

Chapter One

Reason and Spirit

The Translator as Spirit-channel

Let me begin by phrasing it as carefully as I can: in many significant ways translating resembles, or has been commonly thought of in terms that resemble, spirit-channeling—communicating with and/or mediating for others the spirits of dead people, or, as spiritualist writers like to put it, “discarnate spirits.” I’m going to want to push on this analogy fairly hard in the course of this book, in several different directions at once, but for now let’s take it slowly: when translators say that their job is to “step aside and let the original author speak through them,” that is close enough to what is traditionally thought of as spirit-channeling or psychic communication with the dead to make the analogy potentially worth exploring. The translator is a “medium” or mediator who channels the “spirit” or voice or meaning or intention of the source author across linguistic and cultural and temporal barriers to a new audience that could not have understood that source author without such mediation. The translator does not speak in his own voice; he speaks in the voice of the original author. The translator does not convey to the target audience her own ideas, meanings, arguments, images; she is a neutral and noncommittal conduit to the target audience of the ideas and meanings of the original author. “How then,” Alexander Frazer Tytler asked in 1797, “shall a translator accomplish this difficult union of ease with fidelity? To use a bold expression, he must adopt the very soul of his author, which must speak through his own organs” (Robinson *Western* 211). The translator, to

use Patrick Mahoney's spiritualist term, must become the source author's "borrowed body" (3).

Or read this passage from Eva Wong's introduction to her translation of the *Lieh-tzu* and try to determine just what kind of claim she is making about her "channeling" of the original author. Is she claiming to be serving as a psychic medium for Lieh-tzu to speak through? Or is she merely using the psychic terminology metaphorically to express her sense that her translation, while not "psychic" or "mystical," is nonetheless "true" to the "spirit" of her author?

Lieh-tzu is the first Taoist text to have spoken to me. Since it is a Chinese text, and Chinese is one of my first languages, my dialogue with it was in that language. "Opening" a text and presenting it in its original language is relatively straightforward. It is not necessary to deal with the semantics of two languages. Opening and presenting a text in a language other than its original one is much more interesting. One approach would be to translate it first in the conventional way and then open the translated text by listening to its intention or voice. My friends who work with Greek and Hebrew texts advised me to use this method. However, when I tried it, the method did not feel natural, so I decided to experiment with a different approach.

To me, wisdom is timeless and transcends language. At the same time, language can be used to open the meaning of a text. What if I could be freed from linguistic constraints, eliminate the process of translating from one language to another, and go directly from the teachings of the *Lieh-tzu* to its voice in the English language? This would require being in the state of mind that Lieh-tzu must have been in, or at least being a kindred spirit to Lieh-tzu. Since I had been listening to the text for some time, this approach seemed promising.

With time, as I developed a kinship with Lieh-tzu, I began to feel what it was like to think the way he did. His teachings were no longer tied to a language. Sometimes he would speak in Chinese, sometimes in English, and sometimes not in any language in particular.

My next task was to find a voice for him in the English language. How would Lieh-tzu speak if he lived in an English-speaking country in our times? The voice would be natural, as if he were speaking in a first language and not a translated language. In this aspect, I am fortunate, because as a bilingual person with two first languages (English and Chinese), I am used to switching back and forth between the two languages when I think. Sometimes I would even forget which language I was thinking in. To give Lieh-tzu a voice in English, I had only to become a channel and let the *Lieh-tzu* come out naturally in the English language after I had totally immersed myself in his teachings. The emptier my mind, the clearer would be the voice of the text. Thus, opening a text and revealing its meaning require stillness of mind, quite the opposite of the analytical state of mind demanded in translation work. (16-17)

Does she mean spirit-channeling? Or is this a hermeneutical projection like Borges's Pierre Menard's into the "mind" of Cervantes, or like

Friedrich Schleiermacher's into the minds of the original authors of the Bible (the original idea behind romantic or "liberal" biblical hermeneutics)? It seems on the one hand as if Wong is simply reading deeply, "immersing" herself in Lieh-tzu's writings, not contacting the spirit of the dead Lieh-tzu; but she also gives us a very strong sense that she believes Lieh-tzu is in some manner speaking through her. Just what degree of metaphoricity should we assign to claims like "*Lieh-tzu* is the first Taoist text to have spoken to me" or "Sometimes he would speak in Chinese, sometimes in English, and sometimes not in any language in particular"? Did the text speak? Did its author speak? Or did they only "speak"—did they "open" to Wong through deeply intuitive study and so finally come to *seem* as if they were speaking? Just what sort of mental state is that "stillness of mind" of which she speaks? Is it a mystical trance, a creative intuitivity, or even, perhaps, unbeknownst to Wong, simply an internalized ("somatized") version of that "analytical state of mind" that, as she says, is traditionally "demanded in translation work"?

My plan in untying this imagistic knot is to start at the "top" and work "downwards" (to invoke the spatial metaphor that is traditional in these matters): to start at the "highest" level of unmetaphorical spiritualism, the level at which translators actually do claim to be channeling the spirits of their dead source authors (chapter two), and gradually work "earthward," which is to say in increasingly secular and metaphorical directions (chapters three and four), until the "spirit" that the translator "channels" is an internal psychic agent (chapter five) or an invisible but quite physical living human voice at the end of a phone line or e-mail correspondent (chapter six). I will be spending the bulk of our time here in the early chapters on the "weird" stuff at the higher levels; once we get down to the marketplace the connections should be clear enough that you can make them yourself.

To begin, then, the analogy suggests both:

- a. that the source author has the power to initiate communication with the target audience *through* the translator (though again this does not mean that the translator is passive: the translator actively creates the channel through which the author actively contacts the target audience), and
- b. that the translator possesses some means of gaining access to the author's voice and meaning, of reliably "opening up" to the intentional speaking of a person who is almost invariably other (sometimes translators translate source texts they wrote themselves, but usually the source author is another person), most often distant in time and place, and not infrequently dead.

Both claims are highly problematic in the rationalist regime of Western thought, especially (and increasingly) since the Renaissance—and this is the philosophical issue that I want to examine here in chapter one. There is no rationalist model that would explain the power of a dead author (or of a living one who is distant in time and place and unconnected to translators either directly or through intermediaries—editors, agencies) to speak or generally initiate communication through a translator, or for that matter through anyone else. To the extent that we imagine authors, especially dead authors, as having the power to reach out to target audiences through the mediation of a translator, we are operating within a mystical model that has been under serious assault in the West for hundreds of years, perhaps even as many as two thousand years—and even if that model has not been entirely discredited or displaced, it is certainly way beyond the pale of credibility in an academic setting. Ditto the notion of readerly access to a writer's intentions: that has been considered a bogus claim at least since W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley published their famous "Intentional Fallacy" essay in 1954. If we can't read our own spouse's mind, how can we claim to know what Dante or Homer was thinking hundreds or thousands of years ago? Rationally speaking, the claim to have access to a writer's intended meaning is, as Wimsatt and Beardsley insist, a fallacy. It can't be done. We only wish it could—and so pretend it can.

But of course this tentative formulation is somewhat extreme. When people say today that translators should step aside and let their authors speak through them, you may protest, they are not really claiming that translators are spirit-channels, or that translators can read their authors' minds. Translators simply use biographical and historical research and painstaking textual analysis in order to make an effective "best guess" as to authorial intention.

And it is true that that is how most people would thematize the act of translation today. But in this book I want to work from what might be called a strategic excluded-middle argument. For it seems to me that the argumentative positions and stakes in this debate have been historically blurred, and need to be brought into new clarity. The debate as it is traditionally binarized has at one pole the insistence that the translator should "submit" to the source author and/or source text, and at the other the belief that such submission is impossible: that translators are the active interpretive agents in the act of translation and control the entire event. From the conservative (former) viewpoint, if the translator does not submit to the source author/text, all connections between the source text and the target text are severed and the translation can no longer truly be called a translation. From the progressive (latter) view-

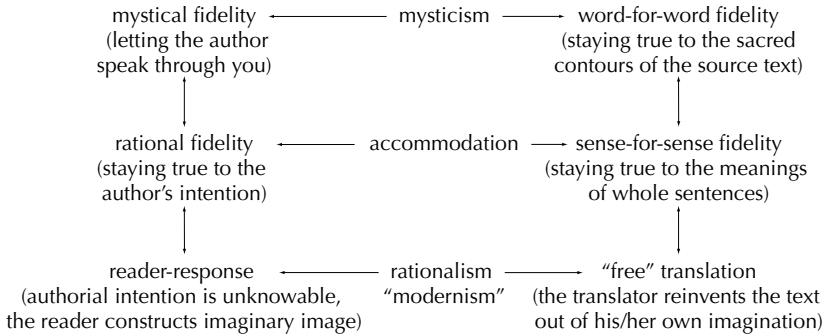
point, this whole dualism is vitiated by the impossibility of “submitting” to either an author (especially if that author is dead or otherwise unable to exert any kind of active influence on the translation) or a text, which is, after all, just black marks on white paper. How do you submit to a dead person, or a living person whom you never meet, or who never corresponds with you or your editor or publisher in the attempt to control your work? How do you submit to black squiggles? From the progressive point of view, the translator’s “submission” is to an *abstraction* called “the author” or “the text.” That abstraction is a mental construct, an imaginative fiction, created and controlled by the translator. In this light the submission too is controlled by the translator, and thus is no submission at all. The conservative view, from this perspective, is meaningless.

I have argued roughly this progressive perspective myself, in *The Translator’s Turn*. I still believe that this approach, which might be called a Kantian or constructivist or reader-response approach, is a useful first step in a critique of ancient fossilized assumptions about translation. *Who Translates?* is based on my sense that it is only half a critique—and that in ignoring the other half, it grossly oversimplifies the issues. It is essential, I would argue, that we look carefully at the historical roots and metaphorical implications of the conservative insistence on “submission” to the source author/text as well—of the idea that it is essential even today to “let the author speak through you.”

To that end I propose to treat the modern conservative position as an uneasy middle ground between two more distant poles: the modern rationalist one according to which the translator controls the entire process, constructing an image of the author and the text imaginatively and then pretending to “submit” to it, and an ancient one based on spirit-channeling, the notion that the discarnate spirits of authors actually do take over the translators of their works and dictate the translations through them. I propose to argue, in other words, that the conservative position is an uneasy and unstable but historically quite interesting accommodation of originally mystical thinking to more rationalist models, retaining the ancient assumption that the translator must submit entirely to authorial intention but also incorporating elements of the Kantian or “constructivist” reader-response position—the constructive or constitutive nature of every reader’s take on “authorial intention.”

Significantly enough, this conservative middle ground is essentially the same as the one carved out for “sense-for-sense translation” between the extremes of radical literalism and “free” translation, borrowing fidelity from the literal model and interpretive license from the “free” model. And considering that literalism is historically linked to a mystical respect for the exact contours of the source text as the perfect

expression of authorial will, the two “synthetic” accommodations of opposed views would also seem to be historically congruent.



The only problem I have with this accommodation, and the reason I want to put it on hold here for a while, is that it has been accompanied for so long by such a powerful charge of social repression that it is difficult today to talk about the precise composition and history of the synthesis. Rather than being explored as the largely ideological product of an ongoing social process, it has typically been naturalized and universalized as the “true nature” of translation. This book is an attempt to engage in that ideological type of exploration, by picking at the repressed traces of an earlier mystical view in the current “traditional” or “mainstream” accommodation and seeing where they will lead.

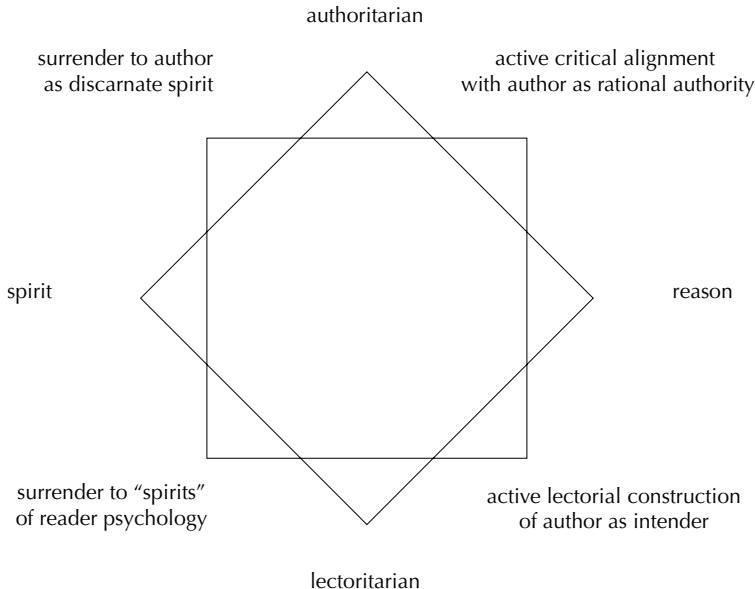
“Reason”? “Spirit”?

We are faced now with another problem, which is really only a problem in a rationalist regime like the scholarly monograph you’re reading: “reason” and “spirit” are becoming rather complex shifters, ciphers, markers for a welter of identifications that keep conflicting in confusing ways. “Reason” in my argument so far in this chapter has come to signify both (a) the authoritarian control of translation by reference to an author, to authorial intention, and (b) the more constructivist lectoritarian reframing of translation by reference to the reader’s interpretive activities. Of these the former is traditionally associated with reason, rationalism, the author’s control of his (never her) own intentions and their expression and the critic’s determined submission to that control in the interests of accurate or objective interpretation; this is the conservative position in the theory wars, argued by E. D. Hirsch, Jr., M. H. Abrams, and others. From this point of view the reader-response position

seems irrational, because it is out of control; the reader reads any way s/he feels inspired to read, prompted not by the true source of rational authority (authorial intention) but by whatever whims or preoccupations or other psychological forces take over the reading process.

The reader-response position only comes to seem like an instantiation of "reason" when it is thematized as a secular reframing of the mystical notion that interpretation (including translation) is or should be a form of spirit-channeling. Interpretation *couldn't possibly* (in a rationalist regime) be controlled by the author's discarnate spirit; here is what *must* be going on instead. From a reader-response standpoint, in fact, the conservative authoritarian position, traditionally construed as the purest form of interpretative rationalism, looks remarkably like spiritualism: in both the authoritarian and the spiritualist view, the reader surrenders all interpretive activity to an external force variously identified as "the author" or "the text." Thus in this new perspective "spirit" too comes to signify both sides of the equation: "the author" to whom the reader is expected to submit all control and the psychological "identity themes" and other internal forces to which the reader actually surrenders.

A schematic representation of this shifting may help us impose some rationalist order on it, especially if we build it around dualisms like spirit-reason, authoritarian/lectoritarian, and active-passive:



This is a good start, but it does not even begin to unpack the complexity of “reason” and “spirit” as argumentative shifters. (To put it in the terms I mentioned in the introduction, this diagram does not yet “teeter on the verge of several things at once.”) What does it mean for the translator to channel “spirit”? How is that opposed to, and how is it related to, the translator’s channeling of “reason”? It seems beyond question that translators (claim to) channel something; that “true” or “faithful” translators, at least, have the reported experience of channeling some force beyond their own will, ideas, images, prejudices, intentions. What that “something” is, we don’t exactly know: the source author? The target reader? Some figment of their own imaginations? Perhaps they’re all imaginative figments; but what shall we call those figments? “Reason”? “Spirit”? What is at stake in making a choice between the two? In chapter six I will be associating the disembodied voices and fingers at the end of phone lines (clients, agency people, research support people, editors, etc.) with these “figments.” Are they “spirits”?

Not in any supernatural sense of the word. But in some sense? What shall we do about this notion of spirit-channeling as we move “down” from overtly spiritualistic conceptions of translation-as-channeling here in these first few chapters to ever more secularized understandings in the later chapters of the book? Shall I say that I am still talking about channeling, but now no longer of spirits? Shall I say that I now mean spirit-channeling figuratively, or analogically? And are those two the same thing? Is their “spirit” the same? Would the spirit of a text, the spirit of a law, the spirit of a command, the spirit of a conversation, the spirit of an age be figurative spirits? Would they be analogical ones? If I have to resort to such fudging as “figurative” or “analogical” meanings, does that mean I’m defining spirit narrowly to mean the soul or ghost of a dead or once-living-but-now-discarnate person, and any other sense of spirit must be shunted over to some peripheral or marginal or secondary or parasitical category? Is it all right if I appropriate the full range of connotations that spirit-words have had in the Western religious and philosophical tradition(s), including *ruach*, *pneuma*, *spiritus*, *Geist*, *esprit*? *Ruach* takes us to *deed*, *pneuma* and *spiritus* take us to *breath*, *Geist* takes us to *mind*, *intellect*, *culture*, *education*, *esprit* takes us to *breath* and *joke*. If I cite recent texts that push “psychological” uses of the word spirit into the “parapsychological” (ghosts, specters, revenants), like Jacques Derrida’s *Of Spirit* or *Specters of Marx* or my own *Translation and Taboo*, can I then get away here with pushing parapsychological spirits back into the psychological, sociological? Roget’s gives me the following “figurative” or “analogical” synonyms for English *spirit*—or

should we say synonyms for “nonsupernatural” spirits, negating spirit’s ancient negation of flesh and blood, corporeality, materiality, nature, physical science in order to flesh out a “positive” body here on earth?

- essence (stuff, substance, quintessence, gist, elixir, extract, distillate, concentrate, infusion, flower),
- heart (nucleus, center, kernel, core, pith, meat, sap, marrow),
- energy (animation, vivacity, liveliness, life, sprightliness, spiritedness, briskness, breeziness, peppiness, pep, vim),
- eloquence (punch, raciness, sparkle, piquancy, poignancy, pungency),
- fervor (fervency, fervidness, passion, ardor, ardency, *empressement*, warmth of feeling, heat, fire, verve, furor, gusto, vehemence, heartiness, cordiality, unction, zeal),
- courage (nerve, spunk, pluck, grit, sand, stamina, backbone, guts),
- genius (*Geist*, soul, inspiration, afflatus, fire of genius, lambent flame of intellect, coal from off the altar, talent, creative thought),
- mood (humor, temper, frame of mind, state of mind, tone, vein, grain, streak, stripe, cue, mind, mettle),
- meaning (significance, point, sense, idea, expression, purport, import, implication, connotation, denotation, construction), and
- drift (tenor, bearing, effect, force, impact, value).

Are all of these fair game? Or does the compound *spirit-channeling* require the narrow sense of ghosts, shades, discarnate persons? Roget’s also gives these:

- specter (intelligence, supernatural being, ghost, spook, phantom, phantasm, wraith, shade, shadow, apparition, presence, vision, materialization, haunt, astral spirit, unsubstantiality, immateriality, incorporeity, entity, banshee, poltergeist, White Lady),
- sprite (imp, pixy, elf, puck, kobold, *diablotin*, tokoloshe, gremlin, devilkid, devling, erlking, goblin, hobgoblin, hob, ouphe, sylph, gnome, salamander, undine, fairy, fay, brownie, clurricane, leprechaun, nymph, dryad, hamadryad, oread, limoniad, nix, kelpie, naiad, limniad, nereid, sea-maiden, siren, merman, mermaid, faun, satyr, silenus, paniscus),
- demon (fiend, devil, satan, deva, shedu, gyre, unclean spirit, hellion, cacodemon, incubus, succubus, jinni/genie, afreet, barghest,

- flibbertigibbet, troll, ogre, ogress, ghoul, lamia, vampire, Harpy, Fury),
- bogey (bugbear, bugaboo, boggle, booger, boogymen, bête noire, fee-faw-fum, mumbo jumbo),
 - familiar (genius, daimon, *numen*, totem, guardian spirit, guardian angel, fairy godmother, guide, spirit guide, control, attendant godling, invisible helper, special providence, tutelary god),
 - angel (celestial being, heavenly being, messenger of God, saint, seraph, angel of love, cherub, principality),
 - double (etheric self, cowalker, *Doppelgänger*, fetch),
 - soul (psyche, spiritus, *Geist*, heart, mind, anima, nephesh, spiritual being, inner man, ego, self, I),
 - life principle (vital principle, vital force, prana, divine spark, divine flame, *ousia*),
 - astral body (linga sharira, design body, subtle body, vital vody, etheric body, bliss body, Buddhist body, spiritual body, soul body, kamarupa, desire body, kamic body, causal body, mental body),
 - breath (pneuma, divine breath, atman, purusha, buddhi, jiva, jivatma, ba, khu, ruach),
 - deity (god, deus, divinity, immortal, deva, shining one, godling, godlet, godkin, demigod, avatar, manito, huaca, mana, nagual, pokunt, tamanoas, wakan, Zemi), and
 - form (shape, eidolon, idolum, appearance).

Are all of *these* fair game? If in discussing the economic agents that produce translations (the topic of chapter six) I wanted to call various experts and editors the translator's "invisible helpers" (listed above under "familiar"), do I first have to insist that I am using the term in a figurative sense? If a person that I can't see—because I'm speaking to him or her on the phone—helps me, and I want to call that person an invisible helper, where shall we draw the line between "literal" and "figurative" meanings of spirit?

Logologies of Reason and Spirit

The main question I will be asking in this book, most overtly beginning in chapter three, is: how are spirits secularized into the metaphors that inform our thought about *this* world, *this* life?—negating (but never

quite eradicating) with these thisses an occult or supernatural world beyond the grave, the realm of the discarnate spirits of the dead. Karl Marx is not the only one for whom, as Jacques Derrida insists, ghosts or spirits or specters give form or body to ideology, market forces, prosthetics, virtuality, and so on. It happens to all of us. (I want to say: it is *done* to all of us.) We are all haunted by the spiritualist imagination. Even when we least believe in it. Even when, like Marx and Max Stirner, whose debate over ghosts in the pages of *The German Ideology* provides Derrida his main text in *Specters of Marx*, we despise that imagination and want to hurl abuse at it. This “go away closer” inclination of the spiritualist imagination Derrida dubs the “paradoxical h(a)unt”:

And the ghost does not leave its prey, namely, its hunter. It has understood instantly that one is hunting it just to hunt it, chasing it away only so as to chase after it. Specular circle: one chases after in order to chase away, one pursues, sets off in pursuit of someone to make him flee, but one makes him flee, distances him, expulses him so as to go after him again and remain in pursuit. One chases someone away, kicks him out the door, excludes him, or drives him away. But it is in order to chase after him, seduce him, reach him, and thus keep him close at hand. One sends him far away, puts distance between them, so as to spend one’s life, and for as *long a time* as possible, coming close to him again. The *long time* is here the time of *this distance hunt* (a hunt *for* distance, the prey, but also a hunt *with* distance, the lure). The distance hunt can only hallucinate, or desire if you prefer, or defer proximity: lure and prey. (*Specters* 140)

The ghost you hunt, in other words, continues to haunt you. Which is why you hunt it.

Kenneth Burke calls this h(a)unt (or something very like it) “logology”: the imaginative displacement by which the Logos, the supernatural Word of God, becomes Logic, the secular *techné* of reason and science; the *geistesgeschichtlich* (“literally” spirit’s-historical, “figuratively”—effacing the term’s spectral semantics—intellectual-historical) process whereby words for otherworldly things become words for this-worldly things: “‘Spirit’ is a similar word. Having moved analogically from its natural meaning, as ‘breath,’ to connotations that flowered in its usage as a term for the supernatural, it could then be analogically borrowed back as a secular term for temper, temperament and the like” (Burke 8). Logology in Burke’s hands, despite the word’s oogly unloveliness, becomes a versatile conceptual tool for tracing historical homonymies and synonymies up and down various ontological ladders or “conversion gradients” that unearth buried tonalities and reincarnate dead metaphors. In some sense in fact the logological resurgence into contemporary consciousness of etymological origins *is* an awakening

of the dead, the older senses of words reappearing as ghosts to haunt their later and more current ones, the discarnate spirits of words like “spirit” channeled by the logologer into whatever present we occupy.

But only in a sense. For Burke is never interested in freezing this sort of historical movement into a single perspective—that, for example, of the present, in which “the spirit of a text” means its meaning and older senses like the author’s personalized spirit merely hover nearby. He is logologically concerned with the entire shifting series of perspectives, indeed with perspectivizing semantic shifts historically and hierarchically, so that, say, our current understanding of the *meaning* of a text sheds light on earlier and more “primitive” conceptions of the spirit of its author, and also of course vice versa: by thinking of translation as spirit-channeling, say, we can better understand the more “modern” notion that translators should step aside and let the (semitextualized, almost entirely despiritualized) source author speak through them.

In Burkean terms, for example, the series of ten ghosts (*Gespenster*) that Derrida shows Marx tracing or enumerating in Stirner would be a logology of *Gespenst* in German religious/philosophical thought: (1) *das höchste Wesen*, the highest or supreme being, God; (2) *das Wesen* in general, being or essence; (3) the vanity of the world; (4) a pluralized *Wesen*, *die gute und böse Wesen*, good and evil beings, animistic spirits; (5) an imperialized *Wesen*, *das Wesen und sein Reich*, being and its realm or empire; (6) another pluralized *Wesen*, this time apparently closer to human beings, *die Wesen*, (the) beings; (7) *der Gottmensch*, the god-man or man-god, Jesus Christ; (8) *der Mensch*, the human being, a generically masculine “man”; (9) *der Volksgeist*, the spirit (or ghost) of the people; and (10) *Alles*, the All, everything, which is, as Derrida says, Marx’s excuse for stopping the enumeration, throwing his hands up in mock despair over Stirner’s tendency to see ghosts everywhere: “One could throw it all together in any order, and Stirner does not fail to do so: the Holy Spirit, truth, law, and especially, especially the ‘good cause’ in all its forms” (Derrida *Specters* 146).

Shifting terms just slightly, from *Gespenster* to *Geister* (a crucial shift, as Derrida shows, for Marx as for German philosophy in general—see also my remarks on Schleiermacher’s *Gespenster* and *Geister* in *Taboo* 179–81, and my discussion of Schleiermacher and Marx at the end of chapter four), we might tabulate a logology of spirit as a kind of rationalist framework for my argumentation(s) here. Let’s build it, again, following good rationalist principles, around three dualisms: singular/plural, control/no control, and knowledge/no knowledge, on the assumption (or perhaps we can agree to call it a hypothesis) that the more singularity, control, and knowledge we ascribe to spirits, the more

magical and alive and meaningful and patterned our world will seem to be, and the less we ascribe to them, the more inert and chaotic and out-of-control our lives will seem:

1. *God* (singular, control, knowledge)
 - the sole ruler, omnipotent, omniscient
2. *gods and goddesses, angels and demons, sprites and familiars* (plural, control, knowledge)
 - possess supernatural or occult knowledge and can control events on earth, but because they are many, to achieve their ends they must compete and conflict with other similar spirits
3. *channeled spirits of the dead* (plural, no control, knowledge)
 - possess supernatural or occult knowledge but cannot control events on earth; they must depend on living spirit-channelers to convey their messages to other living beings
4. *worshipped/remembered/imagined spirits of the dead* (plural, no control, no knowledge)
 - have no power to act, no agency, no independent existence; in some sense don't exist at all, except as memory images in "real" or living or carnate beings' minds

In the hallowed tradition of literal/figurative dualisms, the entities in 1–3 are "literal" spirits, those in 4 "figurative" ones: we might say that "remembered" or "imagined" spirits aren't "really" spirits, they don't "really exist"; we only think of them as spirits by analogy—or logology—with other (conceptions of) spirits. 4, to put that differently, is the breach in the wall of spirituality: once we call things spirits that have no (or are imagined as having no) agency, that have neither (in)visible form nor intentionality, then anything, really, can be a spirit.

And we could extend that logological chain, 5, 6, 7 . . . n, enumerating ever more "figurative" spirits, spirits lower and lower on the logological food chain, farther and farther from the supernatural. But I want to set things up a little differently. I want to use that four-step hierarchy as a template for structurally parallel conceptualities, concept-clusters that (can and will) become structurally parallel in and through the act of imposing this spirit-template on them. This will mean effectively ex-foliating the fourth step in that "top" logology by mapping secularized versions of the whole hierarchy onto its fourth or "figurative" rung: embedding three secular logologies in succession into what this first logology identifies as postsupernatural.

For example, if we wished to outline a similar logology of reason, a “figurative” spirit if it is any kind of spirit at all, we could map four different rationalist ideologies onto the four steps of the spirit logology. I will be exploring such logologies of reason in greater detail in chapters five and six (and logologies of ideology in chapters three and four), but let me adumbrate my argument there just briefly here, by way of getting us started.

1. It seems clear, for example, that there are important logological connections between the rationalist God of the Judeo-Christian imagination and the quasideified reason given pride of place in the increasingly secularized subjectivities of the late Middle Ages and especially the modern era. Both God and reason are imagined as the supreme ruler of their universes, the created cosmos for the former, subjectivity for the latter. Like God, reason is the self’s god, king, lord, master, father. It must constantly do battle with the emotions, of course, traditionally thematized as a separate power inside the subjective body, just as the theological God is imagined as constantly doing battle with Satan, lord of carnality. Strictly monotheistic reason religions, however, will want to see the emotions as not really all that serious a threat to reason’s hegemony—at least not in the right sort of people, rational people, especially ruling-class men. In this conception the emotions are projected outward onto other people, women, children, the lower orders, racial and ethnic minorities. *We* are perfectly ruled by reason—*we* being the group that in an earlier, less secular age, would have been perfectly ruled by God and thus empowered to make life-or-death decisions in His name.
2. Now if, following our logology of spirit, we decrease the imagined *singularity* of the “spirit” forces, at the second level we have to envision an internal battle between reason and emotion, the mind and the body, duty and desire, and so on. In this second-level conception it is not so clear that reason will emerge triumphant, so that it must constantly be bolstered by militant calls to vigilance against the insidious siren-call of the body, emotion, desire. On this level, for example, authoritarian and lectoritarian approaches to interpretation might be thematized as pluralistic models competing for ascendancy over readers, with conservatives arguing that their authoritarian model represents reason, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and so on and their opponents’ lectoritarian model represents emotion, randomness, distortion, subjectivity, and reader-response people arguing that all this talk of objectivity is an outdated theological myth,

not only tyrannical but ontologically discredited, all there *is* is emotion, predilections, subjectivities. Reason is simply a name we give to one of them.

3. At the third level, then, our internal “spirits” lose control as well as singularity: not only are there many of them, hundreds, thousands, an infinite number, but none of them has the power to impose its will on the others. Our “spirits” or selves simply arise in great numbers, and our behavior emerges out of their infinite clashing and clamoring for ascendancy. This will be the topic specifically of chapter five, but more generally of the book as a whole. This notion of fragmentary subjectivity is my main concern, my primary sense of what a “translator subjectivity beyond reason” might entail—the terminus toward which my rather fragmentary argument tends.
4. At the fourth level, finally, the internal “spirits” of our subjectivity dissipate into illusion, become the mere by-products of ancient-but-dead ideologies. There is no such thing as subjectivity. This was a popular view in France and elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s and after, spawning such diverse cultural products as the *nouveau roman* of Robbe-Grillet and others, in which there were no characters, only behavioral effects of the movement of bodies through space, and the anti-liberal humanist theories of the poststructuralists, for whom subjectivity was largely a bourgeois myth.

Mapped out in this tidy rationalist way, my attack on rationalism in this book may seem less obviously, to bivalent readers, a simple flip-flop into the mystical camp. My antirationalist argument is directed specifically against the first two levels of this logology—which are ideological positions without much philosophical credibility left in the twentieth century anyway—rendering my antirationalism much less iconoclastic than it may seem to some. Indeed some readers may be inclined to read it as just another expression of rampant (post)modernity—but note that I am seeking here to avoid that extreme as well, by associating it with the fourth level, and directing my attentions to the third.

I am not, in any case, trying to claim that I invented this pre/post-rationalist approach to subjectivity. I am only attempting to apply it methodologically to the study of translator subjectivities across a fairly wide disciplinary spectrum, including church history, psychoanalysis, philosophy, literature, neurology, and economics.