

On Translating Faërie:  
Through Fidelity and Meaning to a Translation of MacDonald's *The  
Light Princess*

*And see ye not yon bonny road*

*That winds about yon fernie brae?*

*That is the road to fair Elfland,*

*Where thou and I this night maun gae.*

—12<sup>th</sup> stanza of Thomas the Rhymer

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Note: The stanza of Thomas the Rhymer on the title page is quoted from Tolkien's essay "On Fairy-Stories" (110).

## INTRODUCTION

“What is the task of the translator?” is a question unavoidable to any translator. If translation is to be a rational activity, it must be bound by rational laws, the most evident of which is the call for harmony. As the translator works on his text encountering difficulties, he cannot answer now this way, now that. He must answer categorically. He must answer to the translation problems with an objective norm. He must answer what a translation should be; he must answer what *his* translation should be.

In translation studies one of the main themes is Foreignness: how to give a place to the Otherness of the original text, how to honour its peculiarity, how to make it one's own without violence to its ownness. A special foreign country is Fairyland, or Faërie. It has its own peculiar habits and ways; it is its own culture. In translation it is extra special because it usually has no language of its own. In fact, it cannot speak for itself at all, cannot defend itself from any attack on its identity. But it is also a culture not regionally bound, and any human entering is a stranger: its foreignness, at the very least, is universal. French, German and Danish fairy-tales have travelled the world, and found homes all over. This thesis's text is a fairy-tale from Britain, playfully rooted in the continental tradition.

In this thesis I propose to investigate what Faërie means in translation, how one should approach a fairy-tale if one is to translate it, by translating George MacDonald's fairy-tale *The Light Princess*. There are two aspects that must be discussed before translation may possibly begin. The first is to investigate what a translation actually is. The second aspect is how to understand a fairy-tale: the translator is the first reader of a text, he cannot translate what he does not understand. Only then can the specific fairy-tale to be translated be approached. Van Wyke states that “translators must take responsibility for their decisions and cannot pretend they are invisible by hiding behind the notion that they are simply repeating what they find in

the original or what the author might have intended.” (551) Translators certainly cannot be invisible, and like everyone must take responsibility for their decisions, but I do not agree with the notion that a translator saying “I repeat what I read” is to hide. It is the only way for translation: the only reason a translator needs to justify what he wrote is because he is bound – and so is his text – to his source. I do agree, however, that to read, and to repeat in writing, is not simple at all; and that to *present* it as simple, to present one’s translation as *self-evident*, is a grave falsity.

*The Light Princess* was first published as part of MacDonald’s novel *Adela Cathcart*, in 1864. Three years later was its debut without the novel frame, as part of a collection of MacDonald’s fairy-tales. Within the novel, the story is told by John Smith at a dinner-party. The dinner guests sometimes comment on the story, as does its creator, and so provide some insight as to its intended purpose. It is a story of generally simple vocabulary, and as such it does not exclude children as its audience. It is a story with humour – wordplay is prominently present in the first half –, which does not disappear even as the story, which starts whimsically, grows serious in both matter and tone. It also features several original poems.

This variety, as well as a personal liking of the story, made me choose the text. Due to the scale of this thesis, I have chosen three parts that represent the variety: the first two chapters show the narrator and his style, a section of the ninth chapter shows the first meeting of the prince and princess, after which the story becomes more serious, and a poem from the penultimate chapter fourteen provides the more serious tone and challenges specific to poetry.

The first chapter discusses what a translation *is*, the role of fidelity therein, and the specific purpose of this thesis’s translation. The second chapter is about meaning and interpretation, starting with meaning *an sich*, continuing via the meaning of fairy-tales, ending with the meaning of *The Light Princess*. In the third chapter, difficulties encountered in translating the prose and poetry are discussed. The annotated translation follows in chapter

four, after which comes the conclusion. Appended are the source text and some material for which there was no place in the main thesis, but which did play a role in the thesis's translation.

All translation starts with an ideal. That is, logically speaking: every choice in the process of translation is made, if the translator is consistent, based on this ideal. It would ease the translator's task if – chronologically speaking – this ideal is clear before he makes those choices. This ideal at its broadest scope is his definition of what translation is. It may be narrower, as narrow maybe as a specific text: the target text. To materialise this ideal – this is the creative act of translation, common to all art. To music: where the ideal is given body in the playing of an instrument; to drawing: where the ideal picture in the mind is put on paper; to writing: the idea put in words.

To formulate the ideal of translation is not an easy task. Traditionally, the ideal of translation was to be faithful to the original: in one word, Fidelity. Steiner remarks upon fidelity that “The whole formulation, as we have found it over and over again in discussions of translation, is hopelessly vague” (160). Indeed, how fidelity is defined through the ages differs considerably. Cicero [1<sup>st</sup> century BC] defined it as the weight instead of the count of the words (qtd. in Jerome, 23). Jerome [4<sup>th</sup> century AD], following Cicero, chooses faithfulness to the meaning of the text instead of the words (24). This is followed by Luther [1530] and others (Huet [1661] 31; De La Motte [1714] 25). D’Ablancourt [1654] wanted to be faithful to the effect instead of the words or sense of the text: “It was therefore necessary to change all that, in order to make something pleasing; otherwise, it would not be Lucian” (35).<sup>1</sup> The object of fidelity has shifted from the text to its author. Dryden’s formulation of this new idea [in 1680], “to write, as he [the translator] supposes, that Authour would have done, had he liv’d in our Age, and in our Country” (40), proved effective enough that it can still be heard, relatively recently, in Bomans’s translation criticism (281-3).

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<sup>1</sup> Equivalence of effect is an ideal still followed in modern times (Verstegen [1978] 213).

Schleiermacher<sup>2</sup> [1813] uses this formulation too (and argues against it), even while he and Goethe change the paradigm of translation further: fidelity not to the text, nor its author *per se*, but its language; in fact, fidelity to the Foreign. They argue for the “receiving the Foreign as Foreign” (Berman [1985] 241), for the primacy of the source culture, against the primacy of the target language, and with it the primacy of the whole receiving culture.

The receiving culture had grown paramount. While Luther would change expressions and conform them to German usage out of concern for, amongst other reasons, its being *understood* as proper German and not Latin or Greek (“Zendbrief” 18-9), De La Motte was not averse to changing expressions, and even whole parts of the text, because they were judged *disagreeable*, “*désagréable*” (25). Nietzsche places this French practise of the ‘belles infidèles’ in the Roman tradition:

they had no time for all those very personal things and names and whatever might be considered the costume and mask of a city, a coast, or a century: quickly, they replaced it with what was contemporary and Roman. . . . what was past and alien was an embarrassment for them; and being Romans, they saw it as an incentive for a Roman conquest. (67)

Jerome, too, used conquest as a metaphor<sup>3</sup>, but there it is meaning that is captured and forms the spirit of the new text; but Nietzsche means that culture is captured, and he supposes the Romans to say: “Should we not have the right to breathe our own soul into this dead body?” (67) The simple idea of translation, that the language of the translation differs from that of the original, grew into the practise of supposing fidelity not to the text or anything related, but to the receiving culture.

This conflict is none other than the initial norm of Toury: the choice between adequacy and acceptability (323). This conflict was recognised, but not resolved, by Jerome

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<sup>2</sup> All textual references are to the English translation “On the Different Methods”.

<sup>3</sup> “It suffices for the present to name Hilary the Confessor who . . . by right of victory carried the meaning as if captive into his own language” (24-5)

and Luther in discussing Bible translation. For Jerome, “the very order of the words is a mystery” (23), but he does not expand on that thought. For Luther, when it really mattered, he would rather do violence to the German than divert from the literal words. He stipulates that to know when this divergence of translating practise is appropriate “requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, educated, and experienced heart” (translation Mann’s, “Zendbrief” 20). They both recognise that to write good Latin or good German, that is to follow the simple idea of translation to write in a different language, may do an unacceptable violence. To know when this is the case, one has to fully *understand* the original text. To translate is first to understand: translation is a “demonstrative statement of understanding” (Steiner 156).

It may be supposed that functionalist approaches to translation oppose to this ideal of old, fidelity, as the purpose of the target text is the leading principle. But this would not be true. Vermeer allows for a faithful translation as a possible *skopos* (200). He does not question the ethics of allowing the commission to dictate how a source text is used. Nord does pay attention to this aspect. She states:

Yet there is a moral responsibility not to deceive them [the target audience], because in the communicative interaction between members of two different cultures, the translator is the only person with a profound knowledge of both. This responsibility translators have toward their partners has been called ‘loyalty’ (*Loyalität*) . . . It must not be mixed up with the traditional concepts of fidelity or faithfulness, concepts that usually refer to a relationship holding between the source and the target *texts*. Loyalty is an interpersonal category referring to a social relationship between *people*.

(emphasis original, “Functionalism” 205)

Her loyalty equals fidelity to a people. How can this not include loyalty to the source text, which belongs to the source culture, of which the people that her loyalty refers to are a part?



Is the author of the source text not a part of that people whom are supposed loyalty? The question of how one is to translate has always been an ethical question, because it is only a more specific “how should I act.” There is nothing radically new in Skopos theory. Vermeer says that “What the skopos states is that one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principle respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is” (198); this principle respecting the target text has traditionally been that the target text, as also its author, should be faithful to its source: whether this source means the text, author, language, or the entire culture – there is no escaping fidelity. Fidelity is the means to whatever end: to proof one’s fidelity, to make wider available an author’s wisdom, to practise one’s writing, to make money. A translation’s purpose is certainly bound by ethics – as are all acts, but not by an ethics of translation.

It is only through fidelity that translation can effect “the approximation of the foreign and the familiar” (Von Goethe “Translations” 66).<sup>4</sup> One aspect to realising this approximation is the understanding of the Other as Other.<sup>5</sup> However, because it is the translator that the reader meets, and not the author, complete understanding cannot be mediated through translation (Schleiermacher 50-1). For the reader to gain that understanding, to make the foreign his own in that way that does no violence to its whole ownness,—for this end the reader needs the original. That is also part of the fidelity that the translator owes to his source: not to lead the reader away, but to guide back again. A translation, besides what else it may do, appeals to its reader to appreciate and love that thing that is not himself: its original, but

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<sup>4</sup> Compare Schleiermacher about translation: “men are thus brought together who were originally separated” (43).

<sup>5</sup> This is why Appiah argues for ‘thick’ translation: “to undertake the harder project of a genuinely informed respect for others” (341). This resounds in Venuti’s concept of the “translator’s ethical responsibility,” which he defines as “to prevent the translating language and culture from effacing the linguistic and cultural differences of the source text, its foreignness” (“Retranslations” 107-8).

also its original's worth. It is through love that one makes the Other his own (St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>6</sup>, qtd. in Pieper 125).

The purpose of this thesis's translation is to put the story, with its meaning unchanged, in Dutch, not to a specific audience, to the best of my personal ability and taste<sup>7</sup>. I believe this meaning to be the most essential aspect of a fairy-tale: more important than its intertextual nature, its author, the culture in which it was created, or the language in which it was first told, and up to a point independent of these: it has universal value. The story is as yet not available in Dutch, so a Dutch translation that would wilfully obscure its meaning in favour of something else would be against the requirement of fidelity. This requirement being met, anyone would be free to translate – faithfully – and move any other aspect of the text to the front.

The audience does not necessarily play a role in a translation's purpose. It is clear that to write inclusively for a specific audience is a valid purpose. To say that all translation is meant to appeal to a certain audience, that this audience is the most important guide (Venuti "Vijf regels" 277), is saying too much. The fact is, as Benjamin states, that "no work of art presupposes his attentiveness. No poem is meant for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the audience" ("The Translator's Task" 75). Ancient statues have not failed as art because their original audience is gone; to define the audience as everyone everywhere everytime is to exclude them as an influence: no one can know who they are, after all. If translations are art – and they too have gained new audiences that were unthought-of by their creators – there is no need to suppose a specific audience in their purpose. The translator may have a specific audience in mind – himself, for example – whose taste, or idea of beauty, he uses as a guide; but that is a different matter than purposing the art for that audience. Even if

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<sup>6</sup> *Summa Theologiae* II.II.45.2

<sup>7</sup> The translator's best may be supposed in any translation. I chose to include it, because I think writing a translation is a very creative art – and therefore very personal.

there is a specific target audience, it may be too vaguely defined to be of use in the small particulars of writing.<sup>8</sup>

A Translation cannot help but be something new. The concept of *equivalence* may have clouded this point. Against any element of the source, some element of the translation is set, supposedly of the same weight, so it can be said “see, they are the same.” It may thus be easily forgotten that the idea of equivalence means that things are the same (in some way) in spite of their differences (in other ways). Even if a translation did not add nor take away, it is still the translator’s work that created the new text: he chose the new words. Claudio Magris, writer, translator, and close collaborator with his translators, writes that the translator, in translating, writes words that he has made his own (3). He sees writing a translation as actual *writing*. The translator by definition cannot be invisible. To say he is, or worse yet, should be, would be equivalent to calling a painter invisible in his own work: excepting in the case of self-portraits, this would be true, but also absurd.

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<sup>8</sup> On a supposed essential connection between fairy-stories and children as their audience, see Tolkien’s *On Fairy-Stories* 129-38, and Lewis’s “On Three Ways of Writing for Children” 97-8 and “Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What’s To Be Said”.

After reading a fairy-tale, one may ask what it meant. In the original novel frame of *The Light Princess*, “What is the moral of it?” is a question that George MacDonald gives to one of the listeners to the tale: an obstinate old aunt poses the question. It may be supposed MacDonald considers the question inappropriate. He does not stand alone campaigning against this educational view of tales out of Faërie – tales of Fantasy. Two of the genre’s greatest, E.R. Eddison and J.R.R. Tolkien, support him. Eddison clarifies in his romance *The Worm Ouroboros* what it is about on the dedication page: “It is neither allegory nor fable but a Story to be read for its own sake.” Tolkien likewise states, in the foreword to *The Lord of the Rings*, that “It is neither allegorical or topical” (xxiii) and that “little or nothing in it was modified by the war that began in 1939 or its sequels” (xxiv).<sup>9</sup> MacDonald is equally unembracive towards the allegory. In his essay “The Fantastic Imagination” he writes that “A fairytale is not an allegory. There may be allegory in it, but it is not an allegory. He must be an artist indeed who can, in any mode, produce a strict allegory that is not a weariness to the spirit” (7-8).<sup>10</sup> A fairy-tale, then, is not a puzzle, where the magical needs to be substituted for something else to reveal the meaning. The tale is what it is, and neither secretly nor openly something else. If there is to be meaning at all, the Fantastic cannot be separated from it. At the least, Fantasy, as does Story in general, as does poetry, and does not music as well?—Fantasy means to speak to the Imagination (Lewis “On Stories” 93).

### *On Meaning*

In the same essay, MacDonald writes that a fairy-tale “cannot help having some meaning” (7). It may be wise to comment first on what is actually meant by the word “meaning”. An essential divide exists on the metaphysical plane: either meaning is objective, an immaterial

<sup>9</sup> Foreword to the second edition, which was published some ten years after the first.

<sup>10</sup> The essay was published ten years after his last fairy-tale, in 1893, and used as an introduction in a collection of those tales.

object existing independently from an interpreter and the standard for interpretation, or meaning is subjective, existing only as the interpretation of an interpreter. The distinction is especially relevant in translation. Following the subjective view, it is impossible to extract meaning from a text and put it into words anew: the meaning was never in the text, only in the mind of the extractor, the meaning was only interpretation. Following the objective view, extracting meaning and putting it into words is the perfect way to put the simple idea of translation into words. It is the ethical method, as the meaning of the original is the standard for the meaning of the translation. It is the opposite for the subjective view, where, as Venuti states, to present one's interpretation as the unchanged meaning of the original is misleadingly false ("Retranslations" 104; "Genealogies" 485, 499).<sup>11</sup> Other scholars lean in that direction; Appiah argues that "we should give up language that implies an epistemology in which the work has already a meaning that is waiting for us to find" (340); Holmes calls a translation a "possible interpretation (out of many)" (188, translation mine).

The idea is not unrelated to the notion of the death of the author, in which the author's interpretation of his own text is not a priori better than any reader's. MacDonald agrees with the rejection of the author as absolute interpreter. He writes that "one man will read one meaning in it, another will read another," even that it "may be better that you should read your meaning into it" (7). He does not, however, reject objective meaning as the standard of interpretation, with which interpretation must agree. Holmes calls for multiple translations – translations that must be possible, that is, 'not wrong' – because the collection as a whole can show the original better than only one (188). Appiah argues for translation to "preserve for us the features that make it worth teaching" (340). To preserve meaningful features, to have a standard for interpretation: this disagrees with the subjective view of meaning. Venuti calls a practise of translation ethical "to the extent that it facilitates a transparent understanding of the

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<sup>11</sup> Venuti uses the terms instrumental and hermeneutic model for the objective and subjective view, respectively.

interpretation that the translator inscribes in the source text” (“Genealogies” 499). How the reader is supposed to trust his understanding of the translator’s interpretation in the subjective view of meaning remains, in Jerome’s words, a mystery.

The subjective view is one answer to the problem that the objective view faces: how there can be so much difference in understanding. There are many interpretations, and the question which one is true is difficult to answer. MacDonald’s answer is also the reason he rejects the author as absolute authority. He writes: “A man may well himself discover truth in what he wrote; for he was dealing all the time with things that came from thoughts beyond his own” (9). That is why he can hold to the objective view, of true and wrong interpretations, and yet allow for as many interpretations as there are people.<sup>12</sup> Instead of lowering the standard of interpretation (the subjective view removes it completely), which is the meaning of the text, he raises this standard right into Heaven: for man’s work is only a reworking of God’s work (9). If a man uses true things, including, but not limited to the real world surrounding us, as basis for his art, his art contains truth, and this truth, the meaning in the work (independent of the author’s intention), may be understood. A reader “will read its meaning after his own nature and development” (7); for a true understanding – which is different from a complete understanding, which would be limited to God only – he needs only be a true man.<sup>13</sup> MacDonald writes: “If he be not a true man, he will draw evil out of the best; we need not mind how he treats any work of art! If he be a true man, he will imagine true things; what matter whether I meant them or not? They are there none the less that I cannot claim putting them there!” (9)<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> For the problem of how to handle these multiple (true) possible interpretations, the accomplishments of the subjective view can very well be used even if one does not subscribe to that subjective view. Holmes’s (multiple translations), Appiah’s (‘thick’ translation) and Venuti’s (making translator’s interpretation explicit) answers to the problem are perfectly valid.

<sup>13</sup> This is not very different, though much shorter, than Luther’s list of virtues required for good translating, and thus good understanding.

<sup>14</sup> St. Augustine would agree that it does not matter that interpretations *differ*, but only that they be *true*. (*Confessiones* XII.xviii,27, p. 303)

### *On Faërie*

It is, then, essential for the meaning of a work – and therefore its translation – of what sort of material it is made. It needs to be true stuff, according to MacDonald. Yet he wrote about fantastic things: fairies, witches and dragons. For Fairyland to be a meaningful Other, and for all the difficulties that come with dealing with such an Other, Faërie needs to be true. There are two possibilities: either the Fantastic is a poetical, almost allegorical form, or it is, as Tolkien calls it, sub-creation. That this second category is as real as the first may be understood by stating that machines are clearly newly created by man, yet no one would deny their reality. The category has limitations: not everything is true just because it is imagined. In his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, Tolkien writes that Fantasy “certainly does not destroy or even insult Reason,” that it is a “natural human activity,” even a “human right,” for “we are made: and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker” (144-5). To say that Fantasy is rational is to make Fantasy subject to Law, and as such a part of the *cosmos*. MacDonald wrote much the same before Tolkien in “The Fantastic Imagination”:

man may, if he pleases, invent a little world of his own, with its own laws; for there is that in him which delights in calling up new forms—which is the nearest, perhaps, he can come to creation. When such forms are new embodiments of old truths, we call them products of the Imagination; when they are mere inventions, however lovely, I should call them the work of the Fancy: in either case, Law has been diligently at work. (5-6)

One of the old truths is the notion of Lawfulness: the invented world must have laws, and they must be harmonious, else it is nothing more than absurdity. “Nothing lawless can show the least reason why it should exist, or could at best have more than an appearance of life” (5). A worse error would be to change the moral law, as that is not only absurd but wicked (6-7). That may be why the meaning of a fairy-story is generally understood as just a moral: it is the

part immediately recognisable as it contains no Fantasy. The truth of Faërie MacDonald compares with that of music and drawing: with that of all true art, any work of imagination (7-9). He writes: “The true fairytale is, to my mind, very like the sonata. We all know that a sonata means something; and where there is the faculty of talking with suitable vagueness, and choosing metaphor sufficiently loose, mind may approach mind, in the interpretation of a sonata” (8). MacDonald practises what he preaches. The question of the old aunt is answered by the other guests. They apply the tale with great variety, each deducing a different moral. However, they mostly answer in jest, as if it would not be proper to be so concrete and earnest. Indeed, the one serious answer given<sup>15</sup> is hopelessly vague.

Since Faërie is meaningful in itself, it cannot be diminished or removed through translation without violence to its character. However, Faërie culture is not usually pure, that is, it is generally mixed with the author’s culture. In order to respect Faërie and understand its peculiarity, it may be necessary to split it from the Human. This is the case in *The Lord of the Rings*, and especially clear in the context of names. Its world has multiple cultures, all of them new, but with the Shire most close to home, almost English. Therefore Tolkien wanted the English forms of the names retained (Turner 47-9). In time he decided otherwise: the Englishness was inessential. In the Appendix F.II “On Translation” to *The Lord of the Rings* he wrote:

It seemed to me that to present all the names in their original [Westron] forms would obscure an essential feature of the times as perceived by the Hobbits (whose point of view I was mainly concerned to preserve): the contrast between a wide-spread language, to them as ordinary and habitual as English is to us, and the living remains of far older and more reverend tongues. (1134)

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<sup>15</sup> “I think there is a great deal of meaning in it, to those who can see through its fairy-gates.”



In sacrificing the Westron language in favour of English, the English reader gains access to Middle-Earth; in sacrificing the English for any language, any reader gains that access. Its value has manifested as universal.<sup>16</sup> In the case of the *Harry Potter* series, to divorce the magical element from the British would be offensive, as well as impossible: the wizarding culture is distinctly British.

The meaning of Faërie and its tales may be compared with those of things besides art. It may be compared to that of history, or mathematics, or it may be meant to be enjoyed for its own sake as Eddison and Tolkien wanted. There may be nothing concrete to say about its meaning<sup>17</sup>, but that is not to say that they are worthless, or even useless. Tolkien, in the heretofore alluded to foreword, would not gainsay the “varied applicability” (xxiv) of his tale. Faërie seen this way is like any other culture: it may be understood the same, criticised the same, translated the same. Faërie may rouse the imagination of its visitor, may assail his soul “as the wind assails an aeolian harp” (MacDonald “The Fantastic Imagination” 10). But it is as Steiner notes as the first step in his hermeneutic motion (156), one must first trust the wind not to play one for a fool.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Moral of the Story*

The meaning of *The Light Princess* is then the way the story rouses its reader. How that wind moves, that *spiritus* that plays the reader as the wind plays the Aeolian harp, is the question that needs an answer before translation can begin. This is through the enchantment of humour. The whole story has as its fundament a pun. The *Light* princess: she is cursed to be light of both body and spirit. Her body is moved by the lightest touch, but her sympathy cannot be

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<sup>16</sup> Tolkien’s decision resulted in the posthumous publication of the “Guide to the names in *The Lord of the Rings*”, explaining the meaning of the names and how they are etymologically constructed, so that the Englishness can be replaced while the non-Englishness can be preserved.

<sup>17</sup> Historic facts on their own mean very little, a thing they share with mathematical facts.

<sup>18</sup> C.S. Lewis put it nicely talking about poetic language: “Such information as Poetic language has to give can be received only if you are ready to meet it half-way. It is no good holding a dialectical pistol to the poet’s head and demanding how the deuce a river could have hair, or thought be green, or a woman a red rose. You may win, in the sense of putting him to a non-plus. But if he had anything to tell you, you will never get it by behaving in that way. You must begin by trusting him. Only by so doing will you find out whether he is trustworthy or not.” (“The Language of Religion” 260-1)

moved at all – she only laughs. If this base cannot be maintained, if the two curses cannot be made one, the story becomes absurd. It will lack reason, harmony, and life – and to make a something dead out of something live: this cannot be fidelity. Translation would be impossible. Fortunately, the pun survives in Dutch; even associated words such as weight and gravity have the same double meaning. Translation is possible.

In *The Light Princess* the amount of culture is surprisingly small: in any case, it features only three proper names. Only one important character is named, but the name is used only twice. That name, Makemnoit, is in any case nothing more than a pun (Make-them-know-it).<sup>19</sup> She, the main villain of the story, is usually referred to as the king's sister. The tale is not set in a known locale. There is only the description of the lake and woods to determine the place of action. There are pines, and the lake bank may be a few meters high: probably a mountainous region in a colder climate, which is consistent with Scotland, where MacDonald lived. Of the princess's country it is known that it features a court headed by a king, but of the prince's country nothing is known at all. The princess is cursed at a baptism, a fact which MacDonald playfully problematizes in the novel frame. The clergyman reacts saying "that no such charm could have had any effect where holy water was employed as the medium. In fact I doubt if the wickedness could have been wrought in a chapel at all." It is a criticism to which the storyteller John Smith submits, and he craves indulgence. It would seem that even a meaningful act such as a baptism is not essential: the meaning of the baptism rather diminishes than augments the meaning of the tale. If anything of the baptism matters at all, it is that is a meaningful act at which the princess's aunt could believably be present. The *colour locale* is evidently unimportant, in favour of a more universal appeal.

There is one aspect which proves more problematic, and that is the princess's language. This is rendered as English, of course, and she has no accent. Yet she talks very

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<sup>19</sup> The other two names are of philosophers that appear in one chapter only. These are also wordplay: they are called Hum-Drum and Kopy-Keck.

particularly, as a by-product of her being cursed without gravity no doubt – and as such her way of talking is part of her autonomous person: her idea of up and down are a little different. Thus she says to the prince: “What business had you to pull me down out of the water, and throw me to the bottom of the air?” (33) The conversation and plot develop and incorporate the author’s habit of punning in that development. This is an autonomous feature to be preserved. A translation has to preserve the variety of the princess’s talk, and not just any variance, but the variance-because-of-her-curse.

*On Writing*

To write is a personal art. Not just because one can only write words that one knows, in a style that one knows. It is because a writer writes his own words (Magris 3). Not only does he need to know what he writes from the outside, know analytically, he needs to know intimately, the words must be a part of him.<sup>20</sup> Writing is not just copying what one sees elsewhere. The writer reveals himself in his writing. The translator, the writer of words-of-others, is no exception.

Even in adopting a writer's style, or in adapting himself thereto, one stays himself, but enlarged. One must make that other his own: that is what adoption means. This means that one's style must include that other's style for this adaptation to be possible, to be believable, and to have the "inner consistency of reality" (Tolkien "On Fairy-Stories" 139). That is an art that goes beyond the style-analysis of an author's text, selecting certain elements considered important, and copying these in the target text, though it may of course include this.<sup>21</sup> It goes beyond, because a style needs harmony. A patchwork quilt may be harmonious, indeed it should be, but that requires careful selection of fabric and thread according to colour, texture and material. Just sewing patches together may be useful, but has no artistic worth. In order to not let a failure in this art spoil the whole translation, I thought it honest and appropriate to not bother with the adoption of style, but to be content with writing my own words. That choice certainly results in an easier task, as it lowers the difficulty of writing a translation towards that of only ordinary writing.

There were few problems to do with translation. This is because what Nord says is true: starting at the highest level and working top-down is very effective ("Tekstanalyse"

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<sup>20</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas's terms for the distinction are *per cognitionem* and *per connaturalitatem*, respectively (Pieper 125).

<sup>21</sup> An analysis is a break-down, after all. The bigger problem lies in building it up again, to give it life.

146). Through a thorough analysis of what the target text should be, and what it need not do (in chapters one and two)<sup>22</sup>, traditional problems of the sort “the text has this, what should I do” have already been answered. As the text no longer poses any difficulty on the pragmatic, cultural and linguistic level, but only on the textual, because of its essential humour, keeping Nord’s categorisation of translation problems seems nonsensical. However, as the text features both prose and poetry, and poetry has some translation problems of its own, it seems appropriate to use that distinction.

### *On Prose*

I have endeavoured to translate the story and its meaning, and the components of the text that are essential to that goal, which is mainly the humour and the punning. The result is a thorough naturalisation on the linguistic and intratextual plane (including metaphors), and conservative otherwise, in my own style.<sup>23</sup> If I have kept to MacDonalds style in, for example, sentence length, that is because to translate a text all at once is impossible. Between the whole-at-once and the word-for-word the sentence is a pragmatic in-between as a translational unit. It generally needed little to no revision, but in some instances I have structured the text differently. Usually this is a rearrangement of the sentence itself. MacDonald makes frequent use of comma’s, semi-colons and M-dashes<sup>24</sup> to separate thoughts that are more closely related to each other than to the adjoining sentences. I found this sometimes flowed better in a different order. In one instance in chapter nine I have recreated MacDonald’s two sentences in five, because it otherwise dammed the narrative flow. It seemed unnecessary to require the reader to re-read the paragraph multiple times just to understand what was going on.

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<sup>22</sup> This analysis, and the method of translation therefore, is of course based on the source text, which is leading because of the ethical principle of fidelity. This is what Bindervoet and Henkes argue: “every word, every story, every poem, every song [deserves] its own method of translation” (translation mine, qtd. in Bloemen)

<sup>23</sup> I have heard it said that that style is rather archaic at times. In the translation this feature is especially noticeable in the narrator’s and the prince’s words (especially his song), as I wholly embraced it in those parts.

<sup>24</sup> That is the long dash, “—”, as opposed to the shorter N-dash “-” and hyphen “-”.

The same pragmatism lies behind the translation of metaphors. While I found it unfaithful to present scenes differently, meaning a fir tree cannot become a different tree, I did not think metaphors should be handled the same. When MacDonald likens the witch's face to "a pat of butter" because they are both very wrinkly,<sup>25</sup> there is no need to keep the metaphor that way, unless it happens to be well-suited image- and lengthwise in a contemporary Dutch cultural context. This metaphor fails qua image, because butter is smooth nowadays. Another, in which the witch's forehead is said to project over her face like a precipice, fails mainly qua length: the image has no problem being understood by a Dutch reader, but because of the Dutch language requires a more elaborate description. The Netherlands have no real cliffs, and the language does not support a wide vocabulary with which to talk about them. To explain in detail the shape of the cliff would be a little absurd. A cliff happens to return in chapter nine, as a lake is surrounded by them. Here again the Dutch are a little awkwardly equipped; a Dutch lake shore is generally a beach. The swimming in the lake only reinforces this image. But since this cliff actually exists and is not just an image, I would not change it.

### *On Poetry*

The translation features two poems, a small in chapter two and a larger in chapter fourteen. They are rather different. The small is an incantation of the witch, the curse on the princess, while the big is a song of the prince, to support the princess. I have taken different approaches to the twain regarding rhyme and metre, but the same approach as the prose to the sense of the poems. That is, I made an abstraction of the sense devoid of the poetry, and then tried to create lines incorporating that.

In the case of the curse this abstraction looked like this:<sup>26</sup>

*Licht van* {spirit\*}, {through my means}

*Licht van* {body\*}, {all of it}

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<sup>25</sup> It was a different sort of butter from a different time. Paddles were used with a serrated profile to beat the moisture out of the butter, which impressed the pat with the same jag-toothed notches all over.

<sup>26</sup> Italics for Dutch words. {Curly brackets} for the abstractions.

{Easy to carry}

{But hard to bear for the parents}

I thought the repetition of *licht van* essential, as well as the contrast of line four with the lightness of the previous lines. The translation of “spirit” and “body” was preferably *lichaam* and *geest*, as that is the classic duality. *Lichaam* and *ziel* keeps the duality, but you cannot be *licht van ziel* in Dutch. This forced the foot of the metre. The length of the line was decided by *licht van geest/lichaam* carrying half the line’s stresses. Because I stumbled on the line *goed te dragen, ’t nood geen klagen* which features a rhyme in the line, I got the idea to have the three remaining lines rhyme with each other, imitating the limerick rhyme scheme. As I thought the second halves of the first two lines inessential, there was room for rhyme.

The longer poem I tackled slightly differently. After the abstraction, I decided on the metre before any of the words. The abstraction made it logical to keep the rhyme scheme, so that every image gets a rhyming couplet. Because of the original intention to make two translations<sup>27</sup> it seemed a good idea to have one version use the amphibrach as its foot, and the other the original trochee, both tetrameters like the original. Both verse feet are used in songs, though both not as much as the iamb. The abstraction for this poem was more abstract than for the other. For the second stanza, for example, the abstraction was in general: {as a world without the sound of water is the soul without love}. More particularly, it ran as follows:

{As a world without the sound of little rivers (underground)}

{of bubbling spring}

{of rushing river}

{of water drops falling on leafs}

{of ocean wave-rejoicing}

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<sup>27</sup> See Appendix B.

{so would the soul's world be without love}

This gave ample room for rhyme and adhering to the metre. In the first stanza I could repeat the gleamlessness without repeating the words as such by utilising (*zo*) *dof*, *mat*, *vaal* and *grauw* (*als een wereld*). This I could not manage for the silence of the second stanza, so I made do with repeating *gelijkend een wereld* from the second line onwards. The third stanza has no repetition, but keeps the couplet structure.



## DE LICHTE PRINSES

## I

## WAT! GEEN KINDEREN?

Er was Eens<sup>28</sup>, lang geleden, zo ver terug dat ik niet met zekerheid durf te zeggen wanneer precies,—Eens waren er een koning en een koningin die geen kinderen hadden.<sup>29</sup>

De koning sprak zichzelf toe: ‘Alle koninginnen die ik ken, hebben kinderen – deze drie, die weer zeven, sommige zelfs wel twaalf – en mijn eigen koningin heeft er nog niet één. Het valt me zwaar van haar tegen.’ Daarom besloot hij knorrig te doen tegen zijn vrouw.<sup>30</sup> Maar zij verdroeg hem gelijk een goede, geduldige koningin zou doen, want dat was ze ook. Toen werd de koning pas echt boos. De koningin leek het echter niet serieus te nemen, als ware het een grote grap.

‘Waarom neem je dan niet op zijn minst een dochter?’ zei hij. ‘Over *zonen* heb ik het niet, dat is misschien te veel gevraagd.’

‘Weet dan, koning lief, dat het mij spijt,’ sprak de koningin.<sup>31</sup>

‘En terecht,’ viel de koning uit, ‘maar daar laat je het toch zeker niet bij.’

Maar de koning was geen driftig man, en in zaken van geringer betekenis zou hij de koningin geen strobreed in de weg hebben gelegd. Dit, echter, betrof het Landsbelang.

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<sup>28</sup> I used a capital here to give the word a bit more importance. *Er was eens* is so usual a start to a fairy-tale that one hardly stops to think what it means. That is why MacDonald played with “Once upon a time”, to give some originality back to those words.

<sup>29</sup> Fairy-tales usually, but not always, start with *Er was eens* in Dutch. It means the same as “Once upon a time there was”. Because the subject of the sentence is “a king and queen who had no children”, a plural, one must either ignore the grammatical error or use a different construction. As there is a subordinate clause explaining the timeframe, I thought this would obscure the switch from singular to plural well enough.

<sup>30</sup> The king is not acting very kingly, and the image of *knorrig* (grumbling like a pig) strengthens the humorous contrast.

<sup>31</sup> The queen speaks, while the king says. This is because the queen acts and talks more queenly than the king kingly, and *sprak* feels a bit more formal than *zei*.

De koningin glimlachte.

‘Bij een dame moet u geduld betrachten, weet u, koning lief,’ sprak ze.

Ze was eerlijk waar een heel aardige koningin, en het ging haar aan het hart dat ze niet ogenblikkelijk aan de wens des konings kon gehoorzamen.

De koning trachtte geduldig te wezen, maar succes bleef uit. Toen de koningin hem ten slotte toch een dochter gaf – een prinsesje zo lief, klein en krijsend als er te vinden is – was het dan ook meer dan hij had verdiend.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> I thought it more fitting that the chapter should end on the king than on the princess, as he is the focus of the chapter.

## II

### IK ZAL TOCH NIET?

De dag was aanstaande<sup>33</sup> dat het kind gedoopt moest worden. De koning schreef eigenhandig alle uitnodigingen. Vanzelfsprekend werd er iemand vergeten.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>35</sup>Nu maakt het normaal gesproken niet uit of dat er iemand vergeten wordt, maar men moet wel oppassen wie. De koning was jammerlijk genoeg *per ongeluk* iemand vergeten, en het lot viel op prinses Lahtsetwêen<sup>36</sup>, wat enigszins onhandig uitkwam. De prinses was namelijk de zus van de koning zelf en zo iemand behoort men niet te vergeten. Wel had ze het bij de vorige koning, hun vader, zo verziekt dat ook hij haar vergeten was, en wel in zijn testament: het mag dus geen wonder heten dat haar broer vergeten was voor haar een uitnodiging te schrijven. Maar arme familieleden doen ook zo weinig om in je gedachten te blijven. Hoe dat zo? De koning kon toch niet bij haar krot naar binnen kijken, of wel soms?<sup>37</sup>

Ze was een misbaksel, gemaakt van zuur en nijd. Plooiën in haar karakter als afgunst en twistzucht kwamen in haar gezicht aan de oppervlakte, waardoor het zo rimpelig zag als een

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<sup>33</sup> Alternatives such as *kwam dichterbij* or *naderde met rasse schreden* do not actually say that the day is close. *Was aanstaande* does do this. *Aanstaande* is more intimate than *ophanden* (a fiancée is an *aanstaande* in Dutch), which fits for a christening. *Is aanstaande* is a construction often used in Dutch, even today: a simple google search for “is aanstaande” will show results in contexts as differing as the Apocalyps and Football transfers. It has the sound that something grand is near, which too is befitting of a christening.

<sup>34</sup> “Forgotten” appears quite a few times in the text, and sometimes *overgeslagen* is a better fit than *vergeten*. To keep the repetition, which links the forgetting of the current king to the previous, I used *vergeten* only.

<sup>35</sup> This line break does not appear in the freely available Gutenberg version of the text. In fact, that version also places the last sentence of the previous chapter at the start of this one. The mistake does not appear in their version of *Adela Cathcart*. The line break is well placed in any case, because the style changes from short and to the point to a more elaborate, reflective style.

<sup>36</sup> The name of the princess is a pun on her being forgotten, and is not otherwise meaningful or important. Her having a name at all, unlike the king, queen, princess and prince, is rather more distracting than beneficial. It does allow for a more multifaceted characterisation than “princess”, “king’s sister”, or “witch” would have, as now she can be all at once. The pun in English was on Make-them-know-it, which I translated as *Laat-ze-het-weten*, which I then compounded and obscured slightly to Lahtsetwêen. An alternative was *Maak-ze-het-wijs* (Mazhetwijs), but while I liked the extended version, so to speak, the name appeared rather too easy to guess (*ze-het-wijs* was hard to obscure at all) or too hard. Another possibility was Mysotis, the Greek name for the forget-me-not flower. Though the meaning is easily found on the internet, I thought it proper to not need external tools.

<sup>37</sup> These three sentences may appear a bit out of place, as it is utterly unimportant that the princess is poor. At least, an explicit connection is never made between being forgotten in her father’s will and her ill-will towards everyone. I have not removed them despite them not really adding to the story, because they show very neatly that the narrator is a person, probably poor, not unlike MacDonald himself.

oude appel.<sup>38</sup> Als er ooit een koning was die met het recht aan zijn zijde iemand kon vergeten, dan moest het deze koning zijn in het vergeten van zijn zus, zelfs al ging het om een doopdienst<sup>39</sup>. Ook had ze een zonderling uiterlijk. Haar voorhoofd besloeg de helft van haar gezicht en hing er overheen als was het een zonnescerm.<sup>40</sup> Wanneer ze kwaad was, flitsten haar ogen blauw; wanneer ze iemand haatte, schenen ze geel en groen; hoe ze er uitzagen wanneer ze iemand liefhad, weet ik niet. Nooit hoorde ik dat ze iemand anders liefhad dan zichzelf; en ik denk niet dat ze dat voor elkaar had kunnen krijgen als ze niet op één of andere manier aan zichzelf gewend was geraakt.—<sup>41</sup>Maar wat het hoogst on-wijs van de koning maakte om haar te vergeten, was dat ze ongenadig slim was. Eigenlijk was ze een toverkol, en als ze iemand betoverde, had die er snel genoeg van. Ze versloeg namelijk alle kwade feeën in kwaadaardigheid en alle slimme in slimmigheid. Alle wraakmethodes van gekrenkte elfjes en heksen, zoals beschreven in de geschiedenisboeken, waren haar te min. Zo kwam het dat ze, nadat ze had gewacht en gewacht op een uitnodiging die maar niet kwam, besloot om de gehele familie tot grief te wezen en zónder te gaan – ze was immers een prinses.

Dus trok ze haar mooiste japon aan, ging naar het paleis, werd vriendelijk ontvangen door de blijde monarch, die vergeten had dat hij haar vergeten was,<sup>42</sup> en liep met de familie mee in de processie naar de koninklijke kapel. Toen ze allemaal rond het doopvont stonden, had ze

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<sup>38</sup> I thought the “wrinkles of contempt” crossing the “wrinkles of peevishness” a weird image, because wrinkles follow strict lines and do not cross all over the place. In any case, the pat of butter, not only an antiquated image, has no crossing wrinkles. This called for the current translation, in which the image of a wrinkly old apple contains a reference to poisoned apples given by wrinkly old witches of other fairy-tales. That *plooien*, imagery related to the wrinkle, can in Dutch appear in one’s character was a happy coincidence, as now the focus is not yet on her looks.

<sup>39</sup> The exact nature of the christening (whether Roman, Anglican, Calvinist or otherwise) is unimportant. In Dutch I have the term *doopdienst* heard used for Anglican and other Protestant christenings, and as such is of a proficiently general nature.

<sup>40</sup> “Projected over it like a precipice” efficiently gives an image of a negative slope. The imagery does return, up to a point, in the mountain-lake surroundings, but I thought that not important enough to keep the rocks in. Rather, it becomes a prime example of the naturalisation: where to keep the story intact there is no need to treat the narrator as a fossil. He may be modernised, the story may not. That is why I can use the image of a sunscreen, even though the image it calls to the mind of the present reader may be rather anachronistic.

<sup>41</sup> I introduce a dash here to signify the end of the tangent of the narrator. Just *Maar* implies too much that what was aforesaid will now be gainsaid, while that is certainly not the case. It is rather a continuation.

<sup>42</sup> I use both *had* and *was* (either is correct) because I found the repetition of one of the two jarring, and would take away from the repetition of the forgetting, which is now more pronounced as repetition-by-choice. The English starts the clause with a simple past tense, but that was not an option in Dutch: it would imply that the king was busy forgetting while receiving the princess.

zich zo gepositioneerd dat ze iets in het water kon gooien. Dat gedaan hebbende gedroeg ze zich voorbeeldig—totdat de doop werd bediend: want op dat moment draaide ze drie keer in de rondte en prevelde, luid genoeg om haar directe burens te laten meeluisteren, als volgt:

*‘Licht van geest, zo ik gelast;  
licht van lichaam, houd je vast;<sup>43</sup>  
goed te dragen, ’t nood geen klagen—  
maar ‘t ouderhart tot loden last!’<sup>44</sup>*

Ze dachten allemaal dat ze gek geworden was en een suf kinderversje op stond te zeggen; desalniettemin kregen ze er kippevel<sup>45</sup> van. Het kind daarentegen begon te lachen en te kraaien, terwijl het kindermeisje nog net een kreet van schrik smoren kon. Ze dacht verlamd te zijn: ze voelde het kind in haar armen niet meer. Maar ze hield het strak tegen zich aan zeiniks.

Het kwaad was geschied.

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<sup>43</sup> The second half of the line is the only sense-deviation in the poem. This is, of course, to keep the rhyme. That it implies the cursed one to already be blown away by the curse seems to me a nice bonus.

<sup>44</sup> The simple metre is deviated from at the end of the third line and the start of the fourth, to introduce a pause which strengthens the contrast between the third and fourth line. The fourth line rhymes with the first and second for a more heavy finish after the breather that was line three.

<sup>45</sup> Aware of the official spelling rules of the n-in-between, I heartily disregard them as nonsensical, and prefer not to use the n in this word, and not in “denneboom” and “denneappel” which come into the story at a later point.

## IX

### GOOI ME ER WEER IN

Welnu, wat de ware toedracht dan ook moge zijn,—het kan zijn dat ze deed alsof ze [de prinses]<sup>46</sup> verdronk; het is ook mogelijk dat ze van hem schrok; dat ze zich vreselijk gêneerde valt niet uit te sluiten—hoe het ook zij, wat wel zeker is, is dat ze aan land werd gebracht op een wijze een zwemmer onwaardig. Ook was ze bijna verdronken, want zodra ze trachtte iets te zeggen, spoelde het water haar de mond.<sup>47</sup>

Waar de prins aan land wou gaan, stak de oever een halve meter boven het water uit. Hij gaf de prinses derhalve een sterke zet uit het water om haar daarop te krijgen. Maar omdat haar gewicht wegviel zodra ze het water verliet, vloog ze ervandoor, de lucht in, terwijl ze de prins bedolf onder een luide scheldkanonnade.

‘Jij vieze, vreselijke, misselijke vent!’ riep ze hem toe.<sup>48</sup>

Het was de eerste keer dat iemand zo haar passie had opgewekt.<sup>49</sup>

Toen de prins haar zag opstijgen, dacht hij betoverd te moeten zijn: hij had een grote zwaan voor een edele dame aangezien. De dame onderwijl, om het verder vliegen te beletten, greep naar alles wat los en vast zat. Dit bleek een denneappel van een lange denneboom te zijn. Die kwam los. Ze reikte naar een ander. Zo ging ze door: denneappels plukkend, totdat ze stil hing. De prins stond ondertussen nog steeds in het water, en vergat helemaal eruit te klimmen. Pas toen hij de prinses niet meer zag, klom hij aan land en liep haar achterna. Hij vond haar in de denneboom, terwijl ze langs de takken naar beneden klom. Maar het was

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<sup>46</sup> The text starts 5 paragraphs into the chapter, providing the context to identify this “she”.

<sup>47</sup> MacDonald has this paragraph as one sentence. His playful way with words sadly resulted in a beast of a Dutch sentence, which required careful rereading and dismantling to understand.

<sup>48</sup> The original has “You naughty, *naughty*, NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY man!” I could not find a word that was satisfactory to repeat. That in itself I thought unimportant, but the princess’s outrage does gain in strength still in the translation.

<sup>49</sup> It may be thought that English “passion” cannot be simply translated as *passie* in Dutch, because in Dutch it is usually a burst of positive emotion, usually love, not really anger. However, it does still carry the connotation that what one is passionate about one must suffer for, and this is the first time that the princess is suffering. One can also read it ironically, as love is the thing furthest from her mind.

donker in het bos, en de prins begreep nog steeds niet wat hij zag totdat ze met de voeten op de aarde stond, hem zag, vastgreep, en zei:

‘Ik ga het papa vertellen.’

‘O nee zeker niet!’<sup>50</sup> reageerde de prins.

‘Zeker wel,’ hield ze vol. ‘Hoe kom je erbij om me uit het water neer te halen en me onderin de lucht te gooien? Waar heb ik dit aan verdiend?’

‘Mijn excuses. Het was niet mijn bedoeling u<sup>51</sup> iets aan te doen.’

‘Liever verlies ik mijn gewicht dan mijn verstand, zoals bij jou lijkt te zijn gebeurd. Ik heb met je te doen.’

De prins zag nu dat hij voor de betoverde prinses stond en haar al meteen had beledigd. Maar voordat hij kon bedenken wat hij zeggen zou, was de boze prinses hem voor: ze stampte hard op de grond – hard genoeg dat, had ze de arm van de prins niet vast, ze weer zou zijn weggevlogen – en sprak:

‘Krijg me er direct weer op.’<sup>52</sup>

‘Krijg u waarop, schone dame?’ vroeg de prins.

Hij was bijna meteen op haar gevallen: boos was ze charmanter dan iemand haar ooit had aanschouwd. Voor zover hij kon zien – niet bijster ver – was er geen smetje op haar blazoens te bekennen, behalve, natuurlijk, dat ze geen gewicht had. Maar geen prins zou ooit prinses beoordelen naar haar zwaarte. De bekoorlijkheid van haar voetje kan moeilijk worden geschat op basis van hoe diep de afdruk zou zijn in de modder.

‘Krijg u waarop, schone dame?’ vroeg de prins.

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<sup>50</sup> The prince’s exclamation lacks a comma, which would be usual in such a construction, because it suggests a pause that makes no sense.

<sup>51</sup> The prince is polite to the princess, while the princess cares not at all about the prince. This is reflected in their use of personal pronouns for each other, and the more formal language of the prince. It is a bit of a role-reversal from the king and queen in the early chapters.

<sup>52</sup> The subtleties of meanings contained in the English “put me up” cannot be maintained in Dutch. I thought it important to keep, at the very least, the confusion: she means “put me down”. Were I to translate “put me up” as *Til me omhoog*, this simple reversal of direction would not be possible. To repetition of “put”, to “put me (up) in the water”, can also be maintained by translating “to put” as *krijgen*.

‘In<sup>53</sup> het water natuurlijk, domoor!’ antwoordde de prinses.

‘Kom dan,’ zei de prins.

Door de staat van haar kleding kon ze nog moeilijker lopen dan normaal gesproken het geval was, en ze moest zich dan ook stevig aan hem vasthouden; bij hem ging het er niet in dat hij niet verrukkelijk droomde, ondanks de muzikale woordenvloed die zij over hem uitstortte. Voor de prins hoefde het dus allemaal niet zo snel; ze kwamen bij een heel ander stuk van het meer uit, waar de oever een klif vormde van minstens zeven meter hoog. Toen ze de afgrond hadden bereikt richtte hij zich tot de prinses en zei:

‘Hoe moet ik u erin zien te krijgen?’

‘Zoek dat zelf maar uit,’ antwoordde ze vinnig. ‘Jij vist me eruit—krijg me ook weer erin.’

‘Juist,’ zei de prins, tilde haar op in zijn armen, en sprong met haar van de rots. De prinses slaakte nog net een kreet van plezier voordat ze kopje onder ging. Toen ze weer boven kwamen, had ze de adem niet om te lachen, zo snel waren ze in het water gestort. De prins daarentegen zei meteen:

‘Hoe bevalt het u om erin te vallen?’ Met enige moeite bracht de prinses puffend en hijgend uit:

‘Is dat wat je *erin vallen* noemt?’

‘Ja,’ bevestigde de prins, ‘ik zou het een heel aardig voorbeeld denken.’

‘Het deed mij aan alsof ik omhoog ging,’ reageerde ze.

‘Ik voel me ook alsof ik in de wolken ben,’ gaf de prins toe.

De prinses leek hem niet te begrijpen; in ieder geval beantwoordde ze zijn vraag met een wedervraag:

‘Hoe bevalt het *jou* om erin te vallen?’ vroeg ze.

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<sup>53</sup> The movement from *-op* to *in* is caused by the princess explaining what she meant. A repetition of *op*, which is at best implied in the English, would needlessly confuse things.



‘Hemels,’ was zijn antwoord, ‘want ik ben gevallen op het meest perfecte schepsel dat ik ooit heb aanschouwd.’

‘Stop daarmee: ik word er moe van,’ zei de prinses.

Misschien had ze van haar vader zijn aversie tegen de woordgrap geërfd.

‘Bevalt het erin vallen u niet, dan?’ vroeg de prins.

‘Ik heb van mijn leven nog nooit zoiets verrukkelijks meegemaakt!’ antwoordde ze. ‘Ik ben nooit eerder gevallen. Wou dat ik het kon leren; alleen de gedachte al dat ik de enige ben in mijn vaders koninkrijk die niet vallen kan!’

Het huilen stond de prinses nader dan het lachen.

‘Het zou me een eer en een waar genoegen zijn om op enig moment dat u wenst met u erin te vallen,’ bood de prins nederig aan.<sup>54</sup>

‘Dank je. Ik weet het niet. Misschien zou het niet toonbaar zijn. Maar dat doet me niks. Laat ons in ieder geval, nu we er toch in zijn gevallen, een stukje samen zwemmen.’

‘Met heel mijn hart,’ verklaarde de prins.

En weg waren ze: ze zwommen, ze doken, ze dreven, totdat ze uiteindelijk mensen hoorden roepen langs de kant van het meer, en alle kanten uit lampen zagen rondschijnen. Het was al laat, en geen maan liet zich zien.

‘Ik moet naar huis,’ zei de prinses. ‘Het spijt me zeer, want dit is heerlijk.’

‘’t Spijt mij ook,’ reageerde de prins. ‘Maar het verheugt me wel dat ik geen huis heb waartoe ik zou gaan—tenminste, ik heb geen idee waar het is.’

‘’k Wou dat ik er ook geen had,’ zei de prinses. ‘Het is zo stom, hè! Ik voel er sterk voor,’ vervolgde ze, ‘om ze allemaal eens goed te bedotten. Waarom kunnen ze me niet met rust laten? Eén nachtje in het meer is hun al teveel gevraagd!—Je ziet waar dat groene licht brandt? Dat is mijn slaapkamerraam. Als je nou stilletjes met mij daarnaartoe zou zwemmen,

---

<sup>54</sup> The punning on “falling in” cannot be maintained to the end; the implication of the prince that just meeting the princess again would make him happy simply does not work in Dutch. His feelings are clear from the context, however, so it is no loss for the logic of the narrative.

en me dan iets voor het balkon net zo'n duw<sup>55</sup> – *omhoog* zou jij zeggen – geeft als een tijdje terug, dan moet ik wel de balustrade kunnen vastpakken en door het raam naar binnen kunnen glippen. Laat ze dan maar tot morgenochtend door zoeken!<sup>56</sup>

‘Slechts om uwentwil’ sprak de prins galant; en stil zwommen ze weg.

---

<sup>55</sup> Alternatives would be *hijs* or *zet*, but they imply an upwards motion already, or in any case do not make sense for a downward motion, which the pushing up would be for the princess. *Neerduwen* however is a thing.

<sup>56</sup> I wrote *door zoeken*, because of the likeness to *doorzoeken*, strengthening the thoroughness of the search.

## XIV

### GEZANG DER PRINS<sup>57</sup>

*'Zo dof als een wereld waar water niet welt  
in donker-zwart woud, en geen fonkel zich meldt;  
zo mat als een wereld waar water niet springt  
van hoog naar benêe en niet sprankelend glimt;  
zo vaal als een wereld met geen oceaen,  
waar ook golven-schitter vergeet te bestaan;  
zo grauw als een wereld waar nergens op 't veld  
de regenvloed valt en 't gras glansloos zich stelt;—  
alzo<sup>58</sup> moet, mijn hart, het uw wereld vergaen  
als de stroom van de liefde er niet zou bestaan.*

*Zo stil als een wereld waarin geen geluid  
van verborgen riviertjes hun ligplaats ontsluit;  
gelijkend een wereld waar bron niet ontspringt  
en bobbelend bruisend uit de aarde zich dringt;  
gelijkend een wereld waar geen watervloed  
met machtig geraas naar de zeeën zich spoedt;  
gelijkend een wereld waar geen regenval  
de blâadren bespeelt en geen oor reiken zal;*

---

<sup>57</sup> Not the title of the chapter.

On the song itself, MacDonald writes, in the first two stanzas, on a world without the gleam and sound of water. The implication that the song references a world without water at all is a bit stronger in my translation. The second stanza has, for some reason, two extra lines. This seems to me to be unusual for a song, but as I liked my translation of the lines there can be no question of their removal. In general it may be noticed that I kept to the rhyme scheme and the structure of two lines that together give an image, but altered the metre. I did so because, especially for a song, I like this metre more. I did write a version with original metre as well, see Appendix B.

<sup>58</sup> *Alzo*, because *zo* refers back to the first line, which uses *zo* also.

*gelijkend een wereld die stil is, ontdaan  
van golven-gejubel van de oceaan;—  
alzo moet, mijn ziel, het uw wereld vergaan  
als het lied van de liefde er niet zou bestaan.*

*De vreugd' van uw wereld, zie dát te behouden;  
och, laat u zich niet van het water weerhouden.  
De liefde, die heeft mij gesterkt om te gaan—  
om uwentwil machtige proef te doorstaan—  
naar Onder te gaan waar het water niet schijnt  
en ook al het blijde geluid is verkwijnd:  
herinnert u mij en laat dat in u zijn  
tot bron, luidt mijn bede, tot grote fontein,  
opdat niet uw ziel, 't liefdeloze domein,  
blijve dor, droog en dorstig gelijk een woestijn.'*

## CONCLUSION

“What is the task of the translator?” is a question unavoidable to any translator. Posed again and again throughout history as essentially a dilemma though ever-changing in its two options from words versus sense to foreign versus natural, the answer must include being faithful to his source, as the only ethical translation is built on the principle of fidelity. Whatever one thinks important – words, sense, language, culture, rhythm – or possible – meaning as objective fact, or only interpretation – there is no escaping fidelity, whatever the translation’s purpose may be. To keep faith with the Other—that is the translator’s responsibility; that is the way to make the Other one’s own without making it the same as one’s own.

In the case of the Fantastic tales out of Faërie, the meaning of the words form the story, but the meaning of the story lies in the way it – that is, Faërie itself – rouses the reader. It is important, then, to leave it intact: to let the story be itself; to let its foreignness be foreignness-in-its-own-way. Fairy-stories are wide-spread and have become native to many foreign soils, including the British and Dutch; though its fairy-roots stay strange in any country. I think this manifests itself in my translation; through the thorough naturalisation linguistically the story, its characters, and its magic are stripped of their accidental Britishness and the universal strangeness of fairyland is free to work its magic on the reader.

This method is widely applicable for fairy-tales set in other-worlds, for what before has been called “high fantasy”. Though its applicability is broader: though, for instance, the world of Well’s *The Time Machine* is our own (and that being an essential point), it is so far removed in time that its strangeness, that makes it so foreign for the time traveller as well as the reader, does not depend on being removed from Britishness, but from humanity as a whole.

This thesis has not concerned itself with that tale of Faërie where the native human country is fused with the fairy-story, either in the setting or the telling. To dissect these two domains may be an unfaithful violence. So, probably, in the *Harry Potter* series, even more so as the Wizarding World expands and stories are told set in wizarding cultures all over the world. So, maybe, in Eddison's *The Worm Ouroboros*: not because of the setting (which is said to be Mercury), but because his language is drenched in the history of English. The story has no problem being transplanted, but whether the telling would be worth listening too is a question that remains. To guide the translator, translation studies would not do amiss to reflect further on these matters.

The difficulties I encountered in writing the translation were foremost of the philosophical sort: to decide on what the target text should be. For works that are more than their words, this difficulty the translator may expect anew for every new text. As Bindervoet and Henkes state: "every word, every story, every poem, every song [deserves] its own method of translation" (translation mine, qtd. in Bloemen). The other difficulty was to actually write the Dutch words, to write what I meant to say. As difficult as it is to extract the meaning from words and understand them, it is not easier to reverse the process and incorporate one's meaning into words. This was hardest, as expected, in the language of the princess, as the free room for appropriate punning was small. Writing the poetry, the curse as well as the song, was easier than expected. I thought I would have more difficulty in translating the meaning of the words and still adhere to rhyme and metre, even if I considered myself free in the choosing of their scheme. Of the whole translation, both the song translation given in chapter four and that in Appendix B are most to my satisfaction.

The fairy-tale moves the reader, therein lies its meaning. I think my translation a suitable vehicle for that movement. So: be a guest in Fairyland, be moved like True Thomas the Rhymer, and like him hold your tongue while there, but wonder instead.

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## APPENDIX A. SOURCE TEXT

The source text used in translation is out of MacDonald's *The Complete Fairy Tales*. The source here given is copied directly from the Project Gutenberg version of *The Light Princess*. As noted earlier, these texts differ. I noticed difference at the start of chapter II: the first sentence should be the last of chapter I, and "Now it does . . ." should be a new paragraph. Also, what should be italicised is in caps instead, or plain text. I only altered the text size and line spacing.

### 1. What! No Children?

Once upon a time, so long ago that I have quite forgotten the date, there lived a king and queen who had no children.

And the king said to himself, "All the queens of my acquaintance have children, some three, some seven, and some as many as twelve; and my queen has not one. I feel ill-used." So he made up his mind to be cross with his wife about it. But she bore it all like a good patient queen as she was. Then the king grew very cross indeed. But the queen pretended to take it all as a joke, and a very good one too.

"Why don't you have any daughters, at least?" said he. "I don't say sons; that might be too much to expect."

"I am sure, dear king, I am very sorry," said the queen.

"So you ought to be," retorted the king; "you are not going to make a virtue of that, surely."

But he was not an ill-tempered king, and in any matter of less moment would have let the queen have her own way with all his heart. This, however, was an affair of state.

The queen smiled.

"You must have patience with a lady, you know, dear king," said she.

She was, indeed, a very nice queen, and heartily sorry that she could not oblige the king immediately.

## **2. Won't I, Just?**

The king tried to have patience, but he succeeded very badly. It was more than he deserved, therefore, when, at last, the queen gave him a daughter—as lovely a little princess as ever cried.

The day drew near when the infant must be christened. The king wrote all the invitations with his own hand. Of course somebody was forgotten. Now it does not generally matter if somebody is forgotten, only you must mind who. Unfortunately, the king forgot without intending to forget; and so the chance fell upon the Princess Makemnoit, which was awkward. For the princess was the king's own sister; and he ought not to have forgotten her. But she had made herself so disagreeable to the old king, their father, that he had forgotten her in making his will; and so it was no wonder that her brother forgot her in writing his invitations. But poor relations don't do anything to keep you in mind of them. Why don't they? The king could not see into the garret she lived in, could he?

She was a sour, spiteful creature. The wrinkles of contempt crossed the wrinkles of peevishness, and made her face as full of wrinkles as a pat of butter. If ever a king could be justified in forgetting anybody, this king was justified in forgetting his sister, even at a christening. She looked very odd, too. Her forehead was as large as all the rest of her face, and projected over it like a precipice. When she was angry, her little eyes flashed blue. When she hated anybody, they shone yellow and green. What they looked like when she loved anybody, I do not know; for I never heard of her loving anybody but herself, and I do not think she could have managed that if she had not somehow got used to herself. But what made it highly imprudent in the king to forget her was that she was awfully clever. In fact, she was a

witch; and when she bewitched anybody, he very soon had enough of it; for she beat all the wicked fairies in wickedness, and all the clever ones in cleverness. She despised all the modes we read of in history, in which offended fairies and witches have taken their revenges; and therefore, after waiting and waiting in vain for an invitation, she made up her mind at last to go without one, and make the whole family miserable, like a princess as she was.

So she put on her best gown, went to the palace, was kindly received by the happy monarch, who forgot that he had forgotten her, and took her place in the procession to the royal chapel.

When they were all gathered about the font, she contrived to get next to it, and throw something into the water; after which she maintained a very respectful demeanour till the water was applied to the child's face. But at that moment she turned round in her place three times, and muttered the following words, loud enough for those beside her to hear:—

"Light of spirit, by my charms,

Light of body, every part,

Never weary human arms—

Only crush thy parents' heart!"

They all thought she had lost her wits, and was repeating some foolish nursery rhyme; but a shudder went through the whole of them notwithstanding. The baby, on the contrary, began to laugh and crow; while the nurse gave a start and a smothered cry, for she thought she was struck with paralysis: she could not feel the baby in her arms. But she clasped it tight and said nothing. The mischief was done.

### **9. Put Me in Again.**

[. . .]

Now I cannot tell how it came about,—whether she pretended to be drowning, or whether he frightened her, or caught her so as to embarrass her,—but certainly he brought her to shore in

a fashion ignominious to a swimmer, and more nearly drowned than she had ever expected to be; for the water had got into her throat as often as she had tried to speak.

At the place to which he bore her, the bank was only a foot or two above the water; so he gave her a strong lift out of the water, to lay her on the bank. But, her gravitation ceasing the moment she left the water, away she went up into the air, scolding and screaming.

"You naughty, naughty, NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY man!" she cried.

No one had ever succeeded in putting her into a passion before.—When the prince saw her ascend, he thought he must have been bewitched, and have mistaken a great swan for a lady.

But the princess caught hold of the topmost cone upon a lofty fir. This came off; but she caught at another; and, in fact, stopped herself by gathering cones, dropping them as the stalks gave way. The prince, meantime, stood in the water, staring, and forgetting to get out. But the princess disappearing, he scrambled on shore, and went in the direction of the tree. There he found her climbing down one of the branches towards the stem. But in the darkness of the wood, the prince continued in some bewilderment as to what the phenomenon could be; until, reaching the ground, and seeing him standing there, she caught hold of him, and said,—

"I'll tell papa."

"Oh no, you won't!" returned the prince.

"Yes, I will," she persisted. "What business had you to pull me down out of the water, and throw me to the bottom of the air? I never did you any harm."

"Pardon me. I did not mean to hurt you."

"I don't believe you have any brains; and that is a worse loss than your wretched gravity. I pity you."

The prince now saw that he had come upon the bewitched princess, and had already offended her. But before he could think what to say next, she burst out angrily, giving a stamp with her foot that would have sent her aloft again but for the hold she had of his arm,—

"Put me up directly."

"Put you up where, you beauty?" asked the prince.

He had fallen in love with her almost, already; for her anger made her more charming than any one else had ever beheld her; and, as far as he could see, which certainly was not far, she had not a single fault about her, except, of course, that she had not any gravity. No prince, however, would judge of a princess by weight. The loveliness of her foot he would hardly estimate by the depth of the impression it could make in mud.

"Put you up where, you beauty?" asked the prince.

"In the water, you stupid!" answered the princess.

"Come, then," said the prince.

The condition of her dress, increasing her usual difficulty in walking, compelled her to cling to him; and he could hardly persuade himself that he was not in a delightful dream, notwithstanding the torrent of musical abuse with which she overwhelmed him. The prince being therefore in no hurry, they came upon the lake at quite another part, where the bank was twenty-five feet high at least; and when they had reached the edge, he turned towards the princess, and said,—

"How am I to put you in?" "That is your business," she answered, quite snappishly. "You took me out—put me in again."

"Very well," said the prince; and, catching her up in his arms, he sprang with her from the rock. The princess had just time to give one delighted shriek of laughter before the water closed over them. When they came to the surface, she found that, for a moment or two, she could not even laugh, for she had gone down with such a rush, that it was with difficulty she recovered her breath. The instant they reached the surface—

"How do you like falling in?" said the prince.

After some effort the princess panted out,—

"Is that what you call FALLING IN?"

"Yes," answered the prince, "I should think it a very tolerable specimen."

"It seemed to me like going up," rejoined she.

"My feeling was certainly one of elevation too," the prince conceded.

The princess did not appear to understand him, for she retorted his question:—

"How do YOU like falling in?" said the princess.

"Beyond everything," answered he; "for I have fallen in with the only perfect creature I ever saw."

"No more of that: I am tired of it," said the princess.

Perhaps she shared her father's aversion to punning.

"Don't you like falling in then?" said the prince.

"It is the most delightful fun I ever had in my life," answered she. "I never fell before. I wish I could learn. To think I am the only person in my father's kingdom that can't fall!"

Here the poor princess looked almost sad.

"I shall be most happy to fall in with you any time you like," said the prince, devotedly.

"Thank you. I don't know. Perhaps it would not be proper. But I don't care. At all events, as we have fallen in, let us have a swim together."

"With all my heart," responded the prince.

And away they went, swimming, and diving, and floating, until at last they heard cries along the shore, and saw lights glancing in all directions. It was now quite late, and there was no moon.

"I must go home," said the princess. "I am very sorry, for this is delightful."

"So am I," returned the prince. "But I am glad I haven't a home to go to—at least, I don't exactly know where it is."



"I wish I hadn't one either," rejoined the princess; "it is so stupid! I have a great mind," she continued, "to play them all a trick. Why couldn't they leave me alone? They won't trust me in the lake for a single night!—You see where that green light is burning? That is the window of my room. Now if you would just swim there with me very quietly, and when we are all but under the balcony, give me such a push—up you call it—as you did a little while ago, I should be able to catch hold of the balcony, and get in at the window; and then they may look for me till to-morrow morning!"

"With more obedience than pleasure," said the prince, gallantly; and away they swam, very gently.

[. . .]

#### **14. This Is Very Kind of You.**

[. . .]

As a world that has no well,  
Darting bright in forest dell;  
As a world without the gleam  
Of the downward-going stream;  
As a world without the glance  
Of the ocean's fair expanse;  
As a world where never rain  
Glittered on the sunny plain;—  
Such, my heart, thy world would be,  
If no love did flow in thee.

As a world without the sound  
Of the rivulets underground;  
Or the bubbling of the spring  
Out of darkness wandering;  
Or the mighty rush and flowing  
Of the river's downward going;  
Or the music-showers that drop  
On the outspread beech's top;  
Or the ocean's mighty voice,  
When his lifted waves rejoice;—  
Such, my soul, thy world would be,  
If no love did sing in thee.

Lady, keep thy world's delight;  
Keep the waters in thy sight.  
Love hath made me strong to go,  
For thy sake, to realms below,  
Where the water's shine and hum  
Through the darkness never come;  
Let, I pray, one thought of me  
Spring, a little well, in thee;  
Lest thy loveless soul be found  
Like a dry and thirsty ground.  
[ . . . ]

This appendix is a bonus; it is included because it seemed a waste not to. It is not a part of the main thesis.

*On Foreignizing Translation*

This translation is a relic of the idea that started this thesis. That idea was to make two translations according to opposing translation philosophies, as there was doubt in my mind that they would be as different as the philosophies would suggest, only that one would be a better translation than the other. These were based on Goethe's Circle of Translation, where from the original a simple prose translation is made as introduction in the work; an imitation, a surrogate of the "native soil" is to follow; after which comes the *foreignizing* translation, that would give access to the foreign text in its foreignness, leading back to the original. The translation in this Appendix was supposed to help (me at the least) understand what such a foreignizing translation would be. The idea seemed noble but vague: to keep faith with the English word while writing no English at all.

In creating the method of this translation I was influenced by Schleiermacher, Goethe, Benjamin and Berman. Benjamin especially, since I do not understand at all what he is about with that "pure language" of his. He writes: "To set free in his own language the pure language spellbound in the foreign language, to liberate the language imprisoned in the work by rewriting it . . . he [the translator] breaks through the rotten barriers of his own language" (82). He quotes Pannwitz: "our translations even the best start out from a false principle they want to germanize Indic Greek English instead of indicizing, graecizing, anglicizing German. they are far more awed by their own linguistic habits than by the spirit of the foreign work" (82). Berman, for whom translation can "reveal the foreign work's most original kernel" (240), writes that "Thanks to such translation, the language of the original shakes with all its liberated might the translating language." (241) He quotes Foucault: "there are translations

that hurl one language against another [. . .] taking the original text for a projectile and treating the translating language like a target. Their task is not to lead a meaning back to itself or anywhere else; but to use the translated language to derail the translating language.” (241)

The method of translation that would have such noble results is “exactly word for word, without adding anything, preserving the very order of the words, until at last you find the meter, even the rhymes.” (Alain, qtd. in Berman 241)

This seems to me problematic. If we are to appreciate foreignness, it must certainly not be to the cost of the foreign. There is no reason, however, why it should do violence to our own: it would be an absurd world indeed where Dutch translators disfigured their language in favour of English, and the English translators in favour of Dutch. The only reason I can think of that would make this reasonable is that this would lead to a universal language, but that would utterly destroy the variety and foreignness of all languages. It simply makes no sense to me to force a language to be different. It does make sense to me to love it and make it want to grow in richness, in possibility and variety.

In this translation therefore I have tried to use whatever I could find in the Dutch language to make it as English as I could. I have tried to photograph the English text with a plate sensitive to Dutch only. Words that we may recognise, though not maybe in that context, I have copied. I then forced the meaning into it, rather than start with the meaning and give it words that fit it in a Dutch fashion. The translation is thus heavily based on etymology, which was great fun to do, but appears a false guide for translation in many cases (Jerome 29; Tolkien “On Translating Beowulf” 56). It did help to avoid literalness in the main translation. I used words that appear in dictionaries describing the Dutch language from the 1500s and onward.

The poem of Chapter XIV has a version that could be used in the main translation.

DE LICHTE PRINSES

I

WAT! GEEN KINDEREN?

Eens opaan een tijd, zo lang geleden dat ik de datum helemaal heb vergeten, leefden er een koning en koningin wie geen kinderen hadden.

En de koning zeide tot hemzelf, ‘Al de koningins van mijn weten hebben kinderen, sommige drie, sommige zeven, en sommige alzo menig als twaalf; en mijn koningin heeft niet één. Ik voel mis-bruikt.’ Zo had hij zijn menen opgemaakt erover te kruisen met zijn vrouw. Maar ze beurde het al gelijk een goede patiëntievolle koningin zoals ze was. Toen groeide de koning in-daad zeer kruisend. Maar de koningin probeerde het al te nemen als een grap, en een waarlijk goed ééntje ook.

‘Waarom doe-nie je enige dochters hebben, ten minste?’ zeide hij. ‘Ik doe-nie zeggen *zonen*; dat mocht te menig benne om naar uit te zien.’

‘Ik ben zeker, diere koning, dat ik zeer sorry ben,’ zeide de koningin.

‘Zo benne je verplicht,’ gaf de koning terug; ‘je bent niet gaande tot in-deugd-maken van *dat*, zekerlijk.’

Maar hij was niet een mis-getemperde koning en in enige materie van lutteler moment woude de koningin haar eigen weg hebben laten hebben met al zijn hart. Dit, echter, was een Zaak van State.

De koningin trok een smoeltje.

‘Je moet patiëntie hebben met een vrouwe, weet je, diere koning,’ zeide ze.

Ze was, in-daad, een waarlijk aardige koningin, en hartelijk sorry dat ze niet meteen de koning konde obligeren.

De koning probeerde patiëntie te hebben, maar hij slaagde waarlijk slecht. Het was meer dan hij verdiende, daarvoor, wanneer, ten leste, de koningin hem een dochter gaf—alzo lieflijk een luttele prinses als ooit krijste.

## II

### WIL-NIET IK, JUIST?

De dag trok nader wanneer de neonaat moest benne gekerstend. De koning schreef al de invitaties met zijn eigen hand. Zoals dat koerst, was sommigman vergeten. Nu doet het niet generaliter materieel benne of sommigman *is* vergeten, eenlijk moest je in menen houden wie. Onfortuinlijk, vergat de koning metzonder intentie tot vergeten; en zo viel de kans opaan de Prinses Mazhetwijs, welke wrangwaarts was. Hiervoor dat de prinses de konings eigen zuster was; en hij behoorde haar niet te hebben vergeten. Maar ze had haarzelf zo uit de gratie gemaakt tot de oude koning, dezer vader, dat hij haar had vergeten in de making van zijn laatste wil; en zo was het geen wonder dat haar broeder haar vergat in de schrijving van zijn invitaties. Maar povere relaties doen-nie doen enigding die in jouw menen te houden. Waarvoor doen-nie die? De koning konde niet intot de zolder waarin ze leefde zien, konde hij?

Ze was een zuur, smaadvol creatuur. De plooiën van contempt kruisten de plooiën van irriterendheid, en maakte haar facie alzo vol van plooiën als een kluit van boter. Als ooit een koning konde benne gejuistigd in de vergeting van enigman, was deze koning gejuistigd in de vergeting van zijn zuster, zelfs bij een kerstening. Ze leek waarlijk raar, ook. Haar voorhoofd was alzo groot als al de rest van haar facie, en projecteerde erover gelijk een steile rotswand. Wanneer ze boos was, flitste haar luttele ogen blauw. Wanneer ze enigman haatte, schenen die geel en groen. Wat die gelijk leken wanneer ze enigman loofde, ik doe niet weten; hiervoor dat ik nooit hoorde van haar lovende enigman dan haarzelf, en ik doe niet denken dat

ze dat konde hebben gemend als ze niet sommigwijs gewenning had gekregen tot haarzelf. Maar wat het hooglijk imprudent maakte in de koning haar te vergeten was—dat ze vreesvollig slim was. In feite, ze was een wichelaar; en wanneer ze enigman bewichelde, had hij er waarlijk snel genoeg van; voor ze sloeg al de kwade feetjes in kwaadheid, en al de slimme ééntjes in slimmigheid. Ze besmaadde al de modi die de historie ons raadt, in welke gegriefde feetjes en wichelaars dezer revanches hebben gepakt; en daarvoor, achter wachting en wachting in ijdelheid voor een invitatie, had ze ten leste haar menen opgemaakt te gaan metzonder één, en de hele familie miserabel te maken, gelijk een prinses zoals ze was.

Zo trok ze haar beste robe aan, wendde tot het paleis, was vriendelijk verwelkomd bij de gelukkige monarch, wie vergat dat hij haar had vergeten, en nam haar plaats in de processie tot de royale kapel. Wanneer die al waren gegaderd buiten het vont, gelukte ze ernaast te komen, en sommigding intot het water te gooien; achter welke ze een waarlijk respectvolle houding mende totdat het water tot het kinds facie was geappliqueerd. Maar op dat moment tourneerde ze in haar plaats drietijds rond, en murmelde de volgende woorden, voor die bezijden haar luid genoeg tot horen:

*‘Licht van geest, bij mijn charmen,*

*Licht van lichaam, ieder part,*

*Nooit vermoeiend mensenarmen—*

*Eenlijk plet dier ouders hart!’*

Die al dachten dat ze haar weten had gelost, en sommige dwaze kinderrijm repeterende was; maar een schuddering wende door het geheel van die nietwederstaande. De baby, contrariewijs, begon te lachen en kraaien; terwijl de voedster een spartel en een gesmoorde krijs gaf, hiervoor dat ze dacht dat ze was geslagen met paralyse: ze konde de baby in haar armen niet voelen. Maar ze klampte het dichtbij en zeide geen ding.

De ondeugd was gedaan.

## IX

### ZET ME ER WEER IN

Ik nu kanniet vertellen hoe het naarbuiten kwam,—of dat ze pretendeerde te benne verdronken, of dat hij haar bevreesde, of haar zo ving als haar te embarrasseren,—maar zekerlijk bracht hij haar tot kust in een mode ignobel tot een zwemmer, en meer naderlijk verdronken dan ze ooit expectatie had te benne; hiervoor dat het water intot haar strot had gegaan alzo oft als ze had geprobeerd te spreken.

Op de plaats tot welke hij haar beurde, was de oever éénlijk een voet of twee boven het water; zo gaf hij haar een sterke lift uit van het water, om haar op de oever te leggen. Maar, haar gravitatie cesserende het moment dat ze het water verliet, teweg wendde ze op intot de lucht, scheldende en schreeuwende.

‘Jij nietsige, *nietsige*, NIETSIGE, NIETSIGE man!’ krijste ze.

Niet één had ooit bevoren succes in haar intot een passie te bewegen.—Wanneer de prins haar zag opstijgen, dacht hij dat hij moest hebben gebenne bewicheld, en een grote zwaan hebben misgevat voor een vrouwe. Maar de prinses ving houvast van de topmeeste conus opaan een hoge vurenboom. Dit kwam eraf; maar ze ving aan eenander; en, in feite, stopte haarzelf bij gadering van conussen, die droppende als de steelkes weg gaven. De prins, middentijds, stond in het water, starende, en vergetende eruit te gaan. Maar de prinses verdwijnde, krabbelde hij aan oever, en wendde in de directie van de boom. Daar vond hij haar één van de branches neerklimmende toewaarts de stam. Maar in de duisternis van het woud, continueerde de prins in sommige verwildering als tot wat het fenomeen benne konde; totdat, de grond bereikende, en hem daar staande ziende, ze van hem houvast ving, en zeide,—

‘Ikwil papa vertellen.’

‘Oh nee, jij wil-nie!’ retourneerde de prins.



‘Ja, ik wil,’ persisteerde ze. ‘Welke bezigheid had je me neer uit van het water te plukken, en me tot de bodem van de lucht te werpen? Ik deed jou nooit enig kwaad.’

‘Pardonner me. Ik deed niet menen jou een hort te geven.’

‘Ik doe-nie geloven dat je enig brein hebt; en dat is een warriger verlies dan jouw gewraakte gravitatie. Ik beklaag jou.’

De prins zag nu dat hij opaan de bewichelde prinses had gekomen, en haar alreeds had gegriefd. Maar bevorens hij konde denken wat nader te zeggen, barstte ze boos uit, gevende een stamp met haar voet dat haar weer telucht woude hebben gezonden dan voor het houvast dat ze had van zijn arm,—

‘Zet me direct op.’

‘Zet jou op waar, jij belle?’ vereiste de prins.

Hij had allermeeft in liefde met haar gevallen, alreeds; hiervoor dat haar boosheid haar meer charmant maakte dan enig één elders haar ooit in zicht had behouden; en, alzo ver als hij konde zien, welke zekerlijk niet ver was, had ze niet een singulaire fout rondom haar, met exceptie, zoals dat koerst, dat ze niet enige gravitatie had. Geen prins, echter, woude bij gewicht judiceren van een prinses. Hij woude het niet harden om de lievenis van haar voet te waarderen bij de diepte van de impressie die het konde maken in modder.

‘Zet jou op waar, jij belle?’ vereiste de prins.

‘In het water, jij stupide!’ antwoordde de prinses.

‘Kom, dan,’ zeide de prins.

De conditie van haar jurk, haar gebruikelijke difficulteit in de wandeling crescenderende, compelleerde haar aan hem te klampen; en het was hem hard hemzelf te persuaderen dat hij niet in een verrukkelijke droom was, nietwederstaande de torrent van muzikaal misbruik met welke ze hem overweldigde. De prins daarvoor in geen haast bennende, kwamen die opaan

het meer op best eenander part, waar de oever ten minste twintig-vijf voet hoog was; en wanneer die de rand hadden bereikt, tourneerde hij toewaarts de prinses, en zeide,—

‘Hoe ben ik jou erin te zetten?’

‘Dat is jouw bezigheid,’ antwoordde ze, best snibbig. ‘Jij nam me eruit—zet me weer erin.’

‘Waarlijk wel,’ zeide de prins; en, haar opvangende in zijn armen, sprong hij met haar van de rots. De prinses had juist tijd één verrukte schreeuw van gelach te geven bevorens het water die overkluisde. Wanneer die tot de oppervlakte kwamen, bevond ze dat, voor een moment of twee, ze zelfs niet konde lachen, hiervoor dat ze met zulks een raas had neergegaan, dat het met difficulteit was dat ze haar adem verkoeverde. Instantelijk met dat die de oppervlakte bereikten—

‘Hoe doet jou het invallen lijken?’ zeide de prins. Achter sommige moeite hijgde de prinses uit,—

‘Is dat wat je noemt *invallen*?’

‘Ja,’ antwoordde de prins, ‘ik zoude het een waarlijk tolerabel specimen denken.’

‘Het zweemde tot me gelijk opgaan,’ verwoegde zij.

‘Mijn voeling was ook zekerlijk één van elevatie,’ concedeerde de prins.

De prinses deed hem niet schijnen te begrijpen, hiervoor dat ze zijn kwestie teruggaf:—

‘Hoe doet *jou* het invallen lijken?’ zeide de prinses.

‘Beginder elkeding,’ antwoordde hij; ‘hiervoor dat ik heb ingevallen met de eenlijke perfecte creatuur die ik ooit zag.’

‘Niet meer van dat; ik ben er moe van,’ zeide de prinses.

Misschien viel ze bij haar vader te scharen in zijn aversie tot woordspelingen.

‘Doet-nie jou invallen lijken, dan?’ zeide de prins.

‘Het is de meest verrukkelijke pret die ik ooit in mijn leven had,’ antwoordde ze. ‘Ik viel nooit bevoren. Ik wens dat ik het konde leren. Te denken dat ik de eenlijke persoon ben in mijn vaders koningdom dat kan-nie vallen!’

Hier leek de povere prinses allermeeft bedroefd.

‘Ik zal meest gelukkig benne om met jou in te vallen op enige tijd die jou lijkt,’ zeide de prins.

‘Dank jou. Ik doe-nie weten. Wellicht woude het niet proper benne. Maar ik doe-nie erom geven. In alle eventualiteiten, alzo wij hebben ingevallen, laat ons een zwem tegader hebben.’

‘Met al mijn hart,’ resondeerde de prins.

En opweg wendde die, zwemmende, en duikende, en vlottende, totdat ten leste die krijsen hoorde langs de oever, en lichten zagen glanzende in alle directies. Het was nu best laat, en daar was geen maan.

‘Ik moest thuis gaan,’ zeide de prinses. ‘Ik ben waarlijk sorry, hiervoor dat dit verrukkelijk is.’

‘Zo ben ik,’ retourneerde de prins. ‘Maar ik ben glad blij dat ik heb-nie een huis om toe te gaan—ten minste, ik doe-nie exact weten waar het is.’

‘Ik wens dat ik ook had-nie één,’ vervoegde de prinses; ‘het is zo stupide! Ik heb een groot menen,’ continueerde ze, ‘die alle een truuk te spelen. Waarom konde-nie die me alleen laten? Die willen-nie me in het meer vertroosten voor een singulaire nacht!—Je ziet waar dat groene licht brandende is? Dat is het raam van mijn ruim. Als je nu met me waarlijk stil daartoe juist woude zwemmen, en wanneer we bijna onder het balkon zijn, geef me zulk een puls—*op* noem je het—als je een luttele wijl vergaan deed, ik zoude habiel benne houvast te vangen van het balkon, en in te gaan bij het raam; en dan mogen die voor me kijken tot morgen in de morgen!’

‘Met meer obediëntie dan plezier,’ zeide de prins, gallant; en opweg zwommen die, waarlijk zacht.

#### XIV

#### GEZANG DER PRINS

[On the right are alternatives that would be used if I used this version in the main translation.

They avoid the use of *dij* “thee” in favour of *u*.]

*‘Als een wereld zonder put,*

*donker-licht in bos beschut;*

*Als een wereld zonder schijn*

*van het stromend water rein;*

*Als een wereld zonder glans*

*van de oceaancadans;*

*Als een wereld met geen regen*

*glitt’rend op het gras gelegen;—*

*Zulks, mijn hart, dijn wereld zij,*

*als geen liefde vloeit’ in dij.*

*Zulks is hartewereld nu*

*als geen liefde vloeit in u*

*Als een wereld zonder klank*

*van riviertjes vlug en rank;*

*Of van bubbelende sprang,*

*spruitend een meandergang;*

*Of van machtig’ raas en vloed*

*van rivier die neerwaarts spoedt;*

*Of van regenmuzieks rinkel,  
door het blad-op-blad getinkel;  
Of van stem van oceaan,  
als zijn golven machtig slaan;—  
Zulks, mijn ziel, dijn wereld zij,  
als geen liefde zing' in dij.*

*Vrouwe, waar dijn werelds licht;  
Waar de waâtren in dijn zicht.  
Liefde heeft mij sterk gemaak'  
neer te gaan voor dijne zaak,  
neer: waar waterschijn en –stem  
door het duister wordt gerem':  
Laat, ik bid, gedacht' aan mij  
sprengen waterput in dij;  
dat dijn ziel, nu liefdeloos,  
waâr niet droog en hopeloos.'*

*Zulks is zielewereld nu  
als geen liefde zingt in u*

*Vrouwe, waar uw werelds licht;  
Waar de waâtren in uw zicht.  
neer te gaan voor uwe zaak,  
Mag gedacht' aan mij volbrengen  
binnen u een put te sprengen;  
dat uw ziel, nu liefdeloos,*