colonel's Helmet: I and II* cannot belong to his thesis, like the first alternate chapters do which form the novel-like chapters of his thesis which Stuart-Fraser hated so much (*Making History* 168, 241). This is because in the two parallel stories, in the first Gloder gets killed by a plotting Hitler, while in the second Gloder secretly frames another soldier in a story that

resembles the first in all other aspects. Of course this second chapter happens after Michael and Leo mess with the fabric of time by sending back the pills. So, the chapters cannot belong to Michaels thesis like the first few of the alternate chapters. In this way, Fry lets these chapters fade into what actually happened in the history of the two parallel storylines/worlds. These two questions regarding fate are pivotal questions in the book. 'Weren't you' is a question directed at Hitler, as though Michael is talking to someone in his vicinity. His question displays an ironic tone (see Haapakoski 140-1), for Michael places himself alongside Hitler as though they are both 'brothers-in-life-meddling', criticizing both Hitler and himself. The Dutch 'was het niet' or 'wasn't it so' maintains this seeming vicinity, but loses the direct address, making the question less ironic. Also, the questioning and answering his own questions is an ironic clue; it reminds us of Socratic irony (see Abrams, 143).

The saying 'stole his thunder' is translated with a Dutch saying 'Wind uit de zeilen nam', which is equally fitting. 'Frustrated' referring to Gloder's ambitions is translated with 'gefnuikt' which means something like 'put down' or 'destroy' according to Van Dale online. This sounds more aggressive and ironic than the original and prepares the reader even better for the coming ironic question 'weren't you', was it not that the Dutch word seems old-fashioned. It is not a given that adolescents or young adults, which form part of the target audience of *Making History*, will be able to understand the word. It seems that in this case the translation, though the meaning of the word suits the irony very well, falls in line with what Puurtinen says about the status of translation within the literary genre: it 'is assumed to lag behind the development of contemporary original target-language literature' (163).

The discourse particle 'oh' also reveals an ironic tone (see Haapakosk 139-41), and this is maintained in the translation. The last two sentences begin with another adverb of manner (of uncertainty) 'maybe' and this is translated consistently again. 'Perhaps' is also translated with 'misschien' or 'maybe' which brings this sentence in line with the two last

sentences, losing the gradualness of Michael's argument and thus decreasing the irony of the excerpt. 'You got him killed' is translated with 'misschien heb je er op de een of andere manier de hand in gehad dat hij sneuvelde' (gloss: 'maybe you had a hand in him being killed in action'), which sounds less direct. Having a hand in someone's death is less clear than actually making sure someone or something is going to kill a person.

Mulder translated the adverbs consistently, maintaining the overall irony, where it not for the loss of gradualness by translating 'perhaps' with the same adverb as the last two adverbs, disturbing the Socratic argument. Alliteration and discourse particle were also maintained in translation, helping the detection of ironic clues. The first question is made more abstract, affecting the question of responsibility which is such a pivotal question in this (part of the) novel. The second question is removed, affecting the echoic mention of responsibility and the connection between Michael and Hitler as shapers of fate. This reduces the irony of the excerpt and the novel. The translator understood the more obvious ironic clues, for he translated them consistently for the most part, but he failed to notice the importance of the context; the intratextuality of the novel and the dramatic irony mostly eludes him.

**11.** 'Oh, hello Doctor Fraser-Stuart. It's Michael Young here.'

'How may I serve?'…

'Well I wonder, if it isn't too much bother, if you could take it out and have a look at it'…

'I'm sorry, I should have asked you to do this weeks ago…'

'Do what, young Young? My time is not wholly without value.'

'If you take the first twenty-four pages…'

'First twenty-four pages…yes. Done. Now what? Set them to music?'

'No. What I want you to do is to roll them up very, very tightly until it forms a tube.

Then I want you to take that tube and push it right up your fat, vain, complacent arse and keep it there for a week. I think that way you'll appreciate it more. Good afternoon.' (Fry, 1996/1997, P. 547-8)

'O, hallo doctor Fraser-Stuart. U spreekt met Michael Young.'

'Wat kan ik voor je doen.'…

'Nou, ik vroeg me af, als het niet teveel moeite is, of u het zou willen pakken en er een blik in zou willen werpen.'…

'Het spijt me, ik had u al weken terug moeten vragen om…'

'Om wat, jonge Young? Mijn tijd is niet helemaal onuitputtelijk.'

'Als u nou de eerste vierentwintig pagina's neemt.'

'De eerste vierentwintig pagina's…juist. Heb ik. En wat nu? Wil je dat ik ze op muziek zet?'

'Dat niet nee. Wat ik zou willen is dat u ze zo strak mogelijk oprolt, tot een koker. En vervolgens neemt u die papieren koker en steekt hem in die dikke, ijdele, arrogante reet van u en laat hem daar een week zitten. Ik heb zo het idee dat u er op die manier meer van zult genieten. Goedemiddag.' (Fry, 1996/2005 , P. 476-7)

This excerpt is from the last chapter of *Making History*, when Michael is all fed up with history, and thus also with his own planned career as a historian. He has lots of new ideas including the writing of Oily-Moily songs he still remembers from before he obliterated the band by changing history and changing it back, but before he does any of this he finds it necessary to call Fraser-Stuart.

This excerpt contains the ironic use of both levels of tenor which are discussed by Puurtinen: formality and politeness (161). Michael is very ironic in this discourse; his marked use of tenor cannot be missed. He obviously pays attention to the way in which he conveys his message, being very polite to his teacher only to set the stage for a complete script

opposition. The title ‘Doctor’ signals a distant relationship and formality. The words ‘wonder’, ‘if it isn’t too much bother’, ‘could’ and ‘a look’ sound very careful, like Michael is trying to be of as little inconvenience as possible to his teacher. While the ST sentence ends with ‘a look’ which sounds more polite than something as ‘look at it’, the translation reads ‘zou willen’ twice, making the second ‘could’ more explicit in translation. ‘Zou willen’ sounds more polite than, for instance, ‘zou kunnen’, which sounds more like a possibility than a wanting to do something. The Dutch Michael also really asks for permission and the echoing of the question reinforces this politeness, strengthening the irony.
‘I’m sorry’ is correctly translated, though it could have been translated even more polite for ironic effect with ‘mijn excuses’ (my apologies).

‘Dat niet nee’ is more ironic than a simple understated ‘no’ of the original text. The Dutch Michael has already started being more openly ironic somewhat earlier in the TT. The repeating of the word ‘tube’ make his words sound like a careful instruction, and the Dutch explicitation of ‘a paper tube’ adds to the completeness and carefulness of his message, again increasing the irony of the TT excerpt. The script opposition, which reaches its peak at the sentence ‘Then I want you..’, is a cue for humour (see Hirsch 182). It makes the passage indeed very humorous, but the sharp criticism it entails makes it very ironic, or even sarcastic, being at the expense of Fraser-Stuart.

The passage ends with Michael hoping Fraser-Stuart will ‘appreciate’ the message more in this way, which is translated with ‘genieten’ or ‘enjoy/savour’ which is a much stronger word and, again, adds to the irony of the TT, closing the door even firmer on his teacher. The correct translation ‘goedemiddag’ in Dutch can almost automatically be imagined in an ironic tone of voice, with stress on the ‘i’-sound, also adding to the irony.
This excerpt shows a marked use of tenor to display irony not unlike what Puurtinen shows in her examples in her paper (164-171). Mulder seems to have increased the chances in picking

up on the irony very well, so young readers will almost certainly get the point here. The irony of this excerpt does not come from inferences one makes relying heavily on the overall context of the novel, the irony is pretty straightforward and sharply aimed at Fraser-Stuart here. The translator has done a good job treating it in the TT. The ‘inverted political correctness’ has a very comical effect.

## Conclusion

According to Hirsch's findings, most of the time ironic utterances in translation (and humorous ones, for that matter) do not undergo a shift. But when there are changes, irony tends to be explicitated in translation, while humorous translations tend to be non-explicitating. One could say that irony can handle explicitation without loss of criticism and hereby without loss of effect. Though Hirsch's findings prove to be very interesting tools to detect irony and humour, I think it is wise to consider them as general guidelines. A lot of her text examples containing non-explicitating shifts also contain cues for detecting irony, although she focuses on the cues for humour here. And not every reader might appreciate irony being explicitated, it can reduce the nuances of irony, for "irony thrives on indirectness" (Hirsch 196) and picking up on irony "is a test of skill in reading between the lines" (Abrams 142). An author may like his work being layered; some information being accessible for a certain group while another group reads something different. It gives different groups, like young adult readers and older readers experiences which are exactly suited for them.

De Wilde has a point when she states: "the *a priori* nature leaves little or no margin for the reader's interpretation triggered by elements previously processed, whether intra- or intertextually" (33). Coromines I Calders taxonomy of strategies can certainly be helpful discovering narratively ingrained irony and Michael's narration seems ironic throughout the novel, but for a novel whose irony is mainly of the situational or dramatic kind, these taxonomies leave out too much of the irony of the novel. It cannot be said though, that the novel doesn't have an overall ironic tone.

Of the examined translations, example **1**, **2**, **5** and **6** showed loss of irony in words which perform an echoing function. Linguistic irony supporting dramatic irony was lessened or even lost this way. Example **10**, the mock-conversation with Hitler, even contained a whole

missing sentence which severely lessened the support of the dramatic irony. Though example **5** was made less subtle and lost some ironic meaning, it also added an interpretation which supported the dramatic irony in a way that helps (young) readers prepare for the dramatic irony still to come on story level. This is not a bad translational choice in the end. Example **3**, **8**, **9** and **11** express Michael's ironic attitude. The irony in examples **3** and **8**, the cases where the irony is directed at himself, is made more apparent. The irony in **11**, the dialogue with Fraser-Stuart, is also made more apparent. With example **9**, though, where the irony is more dependent on context and echoic repetition, like in examples **1**, **2**, **5**, **6**, the ironic attitude is not made more obvious, not maintained, but even severely lessened. Example **4** and **7** are not the protagonist's narration and **5** and **6** contain narration of Steve, next to the protagonist Michael's. In example **4**, dramatic irony is strengthened thanks to a translational choice. In example **7**, a link to dramatic irony is severed thanks to a translational choice. In example **5**, Steve's narration made a stronger link to dramatic irony in the translation. In Steve's narration in example **6**, the link to dramatic irony was severed by the translators interpretation of the ST, while Michael's narration in dialogue with Steve contains a more ironical translation.

All in all it seems that the translator can add words or interpretations, be it in the narrator's text or other characters', that strengthen the dramatic irony. Mostly though, he seems to miss the pointers, including echoic mention, towards dramatic irony that are already apparent in the novel. Michael's ironic attitude is often strengthened in the translations, especially towards himself or people he is not fond of, like Fraser-Stuart and Ronnie. When it comes to a subtler ironic attitude though, one that is more dependent on the context and the dramatic irony throughout the novel, it is not maintained so well (see example **9** with Hubbard and Brown). In his mock-conversation with Hitler, the textual features pointing towards irony are maintained or even strengthened. The less obvious methods of creating irony though, like a whole sentence alluding to other parts of the novel and the form of questioning adding to

dramatic irony are omitted or tampered with in a way that severs the link to dramatic irony.

In the cultural framework preceding the translational investigations, it became obvious that situational irony is more typical of English humour and harder to grasp for continentals like the Dutch (Bakas, Muecke). The Dutch translation supports this statement, because the passages alluding to dramatic irony, like the in the novel prevailing Irony of Fate, are translated less obviously ironic or lose irony altogether. Either Mulder didn't maintain the irony at all in the translation, by omission of vital information, or by choosing translations that didn't support ironic interpretation, or he lessened irony by not providing extra clues for the detection of irony for this new target audience, or by omission of typographic markers or by choosing less ironic translations.

It is also in line with the former statement about cultural framework that older forms of irony, like irony as a figure of speech are translated more accurately by the translator. This form of irony is older, more ingrained in the continental culture and easier to detect. The last discussed translated passage form *Making History* is an excellent example of verbal irony in discourse and it is made even more obviously ironic because of translational decisions. The passage where Michael adopts an ironic attitude towards his American questioners contains irony that is more dependent of context, and as we see, the irony of the Dutch translation is severely lessened. The translation examples linked to irony of fate, which are heavily dependent on the intratextual context of the book, like the example of the echoing of the meaning of Braunau water, lose ironic meaning altogether.

The more modern the form of irony, the less it is maintained in Mulders translation. Irony of fate loses the most ironic allusions, ironic attitude loses some ironic meaning, and verbal irony is mostly maintained or even made more obviously ironic in translation. Taking into account De Wilde's discrepancy between the general focus of the translator and the microscopic one of the scholar, it is still remarkable that the translator expresses a pattern in

how he treats irony which aligns with the cultural constraints surrounding the different forms of irony. The more intratextual dependable form of irony proves to elude the translator: he is not untouched by cultural constraints.

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