Lit

THREE TRANSLATIONS
OF
HEDDA GABLER

A SEMINAR PAPER

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School of

the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Teaching

---

by

Lois G. Nelson

December 18, 1972

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

GRADUATE COLLEGE

Candidate: Lois G. Nelson

I recommend acceptance of this seminar paper to the Graduate College in partial fulfillment of this candidate's requirements for the degree Master of Science in Teaching. The candidate has completed his oral seminar report.

Dec. 21, 1972 — Date

Roger L Parsons — Seminar Paper Advisor

This seminar paper is approved for the Graduate College:

Dec 21/1972 — Date

James H. Nelson — Dean, Graduate School

ABSTRACT

The three translations of Henrik Ibsen's Hedda Gabler done by William Archer in 1891, Eva LeGallienne in 1928, and Michael Meyer in 1960, revealed significant verbal differences. There were differences owing to the change in language with time, differences in English and American usage, differences in the way French expressions were used to indicate sophistication, and differences in the ways of indicating degrees of intimacy between the characters.

The survey revealed that while some words had become obsolete with time, others had gained in usage. There was evidence of word differences because of the usage of England and of America that involved not only word designations but also a political reference to a national cabinet member. Certain French expressions were seen to have become more familiar with the passage of time, others less. The ways of indicating degrees of intimacy between the character's varied. Each of the translators had adopted his own way of rendering into English the Norwegian formal and informal "you."

The differences were surveyed in the light of each translator's statement of purpose. Each of the translators was well qualified for his task.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss some significant verbal differences between three English translations of Henrik Ibsen's Hedda Gabler. The three translations are those of William Archer in 1891, Eva LeGallienne in 1928, and Michael Meyer in 1960.

All of the translators had excellent qualifications for the task. William Archer, though born in Scotland in 1856, grew up in Norway, and was therefore bilingual in English and Norwegian. He spent his adult life in England where he was prominent in literary society as a drama critic and translator.[1] He also wrote a few plays.[2]

Archer stated that since Ibsen was the first writer of modern realistic plays whose works had been completely and faithfully rendered into English, he had had no precedent to guide him, but he had attempted "to strike a golden mean between clumsy literalness and licentious paraphrase," choosing "when the occasion arose, to subordinate fluency to fidelity."[3]

While Archer's translation had been made mainly with a reading public in mind, the second translator, Eva LeGalli-

[1]Michael Meyer, Ibsen: A Biography (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971), p. 441.

[2]"Archer, William A.," Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1969).

[3]William Archer, trans., Rosmersholm: The Lady From the Sea: Hedda Gabler: By Henrik Ibsen (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n. d.), pp. x-xii.

enne, had primarily the actor and viewing public in mind. Although LeGallienne praised the service that Archer had performed, she said that she found his translation wanting for her purposes as an actress, as being "too gentile [sic]" and "Victorian" in flavor. She also asserted that Archer sometimes "translated the Norwegian idioms so literally that they frequently entirely failed to convey Ibsen's thought," and that "they presented a series of stumbling blocks to the reader's mind and were tongue-twisters to the actor."[4]

LeGallienne, too, was well qualified to undertake the task of translation. She knew the Dano-Norwegian language of Ibsen, Riksmaal, because she had spent holidays and summers in her childhood years in Copenhagen with her maternal grandmother, and so was able to go back to the original of Ibsen when she made her translation. Born in London, she began her acting career at the age of twelve, and before she was eighteen, she emigrated to America in further pursuit of it. Although her formal education ended by the time she was fifteen, she gained stature in America both as an actress and as a director.[5]

Like both Archer and LeGallienne, the third translator, Michael Meyer, was also able to go back to Ibsen's original

[4]Eva LeGallienne, trans., Six Plays by Henrik Ibsen (New York: The Modern Library, 1957), pp. viii-ix.

[5]Eva LeGallienne, At 33 (New York: Longman's, Green and Co., 1934). pp. 15-30.

Norwegian text. Well known for his translations from the Scandinavian languages, Michael Meyer was born in London in 1921, and now lives part of the time in both London and Sweden, where he is a lecturer at Upsala University. Like Archer, Meyer has written plays; and like LeGallienne, he translated Hedda for a stage performance, David Ross having commissioned him to translate it for Anne Meacham's performance in New York City.[6]

Meyer stated that his intention was not to modernize Ibsen's dialogue, but to try to "translate it into a language common to the period in which his plays are set, and to the present. I have, however, retained certain turns of phrase which look Victorian on the printed page but have proved effective in the theatre when spoken by an actor in nineteenth-century costume in a nineteenth-century room."[7]

Since the translations were written at intervals of thirty to forty years apart, one would expect that there would be some differences between them owing to changes in the language with time. Three examples may be given here to suggest some of the differences that resulted (and others will come up later while other kinds of differences are

[6]Michael Meyer, trans., The Pillars of Society, The Wild Duck, Hedda Gabler, Little Eyolf (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1961). p. 277. and preliminary remarks, n. p.

[7]Michael Meyer, trans., The Lady From the Sea, The Master Builder, John Gabriel Borkman, When We Dead Awaken (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960), p. 375.

being discussed). In Archer and LeGallienne, Tesman said, when he arrived home on a warm day carrying an armful of books, "I'm positively perspiring" (A-290, L-376). Meyer changed the line to "I'm positively sweating" (M-313),[8] using the forthright word, "sweating," that would have indicated a lack of gentility before the post World War II trend to shy away from euphemisms. Thus, the 1933 Shorter Oxford English Dictionary notes as its first entry for the verb, "sweat," "Avoided in refined speech in the ordinary physical senses."[9]

Another word that became obsolete with time was "steamboat," which, in Archer, Berta used to refer to the boat that brought Hedda and Tesman home (A-244). As a matter of fact, steam propulsion in boats was already on its way out in Europe about the time Archer was writing, but because of the depression it was still used in inland waterways in the United States when LeGallienne wrote.[10] So LeGallienne still used a similar word, "steamer" (L-344). But by the time Meyer wrote, the word would have seemed incongruous and he used instead the all-inclusive word, "boat" (M-278).

[8]Subsequent citations of the translation of Hedda Gabler by Archer, LeGallienne, and Meyer are to those editions specified in footnotes 3, 4, and 6, respectively, and will be given in the text of this paper, using the form employed here.

[9]The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1933).

[10]"ship," Chambers Encyclopaedia (London: International Learning Systems Corporation Limited, 1968).

Meyer did approximately the same thing when he opted for "bag" (M-280) to refer to Tesman's "portmanteau," in Archer (A-247), or "suitcase," in LeGallienne (L-346). Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary designates a "portmanteau" as "a traveling bag; esp. a large gladstone bag."[11] LeGallienne's modernization to "suitcase" was in keeping with the rest of her translation. But by the 1960's, what is meant by the word is, according to Webster 7, a "traveling bag; esp. one that is rigid, flat and rectangular," which designation would not have approximated either the item used in Archer's 1890's or in Meyer's 1960's. It was with the advent of post World War II air travel that the rigid and weighty suitcase gave way to a light-weight bag made of cloth. That the choice of a word to refer to that article was a delicate one is well indicated by the article in the Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage (1957) on "baggage; luggage." "Baggage used to be the American word, luggage the English. But in recent years luggage has come into currency in America too. Airplanes and trains have luggage racks and what used to be the trunk of an automobile is now often called the luggage compartment. In almost all combinations, however, it remains baggage; baggage room, baggage agent, baggage check, baggage car. He would be a bold man who, west of the Hudson, dared to refer to it as the luggage

[11] Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1963).

van."[12] Meyer's selection of "bag," short for "baggage," was a good one, one that would not call attention to itself either in England or America.

Another class of differences between the three translations was that between English and American usage. Archer was English. LeGallienne, though born in London, emigrated to the United States in 1914, fourteen years before her translation of Hedda. Meyer, though he translated Hedda for an American production, is English. The three examples that are given here show that Archer and Meyer tended to use words more indigenous to England, while LeGallienne chose words more indigenous to America. Both Archer and Meyer had Mrs. Elvsted say that Lovborg's book "came out a fortnight ago" (A-264, M-293). LeGallienne, however, had her say "a couple of weeks ago" (L-358). The entry in The American College Dictionary supports LeGallienne's alteration: "fortnight: Chiefly Brit., in the U.S. literary use only. . . ."[13]

A second difference had to do with the way the evening meal was designated. In Archer the maid, Berta, announced that "Tea is laid in the dining-room, ma'am" (A-318), which Meyer approximated (M-335). LeGallienne's Berta, however, said, "Supper's ready, ma'am (L-396). In the United States

[12]Bergen Evans and Cornelia Evans, A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage (New York: Random House, 1957).

[13]The American College Dictionary (New York: Random House, 1966).

"tea" would not indicate that a meal was served, but the Oxford English Dictionary shows that in England "tea" means "a meal or entertainment at which tea is served; esp. an ordinary afternoon or evening meal, at which the usual beverage is tea (but sometimes cocoa, chocolate, coffee, or other substitute)."[14] (The expression "is laid," used by Archer and Meyer, is English too.)

The translators found it necessary to make some distinctions in political designations owing to differences in British and American usage. Archer had Hedda say she wondered if Tesman could "get into the ministry" (A-295), a statement which in the United States would immediately suggest the clergy. LeGallienne knew that and had Hedda say she wondered if her husband could "become . . . Secretary of State" (L-379). The World Book Encyclopedia Dictionary confirmed that LeGallienne had made a necessary change for her United States audience, when it listed the meanings for "minister," in the following order, "2. the ministers of a church; clergy. 3. the ministers of a govt, esp. of the British or European govt . . . that are . . . comparable to cabinet members in the U.S."[15] Meyer saw fit to revert to the usage of England, and had Hedda wonder if Tesman could

[14] The Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1961).

[15] The World Book Encyclopedia Dictionary (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1964).

"become Prime Minister" (M-317), but he did so in such a way that there could be no possible chance of the audience's thinking that the clergy had been referred to. In this instance, Meyer, though English, seemed to be aware of the needs of the American audience for whom his version was originally intended.

Another interesting difference between the three translations was in their way of handling Tesman's verbal tics, a matter commented on by several authorities. Tesman frequently used such expressions as, "No, for heaven's sake, Hedda darling--don't touch those dangerous things! For my sake, Hedda! Eh?" (A-282); "Well, isn't that splendid, Hedda? Think of that!" (L-358); "Well, anyway, we have our home, Hedda. By Jove, yes. The home we dreamed of. And set our hearts on. What?" (M-306). A count of the number of such expressions used by the three translators in Act I showed the following:

Archer	LeGallienne	Meyer
42 eh's	36 eh's	42 what's
7 think of that's	9 think of that's	
1 just think	1 just think	
1 only think		
1 fancy that		7 fancy that's
7 fancy's	1 fancy	1 fancy
		9 By Jove's
59	47	59

As can be seen, LeGallienne used approximately 20% fewer such expressions than Archer or Meyer. Her reason for doing so was that she felt that Tesman should not be made to seem too tedious: "It is important that Tesman should never feel ridiculous or 'funny.' He is highly self-important [but] in a pleasant way. . . . Tesman's tricks of speech--'just think' or 'think of that--eh'--(the 'fancy that' of the Archer version is pure Archerism; in the Norwegian he says 'Taenk det'--but Archer has a way of fancying things up)--should never be unduly stressed because it is a habit of speech only that could, nevertheless be annoying,"[16] (One might observe in passing that while it may be true that Archer fancied things up, he did not do so in this instance. "Fancy that" may not have been a literal translation, but it wasn't fancy, but rather a perfectly ordinary expression meaning the same thing as her own "think of that." And LeGallienne herself in using "eh," as Archer did, rather than "what," as Meyer did, was in effect doing what Archer had done with the "fancy that" expression, using an expression which was not a literal translation but a substitute which was idiomatic enough and meant the same thing. See the quotation from Holtan in the next paragraph.)

Meyer, however, saw fit to use the exact number of tics that Archer had. He made the observation that Ibsen had

[16]Eva LeGallienne, trans., Hedda Gabler (New York: New York University Press, 1955, p. 10.

purposely added Tesman's tics between his first and last draft of the play. "Tesman is a much less ridiculous character in the early draft of the play than Ibsen subsequently made him. His maddening repetition of genteel phrases such as 'Fancy that!' was added during revision."[17] Support for Meyer's and Archer's position was provided by Holtan, who wrote, "A clear suggestion of the prosaic dullness of Hedda's husband is found in his consistant iteration of 'Hvad?' and 'Taenk det.'" He cited the work of the Norwegian researcher, Else Host, who, in Hedda Gabler En Monografi, noted that there were "eighty five what's in the text and almost as many think of that's."[18]

Now Lucas to a degree supported LeGallienne's position when he wrote: "Possibly Ibsen made Tesman a little too ludicrous and foolish--all the more reason that producers should not, otherwise an audience may begin growing incredulous that the fastidiously aesthetic Hedda could conceivably marry such an owl. Tesman must be allowed sufficient attractions to make it possible for Hedda to swallow him to begin with."[19] But he recognized that Tesman did use those expressions very frequently and suggested that they characterized

[17]Meyer, Pillars, p. 267.

[18]Orley I. Holtan, Mythic Patterns in Ibsen's Last Plays (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1970), pp. 87, 139.

[19]Frank L. Lucas, Ibsen and Strindberg (New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 223.

him in another way. They derived naturally out of his past: "Tesman has acquired some fussy mannerisms of the old (from his sweet old aunts)--for example, a tic of saying 'Just think of that!' as if he had been born only yesterday and could not get over the surprise of it. . . . He is fond of 'What!'--such prosaic quirks drive the neurotic Hedda to frenzy."[20] While it may be too much to say that they drove her to a frenzy, they certainly did annoy her, as indicated by her ironically imitating the mannerisms in Act IV (A-362, L-427, M-369).

There were some interesting differences between the translations in the way certain French expressions were used. Hedda and Brack, who were more socially sophisticated than the other characters in the play, used French words when they conversed, sometimes words suggesting the covert relationship between them. Meyer indicated his awareness of that when he stated, "The main problem in Hedda Gabler is to contrast the snobbish and consciously upper-class speech of Hedda and . . . Brack with the naive and homely way of talking shared by Miss Tesman, Bertha and George Tesman. . . ."[21] For example, when Tesman, Brack and Hedda were conversing, Tesman asked Brack if he didn't think Hedda "looked flourishing?" Hedda, always touchy regarding her femininity (in this

[20]Lucas, p. 224.

[21]Meyer, Pillars, p. 460.

case a reference to her pregnancy), found an excuse to leave the room, saying, in Archer and Meyer, "au revoir" to Brack (A-276, M-302). LeGallienne merely had Hedda say, "Excuse me" (L-366), which was in keeping with her stated purpose to "use ordinary everyday speech,"[22] but the sentence lost one of its functions.

A second difference involving the use of a French word also involved the consideration of a change in the language with time. "Soiree" appears to have been, about 1890, in the process of transition from a "naturalized foreign word" (which would not be italicized) to a "non-naturalized foreign word"--that is, a word retaining its "foreign appearance and to some extent [its] foreign sound" (which would be italicized).[23] The Oxford English Dictionary shows instances of the unitalicized usage of "soiree" in 1820, 1836, and 1856, but the 1892 entry is italicized. Archer did not italicize "soiree," when Brack told Hedda that Lovborg "landed in Mademoiselle Diana's rooms" where she was "giving a soiree, to a select circle of her lady friends and their admirers" (A-331). Meyer did, having Brack say that Lovborg "spent the latter half of last night . . . participating in an exceedingly animated soiree" (M-345). LeGallienne, however, avoided the word, having Brack say that Lovborg "turn [ed]

[22]Eva LeGallienne, "Ibsen, The Shy Giant," Saturday Review (August 14, 1971), p. 26.

[23]The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, p. vii.

up at Mlle. Diana's residence" where she "was giving a party" (L-405). Perhaps she realized that "soiree" was no longer a common and natural "naturalized foreign word" but had become a "non-naturalized foreign word." Still, by leaving it out, she may have failed to use one means of indicating the greater sophistication of Hedda and Brack.

A third case in point involved the use of a French word that experienced the opposite kind of change, becoming more familiar with the passage of time. When Archer used "tete-a-tete" it was a "non-naturalized foreign word," as indicated by his italicizing it, that suggested the upper class speech of Hedda and Brack. By LeGallienne's time, it was a "naturalized foreign word," as indicated by her not italicizing it, and therefore perhaps the word would no longer suggest the sophisticated speech of Hedda and Brack. Meyer, therefore, found it necessary to introduce a new French expression, "a deux," which means the same as "tete-a-tete" but is less familiar and more sophisticated. In the Archer version, "tete-a-tete" came up twice. The first time was when Hedda and Brack discussed the fact that they had both missed the opportunity for a "confidential talk," or "tete-a-tete," during Hedda's absence (A-285). LeGallienne had them say, in the manner of everyday speech, that they both wished for a "real talk. Just a twosome" (L-373). Meyer, however, had them have "a talk . . . a deux" (M-310). The second use of the expression in Archer, came where Hedda confided to

Brack that, even though she grew restless, she would rather metaphorically "keep her seat" in the railway carriage and "continue the tete-a-tete" than jump out and have someone "look at [her] ankles" (A-289). This time LeGallienne left the word in: Hedda would rather "continue the tete-a-tete" than jump out and let someone "stare at [her] legs" (L-375), but she did not italicize the expression. This indicated that it had gained familiar English usage since Archer's time and so no longer seemed to suggest sophistication. Consequently, though LeGallienne here used the expression, she failed to get the effect intended just as much as she failed in the previous instances when she did not use the French expression. Meyer again used "a deux": he had Hedda say she would rather "stay . . . sitting in the compartment. A deux," than "jump out" and have someone look at [her] legs" (M-312-13). (The difference between Archer's "look at [her] ankles" and LeGallienne's and Meyer's "stare [or look] at [her] legs" also indicated something about the difference between the 1890's and the 1930's and 1960's.)

The ways in which characters addressed each other were often subtle indications of various degrees of intimacy between them. There were significant differences between the ways the three translators handled that matter too. In the Archer and Meyer translations, Hedda addressed her husband as "Tesman" throughout the play, with three exceptions. The first time she called him "Jorgen," in Archer, was when she

wanted to taunt him after he told her they could not afford the luxuries of a footman or saddle-horse. She told Tesman she would then amuse herself witn "My pistols, Jorgen" (A-282). LeGallienne and Meyer had her make approximately the same response (L-370, M-307), but LeGallienne lost the stinging effect because, in her translation, Hedda regularly called Tesman by his given name (L-351, 352, 356, plus 417, 427), no doubt because of her desire to make the language seem natural. This was the case also in the third instance when Hedda called her husband by his first name in Archer and Meyer, when at the end of Act IV, before Brack, she was aping Tesman's manner of expression and asked him if he and Mrs. Elvsted were getting along with the manuscript reconstruction (A-362, M-369). The most important indication, however, that a translator should not allow Hedda to call her husband by his given name except for rare occasions occurred at the beginning of Act IV when Hedda told Tesman that she had burned Lovborg's manuscript, "for your sake, Jorgen" (A-348, L-417, M-358). All three translators could show that Tesman was delighted that Hedda had done something <u>for him</u>, but LeGallienne, because she had Hedda regularly call Tesman by his first name, could not indicate how pleased Tesman was that his wife finally had spoken to him in that way indicating intimacy. Archer was able to have Tesman say ". . . you've begun to call me by my Christian name too! Think of that! Oh, Aunt Julia will be so happy" (A-349).

Meyer had Tesman say, "And you--you called me George! For the first time! Fancy that! Oh, it'll make Auntie Juju so happy" (M-358-59). LeGallienne had to omit that speech from her translation. That was a serious omission, for, as F. L. Lucas observed, "Tesman was intoxicated by the unlooked for fondness of being called Jorgen."[24]

The fact that Hedda never seemed disposed to call her husband by his given name was also possibly a subtle way that Ibsen had of indicating Hedda's lack of a feeling of intimacy in the Tesman clan, all of whom operated on a first-name basis. Meyer must have seen the implications of the use of given names because he inserted a given name for Tesman's late father in Miss Tesman's lines twice: first, when she was welcoming Tesman home, saying "Oh, George, it's so wonderful to have you back, and be able to see you with my own eyes again! Poor dear Joachim's own son!" (M-281), and secondly, when she was remarking that Tesman's ability for making notes, filing and indexing was the same as his father's: "Poor dear Joachim was just the same" (M-285). In Archer she referred to her "brother's own boy" (A-248), and her "brother's son" (A-254). LeGallienne omitted the first reference to Tesman's deceased father (L-347), and in the second instance had Miss Tesman say "You're not your father's son for nothing" (L-350), which certainly seemed less intimate.

[24]Lucas, p. 237

Two of the translators themselves commented on the way Hedda was addressed by Brack. When Archer had Brack say to Hedda, "Come, let us have a cozy little chat, Miss Hedda" (A-285), he provided a footnote saying, "Brack, in the original, says 'Mrs. Hedda'; but as this is contrary to English usage, and as the note of familiarity would have been lacking in 'Mrs. Tesman,' I have ventured to suppose that he ignores her marriage and reverts to the form of address no doubt customary between them of old."[25] LeGalliene commented that, "In the Norwegian text Brack calls Hedda: 'Mrs. Hedda' when they are alone, as opposed to his formal 'Mrs. Tesman' when people are present. This seems to me to be a valuable indication, and one which Archer has chosen to ignore, probably because he thought it might sound odd in English."[26] Thus, LeGallienne had, "Let's have a really pleasant little talk, Mrs. -- Hedda" (L-372). (After that, though, he merely said "Mrs. Hedda.") Meyer also had Brack say "Mrs. Hedda" (M-310), except that he did not use the dash between "Mrs." and "Hedda." (Meyer was perhaps more accurate here, for the dash LeGallienne added may emphasize the intimacy more than was intended.) LeGallienne and Meyer were probably more correct to opt for Ibsen's "Mrs. Hedda." At any rate Archer's rationale for changing this to "Miss Hedda" was doubtful, because Hedda just a little later told Lovborg he could no longer address

[25]Archer, p. 285

[26]LeGallienne, Hedda Gabler, p. 28.

her in the old familiar way (A-305, L-387, M-425). Of course she might not have felt the same way about both men; and "Miss Hedda" is probably somewhat more formal than the informal pronoun used by Lovborg which provoked Hedda's response.

This conversation between Hedda and Lovborg brings up another problem of the translators, one having to do with the fact that the Norwegian language has both a formal and informal "you," "de" and "du," respectifely. Archer's translation differed from LeGallienne's and Meyer's concerning how to render the difference between those two forms into English. Archer used the "du" and, realizing that its significance probably would not be known by the English reader, explained what it meant in a footnote (A-260), an unsatisfactory solution, of course--and no solution at all for a production of the play. The other translators did better. For example, Archer had Tesman say to Hedda, who often treated his aunt condescendingly, "If you could only prevail on yourself to say <u>du</u> to her" (A-260). LeGallienne's solution was to have Tesman plainly say, "If you could only be a little more affectionate with her. . ." (L-354). Meyer's Tesman said, "If you could bring yourself to call her Auntie Juju" (M-290). Meyer commented on his use of that name: "George Tesman has unconsciously acquired the nanny-like mode of speech of the old aunts who brought him up. He addressed Aunt Julianna as Tante Julle, a particularly irritating and babylike abbrev-

iation which drives Hedda mad every time he uses it. The last straw is when he asks her to address the old lady by it too. To render this as Aunt Julie, as has usually been done, is completely to miss the point; it must be a ridiculous nickname such as Juju."[27] It is clear that one would not use an absurd nickname like that except with a person one felt close to. Both LeGallienne and Meyer covered the situation nicely without using "du."

A second instance involving that problem occurred when Hedda requested Mrs. Elvsted, an old schoolmate, to use the informal "du" when she was talking to her: "At school we said du to each other and we called each other by our Christian names. . . . You must say du to me and call me Hedda. . . . I shall say du to you . . . and call you my dear Thora" (A-268). Again Archer provided an explanatory footnote. Though the "du" means nothing in English, the difference between calling someone "Mrs. Tesman" and "Hedda" has the same implication in English as in Norwegian. So LeGallienne had Hedda say, "At school we always called each other by our first names . . . so you must call me Hedda . . . and I shall call you my darling little Thora" (L-360). Meyer's solution was approximately the same (M-296). The same difference between Archer and the two later translators was seen in one more instance. When, in Archer, Lovborg, who was a

[27]Meyer, Pillars, p. 460.

previous intimate acquaintance of Hedda, used the familiar "du" to her, she replied, "If you continue to say du to me I won't even talk to you" (A-305). LeGallienne simply had Hedda say, "If you go on calling me Hedda, I won't even talk to you" (L-387). Meyer's solution was the same (M-325).

While in the case of "du" the inclusion of a Norwegian expression created a problem which had to be solved by finding ways to omit it, in another case Meyer found that he could add to the Norwegian flavor of the play by using another Norwegian expression. When Lovborg, a previous problem drinker, who had been abstaining for several years, was urged by Hedda, Tesman and Brack to drink a "stirrup cup," he declined. But after he heard that his "comrade," Mrs. Elvsted, feared he would not be able to maintain his abstinence in the city, he was discouraged and he drank a toast to the two women, saying, in Archer and LeGallienne, "Your health, Thea," and "Here's to your health too, Mrs. Tesman" (A-314, L-393). Meyer, however, had Lovborg say, "Skoal, Thea!" and "Skoal to you too, Mrs. Tesman" (M-332). Now "skoal" is a word that, while perfectly ordinary in Norwegian, might not have been ordinarily known at the time of Archer's and LeGallienne's translations. It is not even listed in the Shorter OED (1933) and the citation in the OED itself includes an entry stating that it had been "in early use only in Scotland," and was presently considered a "non-naturalized foreign word." But, while still carrying a Norwegian flavor, the

word has come into the English language since then and is listed in most recent desk dictionaries.

In conclusion, it may be useful to speak at somewhat greater length then was done in the introduction of the characteristics Archer hoped his translation would have, of the reaction of later critics and translators to it, and of the problems involved in deciding what considerations should most influence a translator in making the choices he inevitably has to make.

In the "Prefatory Note" to the Authorized English Edition of his translation of Hedda Gabler, Archer set forth at some length the principles that guided him in his translation:

> The great difficulty has been, of course, to strike the golden mean between clumsy literalness and licentious paraphrase. . . . Nothing would have been easier than to make the translation read smoothly by the simple process of ignoring difficulties. Let me give a trifling instance of my meaning. A friend who has been good enough to read the proofs of Hedda Gabler objects to Miss Tesman's first speech in the last Act: "Here you see me in the garb of woe," asking "Why not simply, 'Here you see me in mourning'?" My reply is that in the original Miss Tesman uses a slightly stilted and formal, I might almost say romantic, phrase ("Her kommer jeg i sorgens farver"), and that, rightly or wrongly, I hold myself bound to indicate this. Very likely "the garb of woe"

> may not be the phrase best adapted for the purpose; but the mere word "mourning" gives no hint of a verbal nicety which Ibsen certainly introduced with deliberate intention, as befitting the character of "Tante Julle." On the stage, it is almost impossible, and would often be injudicious, to pay regard to such minutiae; but in the printed text it has been my principle, when occasion arose, to subordinate fluency to fidelity. I do not assert that this is the right principle, and still less that I have adhered to it with absolute consistency. I merely wish to explain that vernacular ease has not always been my primary consideration, and where it seems lacking, there are generally reasons, good, bad, or indifferent, for the deficiency.[28]

It will be seen that he believed he had done his best to achieve accuracy even if that meant at times sacrificing "vernacular ease."

Critics and translators since then have in general agreed that he provided an accurate translation. LeGallienne said that "Archer's devotion to Ibsen as an artist made him overconscientious: he clung assiduously to the letter."[29] Bradbrook said "Archer's translations have the great merit of being literally honest,"[30] a comment that Raymond Williams

[28]Archer, pp. xi-xii.

[29]LeGallienne, Six Plays, p. vii.

agreed with.[31]

Sometimes, however, they felt that he had made Ibsen's speech sound too Victorian, too much like Victorian stage language. Williams believed that Archer was in error because he put Ibsen's play into "Archer-English, that strange compact of angularity, flatness and Victorian lyricism [that] was generally taken as Ibsen's own style."[32] LeGallienne stated that "Archer makes Ibsen's dialogue sound like Pinero with a slightly foreign accent."[33] Archer might not have agreed (see his comment on "the garb of woe"), but, of course, there is no way to avoid the effects of the passage of time. A Victorian translation is found to sound Victorian in some ways.

The critics and translators also agreed with Archer that he had often sacrificed vernacular ease, and they were inclined to consider that a more serious fault than Archer had. Some felt his translation was so unidiomatic as to be misleading. LeGallienne said Archer translated "many of the Norwegian idioms so literally that they frequently fail to convey Ibsen's thought."[34] Archer's translation, according

[30]M. C. Bradbrook, Ibsen the Norwegian: A Revaluation (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1966), p. 24.

[31]Raymond Williams, Drama; From Ibsen to Eliot (New York Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 4.

[32]Williams, p. 41.

[33]LeGallienne, Six Plays, p. vii.

[34]LeGallienne, Six Plays, p. vii.

to Rolf Fjelde, resulted in "a kind of artificial patois, a stage-Norwegian dialect distinctive enough to merit being dubbed "Old High Ibsenese,'" Fjelde believed an Ibsen translator sould "employ the style which the original author would have used if he had written in the language of those who are to read him in translation."[35] Bradbrook remarked that "Archer's translations . . . are in the translator's equivalent of Basic English, without form, or comeliness,"[36]

LeGallienne was interested in making the Hedda play more actable too: "Archer's translations are--particularly from an actor's point of view--quite literally unspeakable";[37] and he "translated the Norwegian idioms so literally that they . . . . were tongue-twisters to the actor."[38] It is important to remember that the lines have to be speakable. R. V. Forslund, who had seen his translation of another Ibsen play, Little Eyolf, performed in America and then in England, said he had to change the American English into British idiom English so "the actors could identify themselves more closely . . . . This was a reversal of what was experienced by American actors performing British translations."[39]

[35]Rolf Fjelde, trans., Four Major Plays (New York: The New American Library, 1965), p. xxxiii.

[36]Bradbrook, p. 24.

[37]LeGallienne, "Ibsen, The Shy Giant," p. 26.

[38]LeGallienne, Six Plays, p. viii-ix.

[39]R. V. Forslund, trans. Four Plays of Ibsen (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Company, 1968), p. vii.

Possibly it is more important to attain vernacular ease than it is to be literally accurate. Archer seemed to think so himself, at least for translations intended for the stage. Perhaps Forslund adequately summed up the dilemma when, in 1968, he remarked that today "translations are made for the living stage, and secondarily for libraries and reading rooms." He said that he hoped the language of his translation would never draw attention to itself, because "it is merely a means to an end, a medium through which the author's thought and intent reach us."[40] Ibsen himself made comments that suggest he would have agreed. In a letter written in 1872, he said that "to translate well is a difficult matter. It is not simply a question of rendering the meaning, but also, to a certain extent, of remodelling the expression and the metaphors, of accomodating the outward form to the structure and requirements of the language into which one is translating. . . . The foreign effect which it [the foreign metre] produces on the language acts like a disturbing melody between the reader and the sense of what he is reading."[41] Furthermore, Ibsen's advice to his first American translator, Professor Rasmus B. Anderson of the University of Wisconsin, had been "to see that the language of translation is kept as close as possible to ordinary everyday speech; all turns of phrase and expression which beling only to books should most

[40]Forslund, p. vii-ix.

[41]LeGallienne, Six Plays, p. vii.

carefully be avoided in dramatic works, especially mine, which aim to produce in the . . . spectator a feeling that he . . . is . . . witnessing a slice of real life."[42]

Still, doing this may result in the loss of many of the qualities of the original. As Eric Bentley remarked, "an Ibsen sentence often performs four or five functions at once. It sheds light on the character speaking, on the character spoken to, on the character spoken about; it furthers the plot; it functions ironically in conveying to the audience a meaning different from that conveyed to the characters."[43] (James W. McFarlane made a similar comment.[44]) There may be no way for a translation to do all one would like it to--be accurate, achieve vernacular ease, perform the functions Bentley listed.

Two years after Meyer completed his translation, Lucas wrote: "Ibsen is hard to translate. Older versions were often stiff; modern ones often tend to be vulgar. And neither seem to me, as a rule, quite accurate enough."[45]

[42]LeGallienne, "Ibsen, The Shy Giant," p. 26.

[43]Eric R. Bentley, The Playwright as Thinker (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1946), p. 125.

[44]James W. McFarlane, Ibsen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 12.

[45]Lucas, p. 297

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The American College Dictionary. New York: Random House, 1966.

Anderson, Isaac, trans. Scandinavian Literature from Brandes to our Day. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1929.

Archer, William and Edmund Gosse, trans. Hedda Gabler, in The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen, Vol. X. London: Heinemann, 1907.

Arup, Jens and James Walter McFarlane. The Lady from the Sea; Hedda Gabler; The Master Builder, in The Oxford Ibsen, Vol. VII. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Bentley, Eric R. The Playwright as Thinker: A Study of Drama in Modern Times. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946.

Beyer, Harald. A History of Norwegian Literature, trans. and ed. by Einar Haugen. New York: New York University Press, 1956.

Bradbrook, M. C. Ibsen the Norwegian; A Revaluation. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1966.

Chambers Encyclopaedia. London: International Learning Systems Corporation Limited, 1968.

Chater, A. G., trans. From Ibsen's Workshop; Notes, Scenarios, and Drafts of the Modern Plays, in The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen, Vol. XII. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911.

Dobrée, Bonamy. The Lamp and the Lute; Studies in Seven Authors. London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1964.

Ellis-Fermor, Una, trans. Hedda Gabler and other Plays. Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1967.

Evans, Bergen and Cornelia Evans. A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage. New York: Random House, 1957.

Downs, Brian W. Ibsen: The Intellectual Background. Cambridge: University Press, 1948.

Downs, Brian W. Modern Norwegian Literature 1860-1918.

Downs, Brian W. A Study of Six Plays by Ibsen. Cambridge: University Press, 1950.

Durbach, Errol. "The Apotheosis of Hedda Gabler," Scandinavian Studies, Autumn, 1971, pp. 143-159.

Encyclopaedia Britannica. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1969.

Funk & Wagnall's New "Standard" Dictionary of the English Language. New York: Funk & Wagnall Company, 1958.

Fjelde, Rolf, trans. Four Major Plays [by Ibsen]. New York: The New American Library, 1965.

Fjelde, Rolf, ed. Ibsen: A Collection of Critical Essays. Engelwood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965.

Forslund, R. V., trans. Four Plays of Ibsen. Philadelphia: Chilton Book Company, 1968.

Gosse, Edmund. Henrik Ibsen. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924.

Grene, David. Reality and the Heroic Pattern; The Last Plays of Ibsen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

Grondahl, Ingebright C. Chapters in Norwegian Literature. London: Glyndal, 1923.

Heiberg, Hans. Ibsen: A Portrait of an Artist, trans. by Joan Tate. Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1967.

Heller, Otto. Henrik Ibsen; Plays and Problems. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1912.

Holtan, Orley I. Mythic Patterns in Ibsen's Last Plays. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1970.

Huneker, James G. Iconoclasts: A Book of Dramatists. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905.

Ibsen, Bergliot. The Three Ibsens; Memories of Henrik Ibsen, Suzannah Ibsen and Sigurd Ibsen, trans. by Gerik Schjelderup. New York: Hutchinson, 1951.

Jorgenson, Theodore. History of Norwegian Literature. New York: Haskell House, 1970.

Jorgenson, Theodore. Norwegian-English School Dictionary. Northfield, Minnesota: St. Olaf College Press, 1946.

Jorgenson, Theodore. A Study in Art and Personality. Northfield, Minnesota: St. Olaf College Press, 1945.

Kaasa, Harris. "Ibsen and the Theologians," Scandinavian Studies, Autumn, pp. 356-384.

Knight, G. Wilson. Ibsen. London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966.

Koht, Halvdan. The Life of Ibsen. New York: The American Scandinavian Foundation, W. W. Norton, Inc., 1931.

Koht, Halvdan and Sigmund Skaard. The Voice of Norway. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944.

LeGallienne, Eva. At 33. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1934.

LeGallienne, Eva. "Ibsen; The Shy Giant," Saturday Review, August 14, 1971, pp. 23-26, 35-36.

LeGallienne, Eva. With a Quiet Heart. New York: The Modern Library, 1951.

LeGallienne, Eva, trans. Hedda Gabler. New York: New York University Press, 1955.

LeGallienne, Eva, trans. The Master Builder. New York: New York University Press, 1955.

LeGallienne, Eva, trans. Six Plays by Henrik Ibsen. New York: The Modern Library, 1957.

Lucas, Frank L. Ibsen and Strindberg. New York: Macmillan, 1962.

McFarlane, James, ed. Henrik Ibsen: A Critical Anthology, Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, Inc., 1970.

McFarlane, James W. Ibsen and the Temper of Norwegian Literature. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

McFarlane, James W. ed. Ibsen. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.

McFarlane, J. W., ed. and trans. The Oxford Ibsen. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Meyer, Michael. Ibsen: A Biography. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971.

Meyer, Michael, trans. Brand. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960.

Meyer, Michael, trans. The Lady from the Sea; The Master Builder; John Gabriel Borkman; When We Dead Awaken. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960.

Meyer, Michael, trans. The Pillars of Society, The Wild Duck, Hedda Gabler, Little Eyolf. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1961.

The Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1961.

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1933.

Paulson, Arvid, trans. Last Plays of Henrik Ibsen. New York: Bantom Classics, 1962.

Peacock, Ronald. The Poet in the Theatre. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1946.

Random House Dictionary of the English Language. New York: Random House, 1966.

Reinert, Otto, trans. Hedda Gabler. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1962.

Shaw, Bernard. The Quintessence of Ibsenism. New York: Hill and Wang, 1913.

Sprinchorn, Evert, ed. The Genius of the Scandinavian Theater. New York: The New American Library, 1964.

Sprinchorn, Evert, ed. Ibsen Letters and Speeches. New York: Hill and Wang, 1964.

Stoverud, Torbjorn. Milestones of Norwegian Literature. Oslo: Johan Grundt Tanum Forlag, 1967.

Tysdahl, Bjorn J. Joyce and Ibsen: A Study in Literary Influence. New York: Humanities Press, 1968.

Valency, Maurice J. The Flower and the Castle; an Introduction to Modern Drama. New York: Macmillan, 1963.

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Fifth Edition). Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1948.

Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary. Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1961.

Weigand, Hermann J. The Modern Ibsen; A Reconsideration. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1925.

Williams, Raymond. Drama; From Ibsen to Eliot. New York: Oxford University Press, 1953.

The World Book Encyclopedia Dictionary. Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1964.

Zucker, A. E. Ibsen The Master Builder. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1929.