Transplanting English Dialect Verse: John Clare in Translation

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ABSTRACT

The English poet John Clare's (1793-1864) verse – relying on an unparalleled natural sensibility of a quasi-scientific scope – is vital for exposing contemporary and historical ecological vulnerabilities. His poetry is a litany of lost biodiversity in the British Isles, depicting the pre-enclosure habitats of birds such as snipes and corncrakes (Monbiot 2012). Any poetic translation, transferring this energy to a non-English audience, contends not only with general problems of translating poetry, but also "the dilemma of dialect" (Landers 2001:116). Clare employs a "heteroglossia", merging popular dialectal ballads with standard early-nineteenth century poetic language (McCusick 1995), further perplexing translation efforts. Translational forays in Italian (Clare/Frisa 2021) and Spanish (Clare/Piñero 1966) are accompanied, however, by large scale translational projects in German (Clare/Pfister 2021), French (Clare/Leyris 1969), and Slovak (Clare/Kantorová-Báliková 2018). These matter in terms of communicating the imperative to preserve biodiversity and dialects across cultures. We will use, therefore, an eco-translational approach (Cronin 2017; Scott 2015). This theoretical framework will see translation as attention and as manifesting interdependence as opposed to immediacy or equivalence, allowing one to juxtapose consistent approaches to rendering Clare in a target language.

KEYWORDS: dialect verse, eco-translation, John Clare, poetry, poetry translation

Introduction and Eco-translation

Both in translating Clare, and in evaluating existing translations of his work, the methodology of eco-translation helps profoundly. For Clive Scott, discussing various translations of Arthur Rimbaud into English, eco-translation is a rejection of making a single, authoritative, equivalent translation. Instead, translation is "ecologising", a process of capturing a new "perception" of the text, of embracing pluralities in translation and of becoming aware of new acoustic resonances throughout the original (Scott 2015:291,301). Michael Cronin extends eco-translation to articulate a responsibility translators have in the "post-anthropocenic" period (Cronin 2017:3). This extended project of eco-translation resists both the immediacy and mechanisation of translation. He posits that translation can be a kind of "attention", or even "recycling" in order to overcome the "linear logic of extractivism" (Cronin 2017:4). For Cronin, eco-translation is also a means of understanding the interdependent ecosystem of human and non-human languages (Cronin 2017:3). He discusses minority languages alongside non-human communication. In doing so, he places the translation imperative as a moral responsibility translators now have towards both of these forms of communication (Cronin 2017:7). Clare's poetry, prioritising both non-human communication and written partly using North Northamptonshire dialect, is a perfect testing ground for Cronin's refinements of eco-translation. Cronin extends Scott's definition to non-human communication and minority languages. By the same token, it is a logical extension of the origins of eco-translation as a methodology for discussing poetic translation.

Poetic attention to the natural world is, by necessity, transnational. It is therefore translational. Poets must think both within and beyond the limitations of their own language traditions to capture the interplay between the microcosmic and the macrocosmic. This interplay is crucial to Cronin's discussion of the paradox of eco-translation, that translation often involves discussing the microcosmic from the perspective of the macrocosmic (Cronin 2017:7). John Clare's (1793-1864) "heteroglossia" (McCusick 1995:235) mediates between his own village culture in Northamptonshire, north of

Peterborough, and the broader ecosystem and language-tradition that engulfs it. By heteroglossia, one means here that Clare code-switches, using both expressions adapted from conventional English poetic diction and emblems of spoken North Northamptonshire dialect. His heteroglossia similarly involves using terminology adopted from the surrounding 'gypsy' languages[1]. Idiosyncratically, for example, in "Mouse's Nest", he employs the regional term "progged" to describe the speaker's disruption of a habitat, before this nest is described in more literary terms as "grotesque" (Clare 1965:234). "Progged" means "food, provision", as well as "to poke with a small, pointed stick". In the latter sense, it has connotations of criminality (Baker 1864:137). In "To the Snipe", he employs unconventional verse forms to poetically address a wading bird, calling it "lover of swamps" while celebrating the "hugh (huge) flag forests" it inhabits (Clare 1965:108).

This ecological sensibility energises English eco-poetry today. Elizabeth-Jane Burnett and John Burnside avow Clare's influence and contemporary ecological pertinence as an early sketcher of the intricacies of natural habitats and the devastation of land enclosure for agricultural labourers (Burnett 2016; Burnside 2015). While Clare has energised English eco-poetry, he has had a very limited influence on global eco-poetry. This necessitates a nuanced style of translation that would bring these ecological sensitivities to the forefront. This translational imperative is especially pressing seeing as - since the 1990s - poets and critics have written of Clare in mainstream newspapers, assuming his canonisation (Rumens 2022). Translation, which Li (2019) describes as instrumental to canonisation, would facilitate Clare's canonisation beyond English. It would facilitate the evolution of a global, multi-lingual eco-poetry, responding to the aesthetic demands of the international climate emergency. It would open up mutual discussion of ecological sensitivity across language.

Translations of Clare exist but are fragmentary. There are two Spanish translations (Clare/Gray 2019; Clare/Piñero 1966) of "I am". A small number of Clare poems, such as

[1] For further discussion of the term 'gypsy' languages, please see: https://academic.oup.com/book/1993/chapter-abstract/141838136?redirectedFrom=fulltext". Clare himself uses the term 'gypsy' very positively and does not seem aware of any derogatory context.

"An Invite to Eternity", have Italian renditions (Clare/Frisa 2021:68). These poems limit Clare, given they originate from his later years as an institutional patient in various asylums. In this latter period of his poetic development, Clare drifts from the naturalistic to the visionary. Clare wrote approximately 4000 poems (Fenton 2004:42) inside and outside of this period. He is subject to articles in *The Guardian* that applaud him as an ecological visionary (Monbiot 2012). Hence, these offer only an unrepresentative sample within two prominent global languages, a failure of eco-translational attention to the broader spectrum of his oeuvre. This scarcity accompanies the interpretive challenges within translating Clare. Only Jaime Barón Thaidigsmann and Jens Peters have alluded to these challenges (Thaidigsmann 2009; Peters 2011). Thaidigsmann appraises positively L.M. Piñero's Spanish free verse adaptation of "I am", ignoring the metrical template of the ST (Source Text, the translated language), as the correct response to a poem founded on disassociation (Thaidigsmann: 2009). Jens Peters has analysed competing translations in German. This is only a single TL (Target Language, the output language) (Peters: 2021).

We will develop Thaidigsmann's and Peters' work into a comparative approach, analysing three extended translations of Clare. These are Pierre Leyris in French (Clare/Leyris 1969), Jana Kantorová-Báliková in Slovak (2018) and Manfred Pfister in German (Clare/Pfister 2021). Given these writers have attempted to represent all of Clare, they have thereby formulated working translational methodologies. While Pfister and Leyris have alluded to some aspects of their craft, we will elaborate upon the overall translational challenge, and its iterations across three languages. This will formulate the first comparative study of Clare translation, establishing through translational cross-referencing an eco-translational response to Clare and a blueprint for his multilingual interactions beyond English.

This eco-translational mode is necessary insofar as it eludes what Luigi Bonaffini calls the "slippages" and "expressive impoverishment" of translating dialect (Bonaffini 1997:282). Eco-translation instead – in Scott's terms - is a "prosthetic activity". It allows "synergies", or a dynamic relationship, between the ST and the TL (Scott 2015:286). In "The Nightingale's Nest", Clare's speaker demands the addressee to "hush" and to attend to the natural world's margins, where one finds the nightingale's nest among the "matted thorn"

(Clare 1965:211). We will argue that the difficulties of translating Clare will dissipate if translation focuses more acutely on attention. Translation, indeed, for Scott, can function as a response to the "environment" of the text (Scott 2015:283). We will argue that eco-translation that privileges spontaneous, sensory encounters, recycling rather than deciphering poetry about eroded landscapes, will allow for the translational plurality, diversity, and creativity appropriate to Clare. Scott's notions of "synaesthesia" are equally helpful here, allowing one to focus on how the text generates sensory ecologies (Scott 2015:287). In Clare's case, given his focus on immediate perception, translations facilitate multi-sensory contact between languages. They allow for the creative interrogation, re-inscription and revalorisation of linguistic and ecological landscapes. The work of the most persistent translators of Clare in circumnavigating these difficulties contributes to eco-translational pluralism. In this way, we argue that interrogating existing models of Clare translation sketches a model for other translators to attentively approach this task. In addition, it will allow for the development of eco-translation as a guiding philosophy for translators.

Difficulties Translating Clare

Before discussing how eco-translation allows translators to resist difficulties in rendering Clare, these difficulties need exposition, since every Clare translator necessarily encounters them. The first, then, is textual. Clare's literary output is expansive, standing at around 4000 known poems, a mix of unpublished and published texts, many of which have the same title (Fenton 2004:42). There are two poems, in one example, entitled "The Landrail" (Clare 1984:76-79). In publication terms, much of Clare's work was not only published but achieved considerable fame in his own lifetime. Clare's early work includes his particularly celebrated *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery* (1821) (Martin 1865:201). Many of the mid-career nature sonnets valorised by the Nobel Prize-winning Seamus Heaney appeared in *The Rural Muse* (1835). Here, Clare's work was subject to heavy editing by John Taylor – his publisher and editor – who inserted punctuation, fixed non-standard orthography, and excised dialect words. Critics like Eric Robinson and Elizabeth Burnett lambast such versions as inauthentic. Robinson reconstructs the original manuscript versions with Clare's unconventional punctuation decisions intact. This institutes a

significant dispute regarding how Clare should be presented (Robinson 1998 x; Burnett 2016). On the other hand, much of Clare's most fascinating work was written during his institutionalisation in the last two decades of his life, like the aforementioned widely anthologised and translated "I am". This poem exists as a slightly modified transcription by W.F. Knight (Clare 1845-1850: Northampton Manuscripts 20-21).

Developing an integrated project of translating Clare requires wading through this editorial quagmire, giving parity to works that rely on differing editorial conventions. The result - a translation featuring poems with a mix of both standard and non-standard spelling - is likely to be jarring for a TL reader. There are, additionally, multiple untitled but apparently fully completed poems crammed into sheets of paper, among Clare's manuscripts. One finds, for example, an untitled quatrain beginning "The sun these mornings used to find" (Clare 1830s: Peterborough MS A37). The act of translation presupposes stable texts: multiple competing texts necessitate hierarchy. If deferring to an existing authority, a translator participates indirectly in "textual decisions" and conflicts (De Waard:1977). If the incidental, complete stanzas included in Clare's manuscripts are excised, even if by an earlier editor, the translator cooperates in such excisions.

A linguistic problem intersects with this textual problem. One has seen that Clare's language is both dizzyingly unique and sometimes doggedly conventional. Northamptonshire terms for animals recur throughout Clare's work, many of which appear only in Clare's writings and in specialist dictionaries of Northamptonshire dialect, such as "clock-a-clay", "bumbarrel", and "pettichap". These are a conscious intellectual resistance to the "dryd specimens" of Linnaeus, chosen for their folk etymologies (Clare 1983:38). "Clock-a-clay" – designating a ladybird and derived from the Danish word for beetle - connects to folk methods of measuring time by counting how many finger taps compel a ladybird to fly away (Sternberg:1851). A translator could find some plausible "non-specific rural" dialect to translate this into in order not to lose the effect, which Clifford Landers suggests is the best possible outcome for translated dialect. Even then, however, the related effect of the heteroglossia and the disorientating swerves towards conventional poetic diction are more difficult to identify equivalents for (Landers 2001:117). Alongside

"bolted" and "cracking brood", "Mouse's Nest" uses non-dialect terminology like "stirred", "fancied", and "hoped", connecting Clare resolutely to the conventional diction of early nineteenth century poetry.

These dialectal occurrences are sufficiently frequent that any translator is presumably under some obligation to at least gesture to their appearance in the ST. This heteroglossia is political: Clare integrates unfamiliar terms into more familiar language. One cannot safely externalise or anthropologise terms like "clock-a-clay" into an alternative language. Clare's heteroglossia displaces the standardisation of English at the heyday of its expansion as an imperial language, referencing what Cronin (2017:144) calls the "indigenous knowledge" nestled in English "dialects". Dialect never fully usurps Clare's verse, however, it is used simply enough to make space for its "inexhaustible richness of detail". A "clock-a-clay" is not simply a ladybird, in other words, but a particular ladybird endemic to the region and locally observed. Clare's lexis alludes to these forms of dialectal perception. Translating this effect successfully into any language, then, is a maelstrom. The effect in the ST depends upon the wide comprehension of English compared with the relatively low expectation of comprehension of such East Anglian dialect terms.

A final and entangled problem concerns music and orality, creating additional formal problems. Clare's use of written dialect intends to preserve some interrelation with English as it is authentically spoken. This relates to Clare's lived experience. Jonathan Bate, for example, declares that Clare's childhood in North Northamptonshire meant that he connected its dialect with childhood throughout his life (Bate 2004:21). Clare was a mediator between folk culture and standard literary culture. Hence, Clare views his own literal spoken dialect as actively endangered in the face of the standardisation of enclosure. He wished to intervene to prevent the extinction of terms like "clock-a-clay". The raw sound of dialect words is intrinsic to the message of his poems. Many of these, such as "The Lament of Swordy Well", rally against land enclosure (Clare 1984:147). Bob Holman has striven to preserve such micro-languages as the "souls of culture", aiming to catalogue the spoken sounds of smaller language traditions in the spectre of globalisation (Holman 2007).

Clare was a violinist and a sufficiently spirited collector of music that his exhaustive sheet music has been published separately (Deacon 1986). Clare composed ballads in both their musical and literary iterations. A translator must consider preserving somewhat the rhyme and metre of his verse to pinpoint these overlaps. Clare often situated his own written compositions in a musical, acoustic context. He states of the ballad "Song" that it was composed using the "thrumming" of his "mother's wheel" (Clare 1985:65). Clare relies upon a concept of poetic rhythm derived in part from folk music, allowing his compositions to deviate from the rigidity of iambic pentameter. "Mouse's Nest" contains many rising rhythms, such as "in the wheats" and "then the mouse", utilising an irregular, jaunty metrical template (Clare 1984). Its unique rhyming couplets – mirroring other compositions, such as "The Shepherd's Calendar" - betray Clare's practically consistent use of rhyme. Clare never strays into blank verse, for example, a resistance that no translator can ignore. The fact that Clare composed both musical and literary ballads, however, does not suggest his poetry as anything other than literary creation. Clare remains a poet of the page.

The complicated entanglement herein explains the particular idiosyncratic and dialectal linguistic choices Clare makes. In "February" of "The Shepherd's Calendar" – one of Clare's published epics - cows "nor lingering wait the foddering boy" (Clare 1964:23). Omitting the customary Standard English preposition "for" preserves this canto's octosyllabic structure. This shows Clare's commitment to the essential musicality of his creations – he is willing to sacrifice grammatical orthodoxy to make his poems scan. Equally, he omits an unnecessary preposition in order to emphasise the extent of the anticipation. Unable to do everything, the translator must make difficult decisions about which of these conscious effects to incorporate.

Cronin speaks of eco-translation as mirroring the "cyclical logic" of "regeneration" (Cronin 2017:35). In other words, eco-translation focuses on attention and interdependence rather than equivalence, making space for the translational moment as well as the translation itself. "Translation" in these terms is not merely rendering the ST, but also pinpointing the

expressive qualities of the TL. This is even if, in Bonaffini's terms, it is an "impossibility" to render dialect in another language (Bonaffini 1997:286). To conceive of translation as regeneration, or even recycling, impels translating dialect within an apparent impossibility. Every regeneration is obviously particular to the social and cultural moment it emerges from, and the limits of the TL. In eco-translational terms, translation opens up our awareness to the sensitivities of the text, noticing its harmonious integration of dialect vocabulary. While the expressive force of encountering a term like "clock-a-clay" is difficult to capture in a TL, any translation of a poem merging "clock-a-clay" with more conventional poetic diction will generate new expressivities and alterities. It is precisely the literal transformation of a term like "clock-a-clay" or "bumbarrel" into standard language that dramatises the act of communication translators make with Clare's unique dialectal perception, as translation is relational and processual. Eco-translation resists "extractivism". Extractivism would dictate that we must obtain something definitive from a language and that the unique poetic language of someone like Clare serves as a resource (Cronin 2017:146). Translating Clare beyond English even reverses the process of indigenous voyeurism Cronin charts. By this, one means the phenomenon whereby minority languages, such as the Seri languages, become monuments of loss and exoticism when they are translated into global English (Cronin 2017:147). As simultaneously minority language and Standard English, Clare can be readily translated into a TL, but doing so still cultivates in a TL the kind of linguistic perception common to micro-languages.

Managing Clare's huge output for a translator is likewise made less intimidating if it is considered as an act of "regeneration". Clare worked desperately to convey his natural insights in verse, and worked with every available material for composition, making his own paper from native tree bark. Conventional paper, for example, was often scarce (Gorji 2009:12). An eco-translator can work equally desperately, striving intuitively and spontaneously to preserve Clare's natural insights, aware of the vulnerable ecosystems he charted. Thus, the slippages are immaterial: the eco-translational imperative merely dictates that we attempt to re-interpret and recycle the biodiversity one finds in Clare's work for a contemporaneous audience. The same combination of desperation and ingenuity that marks

attempts to mitigate the climate emergency can become our model for translating Clare and considering translations of his work.

Eco-translation's focus on regeneration and its replacement of equivalence as the overarching translational methodology allows one to appraise translations themselves as regenerations. One is therefore able to appreciate the surprising synergies that occur between a dialect-inflected ST and a TL. It also allows one to pinpoint translating Clare as part of the general ecology of translation, seeing that the difficulties are not unprecedented. Robert Burns, who often writes in Scots, has been translated into Ukrainian, where he has become a symbol of nationhood in this TL (Dyka 2014). Similarly, Seamus Heaney flourishes in Polish, where translations of his Ulster-dialect-infused heteroglossia have cultivated a dialogue with other Polish poets (Heaney 1995). Embracing these interactions can allow one to evaluate the French, German, and Slovak translations of Clare. In turn, one may analyse the separate ways they illuminate different aspects of Clare's verse in their translational style. This is central to how it overcomes the problem of translational dis-equivalence. One understands, for example, translating Clare as a time-sensitive environmental impetus, accompanying a wide variety of translational styles. In their separate emphases, however, they can focus on different aspects of Clare. In this way, we therefore focus on the most expansive undertakings in translating Clare to demonstrate the separate and manifold ways in which Clare is relevant to our contemporary ecological condition.

A final benefit of the eco-translational imperative is that it allows a critic to witness the merits of every individual translation in terms of how it contributes towards a translational ecosystem. In this sense, Clare's role as a visionary, international thinker of translatable ecological sensitivity began from the inception of Clare as a serious translational project, into French. This is where one therefore naturally begins to analyse Clare in translation, before one moves to near-contemporary German and Slovak translations.

Clare in Other Languages

Clare in French

Pierre Leyris began seriously translating Clare in 1963. Before this, in a long career as a translator, he was a fervent translator of some of the most discernibly complex English verse. He is a defensive translator of High Modernist poets like T.S. Eliot, criticising another translator's imprecise translation of the English "shade" into the French "*ombre*". This he criticises as unsophisticated and missing the Aristotelean subtleties of the original (Leyris: 1963a:22). Leyris' interest in ecology is equally evident from the other translations he critiques, and the English poets he chooses to translate. He lambasts poet-translator Paul Valéry's rendition of Thomas Hardy's "Throwing a Tree", a eulogy for a deforested specimen. Leyris takes particular umbrage with the translation of the word "cut" to "*passage de la lame*", since it does not convey the brutality of the original. He disapproves moreover of Valery's decision to translate the poem as free verse, desiring the original's precise slightly irregular metrical pattern to be carried over (Leyris: 1963a:9).

Leyris' comments on the work of other translators throughout the 1960s matter in a discussion of Clare translations in the sense that one understands Leyris as someone who cares deeply about poetry in the sense of its relationship to ecology. He balances this with a commitment to the musicality of poetry. They matter also in the sense that Leyris is a practitioner, not offering sustained elaborations upon his translational methodology. That he criticises the Hardy translation discussed in the last paragraph as formally flawed and insufficiently affected shows the delicacy with which he views his craft. His comments show his commitment to a strict translational credo emphasising equivalence and musicality. His ecological vision was further present in his practice: in the poets he chose to translate. His translations of the syntactically complex English nature poet Gerard Manley Hopkins attest to a desire to render this poet fully yet economically. He coins compounds to describe how Hopkins renders the combination of prayer and natural imagery. Christian Audejean has commented on the compound "*louange-de-langue*". As a translation of "truer than tongue", this imitates Hopkins' love of compound language and alliteration (Audejean 1964:516). All this demonstrates that Leyris was instrumental in bringing experimental English nature poets into French-language consciousness, mirroring the effects they used to portray harmonies of non-human and human.

When Leyris arrives at Clare it is, therefore, with a fundamentally eco-translational imperative. Leyris introduces Clare and translates much of his poetry and prose about his ninety-mile escape from an insane asylum in Epping Forest. In an article for *Commerce,* "*Avez-vu lu* John Clare?" ("Have you read John Clare?"), Leyris notes Clare's modern importance for ecology. He frames his insights in the context of fine-tuning our scientific understanding of the natural world:

> Car la nature ne cessait de lui donner des joies profondes, qu'il l'inventoriât en naturaliste (les savants font encore le plus grand cas de ses observations sur les oiseaux, sur les insectes) ou qu'il épousât en poète (Leyris: 1963b:41).
>
> (For nature never ceased to give him profound joys, that he took stock of as a naturalist (scientists still make use of the greater part of his observations on birds, on insects) that he embraced as a poet. (Authors' translation)

Leyris' interpretation of Clare is that his twin vocation as poet-naturalist leads to a divided self, that this internal conflict expedited his later health problems. Finally, Leyris expostulates that a thorough ecology of Clare himself would not shy away from divulging his mental health problems. Leyris is careful to evoke Dr. Allen's account of Clare, his observation of "*accablant et permanent état d'anxiété* (by an overwhelming and permanent state of anxiety) (Leyris, in Clare 1969:50, authors' translation). Leyris quotes from clinical records pertaining to Clare's mental health troubles, and furthers his own reading of Clare's agrarian labour and poetry in agonistic tension:

> A Helpstone, Clare était redevenu l'ouvrier agricole qu'il ne pouvait plus être, pourtant, d'un coeur entier. Les fermiers répugnaient à employer un poète. Il avait désormais deux métiers, ou plutôt une vocation et un métier, celle-là empiètant sur celui-ci et réciproquement. Sa creation poétique, toujours abondante, se faisait fiévreuse, torrentielle

> quand il préparait un receuil (Leyris: 1963b:38).
>
> (At Helpston, Clare became again the agricultural worker that he could never be, though, with a full heart. Farmers were loath to employ a poet. He had two jobs now, or rather a vocation and a job, the former encroaching on the latter and reciprocally. His poetic creation, always abundant, was feverous, torrential when he prepared a collection.) (Authors' translation).

In frankly discussing the nature of Clare's delusions and attempting to develop a theory of them, Leyris goes beyond many contemporary Clare critics. Such critics often evade Clare's mental illness to focus on Clare as a folklorist and bird-watcher (Deacon 1986). In translational ecology, this thorny subject is reemphasised in the dynamic exchange between French and English. In Leyris' initial foray into translating Clare, culminating in his full-length 1969 collection, Clare is a pathological ecologist. Equally, he is a prophetic poet whose mental illness is fuelled by his hyper-sensitivity:

> NID DE SOURIS
>
> J'ai trouvé une boule d'herbe dans le foin
> Et je l'ai taquinée en passant mon chemin;
> Mais quelque chose avait bougé, me semblait-il,
> Et je me retornai, pensant prendre un oiseau:
> Une vielle souris s'ensauvait par les blés
> Avec tous ses petits pendus à ses mamelles;
> Si bizarre et si grotesque me parut-elle
> Que j'accourus pour démêler ce que c'était,
> Fouillant les centaurées là où je me tenais:
> Elle, alors, détala d'auprès de sa portée.
> Les petits de glapir et, quand je m'éloignai,

La mère retrouvait son nid parmi le foin.
C'est à peine si l'eau coulait sur les cailloux
Et le soleil brillait sur les anciennes fosses. (Clare/Leyris 1963b:46).

Mouse's Nest

I found a ball of grass within the hay
and I teased it as I passed my way.
But something moved, it seemed to me,
and I returned, thinking I would seize a bird.
An old mouse ran away among the wheat,
with all its little ones hanging at its breasts;
so bizarre and so grotesque it appeared to me
that I hurried to work out what it was,
rummaging around the knapweed bushes where I stood.
She, then, hurried from her litter
the young ones shrieking and, when I went away
the mother found her nest again among the hay.
Scarcely the water ran among the pebbles
and the sun shone upon ancient ditches (Authors' back translation).

MOUSE'S NEST

I found a ball of grass among the hay
And progged it as I passed and went away;
And when I looked I fancied something stirred
And turned agen and hoped to catch the bird –
When out an old mouse bolted in the wheats
With all her young ones hanging at her teats;
She looked so odd and so grotesque to me

> I ran and wondered what the thing could be,
> And pushed the knapweed bushes where I stood;
> Then the mouse hurried from the cracking brood.
> The young ones squeaked, and as I went away
> She found her nest again among the hay.
> The water o'er the pebbles scarce could run
> And broad old cesspools glittered in the sun (Clare's original, Clare 1963b, cited in Leyris).

Clare as an ecological thinker, someone who recognised the disruption humans make to ecosystems, is readily apparent in this translation. As contemporary translational theorists, one may take issue, however, with some of Leyris' lexical choices. The dialectal "progged" is rendered as the standard French "*taquinée*". "*Taquinée"* is a much milder, less vernacular term, essentially "teased" or "tricked" (Sternberg 1851:83). This is certainly, in Bonaffini's terms, an "expressive impoverishment" (Bonaffini 1997:282).

Leyris universalises Clare by rendering him into Standard French, however, presenting him as a French poet with parity to Symbolist poets like Stephane Mallarmé. While Clare employs the uniqueness and concomitant disorientation of the regional term "progged", standard lexis communicates Clare's uniqueness to a wider audience. Eco-translation allows one to appreciate the merely attentive instrumentality of dialect translated into non-dialect, celebrating that Clare's perceptive vision is communicated to a larger audience. Cronin affirms that noticing and communicating an "indigenous" or "dialect perspective" in a language like standard English need not be a betrayal (Cronin 2017:7). One sees this in Leyris' eventual full-length volume of Clare translations, *Poèmes et Proses de la Folie de John Clare,* which focuses overwhelmingly on Clare's mental illness (Leyris 1969). It contains a case study wherein the psychiatrist Jean Fanchette identifies Clare as a sufferer of "*la paraphrénie*" (paraphrenia) (Fanchette 1969:141). This allows for a retrospective identification with other mentally ill poets like Friedrich Hölderlin and Antonin Artaud (Fanchette 1969:150). This casting of Clare as a mental-health case study serves to diminish Clare's ecological vision and turn him into an oddity. Leyris includes a letter

to Mary, whom Clare regards as his first wife. Though she had died in her mid-30s, Clare was apparently convinced he remained married to her (Leyris 1969). One sees this in more positive terms when we study Leyris' other comments on Clare. Rather than denigrating him, Leyris extols Clare's vision of Mary. He idealises this apparent delusion, elevating Mary to Socrates' Diotima, or Dante's Beatrice (Leyris 1969:11). If Clare's delusions have poetic predecessors, this valorises also his unique ecological vision.

As a starting point in conceptualising Clare's multilingual uniqueness, therefore, this French translation becomes important. Leyris is sufficiently attentive to the textual problems within translating Clare. He understands the phenomenology of reading Clare in his original manuscripts. This leads him to translate Clare with minimal punctuation:

> On est donc sûr, en ponctuant pas, de retrouver ce que Clare a écrit. On est sûr également, en ponctuant d'une main légère lorsque cela semble preferable fonctionnellement, (surtout dans une traduction, où peuvent naître des ambiguïtés nouvelles) des ne pas aller contre le désir de Clare (Leyris 1969:24).
>
> (It is certain therefore, by not punctuating, we rediscover what Clare has written. It is equally certain, by only using light punctuation [above all in a translation, which can create new ambiguities] we are not going against Clare's wishes.) (Author's translation).

This brings Clare into dialogue with Mallarmé, with whom Leyris compares Clare (Leyris 1969: 24). Mallarmé did indeed write unpunctuated sonnets, such as "*M'introduire dans ton histoire*" ("Introducing me into your story"). These become a fresh object of comparison, dignifying Clare by initiating new synergies within Standard French poetry (Leyris 1969:172). Leyris' French translation of Clare anchors Clare's linguistic abnormalities within the dignity of French Symbolist poetry. Jules Laforgue's translations of Walt Whitman are another example of conscious punctuative unorthodoxy, further allowing new synergies within this TL (Bootle 2016; Whitman 1918). Leyris says little

further about his translational approach: one must infer it. Focusing on Clare's asylum verse, Leyris does elect asylum verse that offers insights into the natural world. He ignores the many poems Clare wrote to local Northampton women in this period, such as "It is love" (Clare 1965:332). This has the effect, again, of transferring a serious, environmentally minded poet, capable of maintaining his ecological vision even as he struggled with paraphrenia. This must have been ground-breaking to its original 1960s audience, as one sees in the second stanza of Leyris' translation of Clare's "Song":

L'été (lines 9-14)

La bête à bon Dieu va quêtant sur la fleur épanouie du mai
L'abeille allègre butinant de l'aube jusqu'à la vepraie
Et le pinson couve en son nid que tapisse la mousse grise
Dans le buisson d'épine blanche où sur son sein je m'appuierai
Que je ne puis plus fermer l'oeil à force de penser à elle
Que j'ai perdu tout appétit que je me consume d'amour
Pareil à la rose des haies qu'assassine l'ardeur du jour (Clare/Leyris 1969: 93-97).

Summer (lines 9-14)

The ladybird is seeking on the blooming flower of May
The cheerful bee is gathering nectar from the dawn until the evening
And the chaffinch broods in its nest that the grey moss overhangs
In the whitethorn bush where I will lean upon her breasts
For I cannot close my eyes out of thinking of her
That I've lost every appetite and I am devouring myself with love
As the hedge rose that the day's ardour kills off (Authors' back translation)[2]

[2] The lack of punctuation in the original is imitated.

SONG (lines 9-14)

The clock-a-clay is creeping on the open bloom o'May
The merry bee is trampling the pinky threads all day
And the chaffinch it is brooding on its grey mossy nest
In the white thorn bush where I will lean upon my lovers breast
I'll lean upon her breast and I'll wisper in her ear
That I cannot get a wink o sleep for thinking of my dear
I hunger at my meat and I daily fade away
Like the hedge rose that is broken in the heat of the day (Clare's original, 1969, 93-97).

One cannot help but perceive that Leyris ignores an opportunity to translate the dialect term "clock-a-clay". This term is knowingly used as a unique term. It is a North Northamptonshire dialect word, utilised when Clare has been displaced from his original dialectal region and resides in Northampton Asylum (Bate 2004:468). The term, one may speculate, could have been translated into Occitan or Breton. There is some history of localisms used in standard French poetry, such as Arthur Rimbaud's "*la flache*"' for "*la flaque*" in "*Le Bateau Ivre*" (Rimbaud 1985:18). "*La bête à bon Dieu*" – a common vernacular term – does nothing, one could propose, to capture Clare's originality. It does avoid, however, the strictures of Linnean taxonomy, which Clare described as a "new chrisning system" that categorises plants as "chinese characters" (Clare 1983:61). This is because it evades the more conventional term for lady-bird (or "clock-a-clay"), "*la coccinelle*". This is derived from *coccinella*, a Linnean taxonomical term. Additionally, Leyris' commitment to preserving rhymic and metrical effects is unparalleled. Clare's lines in "Song" are neither regular nor free verse. They are slightly hypermetrical pentameter, often stretching to thirteen or fourteen syllables and utilising rhyming couplets. Parallel to this, in Leyris' translation, Clare's lines are just over the standard dodecasyllabic unit of French poetry. They are consistent in their slight irregularity. The last two lines are sixteen syllables, whereas some lines are only thirteen or fourteen syllables, but every line is

slightly hypermetrical. Equally, in an eco-translational sense, Leyris regenerates the poem by creating new French rhyming couplets. Leyris uses "*mai/vepraie*" ("May/vespers"), for example, adapted from the original's form. Creating a religious parallel between seasons and religious concepts, Leyris' translation resacralises the original. It also imbues Clare's imagery of the natural calendar with religious significance. Clare was an Anglican. "*Vepraie*" derives from the Latin, "*vepra*". This resituates his verse and its ecological sensitivity in a liturgical context, emphasising and attending to an otherwise unperceived quality in the ST.

Bonaffini's "expressive impoverishment" is absent, finally, within the ingenious framework of focusing on Clare's mental illness. The poetry of this period is enigmatic, removing the problem of equivalence. If Clare was suffering from paraphrenia, a communication difficulty, the translator himself does not have to aspire for strict equivalence. Clare is retrospectively diagnosed with a psychiatric condition that ironically liberates the translator, making the regeneration possible that Cronin describes. The translation may somewhat overzealously focus on Clare's mental health struggles at the expense of his ecological thought. Nonetheless, it is precisely as translational ecologists, and theorists of eco-translation, that one valorises Leyris' incipient contribution. Given this focus was predominantly with Clare's earlier work, more recent translators are able to turn with renewed zeal towards the ecological sensitivities of Clare's earlier work. Eco-translation creates room for further French translations, exploring new heteroglossia and exploiting new possibilities for the integration of French and its connected minority languages. It creates room, in turn, for further translations.

Clare in German

In Manfred Pfister's German translation, we will demonstrate that the focus on Clare's later years as an institutional patient is integrated with translations of Clare's mid- and early- career poetry. This transforms Clare into a predecessor of contemporary eco-anxiety (Clare/Pfister 2021). The translational understanding of Clare that Pfister employs develops and complicates Leyris' translational framework as the only existing full-length Clare translation. Clare is again compared to Friedrich Hölderlin, and is considered within the multinational sphere of poets who have

suffered from mental-health problems. Pfister presents Clare's delusions, however, as emblematic of the kind of radical empathy that also creates perceptive experiences within the natural world:

> Oft sind seine poetischen Naturschilderungen als Annäherung des beobachtenden Dichter an die Tiere und Pflanzen in Szene gesetzt, als behutsam langsames Eindringen in ihre Lebenswelt, das bis zur emphatischen Identifikation mit ihrer Erfahrung der Wirklichkeit führen kann (Clare 2021b:179).
>
> (Often, his poetic descriptions of nature are set up as the observing poet's approach to convergence with the animals and plants, as a careful, slow penetration of their life world, that can go as far as an emphatic identification with their experience of reality.) (Author's translation)

Pfister furnishes his closest exposition of the translator's craft indirectly. For Pfister, translation is an eco-translational convergence with the source material, or a "careful, slow penetration" with the environment of the ST itself. This matches Scott's notions of eco-translation as "inhabiting" the text (Scott 2015:286). This type of translational attention does not necessarily have to constitute equivalence. One sees this in Pfister's German translation of "To The Snipe", a poem published before Clare's institutionalisation in the 1830s. This is the period Seamus Heaney judges as Clare's apotheosis (Heaney 2002). Pfister emphasises the grammatical and punctuative liberties the text adopts by employing his own relative translational liberties.

An de Schnepfe

Wo ruhig Du sitzt
Sicher ins Schilf geduckt
Das wie ein dichter Wald Dich schützt

Oder unter altem Weidenstrunk (Clare/Pfister 2021:140, stanza 3)

To the Snipe

Where you sit quietly
safely crouched in the reeds
that protect you like a dense forest
or under an old willow trunk (Authors' back translation).

To The Snipe

Sittest at rest
In safety neath the clump
Of hugh flag forrest that thy haunts invest
Or some old sallow stump (Clare's original, quoted in Clare/Pfister 2021:140, stanza 3).

In the original, direct address pronouns, such as "you", are often omitted. Pfister reinserts these pronouns. He additionally inserts the word "*dichter*" (which in German means both "dense" and "poet"): The dialectal "hugh flag" thus becomes a more simply descriptive term but one with its own ambiguities in German. This creative reinterpretation harmonises with the regenerative synergy between English and German, their mutually compound nature. Central to Clare's linguistic experimentation is his readiness to create new compounds, which transform symbiotically into the German. "Sallow stump", for example, becomes "*Weidenstrunk*". Precise terminology for natural objects moves across languages, creating new methods of understanding landscape within the TL.

Pfister's translation here shows a sophisticated attempt to confront the textual problems of translating Clare. There is no authoritative version of this: it exists in competing manuscripts, and

in Clare's self-publication project, *The Midsummer Cushion* (Clare Peterborough MS A54 & B4 1830s). Pfister selects multiple editions, published and unpublished. These gesture to Clare's plurality and multifaceted nature as he exists across different mediums. Pfister calls this a result of a non-commercial "labour of love" (Pfister 2022). Equally, Pfister does not ignore the importance of dialect. His translational strategy is twofold. He demonstrates awareness of dialect's importance, often indicating it in footnote form. He uses the nature of German as a compound language, in the sense that German allows the formation of compound nouns and that German language poets exploit this feature to the full. This gestures towards equivalent translational possibilities that allow limited translational ingenuity, but not the use of dialect. One sees this particularly well in Pfister's translation of Clare's post-institutional "clock-a-clay". Entitled with the same dialect word that Leyris had rendered into vernacular French, this term for a ladybird is clearly of key importance to Clare. It is crucial not only for its expressive uniqueness but as a talisman what John Burnside (2015:80) refers to as "indigenous" memory, creating a portal beyond the Northampton Asylum. Pfister renders "clock-a-clay" every time as a different compound term:

Marienkäfer

In der Primelblüte still
Lieg ich fern vom Schrilln der Grill
Unter mir am grünen Grund
Perlt der Tau fischaugenrund
Oben drin, ein Käferwicht,
Wart ich bis der Tag anbricht

Wenn das Laub des Walds erbebt
Weil der wilde Wind anhebt
Schwankt mein Haus wie taumelnd krank
Auf dem Stängel grün und schlank
Trauft herab ein Tropfenschwarm

Käferlein hats wohl und warm

Tag für Tag und Nacht für Nacht
Berge ich mich mit Bedacht
In der Primelblüt ich lieg
Warm trotz Nass und Tau mich wieg
Schwarz im Dunkel, rot im Licht
Ich schwarzgetupfer Käferwicht.

Bebt mein Haus vor Schauers Wut
Schwankt der Stiel samt Blumenhut
Beugt sich unterm Regenwind
Bis zum Gras hinab geschwind
Geborgen drin als Käfermann
Zeige ich die Stunden an (Clare/Pfister 2021:177)

Ladybird

In the primrose flower, still,
I lie far from the screeching of the cricket.
Under me, on the green ground,
the dew pearls round like fish eyes.
Inside, above - a bug man -
I wait for the day to dawn

when the foliage of the forest trembles
because the wild wind lifts.
My house sways as if staggering from illness.
On the green and slim stem,
a swarm of bugs drops down.

Little bug is snug and warm.

Day by day, and night by night
I hide myself with care.
In the primrose flower I lie,
rock myself warmly despite the wet and dew,
black in the dark, red in the light,
I, a black-spotted bug-gnome.

When my house shakes from the rage of the showers,
The stem, including its flower hat, sways.
It bends underneath the rain wind,
quickly, down until the grass.
Protected inside as a bug-man,
I show the hours (Authors' back translation).

Clock a Clay

In the cowslip peeps I lye
Hidden from the buzzing fly
While green grass beneath me lies
Pearled wi' dew like fishes eyes
Here I lye a Clock a Clay
Waiting for the time o'day

While grassy forests quake surprise
And the wild wind sobs and sighs
My gold home rocks as like to fall
On its pillars green and tall
When the pattering rain drives bye
Clock a Clay keeps warm and dry

Day by day and night by night
All the week I hide from sight
In the cowslips peeps I lye
In rain and dew still warm and dry
Day and night and night and day
Red black spotted Clock a Clay

My home it shakes in wind and showers
Pale green pillar top't wi' flowers
Bending at the wild wind's breath
Till I touch the grass beneath
Here still I live lone Clock a Clay
Watching for the time of day (Clare's original, quoted in Clare/Pfister 2021:176).

Pfister renders "clock-a-clay" as a different compound term each time, as "*Käferwicht*" ("bug-gnome"), "*Käferlein*" ("little bug"): eventually, as "*Käfermann*" ("bug-man"). All of this emphasises the empathy that Pfister argues is central to Clare's perception of the natural world. Pfister emphasises this by having Clare transform, in compound terms, into the beetle, in the final stanza. The shifting compounds create a climactic transformation within the last line of German translation, which utilises the verb "*Zeige*", from "*zeigen*" (to show). The "clock-a-clay" in Pfister's transplanted Clare is urging us to trust it temporally, rather than human conceptions. Pfister then dutifully explains the slippage after the poem:

> Dialektwort für Marienkäfer, das auf den Volksglauben verweist, nach dem man durch mehrmaliges Klopfen auf den Boden, bis der Käfer auffliegt, die Uhrzeit ermitteln kann. Die für Clares Naturlyrik charakteristische intime Nähe zur Natur lässt hier den Käfer selbst zu Wort kommen (Pfister 2021:179).

> (Dialect-word for lady bird, which refers to the popular belief according to which one can tell the time by knocking on the ground several times until the bug flies up. The intimate proximity to nature, which is typical for Clare's nature lyricism, allows the bug to have its say.) (Authors’ translation)

An inventive solution to a translational problem, this nonetheless leaves considerable scope for further innovation. Pfister’s translation does not address, even in footnotes, unconventional contractions such as “top’t wi’ flowers”. There remains space for more translation into German dialects, particularly as Michael Eggers has compared Clare to the Austrian poet Adalbert Stifter (1805 – 1868). Stifter experimented with unpunctuated narrative forms, a parallel to Clare (Eggers 2019). The eco-translational permaculture of Clare translations continues, as translations inform, enrich, and challenge one another.

Clare in Slovak

“Performativity” is an important concept within Scott’s notions of nineteenth century poetic eco-translation: the way in which translation engraves the ST into a new spatio-temporal reality, even becomes an “exercise in perception” in its own right (Scott 2015:291). Rather than a simple retelling of a past composition in a TL, eco-translation is an “evolving and encompassing ecological event” (Scott 2015:301). Scott also discusses eco-translation as “changing the disposition of the house”, of creating a new environment for the text to dwell in (Scott 2015:291). Similarly, Cronin has explored how eco-translation helps us to dramatise the “placedness of language” and the “dual nature of language […] between movement and place.” (Cronin 2017:123). These tensions, as we have explored, are found in Clare’s work itself and its unique heteroglossia, but find new expression in the moment of their translation. In this section, we will argue that the Slovak translation of Clare replaces Clare, in eco-translational terms, within a new non-global language. We will argue that this resolves the contradiction in the original between Clare’s Northamptonshire dialect and Standard English, performing a new translation that situates Clare’s work within the small Slovak linguistic microcosm. Given the text even makes use of Eastern Slovak, Clare

is precisely situated within a particular dialect region.

In turn, we will demonstrate that this re-houses the text by engraving Clare's ecological vulnerabilities within a new textual environment. Creating a sensitive environment for the text to dwell within is more important, in eco-translational theory, than semantic or syntactical equivalence. Within translation theory, eco-translation therefore conceptualises a rationale for what Scott calls a "multiplication of versions" (Scott 2015:291). Cronin has likewise spoken about the importance of translating dialect verse as an act of "cultural mediation", where rendering dialect poetry creates a form of "creative and transformative energy" in bridging between an urban and minority culture (Cronin 2017:24).

We will argue that poet-translator Kantorová-Báliková's translations complicate this notion, since an English heteroglossia of standard English and Northamptonshire dialect is transformed into a Slovak heteroglossia of standard and East Slovak. This divergent creation conforms to Scott's ideas that translation should be a "first-order creation", rather than a merely secondary one (Scott 2015:285). Analysing this Slovak translation, therefore, allows us to develop the kind of attention and synergies that occur within eco-translation. Specifically, these versions are faithful to the text in the sense of facilitating alternative linguistic ecosystems for the text to dwell in. Clare helps Kantorová-Báliková in eco-translational terms to create within Slovak, to valorise Eastern Slovak dialect, and to develop a methodology or ecology of how dialect could be engraved poetically in standard language. Eco-translational theory urges one to celebrate Kantorová-Báliková's apparently imperfect translation as an ecologising expression within a non-dominant culture. It impels one to see this translation as an attentive, creative resituation of the text, as an "ecological event" that reinscribes Slovak dialect as a means of conveying Clare's ecological vision. At the same time, we will argue that Clare allows synergies between English and Slovak, as Kantorová-Báliková creates new metrical forms in order to re-house Clare's ecological vulnerabilities. While many features of Clare's expressive vision are thus lost in translation, we will argue that new lexical and formal templates facilitate his ecological vision.

Before one explores the Slovak translation, it is worth emphasising that its attention is only relevant to us insofar as our analysis employs an eco-translational methodology. It is published simply as a web-page, rather than as an authoritative translation with a precisely delineated translational methodology, by the poet-translator Kantorová-Báliková. It matters in the sense it is an attentive multiplication – a creative exercise in rendering Clare into Slovak. In order to accomplish this difficult translational operation, rendering a poet with a broad, complicated heteroglossia into a TL, many excisions are made. It is from an eco-translational perspective that we can uphold such excisions for the necessary achievement they effect. This translation allows an alternative and similarly plural heteroglossia within a more contracted language tradition, inspiring the creation of new formal environments within the TL. One sees this in Kantorová-Báliková's translation of "I am":

Som

Som! a kto chápe, čo to znamená?
Nik z priateľov si na mňa nespomenie
sám hlcem svoje vlastné trápenia,
čo vzdúvajú sa, miznú nevidené,
a bez duše sa život mení v tiene,
no predsa som a strháva ma vrenie,

čo márnosťou a pohŕdaním ryčí
v tom živom besnom bdelom mori snov,
bez vnemu žitia, radostí – som ničí –
sám v troskách vlastných krutých poryvov,
niet blízkej mysle, potácam sa v núdzi,
tí najbližší sú cudzejší než cudzí.

Už túžim len po čírom javisku,
po ktorom ľudia nikdy nekráčali,

kde Stvoriteľ mi bude nablízku,
sny vráti mi, čo snil som celkom malý –
v dňoch pred zrodením. Chcem, nech stelie sa
tíš trávy dolu, nad ňou nebesá (Clare/Kantorová-Báliková:2019)

I am

I am! and who understands what that means?
None of my friends will remember me.
I alone to gorge my own sorrows,
that recede, vanish unseen,
and without a soul, life turns to shadows.
Yet still, I am, torn away by the creak,

that screams with vanity and scorn.
In that lively, raging, waking sea of dreams,
without a sense of life, of joy, I am nothing:
alone in the ruins of my own cruel impulses,
No near mind, I stagger in claustrophobia.
Those dearest are more alien than strangers - stranger than strangers.

I long only for an empty stage
that people have never walked upon,
where the Creator will be near me.
Dreams will return to me, those that I dreamed, when I was small,
in the days before I was born. I want to let myself dwell:
the silence of the grass below, the heavens above (Authors' back translation).

I am

I am – yet what I am none cares or knows,
My friends forsake me like a memory lost;
I am the self-consumer of my woes
They rise and vanish in oblivions host
Like shadows in love – frenzied stifled throes
And yet I am, and live with vapers tost

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life, or joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
And e'en the dearest – that I love the best
Are strange – nay, rather stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod,
A place where woman neither smiled or wept,
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept;
Untroubling and untroubled where I lie,
The grass below – above the vaulted sky (Clare's original, as formatted and presented in Clare 1965:297).

Kantorová-Báliková safeguards the alterity of the original by recreating its iambic pentameter form in Slovak. This runs counter to Slovak poetic custom, which does not use this metre: each Slovak line is decasyllabic. For example, '*Už'* – beginning the final stanza – is an unstressed syllable. Kantorová-Báliková evidently considers that iambic pentameter is necessary to carry over and ecologise the speaker's desperate performance of self, with the unstressed syllable "I" indicating insecurity. The salient point, in other words, is that the Slovak carries this performance of insecurity into its own language tradition. Only "creator" is rendered as "*stvoritel*", from the verb "*stvorit*", but the emphatic "God" is absent. "*Stvorit*" functions also as secular or artistic creation. This leaves the Slovak version with ambiguities about whether the monotheistic, Judeo-

Christian deity is being referred to, or a less conventional, perhaps pantheistic, force. In the moment of translation, meaning becomes pluralised, and the kinds of creation that include translation are extolled.

If this omission is not sufficiently extreme, an entire line – "A place where woman never smiled or wept" – is changed entirely, to "a place where people never walked upon". Insertions and readaptations are much more abundant than either in Leyris or Pfister's versions. In eco-translation, one may accept and embrace these as ecologising, as testifying to attention accorded to the ST. In the final line, in Slovak, the singular and material "sky" becomes the plural "*nebesá*", a word in its singular "*nebo*" denoting the more cosmic Heaven. An eco-translational methodology would encourage us to see the achievements of these renditions, visualising in different ways the vulnerable ecosystems that Clare depicts. Such a methodology also encourages seeing every translation as an attentive reading, allowing one to see this apparent misreading or translational limitation as opening up a more numinous dimension to the ecological vulnerabilities that Clare depicts.

What we are suggesting, then, is that the ostensible flaws in Kantorová-Báliková's translation, within an eco-translational methodology, actually resolve many of the problems in translating Clare. One sees this in the translational strategy of transferring one heteroglossia over to another. From a translational perspective that valorises equivalence, one would take significant issue with Kantorová-Báliková's decision to render phrases that are not dialect in the ST into dialect phrases in the TL. From an eco-translational perspective, however, this is precisely the sensitivity that respects both languages, focusing on transforming the affect and environment of the original into a simultaneously cohesive environment in the TL. The kinds of apparent mistranslations Kantorová-Báliková makes are attempts to carry over the style's expressive force, which insists that we salvage dialect for the unique ways in which it relates to the natural world. In response to this style, Kantorová-Báliková develops a renewed ecologisation of Eastern Slovak dialect:

Cudzinec

Či moju strasť vzdych uteší?
Úsmev by mal zmyť beznádej. (Clare/Kantorová-Báliková: 2019)

The Stranger

Shall (*Či moju*) my suffering, a sigh comfort?
A smile ought to wash away despair (Authors' back translation)

The Stranger

When trouble haunts me, need I sigh?
No, rather smile away despair (Clare's original, Clare 1920: 94);

"*Či moju*" – "shall?", or "if my" – is more common to vulnerable Eastern Slovak dialects (Štolc 1994). Standard Slovak would be "*Či môj*". Kantorová-Báliková develops a heteroglossia within Slovak to represent the entangled heteroglossia of the ST and its conflict between orality and written literature. This conflict is understood, within eco-translation, in terms of envisaging translation as a performance, a particular spatio-temporal moment. In this way, eco-translation understands a translation as resolving tensions. Its apparent mistakes, or slippages, make sense anew of the text's temporalities. Eco-translation understands translation specifically as encoding new temporalities. One sees in Clive Scott's sense of how eco-translation actualises nineteenth century poetry by making it neither within the past nor present, but within a liminal temporality or act of reading that embraces and makes sense of both. We therefore understand Kantorová-Báliková's translation of "The Nightingale" as a final expression of eco-translational principles:

Slávik

Je čas, keď slávik, farbou blízky hline
zas nôti, pieseň z prítmia rinie sa,
keď v údolí, tam v tráve na lúčine,
počúva panna sľuby milenca. (Clare/Kantorová-Báliková 2019)

The Nightingale

It is time when the nightingale, close to clay in colour,
makes again that melody, the song from the twilight rushes in:
when in the valley, there in the grass on the meadow,
a maiden listens to her lover's vows (Authors' back translation).

The Nightingale

This is the month the nightingale, clod brown,
Is heard among the woodland shady boughs:
This is the time when in the vale, grass-grown,
The maiden hears at eve her lover's vows (Clare's original, Clare 1965:289)

A different transplantation occurs here, as Clare's delicate heteroglossia is subsumed into the Slovak national romantic tradition. "The vale" becomes, for rhymic purposes, a poetic, national word for "meadow". This is an apparent slippage, with these pastoral terms having entirely different meanings. In eco-translational terms, one can see this as enriching the TL, placing into dynamic relationship with the Romantic tradition it emerged from. "*Lúčine*" appears in the Czech national anthem, which was sung in the Slovak Republic until 1993. It is as an emblem of the homeland's fluid landscape, of "*voda hučí po lučinách*" ("the streams that are rushing through the meadows"). The Czech national anthem is contemporary with Clare, adapted from a song within an 1834 play by Josef Kajetán Tyl, *Fidlovačka,* which later became a broadside ballad (Ivánek 2022:75). The performance of this translation regenerates this comparison, ecologising, in turn, the Slovak poetic tradition.

All this is to suggest that eco-translation helps us to see this apparently problematic Slovak translation, the least academic translation we have analysed, as more than a direct, immediate transference. Translating Clare into Slovak is a complex, multimodal arrangement that allows creative adaptation and energisation in a non-global poetic tradition. Clare is used, we are arguing, as an

impetus to develop a Slovak eco-poetry. Elucidating or explaining Clare within this tradition is only secondary to this tradition.

Conclusion

We have analysed three different translations of Clare – in French, German, and Slovak. All of these translations choose entirely different editions and selections of Clare in order to prepare a translational overview. In French, Clare is presented solely from the perspective of his late career. In German, Clare's dialect language is translated as compound language, via footnotes. In Slovak, translation is approached as a creative strategy, in order to develop a language of Slovak eco-poetry.

We have chosen these vastly different renditions of Clare in order to develop Scott and Cronin's nascent conception of "eco-translation". We have demonstrated that such a methodology is useful here because of the difficulty of translating English dialect verse from another translational perspective. In traditional translational theory, we would pinpoint the slippages, mistranslations, and misrepresentations found within these translations as significant obstacles. Further translations would be required in order to elaborate upon these translations, or to expand Clare's work.

In eco-translation, however, the overwhelming focus is not "correctness", nor "felicity', to the ST (Scott 2015:292). Rather, eco-translations can be evaluated in the synergies they activate, and the way in which the text is "performed", manifesting its "obtrusive presence in the here-and-now" (Scott 2015:297). Following on from this, the ways in which the texts address Clare's dialect terminology can similarly be seen in Cronin's urgency to safeguard minority languages and sub-languages from extinction. Following on from Scott, this allows one to avoid debates about whether or not dialect has been rendered accurately. Rather, in eco-translational terms, the focus is on how dialect can be responded to, addressed, noticed, and ecologised.

Thus, we can see all of these translations as eco-translations in their own right, considering that eco-translation would necessitate a multiplicity of responses and readings. This would function

likewise as a response to Clare's significant oeuvre, and the fact that every one of these translations is limited in the particular ways we have delineated. Despite its limitations, eco-translation allows us to see the essential necessity of these attempts, or renditions, insofar as they raise ecological awareness. In considering a variety of Clare translations within its framework, one develops and challenges eco-translation as a working methodology.

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