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Political Corrections: The Revolutionary Context and English Retranslations of Johann Georg Zimmermann's *Vom Nationalstolze* [*On National Pride*] (1768)

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Article abstract

This article concerns the English translations of a popular eighteenth-century work on national pride. Originally entitled *Von dem Nationalstolze* [*On National Pride*], it was first published in 1758 and then twice revised by the author, Johann Georg Zimmermann (1728-1795). A physician by profession, the Swiss-born Zimmermann treated patriotism as a collective sentiment and soon attracted interest across Europe. Accordingly, the second revised edition *Vom Nationalstolze* (1768) also appeared in a number of translations, including in English as *An Essay on National Pride* for the first time in 1771. Since an English retranslation by Samuel Hull Wilcocke was published in 1797 and yet another anonymous retranslation in 1805, the article examines these as attempts to correct the first English translation and to demonstrate the perceived relevance of the source text in the context of the French Revolutionary Wars. Starting from the premise that Zimmermann himself wrote about national pride in order to correct the false preconceptions of his readers, I argue that each translation also participated in the negotiation of a "healthy" form of patriotism. In so doing, the retranslation by Wilcocke in particular took considerable liberties in relation to the source text, while the second retranslator appears to have aspired to produce the most precise and transparent rendition of Zimmermann's original words. However, as revealed by an examination of the linguistic transformations which the work underwent in Britain, all of the English translations adjusted its political meaning in ways that were significant to contemporary readers.

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Abstract
This article concerns the English translations of a popular eighteenth-century work on national pride. Originally entitled *Von dem Nationalstolze* [*On National Pride*], it was first published in 1758 and then twice revised by the author, Johann Georg Zimmermann (1728-1795). A physician by profession, the Swiss-born Zimmermann treated patriotism as a collective sentiment and soon attracted interest across Europe. Accordingly, the second revised edition *Vom Nationalstolze* (1768) also appeared in a number of translations, including in English as *An Essay on National Pride* for the first time in 1771. Since an English retranslation by Samuel Hull Wilcocke was published in 1797 and yet another anonymous retranslation in 1805, the article examines these as attempts to correct the first English translation and to demonstrate the perceived relevance of the source text in the context of the French Revolutionary Wars. Starting from the premise that Zimmermann himself wrote about national pride in order to correct the false preconceptions of his readers, I argue that each translation also participated in the negotiation of a "healthy" form of patriotism. In so doing, the retranslation by Wilcocke in particular took considerable liberties in relation to the source text, while the second retranslator appears to have aspired to produce the most precise and transparent rendition of Zimmermann's original words. However, as revealed by an examination of the linguistic transformations which the work underwent in Britain, all of the English translations adjusted its political meaning in ways that were significant to contemporary readers.
Keywords: retranslation, political thought, patriotism, Britain, French Revolution

Abstract
Cet article porte sur les traductions anglaises d'un ouvrage populaire du XVIII[e] siècle sur la fierté nationale. Initialement intitulé *Von dem Nationalstolze* [*De l'orgueil national*], il a été publié pour la première fois en 1758, puis révisé deux fois par l'auteur, Johann Georg Zimmermann (1728-1795). Médecin de profession, Zimmermann, d'origine suisse, a traité le patriotisme comme un sentiment collectif et a rapidement suscité l'intérêt dans toute l'Europe. En conséquence, la deuxième édition révisée de l'original, *Vom Nationalstolze* (1768), a été traduite en plusieurs langues, y compris en anglais sous le titre *An Essay on National Pride* pour la première fois en 1771. Étant donné qu'une retraduction anglaise par Samuel Hull Wilcocke a été publiée en 1797 et qu'une autre retraduction, anonyme, a été publiée en 1805, cet article les examine comme des tentatives de corriger la première traduction anglaise et de démontrer la pertinence du texte source dans le contexte des guerres révolutionnaires françaises. Partant du principe que Zimmermann lui-même a écrit sur la fierté nationale afin de corriger les fausses idées préconçues de ses lecteurs, je soutiens que chaque traduction a également participé à la négociation d'une forme « saine » de patriotisme. Ce faisant, la retraduction de Wilcocke en particulier a pris des libertés considérables par rapport au texte source, tandis que le second retraducteur semble avoir aspiré à produire l'interprétation la plus précise et la plus transparente des mots originaux de Zimmermann. Cependant, comme l'ont révélé les transformations que le langage politique de l'œuvre source a subies en Grande-Bretagne, toutes les traductions anglaises ont adapté sa signification politique en fonction des attentes de leurs lecteurs.
Mots-clés : retraduction, pensée politique, patriotisme, Grande-Bretagne, Révolution française

Introduction

This article examines translations as political acts by drawing attention to cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan moments in the dissemination of an eighteenth-century essay on national pride.[1] As demonstrated below, the essay was originally intended to promote patriotism while also enlightening contemporary readers. Combining the national perspective with a moral education of the self was certainly a problematic endeavour, but for this reason this case provides highly illuminating empirical evidence regarding the capability of translation to support cosmopolitan openness (see Bielsa, 2016, p. 202). Indeed, since cosmopolitanism can be understood as

1. In addition to the editors and four anonymous reviewers, I am greatly indebted to colleagues in Turku and Helsinki for their many pertinent comments on drafts of this article. In particular, I would like to thank Kristiina Taivalkoski-Shilov for her careful reading. Any remaining errors are, naturally, my own.

reflexive mediation between the local and the global, studying (re) translation is, I think, an excellent way of capturing cosmopolitan reflections in relation to particular moments and places (see Delanty, 2000, pp. 19-43).

More precisely, my article asks what retranslations may reveal about changes in political language. The aim is to show that they can in fact point to "aporias" in the political discourses employed in previous translations and deliberately "dislocate" problematic notions (Palti, 2014, pp. 395-404). The situated agency of translators is of key interest here. Considered as a phenomenon motivated by extratextual causes "beyond the limited and limiting consideration of norms," retranslation constitutes a link between the objective world of discourse and the subjective perspective of the translators (Deane-Cox, 2014, p. 12; Paloposki and Koskinen, 2004, p. 35). In what follows, I therefore consider (re)translations in their publication context, relating translation choices to the political experience of the target audience.

The essay at the centre of my investigation was written by Johann Georg Zimmermann (1728-1795), a Swiss physician who spent a significant part of his life in Hanover, Germany. Originally entitled *Von dem Nationalstolze* [*On National Pride*] (1758), the work first circulated only in German, substantially revised editions appearing in 1760 and 1768. However, owing to great interest across Europe, the revised 1768 edition *Vom Nationalstolze* was translated into French in 1769 and two years later into English. Significantly, the 1771 English translation did not remain the only one: a retranslation appeared in 1797, and yet another in 1805. The target audience of all three English translations—which shared the title *An Essay on National Pride*—was broadly similar: the educated British elite. Yet, the language, paratexts, and appearance of each may have attracted a slightly different readership, corresponding to the work's changing political ethos.

The politically corrective capacity of retranslation has already been highlighted by Sharon Deane-Cox, whose analysis builds on Bourdieu's notion of literature as a "field" (2014, pp. 15-16 and 20). The political agency of eighteenth-century translators has also been examined as "translatorial manipulation," that is, as the subtle recommendation of an ideology to the target culture (Taivalkoski-Shilov, 2009, pp. 308-309). In fact, eighteenth-century translators'

readiness to adapt the source text to the target culture is well known (Oz-Salzberger, 2006, p. 403). However, by introducing the notion of "political language" to the study of retranslations, I would like to direct attention to the complex nature of the context informing such translations. Moreover, as the timing of the English retranslations of *Vom Nationalstolze* suggests that their publication was motivated by the French Revolution, they demonstrate the importance of a transnational perspective surpassing the target culture.

In Zimmermann's case, it is likewise important to consider the impact of his profession as a practicing physician on his writing. As observed in previous research, Zimmermann embarked on writing about national pride to promote republican patriotism in Bern, and I argue that his experience in treating minds as well as bodies informed his method (Leerssen, 2004, pp. 26-33; Stüssi-Lauterburg, 1998, pp. 21-28). For, rather than merely theorizing about national pride, his work engaged this sentiment in the reader in order to encourage critical reflection on the legitimacy of its causes. Accordingly, this dimension should also be taken into account in any discussion of the translation of the work.

This appeal to the reader's sentiments was based, first, on Zimmermann's argument that all human beings are naturally proud of themselves, and therefore at risk of becoming slaves to *Eigenliebe*. This referred to a relationally constructed love of self that was comparable with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's notion of *amour-propre*, translated into English as "vanity" (Zimmermann, 1768, pp. 12-44; Rousseau, 1997, p. 218). Second, Zimmermann claimed that the collective pride of nations was analogous to the subjective pride felt by individuals (Zimmermann, 1768, pp. 45-47). Third, he suggested that while national pride could be justified by virtue and merit, mean pride deriving from self-conceit could not, and was regrettably common (*ibid.*, pp. 66-68 and 210-220). To illustrate these claims, Zimmermann provided a myriad of examples of how national pride displayed itself in different countries—which explains the European-wide interest his work soon attracted.

The negative concept of relative pride makes the circulation of translated versions intriguing, because the 1768 Zürich edition—the source text of all translations—revealed Zimmermann's increasing scepticism towards the sustainability of "noble" national pride in the context of "mean" international rivalry and colonial warfare (Piirimäe,

2007, pp. 123 and 135-139). Moreover, this edition argued that even pride in constructive pursuits such as the arts and sciences was stoked by desire for international acknowledgement (Zimmermann, 1768, pp. 215 and 241-273). Accordingly, though sketching out an ideal of self-sustained national pride, Zimmermann granted that, in practice, nations were caught up in a game of comparison which turned the cultivation of patriotic virtues into a quest for external recognition.

Against the backdrop of growing monolingual audiences, the translation history of *Vom Nationalstolze* thus illustrates the challenges of transforming the early-modern Latin-based *res publica literaria* [a trans-European literary community] into a multilingual "democracy of letters" conducting "a cosmopolitan conversation without a 'universal language'" (Oz-Salzberger, 2006, pp. 386-389 and 393). Indeed, as Zimmermann declared in the tenth chapter, reading—alongside conversation—should have been the best way to heal prejudices against foreign nations (1768, p. 199). Significantly, the same chapter also mentioned the dawn of a European-wide intellectual revolution, "a second awakening of healthy thinking" (*ibid.,* pp. 196-197; my trans.). In order to promote critical reflection, however, such optimistic utterances were interspersed with a gloomy and distinctly world-weary sarcasm. Whether or not this enlightening method survived in the hands of literary mediators was affected by the need to make distinctions between linguistic markets. Since English translations of *Vom Nationalstolze* evidently gained value from curiosity regarding "foreign" representations of the Kingdom of Great Britain and its rivals, this commercial logic tended to promote the relational and "mean" kind of pride, rather than the sound self-esteem that Zimmermann defended.

One way of studying the transnational "effectiveness" of Zimmermann's work would be to compare its reception in different countries (Oz-Salzberger, 2006, p. 399). However, choosing to make use of the temporal dimension opened up by the phenomenon of retranslation, I will instead compare Samuel Hull Wilcocke's 1797 translation with the two anonymous English translations. In so doing, I consider all three translators as agents who (re)interpreted Zimmermann by using such political language that they judged appropriate at the moment of translation. Owing to the nature of Zimmermann's work, all these translators wrote with a political intention, as they participated in the search for "healthy" patriotic pride. While each of them redefined the meaning of the work,

political corrections are most obvious in Wilcocke's 1797 translation, which focused on the "genius" rather than the diction of the source text.

In fact, Wilcocke's translation choices are interesting even in themselves, but to show that the renegotiation of the language of patriotism continued to influence Zimmermann's reception in the nineteenth century, I ask what the *interrelations* of the three translations reveal about responses to the changing political context (Koskinen and Paloposki, 2015, pp. 25-28). Thus, I do not use the comparative approach to underline the challenges of transferring political ideas in interlingual translation, but rather to show how translators, aware of changing circumstances, transformed political meaning to enhance the "value" of retranslations (Venuti, 2013, pp. 97-108; Brisset, 2004, pp. 41-43). The extratextual evidence of reviews is vital in this respect, since it points to factors "which may have left their imprint on the phenomenon of retranslation" (Deane-Cox, 2014, p. 30).

In short, my objective is to highlight historical change as a factor influencing both the perceived relevance of the source text and the discourse available to its translators. From this perspective, *kairos*—the opportune moment (for a translation)—must be understood as plural (cf. Berman, 1990, pp. 4-6; Deane-Cox, 2014, pp. 5-6). Moreover, it should be noted that moments of retranslation which dislocate the preceding political discourse are characterized by a disruption and a reconfiguration of political problems to be solved (Palti, 2014, p. 403). In practice, demonstrating the political nature of acts of (re)translation in the past thus requires the analysis of a translating intellectual historian, who develops an ear for political conversations belonging to the past and translates their meaning for an audience inhabiting the present (Cuttica, 2014, pp. 917-920; Burrow, n. d., pp. 19-20). This, of course, requires constant movement between languages, between historical publication contexts, and between the past and the present.

The Agenda and Audiences of *Vom Nationalstolze* (1768)

Returning to Zimmermann's method of promoting patriotism and its implications for the interlingual transfer of his work, it is worth emphasizing that the political message of the original German editions was highly inconsistent. Moreover, Zimmermann never explained his decision to equate national and individual pride,

nor did he elaborate on what he meant by the German word *die Nation*. Since he focused on the experience of individuals, he may have considered it best to merely invoke a vague sense of national belonging, and to avoid creating a critical distance regarding the notion of nation.

In spite of this vagueness, previous research has linked *Von dem Nationalstolze* and its revised later editions to Montesquieu's and Rousseau's more analytical works on the relationship of citizen-subjects with society. Since Zimmermann drew attention to pride as a sentiment motivating patriotic action, he evidently wished to challenge the arguments of Montesquieu's *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (1734) and *De l'Esprit des lois* (1748). Indeed, while Montesquieu presented republican virtue as self-denial, Zimmermann concluded that patriotic pride was to be encouraged rather than restricted (Piirimäe, 2007, pp. 124-126 and 131-133; Vazsonyi, 1999, p. 299; Stauf, 1991, pp. 99-101). In the 1768 edition, a reference to shackles which men voluntarily put on themselves also points to the impact of Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755) and *Du contrat social* (1762) (Zimmermann, 1768, p. 193; Rousseau, 2015a, pp. 67 and 72; 2015b, pp. 14, 16 and 96). Yet Zimmermann's method of demonstrating the use of pride was different from the approach that Rousseau employed in these works. Instead of dissecting the body politic or recounting its imaginary history, Zimmermann kept the reader's sentiments engaged via constant comparison, which resulted in an apparent lack of logical coherence. Thus, in terms of literary form, it is significant that the first edition of his essay *Von dem Nationalstolze* (1758) invoked Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (1721)—an epistolary satire holding up a mirror to self-conceited readers (Vazsonyj, 1999, pp. 225-227). Furthermore, as Zimmermann's reference to the voluntary shackles suggests, he accepted individual attachment to collective identities as a permanent condition of all human beings. In his role of a patriot physician, he therefore did not recommend radical changes but focused on the correction of false preconceptions.

Zimmermann's awareness of the diversity of situations in which his work would be read may account for its inconsistencies (1768, n.p.; pp. 7-8 and 11). For example, by praising both republics and monarchies and by observing that some of the *Encyclopédistes* were staunch republicans, Zimmermann could hope to heal false pride

in different political contexts (*ibid.*, pp. 193, 271). In this way, he framed the encouragement of national pride as a cosmopolitan cause even at the same time as acknowledging the divisive effect of "mean" pride. Some evidence of attention to the trans-European audience is supplied by his letter to John Coakley Lettsome, which stated that he found nothing more stressful than the prospect of being translated (Pettigrew, 1817, pp. 151-156).

As such, if Zimmermann's work is considered as a project aiming to enlighten a multifarious readership, its oscillation between different perspectives can be seen as a way of showing that antagonistic pride was based on self-conceit (cf. Pettigrew, 1817, p. 155). Yet, as indicated by the reviews discussed in section 4, contrasting national vices and virtues could end up nurturing "mean" national pride. When Zimmermann's work began to be translated, his translators (as well as publishers and reviewers) confronted the very problem of *Eigenliebe* [*amour-propre*/vanity] which Zimmermann presented as universal, and this makes their strategies worth close attention.

The Political Language of the First, Second, and Third *Essay on National Pride*

That *Vom Nationalstolze* (1768) was presented to British readers twice during the Revolutionary Wars underlines its perceived political relevance. The first translation, *An Essay on National Pride* (1771), was published by John Wilkie and Charles Heydinger (Jefcoate 2004, pp. 35-48). As indicated by the title page, its marketing relied on Zimmermann's recently acquired formal status as the "Physician in Ordinary to His Britannic Majesty [George III] at Hanover." According to the preface, the rationale for the translation was, however, "the cause of liberty and virtue, which have always found the most numerous and most zealous friends in the thinking part of this great and wealthy Nation" (Anon., 1771a, pp. iii-iv). Thus, by underlining Zimmermann's connection with Britain as well as the affinity of his views with those of "the thinking part" of the target audience, the first translation related British patriotism to Swiss "liberty, virtue, truth and simplicity" (*ibid.*, pp. iii-iv).

However, by the time Wilcocke's 1797 retranslation appeared, the political context in which the British public would read Zimmermann's work had changed dramatically. The American Revolutionary War raised new interest in the work; in fact, the 1771 translation was reprinted in Philadelphia under the new title

Strictures on National Pride (Zimmermann, 1778). Yet, during the French Revolutionary Wars, it transpired that Zimmermann—deeply distraught by contemporary events—had rejected the 1771 translation in his letter to Lettsom. A translated excerpt of the letter appeared in Wilcocke's preface to justify the new translation, which, according to the translator himself, was characterized by "a careful attention to express the meaning of the author" (1797a, pp. xiii-xiv; Pettigrew, 1817, pp. 153-163). In addition, Wilcocke explained that:

> [T]he very great changes which have occurred in the political, and we may say in the moral system of Europe, since this Essay was composed, will naturally conduce to make some passages lose their effect, and appear out of season; but the nature of man, which is the groundwork on which the author proceeds, remains always the same. (*ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii)

In other words, Wilcocke highlighted the reconfiguration of the political problems which the work addressed, while also emphasizing the universality of human nature.

Though Wilcocke's retranslation displays keen interest in Zimmermann's ideas, it is worth noting that publisher Charles Dilly's voice was also manifest in the promotion of Zimmermann's *œuvre* (Alvstad *et al.*, 2017, pp. 3-7). Indeed, Dilly published an abridged translation of Zimmermann's best-selling work *Über die Einsamkeit* [*Solitude*] in 1791, as well as Samuel Auguste David Tissot's memoirs of Zimmermann's life (Kurth-Voigt, 2001, pp. 588-591; Zimmermann, 1791; Tissot, 1797). Moreover, with regard to national pride, it is significant that Dilly also published a poem by Wilcocke, entitled *Britannia* and designed to "excite the noblest pride of ancestry in the heart of a Briton" (Wilcocke, 1797b, p. 82). The poem was followed by *A New and Complete Dictionary of the English and Dutch Languages*, which Wilcocke compiled for "the traveller, the sailor, and above all, the merchant and the colonist" (Wilcocke, 1798, Part I, p. v). This connects the retranslation of *Vom Nationalstolze* with British sea power, especially since Wilcocke also translated Johan Splinter Stavorinus' *Voyages to the East-Indies* for the publishers George, George and John Robinson (Bentley, 1982, p. 68; Stavronius, 1798).

The third version of *An Essay on National Pride* was issued by James Cundee in 1805 and recommended itself not only as being more accurate but also as containing elaborate illustrations (Jung,

2013, pp. 121-122). This retranslation included, for the first time, the preface of the 1768 Zürich edition, in which Zimmermann explicitly stated that he had made changes to the work in response to "extensive notice" and circulation "through so many hands" (Zimmermann, 1805, p. 1). Like the first translator, the translator of Cundee's edition remained anonymous, but his or her voice can be distinguished in the translator's preface, notes, and the running heads with which this edition was provided. According to the preface, interest in Zimmermann's work had already been "attested by the rapidity of its sale," and this, together with the new visual cues, supported the assertion that the essay had reached the status of a "Modern Classic" (Anon., 1805, p. i).

Like Wilcocke, the third translator justified the retranslation by mentioning a "wholly incompetent" (*ibid.*, p. ii) predecessor, but it is not clear whether this referred to the first translator, to Wilcocke, or perhaps to both. However, judging by textual evidence, the aim of the third translator was to erase Wilcocke's retranslation from public memory by improving the work of the first translator, which was clearly used as the starting point. Interestingly, the third translator also observed that it was not only to

> the fellow-citizens of the author, or to the nation in whose language it was written, that the circulation of this performance was confined; foreign countries were eager to naturalize the interesting stranger, and to pay him that tribute of applause which was so justly his due. (*ibid.*, p. i)

With this remark, Zimmermann's attempt to promote patriotism among his different readers was placed in a clear-cut framework of national languages and literatures. The contrast with the previous translation is striking, since Wilcocke had emphasized that Zimmermann "wrote, as he felt, from the genuine impulse of a benevolent heart," and that copies of his work were of universal interest, "equally acceptable acquisitions to the physician, to the philosopher, to the statesman, and to the philanthropist" (Wilcocke, 1797a, pp. x and xxii-xxxiii). This suggests that the third translator chose to hark back to the first translation because he perceived Wilcocke's approach as politically risqué, seeing that it reflected the liberal and sentimental discourses of the Revolutionary period.

The different lenses through which the English translators studied Zimmermann's work resulted in divergent representations

of his political message. For example, in a paragraph in which Zimmermann referred to the controversial nature of his subject matter and the reading attitude it required, Wilcocke's retranslation replaced the first translator's phrase "freedom of judgment" with the formulation "uncommon liberality of sentiment" (Zimmermann, 1771, p. 3; 1797, p. 3). Moreover, in comparison with the two anonymous translators, Wilcocke appears to have been disinclined to use the word "nation," most conspicuously in the introductory chapter:

> ST (1768), pp. 5-6: Ich glaube auch wirklich nicht, irgend eine einzele [*sic*] Person von Verdienst, und niemals den feinen Theil der **Nation** zu beleidigen, wenn ich das Lächerliche ihrer **Nation** auszeichne.
>
> T1 (1771), p. 4: I promise myself, that in exposing the real ridicules of a **people**, I shall not incur the displeasure of the most esteemable part of that **nation**, nor any person of merit.
>
> RT1 (1797), pp. 3-4: the sensible part of **mankind in every country**, I am sure, will not take umbrage at the exposure of the weaknesses which tarnish the better qualities of its **inhabitants**.
>
> RT2 (1805), p. 5: I am not indeed apprehensive, that, by exposing **national** failings which are fit subjects of satire, I shall offend the more refined portion of any **nation**, or even any individual of merit.

Had Wilcocke avoided the word "nation" only once, the choice might have had little to do with political ideas. Yet, a bit further on, his choice fell on the word "clime" in a sentence in which Zimmermann and the two anonymous translators used "*Nation*"/"nation." This suggests that Wilcocke, translating during the Revolutionary Wars, wished to highlight the cosmopolitan aspects of *Vom Nationalstolze* and the philanthropic interest of its author (Mannucci, 2018, pp. 234-240; Delanty, 2000, p. 42). Whether this was due to personal views is, however, difficult to determine. In fact, considering his ambition to outdo the first translator in terms of style, it is also possible that he simply emulated general trends in literary and political discourse without any consistent political intentions (see Jones, 2018, p. 311).

Nevertheless, when Wilcocke was translating, Zimmermann's republican language would have been read with the knowledge that the French Republic had resorted to aggressive military force (which *Vom Nationalstolze* did not recommend). Accordingly, Wilcocke had to consider the performative function of his retranslation in this context (Mucignat and Perovic, 2018, p. 145; Palti, 2014, pp. 400-

404). The same problem can be found in *Britannia*, which, celebrating the "noblest state that ever stood on earth" not only for its "martial deeds" but also for "milder themes," defined British national pride as the opposite of "a world's unmeaning rage" (Wilcocke, 1797b, pp. 5-8). Yet, *Britannia* did not focus on mankind as a whole, but on "Liberty and independence, the birthright [*sic*] and characteristic passion of the Britons" (*ibid.*, p. 47), and thus addressed a more specific audience than *Vom Nationalstolze*.

As already noted, Wilcocke's retranslation was published after Zimmermann's death. Consequently, his preface provided an account of the final stage of Zimmermann's life, describing how the "heated imagination" of the Hanover-based doctor had aggravated the threat of a French invasion "if possible, even beyond the horror and dismay which those sons of rapine and destruction uniformly spread around them" (Wilcocke, 1797a, pp. xxviii-xxix). According to this biography, Zimmermann had "plunged in the deepest melancholy" on account of the "embroiled" state of "the political hemisphere, to the study of which he had devoted a considerable amount of attention" (*ibid.*). In this way, Wilcocke solicited sympathy for the patriotism of the deceased author while also expressing personal scorn for the French Revolutionary army.

Yet, despite romanticizing Zimmermann's "genius," Wilcocke presented his retranslation as superior to the previous English version, accusing it of "only purporting to be a translation" (*ibid.*, p. xiii). As noted above, he stressed that he had been very careful "to express the meaning of the author," and that he had only given his own views in occasional notes, "the sole liberty allowable to translators" (*ibid.*, p. xiv; see also Wilcocke, 1798, Part I, p. vi). This suggested self-restraint with regard to personal literary ambitions, but Wilcocke's translation was actually more verbose than the source text. One explanation can be found in the preface to *Britannia*, in which Wilcocke suggested that "the *utile* and the *dulce*" [the useful and the pleasant] might be "combined in every literary walk" because "historic truth" deserved an elegant dress just as well as "the harlot beauty of poetic falsehood" (Wilcocke, 1797b, p. xi).

While the first English translation of *Vom Nationalstolze* contained many inaccuracies and even some omissions, Wilcocke therefore supplemented the wording of the original with interpretative phrases in order to convey a better sense of the

"genius" behind it. The third English translator, instead, opted to remove these effusions, often restoring expressions used by the first translator. A prime example of this is provided by the opening, which Wilcocke supplemented with an explanatory clause. By contrast, the third translator preferred a phrasing that restored the rhythm of Zimmermann's original opening, and also replaced the first translator's expression "No foible" with the more neutral "Nothing" [*Nichts*]. This would suggest that he tried to follow the source text as closely as possible.

Translation Choices and Zimmermann's Perceived Political Relevance

The political language of Zimmermann's translators requires careful attention because even subtle changes modified what his work appeared to recommend. The Revolutionary Wars evidently played a role, especially in retranslations of the tenth chapter, in which Zimmermann presaged the coming of a great revolution in Europe (1768, p. 196; 1771, p. 155; 1797, p. 129; 1805, p. 86). In particular, a passage referring to beheading presented itself in a new light after the reign of Terror:

> ST 1768, pp. 197-198: und kurzweg das Sturmlaufen auf die Vorurteile der Zeit, zeuget eine Dreistigkeit im Denken, die oft in eine strafbare Frechheit ausartet, manchem sein kleines Maß von Freyheit, manchem sein ganzes zeitliches Glück, und **hie und da einen Kopf** kosten wird; auch leider schon ist die Sophistik des Misverstandes und der Misdeutung zur gegenseitigen Logik der Zeit macht; aber mit der politischen Klugheit und der pflichtmäßigen Unterwürfigkeit gegen die Landesgesetze verbunden, unserm Weltalter grosse Verbesserungen und der **Barbarey** den Todesstich verspricht.

This passage was omitted in the 1771 translation, perhaps for appearing too violent (Zimmermann, 1771, p. 155). Wilcocke, however, chose to support the idea of a righteous revolution, and even added a few words to facilitate the association of his retranslation with the French Revolution. In this regard, it is striking that the third translator—who generally adhered to Zimmermann's wording—decided to refrain from invoking the idea of the guillotine:

> RT1 1797, p. 130: and in short, the storming of the **seemingly impregnable** fortresses of prejudice and ignorance, **which have to this time kept us in subjection**; all manifest a strength of thought, a hardiness of intellect, which, though it often may shoot out into

> a reprehensible audacity, and will take from many the little share of liberty they possess, and the whole temporal welfare of more, as well as **now and then a head or two**, though it often will give occasion for sophistry and fallacious subtility to become the logic of the day; yet joined to manly policy, and a due deference to the laws, promises to make our age that of the greatest improvements, and to give the mortal stroke to **barbarism and superstition**.
>
> RT2 1805, p. 99: the attacks that have been made on the prejudices of the times, are producing a boldness of opinion, which often degenerating into licentiousness, will cost some their small portion of liberty, many their property and others **their lives**. This revolution, if conducted with political wisdom and due submission to the laws, promises great improvements to our age and to prove the death-blow of **barbarism**.

As is apparent, none of the translations was immune to the reconfiguration of the political context, which underlines the need to consider the implications of other disagreements between them. For example, Zimmermann's original "*das Wohlseyn des Staates, und die Aufnahme der Nation*" (1768, p. 201) was inconsistently interpreted as "the welfare of the nation and the aggrandizement of the state" (1771, p. 157), "the advantage of the many and the interest of the nation" (1797, p. 132), and "the welfare of the state and the prosperity of the nation" (1805, p. 100). In this case, the third translation again followed the original most diligently, while Wilcocke introduced the democratic notion of "the many."

In the discussion of the spread of the enlightenment in Europe, Zimmermann's phrase "*verlornen Rechten der Vernunft und der Freyheit*" (1768, p. 197) was translated as "long lost privileges of reason and liberty" (1771, p. 156) by the first translator, "lost rights of common sense and freedom" (1797, p. 130) by Wilcocke, and "the lost privileges of reason and of liberty" (1805, p. 99) by the third translator. While the third translator again merely improved the work of the first one, Wilcocke's phrasing stands out as markedly different. As in the previous examples, his translation had a democratic tone, interpreting *Rechte* as "rights" instead of "privileges" and *Vernunft* as "common sense." In fact, these words—along with "mankind"—echoed the language of Thomas Paine's popular pamphlets, figuring in their very titles (Paine, 1795). Certainly, other examples of the language of rights were also circulating around this time, but the strong link to Paine's works does suggest that they served as a source

of inspiration for Wilcocke, whether this was conscious or not (see Venuti, 2014, p. 104). Wilcocke's retranslation thus connected Zimmermann's patriotism with the notion of popular participation while its preface condemned the actions of the French army. In addition, a preoccupation with the justification of British naval power is apparent in the mention of "the British empire," which Wilcocke added to Zimmermann's text (Zimmermann, 1797, p. 36; see also Wilcocke, 1797b, p. 2). In a passage about the relationship of Great Britain with Ireland and Menorca,[2] he had Zimmermann observe:

> Another effect of ideal liberty, is the laughable **contempt and** opposition which a **conquered** people have for the laws and customs of their conquerors, which, **though ever so eligible in themselves, it would be** disgraceful for them to adopt. (Zimmermann, 1797, p. 78)

Here, additional words and the rephrasing of the final part of the sentence suggest that, unlike Zimmermann, Wilcocke did not actually find the opposition laughable, but rather respected the "imaginary independence" of a "conquered people" (1797, p. 78; cf. 1768, pp. 118-119).

Besides reflecting an awareness of recent political events, the translators may have influenced Zimmermann's reception in Britain with their responses to the challenge of explaining the relationship between *Eigenliebe* and *Selbstliebe* (see Bour, 2018, pp. 205-206; Biziou, 2013, n.p.; Rooryck and Jooken, 2013, p. 592). Evidently, all three translators realized that *Eigenliebe* could not be translated as "self-love," since this had to be the word used for *Selbstliebe*. Their respective solutions to the problem were, however, somewhat different:

> ST 1768, 13: Die Menschen sind **stolz**, und die Menge der **Stolzen** ist so groß, weil aller Stolz aus der **Eigenliebe** fließt. Die Eigenliebe ist zwar ursprünglich der menschlichen Natur nicht eingepflantzt wie die **Selbstliebe**, die jedes Thier nöthigt, für seine eigene Erhaltung zu wachen.
>
> T1 1771, 9-10: Men are **proud**, and what makes the multitude of **the proud** so very great is, that all pride proceeds from **self-conceit**, which

2. Great Britain possessed Menorca between the War of the Spanish Succession and the Seven Years War, and again after the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Spain gained control of the island in 1782 and Britain in 1798, until the restoration of Spanish rule in 1802.

> indeed was not originally implanted in human nature, like that **just self-love**, which is necessary to every creature for its own preservation.
>
> RT1 1797, 7: The predominancy of **vanity** among mankind is what causes the number of **the proud** to be so great, since it is from **vanity** that all **pride** arises, while **self-conceit** which begets **this vanity** is by no means originally implanted in human nature, like that necessary **self-love**, which incites every creature to attend to its own preservation.
>
> RT2 1805, 8: Men are **proud**, and the reason why **pride** is so very general, is, because all **pride** proceeds from **egotism**. This egotism was not originally implanted in human nature like that **self-love** which impels every animal to study its own preservation.

It would seem that Wilcocke found the first translator's use of "self-conceit" too vague and thus supplemented it with "vanity," which could also stand for *Eitelkeit*.

The translation of *Eigenliebe* is crucial to the understanding of Zimmermann's message, because his concept of patriotic virtue revolved around the notion of noble self-esteem. As he suggested, this kind of pride was drawn to the good and the beautiful, and did not require comparative advantage in relation to others (Piirimäe, 2007, p. 134). Yet, although Zimmermann claimed that national pride was comparable to the pride of an individual, he did not explain why he assumed that such a cohesive collective mind could exist in all the highly different societies he mentioned. As a consequence, the English translators clearly struggled with the following statement:

> ST 1768, p. 214: Mit diesem Gefühl mu*ß* ein Mensch sich selbst nothwendig lieben und schätzen, aber freilich auch nur in so fern er **einer von allen ist**, auf die sich dieses edle Gefühl ausbreitet.

The first translator responded by cutting a part of the sentence and merely having Zimmermann declare that "[u]nder this consciousness, a man must necessarily love and value himself" (1771, p. 168). Wilcocke, however, replaced *allen* with "community or nation," while the third translator once again strove to stay close to the source text:

> RT1 1797, p. 142: Impressed with this sense of his own worth, a man cannot avoid esteeming and valuing himself, but only inasmuch as he **makes a part of the community or nation** over whom this noble sentiment extends.
>
> RT2 1805, p. 107: A man possessing this sense must necessarily love and value himself, but only in as far as he **is one of those** who partake of this conscious dignity.

This passage is especially important, because its nebulousness allowed the essay to be read in two ways. On the one hand, it carried the egalitarian message of philanthropy and commitment to the common good. On the other hand, the idea of patriotic commitment also opened the door to anti-cosmopolitan ideas as Zimmermann invoked the notion of national distinctions.

When translating such a work, it was difficult for translators to refrain from making international comparisons, and this is reflected in their footnotes. Indeed, the French translator observed (erroneously) that "[o]n voit bien que c'est un Allemand qui parle" (1769, p. 151), and the first English translator decided to make this known to the English reader. Observing that the French translator showed national pride in this remark, translated as "[t]hese are the words of a prejudiced German" (Zimmermann, 1771, p. 129), the first English translator created an interlingual antagonism. The pattern was repeated by Wilcocke, who translated the same note as "[w]e see plainly it is a German who speaks" (1797, p. 106). The third translator likewise acknowledged this note as a display of "national hatred and rivalship" (1805, p. 29), ironically for the purpose of demonstrating relative superiority. Yet, while the French translator's interest in the opinions of foreigners was indeed accompanied with similar anxiety and bitterness, some French reviews acknowledged provocation as a part of Zimmermann's enlightening method (Zimmermann, 1769, p. 59; *Journal encyclopédique*, 1769, VI, I, p. 29). Moreover, as shown in the next section, British reviewers were also capable of this, until the Revolutionary Wars reconfigured the political context. In the retranslation of 1805, Zimmermann's critical strategy was consequently weakened by notes that legitimated praise for the English with references to historical change:

> It is almost unnecessary to remark, that though this observation on the conduct of the populace of London might have been correct at the time the author wrote, yet it is by no means applicable at the present day, when it may with truth be asserted, that scarcely any nation is so distinguished for the liberality of its sentiments towards foreigners as the English. (1805, p. 90)

Thus, when the reception of Zimmermann's work is related to cosmopolitan ideas, it is important to bear in mind that all translations were based on an edition which suggested that the French and the English were eternally bound to hold each other in

mutual contempt. Some readers clearly accepted this as a fact, while others understood it as a rhetorical device designed to motivate a change of attitude.

Changing Interpretations in Britain

As pointed out by Zimmermann, the transnational dissemination of ideas offered an opportunity to tackle national self-conceit. Accordingly, translations of *Vom Nationalstolze* could have enabled readers across Europe to appreciate the merits of foreign societies as well as their own. In practice, however, the essay provided nourishment for "mean" pride whenever translators and reviewers flattered their readers instead of encouraging self-reflection. A key incentive for this was, of course, that appealing to the pride of the target audience presented an efficient marketing strategy. Consequently, despite Zimmermann's emphasis on the intrinsic sense of self-worth, *Vom Nationalstolze* could also end up promoting the competitive comparison of national characters (cf. Piirimäe, 2007, p. 139).

In Britain, both the first English translation and Wilcocke's retranslation stimulated a number of reviews, whereas the third translation no longer attracted such attention. While the agency of the first translator was downplayed, Wilcocke figured in all reviews of the retranslation, because his name was included in its title. Another distinctive difference between reviews of the first translation and Wilcocke's retranslation was that the former tended to be more perceptive with regard to Zimmermann's method of writing, while the latter related his work to the current political context. For example, a review of Wilcocke's retranslation published in *The Monthly Epitome* presented an extract suggestively entitled "The Picture of a perfect Monarchy." Since it concluded that the "noblest pride" could "exist in monarchies, when the sovereign and his administration are what they ought to be" (1797, 1, pp. 1-6), it clearly served to counter contemporary arguments for revolution.

Taking a different perspective on the same retranslation, *The Monthly Review* granted that it had been "made with more fidelity, but with somewhat less elegance, than the French version" (1797, 2, 23, p. 316). Regarding the nature of the work, however, the review merely observed that "although many of the facts rest on slight and even suspicious authority, it is not destitute of instruction" *(ibid.,* p. 313). This stands in contrast to the penetrating analysis which the

same journal had given of Zimmermann's method when reviewing the first translation:

> [T]he inference is, that human nature […] has a greater outline resemblance, than the reader would suppose, who derives his notions of his neighbours from books of national characters. It is amusing to observe how this Author balances accounts with a nation before he leaves it. The French are hitherto celebrated for their skill in frivolous arts, and in their contempt of other nations for their inferiority in these arts; we will now examine the *per contra* side of this account. (1771, 45, p. 490)

The Monthly Review's account of Wilcocke's retranslation was partly reproduced by *The Scots Magazine* (1797, 59, pp. 683-685), which had previously also published a part of *The Monthly*'s 1771 review—a passage focussing on how Zimmermann represented the English and "the two nations [the Scots and the Irish] who live under the same laws as they themselves" (cited in, 1771, 33, p. 652. Though a derivative text, the review indicates that in Scotland, Zimmermann attracted interest as it mentioned internal divisions within the Kingdom of Great Britain. This, again, underlines the significance of the publication context.

Since reviews of the first translation tended to treat the words of the anonymous translator as if they had been written by Zimmermann, they reinforced the "translation pact" inviting the reader to take the language of the translator as that of the original author (Alvstad, 2014, pp. 270-273). Although one review that appeared both in *The London Magazine* and *The Hibernian Magazine* did refer to the agency of the translator, this was merely to state that it had in "no way impaired the original" (*The London Magazine*, 1771, 40, pp. 414-415; *The Hibernian Magazine*, 1771, 1, pp. 422-424). This indicates that in 1771, reviewers scrutinized the text to understand Zimmermann's thinking, while in 1797 they had to acknowledge that both English versions had been mediated by translators.

In *The Critical Review*, not only the first translation but also Wilcocke's retranslation were presented from a cosmopolitan perspective that gave credit to Zimmermann's method of correcting national prejudices. Indeed, the 1772 review observed that Zimmermann "wrote like a citizen of the world," keeping "an equal distance from petulant satire on one hand, and servile adulation on the other" (1772, 33, p. 360), while the 1797 review remarked that

Zimmermann used "the agreeable weapon of philosophical irony, and seems more inclined to make men ashamed of their weaknesses, than to gratify his own spleen by their exposure" (1797, 2, 21, p. 73). Significantly, however, according to the latter review, Wilcocke's "faithfully and ably executed" retranslation actually had more value than the original, because "inaccuracies" had been corrected and "pertinent notes" added to illuminate "obscure passages" (*ibid.*).

In other reviews, the idea of revising the first translation was specifically mentioned as important. According to *The Monthly Mirror*, Wilcocke's decision to retranslate *Vom Nationalstolze* was due to the "unbounded success" of *Solitude*, and having "preserved the spirit of the author," he merited "the best thanks of the English reader, for adding to his resources, on a subject of general import, the opinion of one of the greatest men which this century has produced" (1797, 3, pp. 100-102). *The British Critic* likewise declared that "the spirit of Zimmermann" had this time "not been suffered to evaporate through the medium of translation," and that Wilcocke also appeared "fully to have discharged his duty" in providing "very interesting information of a man, whose name will long be dear to the republic of letters" (1798, 11, p. 164). While this review suspected that the retranslation would not achieve the popularity of *Solitude*, it recommended the work for its subject matter. This was exemplified with a reference to Zimmermann's "eulogium on the *laudable* pride of nations" (*ibid.*, p. 165; italics in original). The impact of the political context is clear, especially since the reviewer deemed it necessary to add a note stressing that "Zimmermann did not mean *citizen* in the French style" (*ibid.*, pp. 165; italics in original).

Though the fact that Zimmermann's work was retranslated twice after the French Revolution might suggest that its perceived relevance remained stable, contemporary reviews acknowledged that the revolution had irrevocably changed the perspective from which it was read (Wilcocke, 1797a, p. xii; *The Monthly Epitome*, 1, 1797, p. 1; Anon., 1805, p. ii; *The Universal Magazine*, 1797, 101, p. 94). For Wilcocke, the reconfiguration of the political context appears to have underpinned in particular the importance of highlighting the cosmopolitan aspect of Zimmermann's notion of noble pride. This is best illustrated by his way of embellishing the description of the "Parisian philosopher" in the thirteenth chapter:

> ST 1768, p. 270: Ich rede von dem Geiste der Freyheit, der durch die Werke der Engländer in die Herzen der Franzosen übergieng [*sic*]; und einem Parisischen Philosoph **im siebenden Stockwerk** den gerechten und nothwendigen Stolz giebt, **der aus dem Adel und der Freyheit seines Standes fließt**.
>
> T1 1771, p. 219: I mean the spirit of liberty, which English writings have transfused into the hearts of the French, and impart to a Parisian philosopher **in his lofty mansion**, that just and necessary pride, which **comports with the freedom and dignity of his profession**.
>
> RT1 1797, pp. 180-181: I mean that spirit of liberty which the writings of the English have created and **cherished** in the hearts of the French; and which instils **into the soul** of a Parisian philosopher, **in his attic dwelling, on the seventh story**, the just and necessary pride **due to the true dignity and freedom of his character as a citizen of the world**.
>
> RT2 1805, pp. 135-136: I allude to the spirit of liberty transfused by the writings of Englishmen into the hearts of the French, and which excites in the Parisian philosopher **in his garret**, that just and necessary pride **resulting from the dignity and freedom of his profession**.

In the same context, Wilcocke also referred to the "sole liberty" of translators by adding a note which observed that the French translator's allusion to "the dignity of the government" and omission of Zimmermann's reference to the authors of the *Encyclopédie* betrayed "either an evident fear of giving offence, or the grossest partiality" (Zimmermann, 1797, p. 181). It seems that Wilcocke was indeed somewhat sympathetic to revolutionary ideas.

However, Zimmermann's suggestion that the "constitution of a country or a city may be free, and remain so, although the minds of its inhabitants be in chains", challenged the view that liberty depended on revolution (*ibid.*, p. 127). As already noted, he focused instead on reforming individuals in different circumstances, and thus concluded his work with the following statement:

> ST 1768, p. 394: Wider seine eigene Eingeweide **würde man** wüten, **wenn man** anstatt das Fehlerhafte zum Besten des Ganzen anzuwenden, anstatt **die Menschen** durch ihre Leidenschaften zu führen und selbst ihre Schwachheiten sich zu bedienen um sie zum Guten zu bringen, Grundsätze erwürgte, die eine ganze Nation zu edeln Handlungen begeistern.

Once more displaying egalitarian sympathies, Wilcocke translated the passive voice of this passage with the pronoun "we" and replaced

the plural *die Menschen* with "mankind." In contrast to this, his successor chose to introduce the additional agency of "those who possess influence over a nation," implying that the intended readers of the 1805 retranslation were to be found in very high places:

> RT1 1797, pp. 259-260: **we should** act against our own feelings, if, instead of adapting faults to the good of the whole, instead of conducting **mankind** by their passions, and of employing their foibles, even to lead them to good, **we were to** smother principles and sentiments, which are able to animate a whole nation, and to excite it to the noblest actions.
>
> RT2 1805, p. 193: It would be the height of folly, if, instead of converting what is faulty to the public benefit, if, instead of guiding **men** by their passions and employing their very foibles to conduct them to the practice of virtue, **those who possess influence over a nation were to** discourage principles, which excite it to generous deeds.

Indeed, while Wilcocke's preface shows that he was appalled by the consequences of the French Revolution, it is striking that he used the word "mankind" much more often than the first translator, even in places where the source text mentioned *Völker* in plural (Zimmermann, 1797, p. 178). In contrast, the anonymous retranslator who corrected his version of *An Essay on National Pride* in 1805 presented mankind as divided into nations, and these as subjected to manipulation (rather than as self-governing communities). Thus, although the third translator claimed to convey Zimmermann's ideas "without mutilation or retrenchment," the contextual impact of "political as well as moral" revolutions—both in popular sentiments and "the government and constitution of several European states"—was perceptible also in the second retranslation (Anon., 1805, p. ii.). Indeed, as its final sentence shows, contextual changes had induced the third translator to rewrite Zimmermann's attempt to engage the readers' sense of civic virtue in a way which suggested that a nation should be excited "to generous deeds" by individuals who could "conduct" men from a superior position (Zimmermann, 1805, p. 193).

Conclusion

In this article, I have tried to indicate the usefulness of the analysis of retranslations for the historian of political thought by displaying translators as political agents participating in the transformation of political language. Indeed, though the retranslators of *Vom*

Nationalstolze claimed to correct their predecessors merely in terms of style and accuracy, they actually also attuned the source text to the political experiences of their own target audiences. The case of *Vom Nationalstolze* is particularly well-suited to illustrating how translators took an active role in redefining political ideas, because Zimmermann's method of writing provided opportunities for diverse interpretations. Moreover, as Zimmermann himself recognized, international rivalry posed a serious challenge to the promotion of "noble" national pride, and the context-oriented liberties taken by translators did not make the interlingual transfer of this aim any easier.

The comparison of Wilcocke's retranslation with the first English translation and the second retranslation shows that the Revolutionary Wars certainly changed the connotations of Zimmermann's republican language, as well as those of a European-wide intellectual revolution. The contrasts between Wilcocke's retranslation and the retranslation of 1805 demonstrate that translators could—and effectively did—adjust the political meaning of the source text. This could be done in many ways: by relating it to notions topical in the discourse of the time (such as the guillotine or the "common sense" of Thomas Paine), or by a selective use of pronouns and other words referring to social relations. Finally, these observations also show that it is crucial to acknowledge the translingual and transnational dimensions of political languages while also recognizing the compartmentalised nature of the multilingual "democracy of letters" emerging in the eighteenth century. For, as the transnational dissemination of Zimmermann's work indicates, a single text can engage a multiplicity of audiences, but each of them may still read it from its own particular perspective.

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