

Chapter 11

Translation as a Means of Ideological Struggle

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Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship between the translation of the *Communist Manifesto* into Greek issued by the Communist Party of Greece in 1933, and its contemporary political context. More specifically, it investigates two issues: firstly, the ways in which ideological struggles between counter-hegemonic forces for the 'ownership' of Marxism conditioned paratextual features and translational decisions in the target text (TT); and, secondly, how the (para)textual specificities, in conjunction with translation criticism, aimed to influence the reception of the TT with a view to establishing a particular translation of the *Communist Manifesto* as the only correct one. Recent research in Translation Studies concerned with the 'institutional translation' (Kang, 2008) of political texts has focused mainly on practices, processes and products within the EU (Koskinen, 2000, 2001; Schäffner, 1997, 2004a, 2004b). Whereas the focus of such research has been on translations issued by an institution that is part of the hegemonic apparatus, this chapter studies institutional translation carried out by a political party with counter-hegemonic political ideas, thus broadening our understanding of the role of translation in institutional settings.

In the writings of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1971/1978), the term 'hegemony' acquires different meanings. The best summary definition for the purposes of this essay is provided by Raymond Williams. In its simplest sense, hegemony refers to relations of political predominance between social classes; such predominance encompasses a way of seeing the world (Williams, 1976/1986: 145).¹ Although Gramsci employed the

term 'hegemony' to discuss relations of power and domination between social classes, it is now used in social sciences in a variety of contexts. For Gramsci, the contradictions of capitalism itself create the potential for the spontaneous emergence of alternative ideas and practices, so hegemonic ideas always exist on the fault line with 'counter-hegemonic' ones. In this chapter, Marxism is considered a counter-hegemonic political ideology whose interpretation was contested by different political organizations.

The *Communist Manifesto*, written in German in 1848 by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, is one of the most important political texts ever written. Linking theory to political activity, it summarized the principles of a group of revolutionaries who called themselves communists and articulated a radical analysis and critique of contemporary capitalism. The text, which was published during a period of revolutionary upheaval in Europe, became the most important founding statement of those who considered (and still consider) themselves communists or socialists and has been so widely translated that scholars are in no position to provide a definitive number of its translations. The *Communist Manifesto* has been influential to entire generations of left-wing political activists all over the world and it is a text with enormous symbolic as well as educational significance. The followers of its ideas have transformed world politics.

Within the Greek context, the *Communist Manifesto* played a significant role in ideological struggles which have shaped political forces and ideological developments in Greek society for many decades. The term 'ideology' is used here in a narrow sense to denote a coherent set of political ideas, whereas the term 'ideological struggle' will refer to the battle of ideas between political forces. The discussion will focus mostly on the early 1930s and the translation published by the Communist Party of Greece [Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας, henceforth KKE] in 1933. This is because, around the time of the publication of this translation, the KKE was engaged in an ideological struggle on two fronts: firstly, against the hegemonic ideas of the ruling class; and secondly, against the party's rivals on the left for the establishment of the KKE's own interpretation of Marxism as the only correct one (see section on translation criticism, below). In this context, the term 'counter-hegemonic' encompasses a heterogeneous entity. Thus, power struggles can take place not only between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces but also between counter-hegemonic forces.

In late 1920s and early 1930s Greece, the ideological struggle between Marxist-oriented political organizations for the control of Marxism was at its peak. The significantly different interpretations of Marxism that these organizations presented led to alternative and competing strategies for

bringing about social change. The outcome of the ideological struggle within the left determined which organizational model and vision for the future was proposed to those striving for social change and affected subsequent political trends and social movements. To understand the role of the *Communist Manifesto* in these struggles within Greek society, it is necessary to outline the reasons for its retranslations and to explain the context of the ideological struggles around the time of the publication of the 1933 translation.

Retranslations: A Brief History of the *Communist Manifesto* into Greek

The *Communist Manifesto* was introduced in Greece relatively late, in 1908; this coincided with the first efforts to establish socialist and trade union organizations in the country. The chronology and configuration of subsequent translations is shown in Table 11.1.

As shown in Table 11.1, within the space of 25 years, four new translations and two revised editions of the text were issued. The reasons for the

Table 11.1 Retranslations of the *Communist Manifesto* into Greek until 1933

<i>Year of publication</i>	<i>Commissioner</i>	<i>Editor/ translator</i>	<i>Completeness of translation</i>	<i>Format of publication</i>
1908		Kostas Chatzopoulos (translator)	Incomplete, missing section III	Serialized in the newspaper <i>The Worker</i>
1913		Kostas Chatzopoulos (translator)	Revised 1908 translation; incomplete, missing section III	Brochure
1919 (revised and reprinted in 1921)	SEKE (forerunner of the KKE)	A. Sideris (editor); A. Dumas (translator)	Complete	Brochure
1927		G. Kordatos (translator)	Complete	Brochure
1933	KKE	I. Iordanides (translator)	Complete	Brochure

frequent retranslation of the text concern the quest for a good quality translation that would guarantee the correct rendering of such an important text in the target language (TL). However, as will be discussed, they also relate to ideological concerns. The first translation was carried out by Kostas Chatzopoulos, a prominent literary author and, at the time, a socialist. Chatzopoulos's unsuitable linguistic choices which 'complicated, in many places, the pleasant reading' of the text (Sideris, 1919: ε') and the fact that his translation was incomplete, were not the only reasons why this translation failed to satisfy the needs of the SEKE [Socialist Labour Party of Greece], the forerunner of the Communist Party of Greece. In 1917, Chatzopoulos headed the government's censorship committee (Noutsos, 1991: 414) and had become an anti-communist.² In essence, he had sided with the party's political opponents and this was another reason that made his translation unusable and necessitated the issue of a new one by the SEKE.

The translator of the 1919 translation by the SEKE was Antonis Doumas, a member who later left the party. The editor was the socialist MP Aristotelis Sideris, who was also a member of the SEKE. Later, he also left the SEKE and joined a rival political organization. Questioning again the quality of all previous translations, Giannis Kordatos published his own translation in 1927. Giannis Kordatos was the KKE's former General Secretary who had been expelled shortly before the publication of his translation. He identified himself as a Trotskyist³ at the time, but was not aligned with any Trotskyist organization. However, all these translations were dismissed by the KKE on the basis that their poor quality distorted Marxism (see section on translation criticism, below). This assertion is especially pronounced in 1933 at a time of intense ideological struggle for the ownership of Marxism. In response to these concerns, the KKE published yet another new translation in 1933.

Ideological Struggle: 'The Monopoly of Marxist Theory'

In the period leading up to World War II, very important and complex social, political and ideological developments took place in Greek society. Here I will only outline those most relevant to this discussion. In 1924 the KKE became a full member of the Comintern (i.e. the Communist International organization) and its subsequent political profile was affected by the events that took place in the USSR and in the Comintern itself. In the late 1920s, the KKE went through a period of crisis which resulted in the expulsion of several of its members, such as Kordatos, the translator of the 1927 translation.

In the 1920s, after Stalin had become the leader of the USSR, the parties affiliated to the Comintern underwent fundamental changes which have been described by scholars as 'Stalinism' or 'Stalinization' (Alexatos, 1997: 180–182; Cliff, 1970; Paloukis, 2003: 227; Reiman, 1987). These changes concerned major theoretical and organizational transformations within the Communist parties. Leon Trotsky, leader of the Red Army during the Russian revolution, led the faction Left Opposition (1923–1927) in the Bolshevik party and fought against Stalinism. The International Left Opposition was formed in 1930 as a faction group within the Comintern and had supporters in several countries, including Greece. From the late 1920s, within the USSR, members and supporters of the Left Opposition faced persecution and Trotsky was murdered in 1940 while in exile in Mexico. Outside the USSR, Communist parties were very hostile to Trotskyist groups in their countries. The most significant organizations supporting the International Left Opposition in Greece were the organizations *Archive of Marxism* [Αρχείο του Μαρξισμού] and *Spartakos* [Σπάρτακος], the Archive being the larger of the two.

From the late 1920s, the KKE's objective on the ideological front was the appropriation of Marxism from its rivals within the left. The aim to establish the monopoly of representation of Marxism in Greece was an endeavour that continued after the 1930s, but from the late 1920s to the mid-1930s efforts were particularly intense. The party's Central Committee in its 1927 'Decision on the activity of the propaganda section' stated:

The monopoly of theory. Our Party ought to aim at the monopoly of representing the Marxist-Leninist theory. This is also one of the numerous criteria of the theoretical and political maturity of the Party. It must also seek, through the operation of extensive propaganda, to promote the dissemination of Marxist and Leninist literature.

Securing the monopoly on Marxist and Leninist theory strengthens the Party against hostile organizations, reactionary at heart, which are hidden behind the mask of communism and communist teaching. (*Rizospastis*, 16 April 1927: 1)⁴

This statement expresses the conscious decision by the KKE to appropriate Marxism. Establishing the monopoly entailed, on the one hand, the marginalization of the KKE's political opponents on the left, both Trotskyists and reformists, by exposing them as agents of the bourgeoisie and, on the other hand, the KKE's own launch as the only true representative of Marxism in Greece. But, since Marxist and Leninist theoretical

texts were mainly written in German, English and Russian, the monopoly of Marxism in Greece involved first of all control of the translations of Marxist texts. Such control could be attained through their retranslation with the purpose of establishing them as the only accurate interpretations of the originals. Retranslating works by Marx, Engels and Lenin was particularly important because, until then, rival organizations had issued most of the translations of Marx's, Engels's and Lenin's works. Petranos, who reviewed the previous translations of the *Communist Manifesto* in the KKE's theoretical journal *Komef*, wrote shortly before the publication of the KKE's 1933 translation:

... one of the main duties for safeguarding our ideological line would be, apart from all other things, to inspect all the translations of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin's writings that we have in Greek and to reveal or correct the mistakes and the distortions which are found in them. (Petranos, 1933b: 22)

A corollary of this is that the monopoly of the Marxist theory also necessitated the development of specific strategies to dominate its interpretation. However, the KKE was in no position to prevent other political organizations or individuals from translating Marxist texts. What it was able to do was to appraise previous translations and translators and implicitly promote its own translations as the only accurate ones. To this end translation criticism aimed to demonstrate that the translations issued by other political forces were inaccurate and, more importantly, that inaccuracies were deliberate mistranslations motivated by the translators' political beliefs. The increased translation activity carried out by the KKE particularly from 1927 onwards (further facilitated by the ascent to power of a less oppressive regime after the fall of the Pangalos dictatorship) and the retranslation of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1933 have to be seen not only as a way of addressing a general need for more and better translations of Marxist works (which, as Elefantis [1976: 137f] notes, were indeed few), but also as a valuable means of ideological struggle against its opponents on the Left. The control of translation did not decide the outcome of these ideological struggles, but it played a significant role in them.

The ideological struggle between the KKE and the Trotskyist organizations involved the interpretation of Marxism mainly in relation to the prospects of revolution in Greece and of the defeat of fascism. The KKE saw the necessity for a democratic bourgeois revolution before a proletarian one, whereas the Trotskyists advocated a socialist proletarian revolution without the intermediate stage of a bourgeois intervention.

These differences impacted on the organizational models which these parties adopted and necessitated alliances with diverse social and political forces. The Trotskyists used the *Communist Manifesto* to legitimize their critique of the KKE's (and the Comintern's) political line of 'socialism through stages'. For example, Pantelis Pouliopoulos, the leader of the Trotskyist organization Spartakos, in order to support his critique of the KKE's line that the proletarian revolution would proceed in stages, urged his readers to study the *Communist Manifesto* (Pouliopoulos, 1934/1980: 120f). The KKE's fierce opposition to Trotskyism was prompted firstly by the growth of Trotskyist forces which challenged the dominance of the KKE within the left. Indeed, between 1926 and 1928 the membership of the Archive of Marxism was larger than the KKE's (Kardasis, 2002). Secondly, in the KKE's view (which was also Stalin's view) the Trotskyists represented a bourgeois, anti-working-class trend which disguised itself as Marxist.

On the other hand, the ideological struggle between the KKE and the social reformists concentrated mainly on the means of achieving social change: social reformists advocated the impossibility of a socialist revolution in Greece and posed the alternative of gradual change through state reforms. To a greater or lesser extent they referred to Marxism for their analysis of Greek society. Sideris, who edited the 1919 translation by the SEKE, had by then become an exponent of this strategy and he was criticized by the KKE as a 'social-fascist'. The term 'social-fascist' was used by Communist parties in the 1930s to describe individuals and organizations that supported social-democracy, that is, reformism. It derived from the Comintern's analysis that social-democracy was a form of fascism. Soon the KKE would adopt the term when referring to its opponents in the Left, particularly at the peak of the ideological (and political) struggle of the early 1930s. With this in mind, the following excerpt from the KKE's daily newspaper provides a glimpse of the relationship between the *Communist Manifesto* and its contemporary political situation. It refers to the new translation of the text.

Its study is a colossal theoretical boost for everyone and it gives new strength in the struggle against capitalism and its agents the social-fascists, Trotskyists and other leaders. (*Rizospastis*, 12 March 1933: 4)⁵

In this excerpt, readers are encouraged to read the new translation with explicit objectives in mind: to use it as an asset in the struggle against the KKE's political adversaries who were viewed as sinister agents of the bourgeoisie. This contextualization of the reading of the *Communist Manifesto* smoothed the process of claiming authority over its interpretation.

The *Communist Manifesto* has a dual significance for the Left: as an educational means, explaining the principles of Marxism, and as the 'emblematic' text of communism and of all communists. The term 'emblematic texts' is used here to signify a category of texts which are representative and evocative of a whole community. They form the basis for evaluations (including who belongs to the community and who does not), interpretations, judgments and actions; they are the source of other texts and metatexts. Texts that have acquired such social significance include religious ones, such as the Bible or the Qur'ân, or political texts in the wider sense, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Translation has made these texts available to linguistically diverse groups which, in turn, have formed distinct communities, such as Christians, communists, etc. The concept foregrounds the social value of texts at a particular historical time and relates aspects of the social context to textual choices. Because the Communist Manifesto is the emblematic text of communism, the question of whose translation (and thus interpretation) of the text would be established as the most reliable one was very important, particularly in the late 1920s and mid-1930s, a period when 'ownership' of the Marxist theory was at stake. Efforts to establish the KKE's interpretation as correct are traceable in textual and pictorial elements of the covers of the publication, in textual choices in the TT and in translation criticism.

Establishing Lineage

The covers of a publication, described by Genette (1997: 1) as a type of 'paratexts', present the text and can affect its reception. Moreover, according to Harvey (2003: 68),⁶ they function as sites for the representation of ideological positions. Thus, their investigation can foreground the publisher's assumptions about the text and how it should be read. The publication of the 1933 translation of the *Communist Manifesto* was institutionalized, that is, it was issued by the People's Bookshop [*Λαϊκό Βιβλιοπωλείο*] whose publishing activities were under the control of the KKE's Central Committee (Elefantis, 1976: 142). Consequently, the analysis of its covers (Figure 11.1) can reveal the KKE's own evaluation of the text and its suggested reading. It will be argued that both their textual and pictorial elements evoked a particular relationship between the text and the KKE which facilitated the party's claims on the monopoly of Marxist theory. The 1933 translation was published in the form of a pocket-size brochure denoting the popular orientation of the publication.



Figure 11.1 The 1933 edition of the *Communist Manifesto* by the KKE: front cover. Source: Αρχαία Σύγχρονης Κοινωνικής Ιστορίας (ΑΣΚΙ) Digital Archive with kind permission.

The project to establish the monopoly of Marxist theory was a venture concerning, among other things, the monopoly of all the symbols and references which had come to be associated with Marxism and this was manifested in the design of the covers. The red colour used for the title is an immediate and recognisable sign related to communism, dominates the front cover. The surnames of the authors printed at the top are followed by the title of the publication, *The Communist Manifesto* [Το Κομμουνιστικό Μανιφέστο]. Alternating between upper- and lower-case letters, the font is striking, modernist and, to my knowledge, unique to this publication. The effort made and the care shown in its design demonstrate the importance of the publication to the KKE. To the left of Marx and Engels's portraits is the inscription-tribute (cf. Genette, 1997: 118) 'for the 50 years since Marx's

death', which announces the commemorative character of the publication. Honouring the anniversary was a symbolic action by which the KKE asserted its descent from Marx and promoted itself as the natural inheritor of his thought. The placing of the inscription on the front cover suggests the significance that the KKE attached to this assertion of ancestry. On the otherwise plain white back cover, there is an inscription: the publication was 'issued after the decision by the Politburo of the KKE's Central Committee for the 50 years since Marx's death'. Therefore, the publication as a whole was authorized and approved by the party which was responsible for its issue and which endorsed the interpretation of Marxism presented in the translation as the official interpretation of the party.

The suggested direct relationship between the KKE, the text and the authors makes the cover comparable to an *enthymeme*. An enthymeme is a form of syllogism with a suppressed premise, which can only be supposed if it is deducible from common experience, knowledge or belief (Voloshinov, 1987: 100f). For example, the argument, 'Socrates is a man, therefore he is mortal' contains the suppressed premise that all men are mortal (Voloshinov, 1987: 100f). However, an enthymeme is a reminder of a special kind as it also conveys social evaluation which is presupposed and which organizes behaviour and actions (Voloshinov, 1987: 100–101). Voloshinov uses the term with reference to verbal signs and for recalling already acquired knowledge and evaluative attitudes. Its use here can be extended firstly by encompassing pictorial as well as verbal elements. Secondly, the enthymeme here does not remind the reader of a generally accepted premise (as noted above, not everyone accepted that the KKE was the natural heir of the Marxist theory). Instead, it seeks to establish this by utilizing already accepted cues of social evaluation which promote the assessment of the translation (and the publication) as authoritative and the relationship between the text and the KKE as a historical continuum. The cover as an enthymeme promotes a particular evaluation of the text as naturally and therefore legitimately owned by the KKE. It is an example of how conscious struggles in the politico-ideological domain can mark discursive products such as translations.

Establishing Textual Reliability

Venuti rightly argues regarding retranslation that

[c]laims of greater adequacy, completeness, or accuracy should be viewed critically, [...], because they always depend on another category, usually an implicit basis of comparison between the foreign text

and the translation which establishes the insufficiency and therefore serves as a standard of judgment. This standard is a competing interpretation. (Venuti, 2004: 26)

In its struggle to reclaim Marxism from rival interpretations it was essential for the KKE to promote its own translations, in Nida's terminology as the only 'textually reliable' ones (Nida, 2001: 25). In the 1933 translation, German words are inserted in brackets in the TT after their Greek equivalents. These words referred to concepts for which formal equivalence was difficult to establish or did not exist in the TL. In section 1 of the TT there are five such instances of SL words in brackets.

To demonstrate the quality of its translation, the KKE claimed firstly, that this translation was textually reliable and, secondly, that this was the *only* textually reliable one. As regards the first issue, the examples below show how earlier translators dealt with challenging terms. The term *Stände* [orders]⁷ refers to pre-capitalist social stratification for which, due to its historical specificity, there was no formal equivalent in the TL. It was rendered as shown in Table 11.2.

The concept of class is central to Marxism; what constitutes a social class and who belongs to it has been a controversial issue as it affects the understanding of a society's organization and, consequently, the prospects for social transformation. *Stände* [orders] relates to the feudal structure of society: 'more exactly, [they are] a social stratum organized in a juridical relationship fixed by the state or tradition, not simply by economics' (Draper, 1994/2004: 210). A wrong or simplified translation of *Stände* [orders] could create misconceptions regarding the stratification of earlier societies. In 1933, in order to demonstrate that his translation was textually reliable and of superior quality to all previous ones, the translator did three things in an attempt to translate '*Stände*' [orders] accurately: he put his translation in inverted commas to signify that the meaning was something like that within the inverted commas, provided the SL term in brackets, and added an explanatory footnote with the following definition: 'Stände (singular *Stand*, French *état*). Social classes each [having] a specific legal situation (with specific privileges or with specific legal

Table 11.2 Translation of the SL term *Stände* [orders] in different TTs

1919 TT	1927 TT	1933 TT	SL term
κοινωνικές τάξεις [social classes]	κοινωνικές τάξεις [social classes]	'τάξεις' (<i>Stände</i>) ['classes' (<i>Stände</i>)]	Stände [orders]

disadvantages). Although this definition contextualizes the term, it also contradicts the problematized translation in the main text and asserts that *Stände* means, in fact, classes. On the basis of this definition, the translations of the term across translations do not differ significantly.

Of course, the practice of including foreign or SL words in a text was neither unique to this translation nor to texts in general. For example, Pantelis Pouliopoulos (leader of the Trotskyist organization Spartakos) occasionally used foreign words without translation in his book *Democratic or Socialist Revolution in Greece?* (Pouliopoulos, 1934/1980).⁸ Kordatos in his 1927 translation included foreign words in brackets on two occasions in section 1. Therefore, the translator in 1933 did not employ an unusual or new method to highlight the perceived lack of formal equivalence in the TL. The practice underscored the translational difficulties faced by translators and concerned terms evaluated as important enough to be included in the text in the SL. The effect of this decision on the 1933 TT readers, particularly on those who could read German, was to show that the translator stayed close to the source text (ST) and the assumption was encouraged that the translation was faithful to the original. On this basis, its evaluation by the readers as a textually reliable translation was also promoted.

Another example of SL words in the TT concerns the terms *Pauper* [pauper] and *Pauperismus* [pauperism].⁹ It is worth noting that Kordatos in his 1927 TT ‘considered the French translation’ (1927: 5), so ‘pauperisme’ in brackets (see example below) might refer to that translation.

Example 11.1

1919: Ο εργάτης μεταβάλλεται σε φτώχo, και η φτώχεια μεγαλώνει πειό γλήγορα ακόμα από τον πληθυσμό και τον πλούτο. (1919: 42)

The worker becomes poor and poverty increases even more quickly than the population and wealth [do].

1927 (Kordatos’s non-KKE translation): Ο εργαζόμενος πέφτει στη φτώχεια και η φτωχολογία (pauperisme) μεγαλώνει γρηγορότερα από τον πληθυσμό και τον πλούτο. (1927: 51)

The working person falls into poverty and the poor people (pauperisme) increase more than the population and the wealth.

1933: Ο εργάτης καταντά θεόφτωχος (Pauper), και η αδιάκοπη αύξηση της μαζικής φτώχειας (Pauperismus) αναπτύσσεται γληγορότερα παρά ο πληθυσμός και τα πλούτη. (1933: 40)

The worker ends up extremely poor (Pauper) and the uninterrupted growth of mass poverty (Pauperismus) develops faster than the population and wealth.

ST: Der Arbeiter wird zum Pauper, und der Pauperismus entwickelt sich noch schneller als Bevölkerung und Reichtum.¹⁰

The worker becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops even more quickly than population and wealth.

The word *Pauper* (Latin: poor person) had been used since the middle ages to describe people who were in receipt of welfare money by church parishes. The term *Pauperismus* is the term historically used to describe the phenomenon of mass poverty in the first half of the 19th century caused by the liberalization of the rural economy, early industrialization and rising unemployment (Conze 1989: 217–218). In this sense, the terms *Pauper* and *Pauperismus* are ‘technical terms’ describing a particular kind of poverty, at a certain historical time and as a result of specific social conditions, namely, the restructuring of the economy along capitalist lines. They revealed the workers’ prospects in capitalism, but they had no major theoretical implications; the different translators did not diverge considerably in their interpretation of the terms. Nevertheless, their translation became, in the KKE’s view, proof of the distortion of Marxism by previous translators.

Translation Criticism: The Reliability of Interpretation

For the KKE, the ideological struggle for establishing itself as the only correct interpreter of Marxism went hand-in-hand with the ‘unmasking’ of other current interpretations of Marxism as reactionary (as seen in the Central Committee’s statement earlier). During the 1920s, the Trotskyist organization Archive of Marxism had carried out most of the translations of Marxist texts (Elefantis, 1976: 137f). In 1933, Petranos, writing for the KKE’s journal *Komep* on the translations of Marxist texts, opined that if the KKE had revealed to the masses the distortions in the translations carried out by the Archive of Marxism, this would have assisted in the decline of ‘Archive-fascism’ because it would have exposed the organization as ‘a ghastly distorter of Marxism’ and an ‘agent of the objectives of the bourgeoisie’ (Petranos, 1933a: 14). Thus, for the KKE there was a correlation between translational choices and political beliefs.

Petranos averred that previous translations carried out by individuals associated with reformist socialism (Chatzopoulos and Sideris) or with

Trotskyism (Kordatos) (that is, precisely the type of political ideas that the Comintern viewed as hostile), falsified Marxism and that this was a conscious decision on their behalf in order to find justification for their political positions (Petranos, 1933a: 15). In contrast, it was implied that the KKE did not need to resort to manipulating Marxism because it was in possession of its correct interpretation. In his review of the previous translations of the *Communist Manifesto* into Greek, Petranos provided an inventory of translational errors that he had identified in previous translations of the text, such as the rendering of '*Pauperismus*':

[when the translators] translate the word *Pauperisme*, which means 'extremely bad economic situation' [εξοθλίωση] they render it as 'poverty' [φτώχεια] (Kordatos, Sideris) and as 'poor people' [φτωχολογία] (Hatzopoulos). There is no bigger blindness or worse distortion of Marx's notion. (Petranos, 1933a: 17)¹¹

Interestingly, as shown in Example 11.1, in the 1933 translation which was authorized by the party, *Pauperismus* was translated as 'mass poverty' [μαζική φτώχεια], which was not Petranos's suggested translation and does not differ substantially from the previous translations. This shows that the debate on translation quality was ideologically motivated.

Petranos also criticized the editor of the 1919 translation, Aristotelis Sideris:

But Sideris, defending the betrayals of international social-democracy, tries so shamefully to excuse the crimes of imperialism in 1914 and to help the preparation of new imperialist wars and the invasion of the USSR by conning the masses with distortions in his translations. (Petranos, 1933a: 18)

It should be noted that Kordatos, in the introduction to his 1927 translation, also censured the quality of the 1919 translation which he judged to be 'neither satisfactory nor completely faithful and without errors' (Kordatos, 1927: 3–4). Nonetheless, he did not accuse the previous translator of manipulation. It is this relationship between translation quality and the translators' political trajectories introduced in KKE publications that is of interest here, because it connects translation and translating with the struggle for the appropriation of a political theory. It should also be stated that scholars such as Paloukis (2003: 214) and Elefantis (1976: 137f) agree that in this period there was a genuine case for criticizing the quality of translations of Marxist texts independently of ideological purposes as, they argue, these translations were of poor to medium quality by today's standards. Nevertheless, Paloukis rightly adds that these translations were

an important achievement at the time (Paloukis, 2003: 214). Furthermore, when assessing those translations one should consider that neither professional training nor a variety of reference materials were available at the time, with obvious consequences for the translator's work.

After his departure from the party, Sideris assisted in the formation of the 'Workers Socialist Union of Greece' [Εργατική Σοσιαλιστική Ένωση Ελλάδος] and in 1932 became Finance Secretary in a reformist government headed by Prime Minister Papanastasiou (Noutsos, 1992/1994: 46–47). Branding Sideris as disreputable and a falsifier was an attack on his integrity, but also on the political forces he aligned himself with. Similarly, the condemnation of Kordatos was also a condemnation of the Trotskyists. For the KKE, both Sideris and Kordatos were manipulative translators, but their motives were far more sinister: the poor quality of their translations was part of a wider objective of the political forces they subscribed to, to distort Marxism and mislead the working class. To establish itself as the sole true representative of Marxism meant for the KKE, as regards translation, to reveal the alleged distortions and true identity of the translators and, consequently, of their organizations, and to produce, as the party saw it, its own good quality translations which channelled the correct interpretation of Marxism.

Theofylaktos Papakonstantinou, a critical reviewer from a non-party-affiliated, left-wing publication, challenged the KKE's premise of deliberate translational errors. Commenting on Petranos's review (which reproached the previous translators of the *Communist Manifesto* as manipulators), Papakonstantinou stated that 'there is nothing more natural than translational errors' and rebuked the KKE for attaching ideological importance to those errors (Papakonstantinou, 1934: 326). Papakonstantinou also accused the translator of the 1933 translation of repeating errors that the KKE had previously branded as ideologically motivated distortions (Papakonstantinou, 1934: 326) and he argued that the KKE's criticism was ideologically motivated by the party's effort to 'clear the ideological front' and by KKE members who were only concerned with furthering their careers (Papakonstantinou, 1934: 325). The debate on translation quality aimed to regulate the reception of the KKE's translation and interpretation and it reveals how a translator's political identity and trajectory can affect the reception of their translation.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine the role of translation in ideological struggle and investigated the manifestations of that struggle at the

discursive level in the translation of the *Communist Manifesto* published in 1933. Firstly, the front cover of the publication evoked a direct relationship of lineage between the authors and the KKE and, thus, encouraged the evaluation of the translation as an authoritative one. Secondly, there is an attempt to establish the textual reliability of the KKE's translation both intratextually and intertextually. The preservation of challenging SL lexical items in the TT highlighted the translator's concern to translate accurately and to make this visible to the reader. Intertextually, these efforts were underpinned by translation criticism which censured the quality of previous translations and the motives and integrity of their translators. The intended effect was to guide the reader towards a favourable reception of the KKE's translations against translations issued by the party's rivals.

In the 1930s, the debate on translation quality masked the real debate which concerned different interpretations of Marxism and their ensuing varying propositions of political action. Translation criticism is not usually (directly) associated with politico-ideological struggles, and its use in this context reveals the breadth of means by which ideological battles are often fought and the complex situations in which translation criticism can take place. It also demonstrates the role of the translator as an agent in the battle of ideas which is rarely mentioned by historiographers and sociologists; an investigation along these lines broadens our understanding of the relationship between political institutions, ideological struggles and discursive practices.

Notes

1. More specifically, according to Williams, hegemony 'is not limited to matters of direct political control but seeks to describe a more general predominance which includes, as one of its key features, a particular way of seeing the world and human nature and relationships. It is different in this sense from the notion of 'world-view', in that the ways of seeing the world and ourselves and others are not just intellectual but political facts, expressed over a range from institutions to relationships and consciousness' (Williams, 1973/1986: 145).
2. See Chatzopoulos's personal correspondence in 'Fifty unpublished letters of K. Chatzopoulos to the socialist N. Yiannios and his wife Athina Gaitanou-Yianniou', *Nea Estia*, 1958, 63 (732), 30–31.
3. That is, a supporter of Leon Trotsky's ideas; see next section for a more detailed explanation. A letter written by the socialist Nikos Yiannios responding to an earlier letter by Kordatos expresses Yiannios' delight with Kordatos' description of himself as Trotskyist (Noutsos, 1993: 639).
4. All references to Rizospastis are from the electronic database of the National Library of Greece. All translations from Greek are mine. 'The decisions of our 3rd Party Conference; the decision on the activity of the propaganda section',

- on WWW at http://www.nlg.gr/digitalnewspapers/ns/pdfwin_ftr.asp?c=65&pageid=-1&id=40011&s=0&STEMTYPE=0&STEM_WORD_PHONETIC_IDS=&CropPDF=0.
5. 'We must disseminate the Communist Manifesto broadly', on WWW at http://www.nlg.gr/digitalnewspapers/ns/pdfwin_ftr.asp?c=65&pageid=-1&id=16125&s=0&STEMTYPE=0&STEM_WORD_PHONETIC_IDS=&CropPDF=0. All translations from Greek are my translations.
 6. The discussion on the pragmatic functions of the cover's verbo-pictorial elements (format, font, inscription, portraits) is based on Genette (1997). The present study owes its general position, that covers are sites of traceable ideological standpoints, to Harvey (2003) and shares his semiotic analysis of textual and pictorial elements of the covers.
 7. The term is used in the ST to describe social gradation in pro-capitalist societies, from ancient Rome to the feudalist societies. I have used the translation *order* here, as this is the equivalent of *Stände* in the 1888 English translation of the *Communist Manifesto*.
 8. See, for example, Pouliopoulos (1934/1980: 40, 67).
 9. For more examples see Delistathi (in preparation).
 10. Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*, on WWW at http://www.mlwerke.de/me/me04/me04_459.htm – T30.
 11. Please note that Petranos uses 'Pauperisme' instead of the German word 'Pauperismus'. He also attributes to Kordatos the translation of the word as 'poverty' [φτώχεια] whereas Kordatos rendered it as 'poor people' [φτωχολογιά].

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