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Albert camus l' etranger english pdf

1To to date, Camus's L'Étranger has undergone four translations in English. Known as The Stranger in North America and The Outsider in Great Britain, it is very familiar to the English-speaking world. This novel of alienation, from the absurd, is often the first novel read in French by second-language learners in intermediate-level French courses, in part because of its short length and the relative facility of the language. In the U.S. and Canada, the novel is often necessary reading in the final years of high school or in university, where, of course enough, it is usually read into translation. Our goal is to look closely at the four texts, an attempt to distinguish which factors are changed in the translation and subsequent retranslations and to determine what the retranslations prompted. 2Albert Camus was twenty-nine when he wrote L'Étranger, published in Paris in 1942, which he closely followed with Le Mythe de Sisyphe. He reviewed the novel in 1947 and made additional revisions between 1949 and 1953, raising his already marked confiscation. First translated into English by Stuart Gilbert in 1946 as The Outsider (London), it was published simultaneously in New York as The Stranger. Over time, Camus's novel established itself as a respected, canonical text, as did Gilbert's translation, which remains unchallenged for thirty-six years. By 1985, this delivery had sold more than three million copies. In 1982 Joseph Laredo published his retranslation, The Outsider, in London. At the same time, a first U.S. translation by Kate Griffith, in Washington, D.C., based on an annotated — and censored! — French edition of Camus's novel published in SU1, thereby eliminating the legal difficulties of publishing an American translation. Finally, the late poet Matthew Ward published another translation, The Stranger, in New York, in 1988. 3A first difference between the translations appears at the level of paratext. However, the two translated titles of the work are not widely diverse. The Random House Webster's Dictionary (1997) defining stranger than 3. a person who does not belong to the family, group or community; An outsider, including a note : Stranger may apply to one that does not belong to a group - social professional, national, etc.]. And it defines outsider if a person is not of a specific group. So while outsider contains a smaller extension than stranger, both terms convey the idea — central to the novel — of not belonging, of exclusion2. Also at the level of paratext are the obvious differences between British (Gilbert, Laredo) and American spelling (Griffith, Ward) : colour and colour (USA), etc. 4Sartre, in his Explicit de L'Étranger (1947), describing Meursault's detachment in terms of décalage, divorce et Every New Gesture corresponds to each new somewhat disgruntled style makes for an apparent lack of causality between Camus' sentences, as Sartre noted : une phrase de L'Étranger L'Étranger une lie5. However, Gilbert's translation was published before Camus' revisions to his novel (and Sartre's essay), which should account for at least some of Gilbert's wordier style. Camus said that American novel writing techniques helped him in his quest to describe a man with no apparent conscience (divestment un homme sans conscience apparently)6. Was Matthew Ward, who acknowledges Sartre's essay in his translator's note, perhaps more at ease with the conit needed to convey these American techniques? 5Examining the four English translators of the novel, however briefly, can help explain some of their choices - and reduce their invisibility. A key mid-twentieth-century literary figure, Stuart Gilbert, also translated Camus's La Peste and works by Saint-Exupéry, Malraux, Sartre, Simenon and Cocteau, among others, and matched TS Eliot, Malraux, Richard Ellmann. A graduate of Hertford College at Oxford, he advised James Joyce on the Auguste Morel translation of Ulysses, wrote a critical work entitled James Joyce's Ulysses and edited the first volume of Joyce's letters. The first English translation of L'Étranger was written by a sixty-three-year-old distinguished man of letters. Set apart from the source text, it reads as both elegant and poetic English prose, with a distantly British flavour. To match his own prose, he confidently restructures the paragraph and sentencng sections. For example, simple French sentences that characterize Camus's intuitive or sensory mode of expression are changed, so Gilbert's text appears more connected, with longer (and therefore fewer) sentences. Camus's first two paragraphs (reproduced in the first extract – Texte A – with all four translations into Fascicule des textes de référence) contain 21 sentences : Gilbert spreads them across three paragraphs, with a total of 16 sentences. The Connection links give the impression of causality (absent in the French) : Gilbert adds two semi-colors and a colon in the first paragraph alone. This novel, which was said to be revolutionary in its departure from traditional narrative techniques, is tame by Gilbert, possibly in an attempt to acclimatize the work to readers of English. For example, when writing the rather self-empowering uses of keeping the alertness and wearing the bracelet in raw, Gilbert adds glare, such as keeping the usual vigilance next to the body and a raw band, both of which are left inexplicably by both later translators Laredo and Ward. Gilbert also uses many Britishisms, which we later investigate, which his translation home. Without the benefit of Camus's revisions to L'Étranger, Gilbert has a wordier text ; More seriously, in his work Meursault's personality seems to have shifted, with the narrator becoming an execrative confidant rather than the detached observer described by Camus and named by Sartre : L'Étranger n'est pass livre qui explique?7. However, while Gilbert's narrator appears somewhat Both Gilbert's and Laredo's translations, in the first two paragraphs contained roughly the same number of words8. 6In 1982, Joseph Laredo, a graduate of Trinity College at Cambridge, reconsidered the novel. By now, L'Étranger had become a canonical text, implying that this translator, and any subsequent one, could expect his or her work to be kept to scrutiny. At the same time, in the US, Kate Griffith began the first American translation of L'Étranger. In her prematurely, she describes the translation as a collaborative work with three undergraduates, a rather audacious undertaking for supposedly inexperienced translators. Unfortunately, the results bully recklessness. Spelling errors abound : the foreword of the book is miss-spelled as forward, difference is written as discrepancy, parricide as paracide, etc. Moreover, basic translation errors proliferate : Un corps ints (Camus, p. 95) is rendered as a motionless corpse (Griffith, p. 50) and les plis de sa kleeed (Camus, p. 180) are rendered as the folds of his gown (Griffith, p. 96), when Camus describes a priest's This work was never reviewed in any major periodic, national newspaper or scholarly journal. 7The late Matthew Ward, translator of the most recent version (New York, 1988), translated works by Colette, Barthes, Picasso, Sartre and others. The poet and critic, thirty-seven years old at the time of the translation, was educated at Stanford, at University College in Dublin, where he was a Fulbright scholar, and at Columbia. He won the PEN Translation Prize in 1989. Although Laredo's translation was only six years old, due to considerations of copyright, it was unavailable to U.S. readers. It was also considered noticeably British and colloquial, as we will soon see. Knopf commissioned a new translation. 8Ward's is a systematic translation, one that inspires the trust of the reader early. Translating references from tutelement to English is not always a simple task. Here Raymond Sintes convinced Meursault to write a letter to a woman to him : 'Je savais bien que tu connaissais la vie.' 'Je ne me suis fits aperçu d'abord qu'il my tuyoait (Camus, p. 54). He said, 'I could tell you about these things.' 'I didn't notice at first, but he stopped calling me 'monsieur' (Ward, p. 127). It conforms to the original French text, as Sintes really drops the monsieur. Laredo by bypassed the problem by adding a detail that does not appear in the French : 'I didn't notice at first, but he called me by my first name' (Laredo, p. 36). Gilbert's rendering, however, with its noticeably British flavour, can give today's reader a jolt : 'I could tell you was a brain kind, old boy, and you know what's what.' 'At first, I barely noticed that 'old boy' (Gilbert, p. 9)Gilbert's 1946 translation reveals several other Britishisms. Citing the query from Marie, his girlfriend, says I said I didn't; if she wanted to go for it, we'd get married (Gilbert, bls. And describing a conversation with his employer, Meursault declared : [He] told me that I was always sjelling-studded (Gilbert, p. 52). His choice of words seems more appropriate to the UK than for Algiers. Laredo's translation is characteristically direct : [He] told me that I always evaded the question (Laredo, p. 44), from the French [Il] m'a it que je répondais toujours à côté (Camus, bls. 69). Here, Ward's version manages to be more idiomatic than Laredo's. [He] looked upset, told me that I never gave him a straight answer (Ward, p. 41). Does Laredo perhaps respond to Gilbert's flights of fancy, providing a carefully close rendering, while Ward, who surely would have been aware of the Laredo translation, feels comfortable experimenting more freely? While the first translator appears to have taken great strides in acclimating readers to the outlandish text, Laredo veers down the opposite direction, adhering to the source text so now that its rendering appears uncomfortable. Ward tends to find expressions that fit idiomatically, where Laredo clings to the original : 'J'allais lazy serioeur si qu'il used tort de's obstiner (Camus, p. 107). Laredo translates this as : I was about to tell him that he was wrong to insist, while Ward comes up with the more idiomatic : I was about to tell him he was wrong to live on it (Ward, p. 69). 10Laredo's rendering also reveals other Britishisms, though less highbrow in nature than Gilbert's. For example : I said I didn't care and we could do if she wanted to (Laredo, bls. 44). It seems to conform to Meursault's rather taciturn nature. But Laredo's prose sometimes starts the reader. He's talking about white coffee (Laredo, p. 14) for café au lait (Camus, p. 17), somehow disturbing in a novel set in a French-speaking country. At times, Laredo's Britishisms convey a working-class tone. Here Meursault reports on the words of St.És: I was a man of the world and I could help him and after that he would be my mate (Laredo, 39). The colloquial nature of Laredo's version — which in itself is compatible with Camus' prose — marks it as British. 11Gilbert's translation, however, sends off in the opposite direction and some of his characters appear very refined indeed : Masson an it qu'on avait mangé très tôt, et que c'était naturel parce que l'heure du déjeuner, c'était l'heure où l'on avait faim (Camus, p. Masson noticed that we would have a very early lunch, but really lunch was a stirring feast - you had it when you felt that way (Gilbert, 66). This allusion to Hemingway, which functions as an inside joke, is indicative of Gilbert's highbrow rendering. Laredo's is simpler : Masson said we'd have eaten very early and it was quite natural because the time to have lunch was when you felt hungry (Laredo, p. 53). 12Another brand of Gilbert's translation is that he uses the pronoun one to up, uncomfortable to the contemporary reader, where Laredo and Ward tend to favor the more colloquial you. When Marie and Meursault meet shortly after the funeral to go out to shore, Camus writes : On devinait six signal duress (Camus, p. 57), which Gilbert delivers as One could see the outline of her firmly small breasts (Gilbert, p. 43). Laredo read more naturally to the contemporary reader, You could see the shape of her firm breasts (Laredo, p. 37). In the above Gilbert quote, notice the bit added to qualify the description of Marie's breasts. This seems to indicate its discomfort to the description of any form of sexuality, continuing as it does the following : j'ai eu très envie delle (Camus, p. 57) ; I couldn't take my eyes off her (Gilbert, p. 177). Laredo's rendering is noticeably British : I really fanned her (Laredo, p. 37). Ward here is simpler : I wanted her so badly (Ward, p. 34). While there is nothing particularly shocking in Camus's prose, at least from a contemporary point of view, both British translators shy away from his honest earthiness. 13The first English translation of the novel also contains several instances of étoffement, making a wordier, more execratory text. Gilbert clearly appropriated the text, prose revealing a style all his own. In Part II, the narrator describes his first days in prison: And réalité, je n'étais pas réellement and prison les premiers jours ; j'attendais vaguement quelque événement nouveau (Camus, p. 113). Meursault's sense of otherness, even dreams, his vague anticipation, is delivered by Gilbert as : In fact, during those early days, I was hardly aware of being in prison ; I've always had a vague hope that something would show up, some agreeable surprise. (Gilbert, p. 89). The bold terms point to its own interpretation, tantamount to embroderie. The strange, otherworldly aspect of not really being imprisoned is described by Gilbert's Meursault in intellectual and analytical terms : he's hardly aware of it, Gilbert explains. And Camus' text doesn't actually speak of hope. The agreed surprise of which the British-sounding narrator writes in the source text is a matter-of-fact, apathetic waiting for something to happen. Here, Gilbert's narrator looks less taciturn again, more uppermost. Laredo's Meursault seems more matter-of-fact : In fact, I wasn't actually in jail the first few days : I waited vaguely for something to happen (Laredo, p. 71). 14Gilbert's étoffement sometimes distorts Camus's text. When Marie asked Meursault what Paris was like, he declared C'est sold. Il y a des pigeon et des cours noires (Camus, p. 70). In the first translation, the taciturn protagonist becomes talkative and emphatically : A Dingy kind of town, in my mind. Masses of pigeons and dark courtyards (Gilbert, p. 54). It's quite a leap of talk of coerced noires to portray the city of light as dingy. The from the concierge at the old age home are transformed from a nonchalant It's est interrompu (Camus, p. 14) to He put the screwdriver back in his pocket and stared at me (Gilbert, p. 6). A pattern emerges in Gilbert's translation : he writes illustrative sentences explained rather than translate the original directly. This flesh has the novel out as he sees it, not necessarily how Camus wrote it. While Gilbert is consistent in his own writing style, a reader will compare his translation to the original is likely to get a different picture of the protagonist. He constantly explains and interprets more than Camus does, at least in his revised édition. For example, when the restaurant owner Céleste has finished testifying, we learn : Il avait l'air de me claimant ce qu'il pouvait encore faire (Camus, p. 145). It was exactly like he said, 'Well, I did my best for you, old man. I'm afraid it didn't help much. I'm sorry' (Gilbert, p.116). And it deviates from the disgruntled quality of the French. 15Not just seems the minor character of Céleste more apologetic in Gilbert's translation, but Meursault does too. The dialogue of Meursault's Gilbert skews the context to some extent. Gilbert's use of modalizers helps make Meursault look more apologetic and hesitant. When the narrator asks his boss for two days off to attend his mother's funeral (texts de référence, Excerpt A), Camus writes : Mais il n'avait pas l'air content (Camus A2), which makes Gilbert's Meursault more timid than I had an idea he looked annoyed (Gilbert 2/a). The protagonist continues : Je rings ai même it : 'Ce n'est pas de ma faute.' Il n'a pas répondu (Camus A2). Gilbert delivers it as and I said, without thinking : Sorry, sir, but it's not my fault, you know. (Gilbert 2/a). As Sartre says, referring to Camus, son Roman veut être d'une stérilité magnifique10. The apparent validity of Gilbert's version, to non-readers of French, causes a problem. However, without wanting Camus' unprocessed text as a basis for comparison, we must temper any accusations of Gilbert's skewed text. 16Laredo's protagonist is less talkative and less emphatic, like Camus', but in his apparent allegiance to the bronteks the translator falls into a few traps, coming up with at least one kalque : Après l'enterrement au contraire, ce sera une affaire classée et tout aura After the funeral, however, death will be a classified fact and the whole thing will have accepted a more official aura (Laredo, 3/b Classified fact and aura are calves of affaire classée and allure. Here, Gilbert manages to be more idiomatic. The funeral will bring it home to me, putting an official seal on it, so to speak. . (Gilbert, 3/a). 17One of the key and surprising differences between the Gilbert translation and Camus' original, is the translator's insertion of dialogue where Camus indirectly wrote Describing the restaurant owner's testimony at Meursault's trial, the narrator describes the scene unemotionally, flat : L'avocat général rings a demandé si je payais régulièrement mum pension. Céleste a ri et il a déclaré : 'C'étaient des détails entre nous' (Camus, p. Gilbert's text is more colorful, and he specifies éléments Camus left open. The prosecutor asked him if in any ways settled my monthly bill at his restaurant when he offered it. Céleste laughs. Oh, he paid on the nail, right. But the bills were just details like, between him and me (Gilbert, p. 115). By increasing the amount of direct speech, Gilbert adds a lifelines to Céleste's testimony that never appears in the original. Also during Céleste's testimony we learn : [on lazy a demandé] 's il avait remarqué que j'étais renfermé et il a reconnu seulement que je ne parlais pas throwing ne rien dire. (Camus, p. 143-144) Was I a mysterious kind of man? No, he answered, I shouldn't call him that. But he's not one to waste his breath, like many people. (Gilbert, p.115). So Gilbert's translation takes on a chatty dimension that makes the work less strange. 18Gilbert also inserts dialogue when Meursault and Emmanuel run to a truck to catch a ride. Emmanuel riait à horsere halaine' (Camus, p. 45). Emmanuel gawked and panned in my ear, 'we made it' (Gilbert, p. 31). And when Sintes manages to convince the narrator to write a letter to him, Meursault reports : Alors il m'a déclaré que justement, il voulait my claimant un conseil au sujet de cette affaire, que moi, j'étais un homme, je connaissais la vie, que je pouvais l'aider et qu'ensuite il serait mon copain (Camus, p. 49). In fact, I'd rather ask your advice about something; it's connected with this business. You've knocked around the world a little bit, and I dare help you. And then I will be your pal for life; I never forget anyone who does me a good turn (Gilbert, bls. Here, the marked Britishisms (in bold) and added wordiness change Camus' laconic reporting of the facts. The matter-of-fact it serait mon copain, offhandedly reported by Meursault, here the declaration of a connection is forged. Gilbert conveys a flowing quality to the narration that runs counter to Camus' intentions. Sartre specifically takes on Camus' technique of integrating dialogue into the story, calling real dialogue le moment de l'explication, de la signification; lazy une place privilégiée, ce serait admettre que lesson signs consist of 11. Gilbert's insertions of sometimes animated dialogue thus make for a less deranged narration there where Camus deliberately created an offhand voice through discourses of indirect libre. His Meursault looks kinder, more talkative, less alienated; in fact, he seems less of a stranger. In the above examples, Gilbert Camus's philosophical project changes, and his own illustrative sentences the original, rather than directly directly it. Seen in this light, Gilbert's work seems more effective as a piece of literature than as philosophy. 19Gilbert's embroidery sometimes leads to occasional factual errors, as Eric Plessis 12 points out. For example, when Meursault describes the nurse who was on duty in the mortuary he describes une infirmière arabe and sarreau blanc, un foulard de couleur vive sur la tête (Camus, p. 14). Gilbert delivers it as an Arab woman — a nurse, I suppose — sat next to the beer ; she wore a blue smock and had a rather gaudy scarf wound around her hair (Gilbert, p. 43). Especially the color of the smock is transformed from white to blue, and a brightly coloured scarf was judged by the translator to be gaudy. 20Camus's novel is also remarkable for the predominant use of the passé composé, a verb tense associated with spoken language, one that implies a link to the present of narration. This use of the passé composé would fall into what Emile Benveniste calls discourses, which he opposes against récit historique, told in the passé simple, the usual tense for storytelling – largely absent in Camus's novel. Likewise, Harald Weinrich opposes mouths commenté (predominantly in L'Étranger) and mouths raconté. The distinction between the passé composé and the passé simply is one for which English has no equivalent. The novel begins in the passé composé, a sign of modernity that emphasizes the loneliness of every sentence and makes the hero look more removed. Sartre claimed : C'est cast accenter la solitude de chaque unité phrastique que M. Camus a choisi de faire boy récit au parfait composé (Sartre, p. 142-143). Do the translators compensate in other ways for this phenomenon, impossible to reproduce? 21Camus' use of poetic language is handled in various ways by the translators (Textes de référence, Excerpt B). When the court rises and Meursault is taken back to prison in a van, Camus describes : cette rumeur du ciel avant que la nuit bascule sur le port (Excerpt B2), which Griffith delivers as the sudden surge of nightfall as it spills over the harbour (Griffith, Extract B2/c). Yet surge from nightfall dumping eliminates the sound of nightfall described by this rumeur du ciel, and her rendering does not succeed in correctly conveying the reference meaning, let alone the poetry. Rumeur is delivered as rust by Gilbert (Gilbert, Excerpt B2/a), and as hum by Ward (Ward, Extract B2/d). 22Camus writes (at the end of this excerpt) : tout cela recomposait throw moi un itinéraire d'aveugle, que je connaissais bien avant d'entrer and jail, (Camus, Excerpt B2), which Griffith translates as all this reconstructing for me an admittance that I shredded by blindly, acquainted myself with each object before becoming the prison (Griffith, p. Extract B2/c). The verb shred here is a cliché : its only goal is to collover with blindly. Gilbert opting for All these sounds go jail made like a blind man's journey together route whose every inch he knows by heart (Gilbert, Excerpt B2/a), which characteristically manages to play with the order of the words. 23Finally, Camus writes : Comme si les chemins familiers tracés dans les iels d'été pouvaient sir aussi bien faut aux jalls qu'aux somnells innocents, (Extract B3) that Gilbert delivers as And so I learned that familiar paths are detected in the twilight of summer evenings agitated sleep (Gilbert, Extract). The turmoil is another addition by Gilbert, and twilight, while logical enough in the context, simply not present in the French. Here, aside from the reference significance, Ward captures the significance of the prose : as if familiar roads detected in summer air can so easily lead to jail over sleeping the innocent (Ward, Extract B3/d). 24Ward takes some risks in his translation, many of which involve embracing foreign elements in the translation. He writes in his translator's note : No sense in French literature in English translation is better known as the opening sentence of The Stranger. It became a sacred cow of sorts, and I changed it. In his notebooks, Camus recorded the observation that The curious feeling the boy has for his mother constitutes all his sensitivity. And Sartre, in his Explication de L'Étranger, goes out of his way to point out Meursault's use of the child's word Maman when he speaks of his mother. (Ward, p. vii) 25 Meanwhile, the other translators favored the more colorless, bland and perhaps inaccurate Mother [died today]. Ward recaps his ashes : Maman died today. He confirms : To use the more removed, adult 'Mother' is, I believe, to change the nature of Meursault's curious feeling for her. This is to change its sensitivity (Ward, p. vii). This latest translation is the one that most openly embraces foreign elements from the source text. 26Gilbert's more immediate telling, though a highly readable version of Camus's novel, makes for a more accessible protagonist and faked Meursault's sense of distance, a man Sartre says sets a silence wiii13. Even considering Laredo's more recent translation, an updated translation was apropos. Each version reveals different aspects of the time and place in which the translation was written, as well as individual proclivities and idiosyncrasies of the translators themselves. Gilbert's, crafting a style all its own, is the work of an English gentleman. Laredo's unscrupulous adherence to the original, a decidedly capable, scenic rendering, is at times unidiomatic. Griffith's business with her students remains at the level of an academy exercise. Finally, Ward's cautious prose seems to have let poetry into the English translation that hasn't been seen since Gilbert's work, but without Gilbert's reticence and additions. 27Richard Howard, in his introduction to his retreat from Cade's L'Immoralist says [. . .] all translations date, works never do [. . .] it is my experience that a first translation errs on the part of pusillanimity, playing safe [. . .] It's [the translator's] peculiar privilege, even his obligation, in his own day and age, to save on, to be extraterrestrial instead of posturing or merely plausible.14 28Does Stuart Gilbert's translation plays safe? Certainly he seems to house the text, making it perhaps more accessible to a mid-twentieth century British reader. But in doing so, he seems to fall out what Sartre called the feeling of décalage, divorce and dépaysement. In our increasingly shrinking universe, are we more receptive of change today? Is it partly responsible for the success of Ward's translation? The New Yorker called its Meursault more alien and different — than Gilbert's exoratory confidant of the British version15. Certainly Ward is not afraid to keep the French flavour of the text, when, for example, he writes of neighbourhoods (Ward, p. 82) for fêtes de quartier (Camus, p. 130). Ward said, All translations date, even Pope's translation of Homer. In fairness to Gilbert, she is more than 40 years old. I bow in his direction — and hope that my translation will bring a new generation to the great Camus novel 16. 29By cast aside Gilbert's noticeably British rendering, now peppered with expressions likely unknown to young, especially North American readers, Ward manages to craft a text that is mid-Atlantic in flavour. His translation is in a position to influence young minds who read the novel for the first time. This most recent English version is ultimately more accessible than the Gilbert, or even the updated Laredo version may hope to be. The poetic language translated by a poet is not lost but rather recreated to make a living text as opposed to a revival. Pourquoi donc retraduire? Ward's translation maintains the vitality of a job that — in English — would otherwise wane. Beyond the stranger? The latest translation is one that is definitely consistent – linguistic, spiritual and philosophical – with L'Étranger. Camus, Albert, L'Étranger, Paris, Gallimard, 1957 (1942) — The Stranger, tr. Stuart Gilbert, New York, Vintage 1954 (1946). (Originally published in England as The Outsider) — The Stranger, tr. Kate Griffith, Washington, D.C., University Press of America, 1982 — The Outsider, tr. Joseph Laredo, London, Penguin 1983 (1982) — The Stranger, tr. 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