



Genre in Translation: Reframing *Patagonia Express*

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Introduction

A look at Amazon customer reviews regarding the English and the Italian translations of Luis Sepúlveda's *Patagonia Express*, first published in Spain in 1995, reveals a noticeable contrast when it comes to the perceived complexity of the text (Amazon.com 2014a: n.p.; Amazon.co.uk 2014: n.p.; Amazon.it 2016: n.p.). As regards the English translation, customers comment that the book was difficult to read; the reviews of the Italian translation, on the other hand, frequently comment on the easy readability of the text and there is no mention of complexity or difficulty in reading. This chapter will argue that in both cases a genre disambiguation occurred and that the different ways in which this disambiguation has been achieved can explain this contrast in perceived complexity. It is thus a descriptive-explanatory case study that illustrates how a genre shift can occur in translation and how it can affect the reading experience. Through the analysis of this particular case, it hopes to generate new research questions and hypotheses on the topic of genre shifts in translation, thus opening up a potentially fruitful area of research within Translation Studies that so far has received little attention.

Genre is one of two “interpretative frameworks” (Jones 2012: 43) we use in order “to make sense of texts” (ibid.); another one is “cultural models” (ibid.). The “generic framework ... is based on the expectations we have about different kinds of texts, the kinds of information we expect to encounter in texts of

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different kinds and the order in which we expect that information to be presented, along with other kinds of lexical and grammatical features we expect to encounter” (ibid.). Cultural models, on the other hand, refer to “larger conceptual frameworks that we build up based on our understanding of how the world works” (ibid.). James Paul Gee describes these conceptual frameworks as “‘movies’ or ‘videotapes’ in the mind” (Gee 2008: 104).

Needless to say, which cultural models circulate differs from target community to target community. However, not only cultural models can shift in translation, but also the genre, and if the expectations we have of a particular genre have an impact on how we interpret a text, it follows that such a shift in genre—for example by disambiguating the genre in translation—can lead to a shift in the way we read a text.

Ambiguous Genre: *Patagonia Express*

Chilean writer Luis Sepúlveda, a political activist, was part of Salvador Allende’s government when he was ousted by Augusto Pinochet in 1973. Following the military coup, Sepúlveda was imprisoned. Two and a half years later, thanks to the intervention of the German section of Amnesty International, he was released and kept under house arrest from where he soon escaped, going underground (Cacucci 2013: n.p.). When rearrested a year later, he received a life sentence, later reduced to 28 years (Cacucci 2013: n.p.). Amnesty International again intervened and Sepúlveda was sent into exile (Cacucci 2013: n.p.). In 1977 he left Chile for Sweden, but, reluctant to go to Europe, he decided not to board his connecting flight in Buenos Aires (Cacucci 2013: n.p.). Years wandering around Latin America followed, from Argentina, to Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador until joining the International Brigade Simón Bolívar in Nicaragua (Cacucci 2013: n.p.). Disillusioned with the developments in Nicaragua after the revolution, Sepúlveda eventually left for Germany (Cacucci 2013: n.p.).

Patagonia Express narrates Sepúlveda’s childhood memories of his anarchist grandfather, his own ideological development, his experiences of prison and torture during Pinochet’s dictatorship, the years meandering around Latin America, and finally his arrival in Spain, but also his return to Chile many years later and the encounters made and stories heard during this latter journey. *Patagonia Express* is thus both a travelogue and a political memoir. Travel writing is obviously in itself a genre with fuzzy boundaries (for a definition of the genre—or better, an account of the impossibility of defining it and the futility of trying to—see Thompson 2011: 9–27). Nevertheless, *Patagonia*

Express merges accounts that can be defined as travel literature in a narrower sense with accounts that some scholars would not consider to be travel writing (see Thompson 2011: 9–27 for a discussion of the lack of consensus on what is to be considered travel writing and in particular his discussion of Paul Fussell’s narrow definition of the genre developed in his seminal study *Abroad: British Literary Travelling Between the Wars* (1980) and subsequently in his anthology *The Norton Book of Travel* (1987)).

For one thing, in some sections there is no movement in space as is the case when Sepúlveda narrates his childhood memories and his prison experiences, while in other sections, although movement takes place, scholars who subscribe to Fussell’s narrow view would not consider this movement as travel, as is the case with the accounts of exile (see Thompson 2011: 21 who argues that Fussell’s definitions of travel repeatedly “deny this status to, *inter alia*, the Spanish conquistadors, and to refugees, exiles and other forms of displaced people”). Secondly, the extent to which the accounts are autobiographical varies. Travel literature is of course more often than not autobiographical in so far as it is generally a first-person narration of a journey made by the author—Fussell therefore classifies travel literature as a “sub-species of memoir in which the autobiographical narrative arises from the speaker’s encounter with distant or unfamiliar data” (Fussell 1980: 203). Nevertheless, there is a difference between the part narrating Sepúlveda’s return to Chile in which the focus is on the people he encounters and the stories he hears on this journey, and those parts in which the focus is on his own life and his own experiences. Sepúlveda, in the prologue to *Patagonia Express*, jokingly states that the book is not an exercise in keeping Alzheimer’s at bay and that he does not intend to write his memoirs (Sepúlveda 2011: 11). But, of course, he would not have felt the need to point this out if the text did not, at least in parts, read like a memoir and indeed, the travel vignettes of his return journey to Chile might serve as an excuse to frame them with such an autobiographical portrait. As Sepúlveda put it in an interview with his Italian translator Ilide Carmignani, “[i]o scrivo, prima di tutto, per capire meglio me stesso” (I write, first and foremost, to get a better understanding of myself; my translation) (Carmignani 1996: n.p.).

Which aspect—travelogue or memoir of a political activist—is at the forefront of the reader’s mind, will depend on the reader’s individual interests and reasons for reading the book as well as his or her familiarity (or lack of familiarity) with Sepúlveda as a political activist and also on what kind of intertextual connections and connections with text-external factors, events, or circumstances he or she creates. However, it will also depend on other factors that are not related to the individual reader such as (1) which aspect the book itself foregrounds (both through textual and paratextual choices such as the

front and back cover or the choice of publisher or publishing series), in other words, the generic framework; (2) what narratives regarding the author and the topic in its broader sense (such as narratives regarding Allende, Pinochet and the military coup of 1973, or, more broadly, communism and fascism) are circulating in the reader's culture, in other words, the cultural models.

The Genre in Translation

An uneasiness with fluid boundaries and thus a tendency to firmly anchor texts or textual elements within a clear category is not uncommon in translation. Rachel May (1994), for example, in her case studies on English translations of Russian literature, observes that translators tend to disambiguate perspective; a finding that has been confirmed by Patrick Goethals and July De Wilde (2009). Several further studies observe a tendency to disambiguate free indirect discourse in translation by attributing it to a clearly-defined voice (e.g. Gallagher 2001; Guillemin-Flescher 1981; Poncharal 1998; Rouhiainen 2000; Taivalkoski-Shilov 2003; all quoted in Bosseaux 2007: 60–65; further Alsina 2011; Gharai and Dastjerdi 2012; Zaro 2006).

This section will illustrate how the English and the Italian translations of *Patagonia Express*—in very different ways—disambiguate the genre and shift it more clearly towards travel writing, and investigate what that means for the readers' expectations towards the text and their reading of the text. For this, I will also take into account reader reactions to Sepúlveda's Spanish text as well as the German translation (Zurbrüggen 1998) which maintains the ambiguous genre of the Spanish text.

The Genre Disambiguation in the English Translation

The English translation (Andrews 1996) disambiguates the genre mainly through paratextual means. First and foremost, it is published by Lonely Planet, a publishing house well-known for its guide books and other travel-related literature; in its own words, “the company that understands travel better than anyone else” (in Andrews 1996: 195). Furthermore, it is part of a series called *Lonely Planet Journeys*. On the last pages of the book, the rationale of the series is explained, followed by advertisements for other titles in the series, related travel books, phrase books and a travel atlas and finally an advertisement for Lonely Planet's newsletter of travel news and advice. Hence, the text is clearly marketed as travel writing.

The book title—*Full Circle: A South American Journey*—also foregrounds the travel aspect. Furthermore, both the book title and the title of the series are centred; the author's name appears in a smaller font in the bottom right-hand corner of the cover—another indicator that the book is primarily targeted at an audience interested in travel writing about a particular destination rather than in a particular writer. The image on the front cover features a scene looking out from a window onto open water with a small boat sailing past a snow-capped mountain. The window has bars and therefore could represent a prison window; a backpack on a bench under the window and a drawing with the contours of the South American continent on the wall, however, signal travel. Thus, the image's references to travel predominate and it is unlikely to conjure up the idea of a prison cell in the reader's mind unless he or she is familiar with the author's past.

The blurb on the back cover refers to Sepúlveda as an “exiled Chilean writer” and mentions, in passing, “political prison” (while leaving it open, however, whether he was himself imprisoned or whether he has seen one on his travels). Yet, the blurb's main focus is unambiguously on travel. The blurb ends with stating that the book won a travel-writing award in France, followed by a quote from the Spanish newspaper *El País*, “Detachment, humour and vibrant prose,” thus promising light entertainment rather than thought-provoking or uncomfortable reading such as the passages describing the torture so many suffered under Pinochet. Further, it is classified as “Non-fiction/Travel Literature/South America.” A reference to the darker side of *Patagonia Express* can be found in the biographical note on Sepúlveda on the inside which states that after being “[i]mprisoned by the Pinochet dictatorship, he was for many years a political exile.” However, the note, too, ends with the motif of travel: “travel remains his ruling passion.”

Two more paratextual elements shift the genre towards that of travel. Firstly, a glossary has been added to the English text (Andrews 1996: 191–192). Neither the latest Spanish edition (Sepúlveda 2011), nor the German (Zurbrüggen 1998) or the Italian edition published by TEA (a paperback imprint of Editori Associati) (Carmignani 2016) feature such a glossary. Secondly, maps have been added. All editions—the Spanish, the English, the Italian and the German—feature a map of Patagonia either at the beginning or at the end of the book. The English edition features furthermore a detailed map of South America as well as a small map of Spain; the latter has been added at the beginning of the “Note on Arrival” (Andrews 1996: 169). Glossaries and maps are of course commonly associated with travel writing.

As regards the text itself, the arrangement of the sequence has been slightly altered and the prologue to the Spanish text entitled “Apuntes sobre estos

apuntes” (Notes on these Notes) has been relegated to the end of the English text, just before the glossary. Due to this alteration of sequence, the English translation evokes the theme of travel from the outset. The opening paragraph reads as follows:

The ticket to nowhere was a gift from my grandfather. My grandfather. An extraordinary and terrifying being. I think I had just turned eleven when he gave me the ticket. (Andrews 1996: 11)

Admittedly, this ticket, as it turns out, is a metaphorical one and the rest of this brief chapter describes a childhood ritual rather than travel in any narrow sense, although it does end on a promise of travel—a metaphorical one and an actual one—that the grandfather extorts from Sepúlveda. The Spanish text, however, opens quite differently:

En la casa mexicana de Mari Carmen y Paco Ignacio Taibo I hay una mesa enorme y en torno a ella se reúnen veinticuatro comensales. Allí escuché una vez cierta frase que sirve de título a un libro de Taibo I: «Para parar las aguas del olvido». Cuando más tarde leí la obra, por una parte creció mi cariño y admiración por el escritor asturiano, y por otra, aprendí que es imposible evitar la despedida de ciertos textos, por más que uno los quiera y vea en ellos una parte fundamental de su intimidad. (Sepúlveda 2011: 9)

In the house of Mari Carmen and Paco Ignacio Taibo I in Mexico there is a huge table around which twenty-four dinner guests may gather. Sitting there once I heard a phrase which serves as the title of one of Taibo’s books: “Against the current of forgetting”. When I read the book later, my affection and admiration for the Asturian writer grew, and at the same time I realised that it is impossible to avoid parting with certain texts, no matter how attached to them one is and how much they seem a fundamental part of one’s private life. (Andrews 1996: 187)

The prologue continues with sketching the genealogy of the book, drawing attention to the fact that the text in question is not only a very personal one but also one that “attempt[s] to come to terms with two themes of capital importance, aptly defined by the Argentinean writer Julio Cortázar: understanding what it means to be human, and understanding what it means to be an artist”¹ (Andrews 1996: 189). Thus, in the Spanish text the autobiographical aspect of *Patagonia Express* is highlighted from the beginning.

Interestingly, as the English translation turned the prologue to the Spanish text into an epilogue, it not only begins with the theme of travelling but also concludes with this theme. The last paragraph of the English text reads as follows:

You have accompanied me on a journey without a fixed itinerary, along with all the wonderful people who have appeared here under their real names, from whom I have learnt and go on learning so much.² (Andrews 1996: 190)

The Spanish text, too, ends with the theme of travel—the journey to Sepúlveda’s Andalusian roots his grandfather wanted him to undertake:

... yo supe que por fin se había cerrado el círculo, pues me encontraba en el punto de partida del viaje empezado por mi abuelo. Don Angel dijo:

—Mujer, trae vino, que ha llegado un pariente de América. (Sepúlveda 2011: 178)

... I knew that at last I had come full circle: I was at the starting point of the journey my grandfather began. Don Angel said:

“María, bring some wine, a relative has come from America.” (Andrews 1996: 183)

In other words, while the English translation concludes with the coming to an end of a physical journey through South America, the Spanish text concludes with Sepúlveda’s arrival at the destination of his autobiographical journey, thus fulfilling a promise of travel he made as a child. He has returned to the point from where his anarchist grandfather started his political journey that eventually, escaping prison after being sentenced to death in Franco’s Spain (Cacucci 2013: n.p.), led him to Chile. The place from where Sepúlveda, following in his grandfather’s footsteps politically, begins his own journey as an exile, until he eventually safely arrives at his grandfather’s departure point, thus completing the circle both geographically and metaphorically.

The Genre Disambiguation in the Italian Translation

The first Italian edition of *Patagonia Express* was published in May 1995 by Feltrinelli, a prestigious Italian publisher, in its series *Traveller* (Carmignani 1995). It thus precedes the Spanish edition by a few months. In 1998, a second edition was published by Editori Associati in its series *Superpocket* (Carmignani 1998). A third edition appeared in 1999 with Guanda in its series *Fenici Tascabili* (literally, Phoenician paperbacks), a series featuring literature in translation (Carmignani 1999). A fourth edition was scheduled to appear in the series *Oltre Confine* (Beyond the Border) by Alpine Studios, but this edition seems to never have been published (Carmignani 2006). A Kindle edition followed in 2011, published by Guanda (Carmignani 2011). The latest paperback edition, from May 2016, is published by TEA and is a reprint of the 1998 edition under license by Guanda (Carmignani 2016). It is part of the series called *Teadue*, which features also other works by Sepúlveda. Thus, only the first

Italian edition, which is now out of print, and the edition by Alpine Studios, which never was actually published, were part of a series specializing in travel writing. Carmignani is a well-known literary translator.

The title of the Italian text is the same as that of the Spanish text.³ However, in the edition by TEA, a subtitle has been added: “Viaggio in una terra colma di avventure e di storie” (Journey into a country bursting with adventures and stories). Yet despite underlining the travel aspect in the title, the 2016 edition by TEA—and the same is true for all the Italian editions—awards the author more prominence than does the English edition: the author’s name precedes the title. Furthermore, with the exception of the first edition by Feltrinelli, the name is written in a larger font than the title. Additionally, the back cover of the TEA edition features Sepúlveda’s picture. Due to the wealth of editions, the remainder of my discussion of the paratext will focus on the latest edition.

References to Sepúlveda’s political activism are absent. The blurb on the back cover refers to the book as a “diario di viaggio” (travel diary). A brief description of the book that centres on the theme of travel and adventure is followed by a short sentence about Sepúlveda and finally a list of books he has authored. A dedication, not present in the Spanish edition, appears after the title page; a line by the Spanish poet Antonio Machado invoking travel,⁴ followed by a few words dedicating the book to the people Sepúlveda met on his travels.

However, the disambiguation of genre happens predominantly within the text itself as substantial parts of the Spanish text—namely the prologue as well as Part I, II and IV—are missing in the Italian text. In other words, the Italian text only consists of Part III. The ten vignettes of Part III, which in the Spanish text are simply numbered, have individual headings in the Italian text and form independent chapters. Two further chapters, that cannot be found in the Spanish text, are present: Chapter 8, “Appunti andini” (Andean Notes), and Chapter 12, “Appunti al cospetto di un gigante” (Notes in the Presence of a Giant). Due to the division into 12 chapters, the layout, the font and the thick paper the edition by TEA uses (and the same is true for the previous paperback edition by Guanda), it is not evident that the Italian text is a drastically shorter version; in fact, it is thicker than the Spanish or the German edition. The German edition uses a small font, and thus both the Italian and the German texts end on page 127. The Italian translation thus creates the illusion of being a complete rendering of the Spanish text; that it is an abbreviated version of *Patagonia Express* is nowhere stated in the book.⁵

What is left out, what is not? As stated above, the Italian text reproduces Part III in its entirety. What is missing is the prologue (“Apuntes sobre estos

apuntes”) (Notes on These Notes), Part I (“Apuntes de un viaje a ninguna parte”) (Notes from a Journey to Nowhere), Part II (“Apuntes de un viaje de ida”) (Notes from an Outward Journey), and the final part (“Apunte de llegada”) (Note on Arrival).

As pointed out above, the prologue narrates the genealogy of the text.

Part I (Notes from a Journey to Nowhere) starts with the narration of a childhood ritual. Sepúlveda’s grandfather, a convinced anarchist and atheist, would regularly take him for a walk on Sunday mornings, offering him fizzy drinks and ice cream until he urgently needed to relieve himself, at which point his grandfather unfailingly led him to a church urging him to urinate on the church door. The second chapter of Part I continues to narrate the beginnings of Sepúlveda’s political path and the influence his grandfather had on him and his political views; how he became a member of the Young Communists; how, at the age of 18, he decided to follow in the footsteps of Che Guevara. The third chapter of Part I is about his two-and-a-half-years of imprisonment under Pinochet’s dictatorship. The fourth chapter, the longest chapter of Part I, narrates scenes of torture suffered during this imprisonment. Chapter 5, finally, concludes with his release from prison thanks to the intervention of Amnesty International.

Part II (“Notes from an Outward Journey”) narrates three stories relating to Sepúlveda’s meandering around Latin America after he had been exiled. The first chapter tells of his unsuccessful attempt to cross the border between Argentina and Bolivia where he is held at gun point face down on the platform under the scorching sun all day, and alludes to the political situation in Chile and elsewhere in Latin America, especially the fear that pervaded everyone and everything.

... las gentes vivían en y para el miedo. Hacían de él un laberinto sin salida, acompañaban de miedo las conversaciones, las comidas. Hasta los hechos más intrascendentes los revestían de una prudencia impúdica y, por las noches, no se acostaban para soñar días mejores, o pasados, sino par precipitarse en la ciénaga de un miedo oscuro y espeso, un miedo de horas muertas que al amanecer los sacaba de la cama ojerosos y aún más atemorizados. (Sepúlveda 2011: 42–43)

... people were living in and for fear. They had turned it into a labyrinth without an exit. Fear sat in on their conversations and meals. They performed even the most trivial acts with a shameless prudence, and at night they didn’t go to bed in order to dream of better days or days gone by, but to hurl themselves into a swamp of thick, dark fear, a fear that occupied the dead hours and got them out of bed in the morning bag-eyed and even more afraid. (Andrews 1996: 39)

The second and third chapter narrate two particular sojourns in Ecuador, first his stay in Puerto Bolívar where he tries to make a living as an adjunct professor until a more lucrative opportunity comes up, and then his stay on the estate of one of the most powerful families of Ecuador until he discovers that he is about to get married off to the daughter of the house and escapes.

The final part (“Note on Arrival”) tells about his arrival in Martos in Spain, the place he had promised his grandfather that he will visit—“I had come a long, long way in search of a trace, a shadow, a tiny vestige of my Andalusian roots” (Andrews 1996: 173)⁶—and where he meets his grandfather’s younger brother.

To sum up, the Italian text omits the autobiographical parts, narrating his relationship with his anarchist grandfather and his political coming-of-age, his imprisonment, the torture, the years in exile, his arrival in his grandfather’s hometown in Spain, and his decision as to why writing these events down.

The part that is not omitted in the Italian text, namely Part III (Notes from a Return Journey), on the other hand, narrates predominantly the experiences and stories of others, people that Sepúlveda encountered or had been told about during his trip to Patagonia undertaken years after he arrived in Europe, once he was no longer a *persona non grata* in Chile. Only the first and the last section of Part III are more autobiographical, with the last section not present in the Spanish text. These two sections frame the narrative in the Italian text: the encounter with another great travel writer who wrote on Patagonia, Bruce Chatwin, in Barcelona, and the ensuing promise to return to Patagonia together opening the text; the encounter with one of Sepúlveda’s childhood heroes, Francisco Coloane, a writer of adventure stories that instilled in Sepúlveda a desire for travel, closing the text. Part III is also the only part where Sepúlveda travels out of choice rather than being forced to travel (as is the case in Part II and, to some extent, also in the final part) or not travelling at all, at least not geographically (as is the case in the prologue and Part I). In other words, Part III is the only part that critics such as Fussell who propagate a narrow view of what constitutes travel writing would consider as such.

What are the two added chapters about? While the reason as to why Chapter 8 (“Appunti andini”) (Andean Notes) is present in the Italian text but not in the Spanish text is not self-evident (apart from, maybe, to provide extra material and thus stretch the length in the case of the otherwise shorter Italian text, or vice versa, in order not to exceed a certain length in the case of the Spanish text), Chapter 12 (“Appunti al cospetto di un gigante”) (Notes in the Presence of a Giant) fulfils an obvious function: it provides closure. It narrates Sepúlveda’s encounter with Coloane, the “più grande scrittore cileno e . . . uno dei più importanti autori di romanzi d’avventura di tutti i tempi” (Carmignani

2016: 123) (Chile's greatest writer and ... one of the most important authors of adventure novels of all time; my translation). The chapter refers the reader back to the beginning ("Appunti su una 'moleskine'") (Notes in a Moleskine Notebook) through the repetition of the theme of the moleskine notebooks and thus reminds the reader of Sepúlveda's encounter with Chatwin and the promise of a journey together. It also picks up where Sepúlveda's urge to travel originates from. While the first chapter explained the motivation for his return to Patagonia, this time the motivation—his fascination with travel—is of a more general kind:

Lessi i suoi formidabili libri di racconti e i suoi romanzi quando ero bambino, e dalla loro lettura nacque il desiderio di viaggiare, di essere una specie di nomade, il prurito alla pianta dei piedi che mi spinge a vedere che diavolo si nasconde dietro l'orizzonte, a sapere come vivono, sentono, amano, odiano, mangiano e bevono, le genti di altre terre. (Carmignani 2016: 123)

I read his formidable short stories and novels when I was a child, and from reading them sprang a desire to travel, to become a kind of nomad, the soles of my feet itching to see what the heck was hiding behind the horizon, to know how the people of other lands live, feel, love, hate, eat and drink. (my translation)

Thus, as was the case in the English translation, the Italian translation too concludes with the theme of travel; in both cases, this travel is understood as actual, outward travel to unknown destinations. The Spanish text, on the other hand, as has been pointed out above, frames *Patagonia Express* predominantly as an autobiographical journey. In the Spanish text, Sepúlveda makes three promises of travel: (1) the promise made to his grandfather of being true to his political beliefs and therefore following in his grandfather's footsteps ideologically, the journey to nowhere⁷; (2) the second promise made to his grandfather, that of returning to his Andalusian roots and thus reversing his footsteps geographically; (3) the promise made to Chatwin of a joint visit to Patagonia to retrace the footsteps of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. The Italian translation only maintains the last promise.

Hence, the Italian text not only contains very few references to the political circumstances in Chile following 1973 and when it does, it does so only in passing, but, most importantly, it makes no mention of Sepúlveda's political coming-of-age, his imprisonment under Pinochet and the torture he suffered. Predominantly, it narrates the stories of others rather than Sepúlveda's own experiences. In other words, the Italian text omits the more inward-looking, autobiographical parts that provide an idea about Sepúlveda's political foun-

dations, while offering the more outward-looking parts of travel that focus on narrating the adventures of eccentric and sometimes legendary characters. Through these substantial omissions and by framing the remaining stories differently, the Italian text eliminates the political aspect almost completely and instead focuses on the travel aspect, and by doing so moves the genre clearly towards travel writing.

Positioning of the Reader and Reader Responses

The Italian translation, by focussing solely on Part III and thus omitting the more autobiographical parts, precludes the possibility of reading the text as a personal account of a Chilean political activist, as a rendering of homage to his anarchist grandfather and ultimately also as a critique of Pinochet's dictatorship. The English text does not preclude this possibility, but it makes it less likely. This is not only (and maybe not even predominantly) due to the fact that the paratextual elements foreground the travel-writing aspect and therefore position the reader in a frame of mind expecting to read travel writing, but also due to the fact that by marketing the text as travel writing it is likely to find a readership that is looking for travel writing. A review published in the *Library Journal* in February 1997 and reproduced on the websites of Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com as "editorial review" ends with the words, "this book has a decidedly South American tone, seeing magic and wonder where most North Americans do not. Recommended for cosmopolitan travel collections" (Parker 1997: n.p.). In other words, it is my contention that the mere fact that the book is published by Lonely Planet rather than a publisher specializing in literature—let alone a publisher specializing in political writing such as for example New Internationalist—has an impact on the kind of audience the text receives. This audience, of course, comes equipped with their own interpretative frameworks and this will have an impact on what aspects of the text are foregrounded in their mind and how they make sense of it. The German text, which follows the Spanish text more closely in so far as it does not abbreviate the text, maintains the sequence of the chapters and is not predominantly targeted at an audience interested in travel writing and thus cannot be said to disambiguate the genre, leaves both readings open.

A look at customer reviews on Amazon can help us gain an idea about whether the expectations readers had when purchasing the book were met. The largest number of reviews can be found for the Italian text. Amazon.it (2016: n.p.) has 43 customer reviews in October 2016: one of these refers to shipping; two customers admit to not having read the book. Excluding these

three reviews leaves a total of 40. For the English text a total of ten reviews can be found (six on Amazon.com (2014a: n.p.) and four on Amazon.co.uk (2014: n.p.)). One of the reviews appears twice and will therefore be counted only once, leaving a total of nine. For the German text, Amazon.de (2015: n.p.) features a total of three reviews. For the Spanish text, I could only locate one review on Amazon.es (2016: n.p.); I will therefore include reviews linked to the Spanish edition on Amazon.com (2014b: n.p.), Amazon.co.uk (2001: n.p.), Amazon.it (2014: n.p.) and Amazon.de (2010: n.p.). Of the seven reviews thus located, one will be excluded as the customer has not read the book, thus leaving a total of six reviews for the Spanish text.

When posting a customer review, apart from the actual comment, readers are also required to award stars ranging from one to five, with five being the highest rating. The following discussion assumes that one to two stars constitute a negative rating, three stars a neutral rating, and four to five stars a positive rating. Negative ratings are an expression of the fact that the book does not meet the reader's expectations. One possible source for such a mismatch of expectations is of course the possibility that the book in question does not correspond to the genre the reader expected; in other words, it does not have the characteristics the reader associates with the expected genre. Considering the analysis above, such a mismatch of expectations related to genre is to be expected regarding the English translation as it is marketed as a typical travel book. Furthermore, a mismatch is to be expected to some extent for the Italian editions published by TEA and Guanda (both the paperback and the Kindle edition) as well as the Superpocket edition by Editori Associati,⁸ as the text is abbreviated to such an extent that it only contains the outward-looking travel vignettes of Part III, without however, unlike the earlier Feltrinelli edition, being marketed as a typical travel book. As regards the Spanish and the German texts, there should be less of a risk of mismatched genre expectations. Indeed, the Amazon reviews confirm this assumption. There are no negative comments for the Spanish and the German texts, while the English text has the highest percentage of negative comments: 22.2% of the comments are negative (two out of nine), compared to only 2.5% of the comments for the Italian text (one out of 40).

Apart from the ratings themselves, the customer comments also give some indication about the nature of mismatched expectations. These are the two negative comments regarding the English translation:

This book was disjointed. It was really hard to follow what was going on and where the author was going and why. The book seemed to be a compilation of miscellaneous stories about his life. Some of the stories made sense, while others were out of place and unintelligible. This made for a difficult read. ("It was a difficult read..."; Anonymous on 9 January 1999, Amazon.com 2014a: n.p.)

Having read the previous review and have [sic] also travelled to many of the places covered in the book, I order [sic] this immediately. What a disappointment! There is no impression given whatsoever of many of the places visited other than some sketchy and often derogatory remarks and the short ‘stories’ have an air of anti-climax about them. (“Disappointing...”; Nick Hindley on 25 February 2003, Amazon.co.uk 2014: n.p.)

The first reader criticizes the autobiographical and fragmented nature of the stories and would have preferred a more straightforward travel narrative. The comment that the book was difficult to read contrasts starkly with the majority of comments made by readers of the Italian translation, as I will illustrate further below. The second reader, too, bemoans the fragmented nature of the text, as well as a lack of description of the places visited, a characteristic that one would expect from a typical travel book.

This is the only negative comment regarding the Italian text:

Avrò avuto un’aspettativa che il libro non ha mantenuto e che forse non prometteva neppure. Il viaggio, costruito attorno a dei singoli personaggi, forse originali, non è riuscito a catturare la mia curiosità. Ho letto poche pagine senza riuscire a giungere alla fine. (“Patagonia Express no Express”; Salvatore on 3 August 2014, Amazon.it 2016: n.p.)

I probably had expectations that the book could not meet and perhaps did not even project. The journey, created around individual characters, while perhaps original, could not captivate me. I read few pages without being able to continue till the end. (my translation)

The reader explicitly mentions that his expectations were not met, but he does not specify clearly the nature of these expectations. The comment differs, however, from the negative comments regarding the English translation in so far as it does not criticize the text for being too complex but rather gives the impression that the reader expected something *more* complex.

Indeed, when it comes to complexity, there is a stark difference between the comments regarding the English and those regarding the Italian text. The two reviewers of the English translation quoted above state that they found the book difficult to read. The remaining reviews for the English translation do not comment on its degree of difficulty; none of the comments mention that the book was easy to read. In the reviews of the Italian translation, on the other hand, the easy readability of the text is frequently commented on. Seventeen out of the 40 reviewers remark that the style is fluid and/or that the book is

easy to read, that it is fast to read, that they read it without stopping or that they devoured it. Two further reviewers remark on the simplicity and lightness of content. Another three reviewers mention that the book was a pleasurable read. None of the comments mention complexity or difficulty in reading.⁹ Indeed, as an Italian critic points out, “la semplicità—lui usa il termine ‘poesia della strada’—è sempre stata una delle chiavi dell’impatto del fenomeno Sepúlveda e della sua capacità di eleggersi in pochi anni scrittore di riferimento della nuova letteratura sudamericana” (Bentivoglio 1997: n.p.) (simplicity—he uses the term ‘street poetry’—has always been key to Sepúlveda’s phenomenal impact and his success of having, in a short span of time, become the key figure of the new South American literature; my translation).

One possible explanation for this contrast is that readers of the English translation did not expect to be confronted with stories about political persecution, imprisonment and torture and accordingly found the content difficult to digest, while the readers of the Italian translation were only confronted with the more light-hearted Part III. Another possible explanation could be the style, given that the two texts are written by different people. The English text could simply be a badly written, stilted translation. This second explanation, however, is less plausible as the English text was nominated for the SBS/Dinny O’Hearn Prize for Literary Translation in 1997 (Library Catalogue of the University of Toronto 2016). One reader comments that “the translation, as far as I could judge was great” (R. Henderson on 26 May 2013, Amazon.co.uk 2014: n.p.). Furthermore, the negative comments focus on content and structure, and do not talk about language or style.

The readers of the Spanish and the German text were of course confronted with the same difficult-to-digest content as the readers of the English. However, they were not positioned to expect travel writing in its narrow sense in the same way as the readers of the English text were.¹⁰ In fact, readers of the Spanish text point to its simplicity. The two reviews on Amazon.com (2014b: n.p.) call it “a very entertaining read” (Peter. J. Schoenbach on 20 December 2014) and “[w]onderful and magical in its simplicity” (Katerina on 25 November 2015) respectively. The reader on Amazon.co.uk (2001: n.p.) comments that “[t]he writing is simple” (fct@bpi.pt. on 13 September 2001). The German comment on Amazon.de (2010: n.p.) points out that the book is easy to read even in Spanish (B. Schneider on 10 January 2010). The Italian reader comments that she enjoyed the book (Nunzio Ruta on 5 August 2013, Amazon.it 2014: n.p.) and the reader commenting on Amazon.es (2016: n.p.) says the book “te conquista de principio a fin” (grabs you from the beginning to the end) (Sol on 2 January 2016). In other words, four out of the six readers commenting on the Spanish text explicitly refer to the fact that the book was easy to read, while the remaining two comment on how they enjoyed reading it.

Yet, there is a noticeable difference between the enjoyment readers of the Italian text expressed and that expressed by readers of the Spanish text. Readers of the Italian text (Amazon.it 2016: n.p.) talk about “la voglia di intraprendere lo stesso viaggio” (the desire to undertake the same journey) (Fabrizio on 26 July 2014); how the book “[t]rasmette il desiderio di visitare (e vivere) la Patagonia” (transmits the desire to visit (and live) Patagonia) (Fabio Atti on 20 July 2014) and how it is “[i]mpossibile non aver voglia di andare in Patagonia” (impossible not to want to go to Patagonia) (Massimiliano on 3 June 2014); how “[a]fter this book you should catch a flight to Patagonia” (Daniele on 16 August 2013). None of the readers commenting on the Spanish text mention that the book made them want to travel. Instead, one of the readers points to the tragic background behind *Patagonia Express*:

... Geschichten, die einen Tränen lachen und manches Mal auch bittere Tränen vergießen lassen. Erinnerungen eines Vertriebenen, eines politisch Verfolgten, der aus Liebe zu seiner Heimat eben diese verlassen mußte (B. Schneider, 10 January 2010, Amazon.de 2010: n.p.)

... Stories, that make you laugh yourself to tears and sometimes make you shed bitter tears. Memories of someone displaced, politically persecuted, and forced to leave his home country because he loved it.... (my translation)

Reviewers of the German text comment that it is “ein wunderschön geschriebenes Buch” (a beautifully written book) (Anonymous on 24 June 2000); that the book is “gut und authentisch geschrieben” (written well and authentically) (Funkydad on 1 June 2015) and that it is “kurzweilig” (entertaining) (Anonymous on 28 November 1999).

Conclusion

While there are numerous reader comments available for the Italian, there are simply not enough for the English and the German text, or for the Spanish text, to draw reliable conclusions. However, it seems that the readers of the three translated texts had rather different experiences, and that these differences go beyond individual reading experiences. Readers of the Italian translation were undoubtedly confronted with a different text, due to the abbreviation and the reframing in the opening and closing chapters, and therefore their response—a tendency to point to easy readability, entertainment, and a wish to travel to Patagonia—is not surprising. Reactions to the German translation, on

the other hand, were very similar to reactions to the Spanish text. Of the three translations looked at—and considering the aspects looked at—the German text is closest to the Spanish text: it is not abbreviated, it does follow the same sequence as the Spanish text and it is not published by a travel publisher and/or marketed as a typical travel book. Readers of the English translation were the least satisfied and the only ones who viewed the text as complex and difficult to read. These readers have been confronted with the unabridged text, although with a slightly altered sequence which reframes the narrative by highlighting the aspect of travel. The most salient difference between the English and the other, unabridged texts, however—again, considering the aspects looked at—is the type of publisher and the paratextual material, the packaging.

Several reasons can thus be assumed to lie behind these different reactions to the text. For one thing, there are genre expectations. Readers of the English translation were clearly positioned to expect mainstream travel writing.¹¹ Secondly, cultural models might play a role. Thirdly, and this aspect goes hand in hand with the first two, the English translation, by being published by a travel publisher rather than a publishing house specializing in literature, might have found a different type of readership. Literature in translation can itself be seen as constituting a genre (Tekgül 2012: 276) and is often thought, at least in the Anglophone world, to attract a more sophisticated audience than non-translated literature (see e.g. Byatt 2013: 10–11 who argues that translated literature usually sits “at the literary end of the publishing spectrum”), while travel writing is often seen as more “low-brow” than literature, whether this opinion is justified or not (Thompson 2011: 31). All three factors may have contributed to the fact that the political content may have fallen partly on unsympathetic or uninterested ears as it stood in the way of easy consumption.

Commercially, the Italian text has had more success than both the English and the German translation.¹² There is only one edition of the English and of the German translation; the German edition is now out of print. For the Italian translation, on the other hand, there have been several editions. Not including the more autobiographical parts in the Italian text thus might have been predominantly motivated by economic reasons rather than by an ideologically driven censorship of those parts that are critical of the Catholic Church and of Pinochet’s regime. As the publication of the first Italian edition predates the publication of the Spanish text by a few months, the more autobiographical parts might simply not have been part of the draft on which the Italian translation is based. The prologue to the Spanish text is dated August 1995 and thus was written three months after the Italian translation was published.

Yet, this omission can nevertheless be viewed as an ideological choice in so far as it tells us something about the Italian publishers' value judgement vis-à-vis the Spanish text. In fact, it does so in two ways. For one thing, there is the value judgement of which parts of the Spanish text are worth translating and therefore made available to an Italian readership, and which are not. Even if the Italian translation is based on an earlier draft that did not include the autobiographical parts, it is most likely that Sepúlveda was already working on these chapters when the first Italian edition was prepared for printing. Hence, a decision could have been taken to postpone publication and include these chapters. The subsequent Italian editions were published after the first Spanish edition, but nevertheless do not feature the text in its entirety. And secondly, there is the presumed value judgement of prioritizing profit over ethical criteria such as clearly signalling that the Italian is not a complete rendering of the Spanish.

Similarly, the publisher of the English translation, too, attaches more value to the travel narrative of Part III than to the more autobiographical parts as this is the part of *Patagonia Express* the paratext as well as the altered sequence highlights and presumably the reason why it has been included in the *Lonely Planet Journeys* series in the first place. In both the Italian and the English translation, the publishers thus express a stance towards the Spanish text; the difference lies in the fact that this stance is more transparent and more prominent in the case of the English translation than it is in the case of the Italian translation as the latter does not signal the omission of substantial parts of the Spanish text—roughly half of the material is omitted—and thus this omission is only detectable when comparing the content of the Italian text to that of the Spanish text (or another, unabbreviated translation).

As I have said above, this case study provides too little data to offer any reliable conclusions—a common problem of small-scale, isolated case studies. However, as James Holmes points out in his seminal article 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies' written in 1972, such individual descriptive case studies "provide the materials for surveys of larger corpuses of translations", and that "one of the eventual goals of product-oriented DTS might possibly be a general history of translation—however ambitious such a goal might sound at this time" (Holmes 2000: 177). Translation theory, too, builds on "the results of descriptive translation studies, in combination with the information available from related fields and disciplines, to evolve principles, theories, and models which will serve to explain and predict what translating and translations are and will be" (Holmes 2000: 177–178). Besides providing data for translation history and theory, descriptive case studies can also raise new questions for further study. This study, for example, prompts questions such as whether other translated titles in the

Loneley Planet Journeys series have experienced a similar genre shift or whether titles with features comparable to those of *Patagonia Express* have experienced a similar genre disambiguation when being translated into English or Italian or any other language, and, more generally, whether genre shifts—both through textual and paratextual means—are a common occurrence in literary translation, what could be the reasons behind such shifts, whether some genres are more prone to this type of shift than others, and how such shifts affect the reading.

Notes

1. "... encerraban un intento de comprensión de dos temas capitales muy bien definidos por Julio Cortázar: la comprensión del sentido de la condición de hombre, y la comprensión del sentido de la condición de artista" (Sepúlveda 2011: 11).
2. This corresponds to the last paragraph of the prologue in the Spanish text, but has been shifted into the past tense to reflect the fact that the paragraph now ends rather than opens the text: "Les invito a acompañarme en un viaje sin itinerario fijo ..." (Sepúlveda 2011: 11) (I invite you to accompany me on a journey without a fixed itinerary...; my translation).
3. Although both the Italian and the Spanish text are published under the title *Patagonia Express*, the copyright pages in the Italian editions by both TEA and Guanda refer to another title, presumably an earlier title of the Spanish draft: a line from a poem by Antonio Machado that, in its Italian translation, appears on the title page of these Italian editions. This different title is the only indication that the Italian *Patagonia Express* might not be based on the Spanish book called *Patagonia Express*. Few readers, if any, will pick up on this, however, and therefore the book is marketed as a translation of the Spanish *Patagonia Express*, rather than the translation of an unpublished, earlier draft.
4. "È camminando che si fa il cammino" ("Al andar se hace el camino") a line from the poem "Caminante no hay Camino" ("Wayfarer, the only way...").
5. The prologue to the Spanish edition, dated August 1995, mentions that the earlier Italian edition is a partial edition, while the subsequent Italian editions by TEA and Guanda make no mention of this fact.
6. "... venía de muy lejos buscando una huella, una sombra, el minúsculo vestigio de mis raíces andaluzas ..." (Sepúlveda 2011: 169).
7. Casini argues that this journey to "ninguna parte", to "nowhere" (Sepúlveda 2011: 18) is "una forma simbólica de referirse a las cárceles pinochetistas donde ha sufrido el encierro y la tortura" (Casini 2004: n.p.) (a symbolic way of referring to the prisons during Pinochet's regime where he has been subjected to confinement and torture; my translation).

8. The Superpocket edition, however, highlights the outward-looking travel aspect in its subtitle, “Il Sud del Mondo, i suoi personaggi, le sue storie: lo straordinario universo del grande scrittore cileno” (Carmignani 1998) (The world’s South, its characters, its stories: the extraordinary universe of the great Chilean writer; my translation).
9. One reviewer of the Italian text states that it is difficult to tell what the book is about but continues that it does not matter and that the text flows well (Ilaria C. on 13 February 2015, Amazon.it 2016).
10. Although there are no negative comments for the German translation, one of the readers (who awarded the only neutral rating) comments on the mismatch between paratext and text, remarking that the paratext sells you the illusion of a picturesque travelogue while the text confronts you with accounts of torture (Anonymous on 28 November 1999, Amazon.de 2015). While the inside blurb does not mention torture, it does however state that the book traces a life journey that starts in Chile and then, exiled under Pinochet, continues in Argentina. The fact that Sepúlveda was exiled under Pinochet is also repeated in the short biographical note after the inside blurb.
11. Readers of the English translation were positioned to expect mainstream travel writing from the outset; something similar might have occurred with the readership of the Italian translation as potential readers learn about the book through reviews and recommendations and thus these readers might expect lightweight reading even if it is not necessarily packaged as such. The reviews on Amazon.it date from 2012 to 2016. The first Italian edition was published in 1995; the first Italian edition that did not appear within a travel-writing series was published 1998. It is possible that there would have been more negative reviews due to unmet expectations if earlier reviews by readers of the Guanda editions, the Superpocket edition or the TEA edition had been included.
12. Despite achieving “considerable fame in Europe both as a committed writer and as a political-ecological activist”, Sepúlveda’s main readership is generally to be found in Italy (Maiorani 2004: 466).

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