Polemical Translation, Translating Polemic: Anne Dacier's Rhetoric in the Homer Quarrel

This article examines **Anne Dacier's** rhetoric and its reception in the ***Querelle d'Homère*** (1711–1719). Although a **woman writer,** Dacier was accepted for her learning, as quarrel participant, and as an Ancient. Yet her **polemical voice** has proven contentious. Analysing her interventions, notably her last work, *Réflexions sur la première partie de la préface de Mr Pope* (1719), which I suggest is a polemical **translation** of **Alexander Pope's *Iliad* Preface**, I explore Dacier's male-gendered **rhetoric** and the significance of the Quarrel in her projected legacy. I argue that Dacier's case unsettles the role of translation in the **Republic of Letters**.

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The seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in France were no strangers to polemics about translation, particularly classical translation. The question of whether to assimilate an ancient text to French standards of taste or retain its original culture fuelled debates about literary value, modernity, and national identity in this period, often seen as a time of transition from the retrospective gaze of the Renaissance to Enlightenment modernity. This transition made itself felt in the emergence of the increasingly popular, but not uncontested, 'domesticating' method of translation, known as the 'belles infidèles' or 'faithless beauties';[1] in the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns of 1687, which centered on questions of legitimate adaptation of ancient texts and their relative value compared with French works;[2] and in the *Querelle d'Homère* (1711–1719), often seen as the Quarrel's 'second phase', which focused on Homer's significance and the translation of his epics into French. The Homer Quarrel was initiated by a dispute between Anne Dacier, who had produced a scholarly prose translation of the *Iliad* in 1711, and the *académicien*, librettist and playwright, Antoine Houdar de La Motte, who

This article was funded by the support of the Leverhulme Trust. I would also like to thank Hugh Roberts and Kate Tunstall for their generous feedback on earlier versions of it.

[1] Gilles Ménage in reference to Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt's translation of Lucian of 1654 in *Menagiana*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Paris: Delaulne, 1694), I, 306.

[2] On the Quarrel, see Joan DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

provoked outrage with his freer verse translation of the *Iliad* in 1714.[3] Translation, therefore, was frequently the subject of debate in this period and translators' choices often made them agents of change.

The *Querelle d'Homère* was also a case of a 'translated Quarrel' as it had a parallel in England, the Battle of the Books, which occurred in early eighteenth-century London, involving authors and critics such as Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope and William Wootton.[4] Anne Dacier and Alexander Pope represent a point of interaction between the two contexts, and translation played a central role in their exchange. Alexander Pope made use of Dacier's 1711 translation of the *Iliad* to produce his version in 1715;[5] Dacier then engaged Pope in a quarrel as she attacked the Preface to his *Iliad* translation in her *Réflexions sur la première partie de la préface de Mr Pope*, the last work she wrote, published as an appendix to the second edition of her *Iliad* in 1719, a year before she died.[6] Dacier based her *Réflexions* not on Pope's original Preface, but, because she could not read English, as she herself states, on a

[3] Anne Dacier, *L'Iliade d'Homère*, 3 vols (Paris: Rigaud, 1711). Houdar de la Motte, *L'Iliade, poëme avec un discours sur Homère* (Paris: Dupuis, 1714). References to both translations hereafter will be given in-text.

[4] Alexis Tadié, 'Peut-on traduire les Querelles? De la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes à la Battle of the Books', in *Le Temps des querelles*, ed. by Jeanne-Marie Hostiou and Alain Viala (= *Littératures classiques*, 81 (2013)), pp. 211–26.

[5] Alexander Pope, *The Iliad of Homer* (London: Lintott, 1715).

[6] *L'Iliade d'Homère, traduite en françois […] Seconde édition […] avec quelques réflexions sur la préface angloise de M. Pope*, 3 vols (Paris: Rigaud, 1719), III, np. References to the *Réflexions* hereafter will be given in-text.

French translation attributed to André-Robert Perelle.[7] Pope then offered a counter-attack in the Postscript he attached to his 1725 *Odyssey* translation,[8] after an English translation of Dacier's *Réflexions* was published in London in 1724.[9] In this article, I shall focus on the quarrel between Dacier and Pope. The Pope–Dacier quarrel has been examined from the perspective of the English context by Howard Weinbrot.[10] Instead, I shall focus on Dacier, examining the role of translation in their quarrel and exploring its relationship to the polemical, provocative and male-gendered rhetoric that Dacier used throughout her engagement in the Homer Quarrel.

The French *Querelle d'Homère* and its English offshoot were unusual for the time because one of their major participants, Dacier, was a woman who sided with the Ancients (that is, with her contemporaries who defended antiquity). Not only were women not usually

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[7] [André-Robert Perelle], *Traduction de la première partie de la préface d'Homère Anglois de Monsieur Pope* [n. p, n. pub, n. d].

[8] Alexander Pope, 'Postscript', *The Odyssey of Homer* (London: Lintott, 1725), np.

[9] *Madam Dacier's Remarks upon Mr. Pope's account of Homer prefixed to his translation of the Iliad, made English from the French by Mr. Parnell* (London: E. Curll, 1724).

[10] Howard D. Weinbrot, 'Alexander Pope and Madame Dacier's Homer: Conjectures concerning Cardinal Dubois, Sir Luke Schaub, and Samuel Buckley', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 62 (1999), 1–23; 'Annotating a Career: From Pope's Homer to *The Dunciad*: From Madame Dacier to Madame Dacier by Way of Swift', *Philological Quarterly*, 79 (2000), 459–82; '"What Must the World Think of Me?": Pope, Madame Dacier, and Homer: The Anatomy of a Quarrel', in *Eighteenth-Century Contexts: Historical Inquiries in Honor of Philip Harth*, ed. by Weinbrot, Peter J. Schakel, and Stephen E. Karian (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), pp. 183–206.

accepted as legitimate opponents in a quarrel, especially when it did not pertain directly to questions about their sex, but they were more often aligned with — and indeed usually aligned themselves with — the Moderns.[11] Dacier also cuts an exceptional figure because unlike most other women writers of her time, she was not, or was rarely, criticized publicly during her lifetime on account of her sex, even when she was most definitely criticized for her ideas in one of the most vituperative quarrels this period knew. Her status as *savante*, often a contested identity, was accepted.[12] This in part is because she had mastered elite and masculine forms of knowledge in her abilities in Latin and Greek: her scholarly translations and commentaries of Sappho and Anacreon (1681), Plautus (1683), Aristophanes (1684), Terence (1688), and Homer's *Iliade* (1711) and *Odyssée* (1716) were met with acclaim amongst male peers.[13] The fact she came from an elite family of scholars further enhanced her reputation: she was the daughter of the renowned Hellenist, Tanneguy Le Fèvre, and wife of André Dacier, also a

[11] See Helena Taylor, 'Ancients, Moderns, Gender: Marie-Jeanne l'Héritier's 'Le Parnasse Reconnoissant, ou, Le Triomphe de Madame Des-Houlières', *French Studies*, 71 (2017), 15–30.

[12] See Suzanna van Dijk, *Traces de femmes dans le journalisme français du XVIIIe siècle* (Amsterdam: APA Holland University Press, 1988), p. 194.

[13] *Les Poésies d'Anacréon et de Sapho* (Paris: Thierry, 1681); *Les Comédies de Plaute*, 3 vols (Paris: Thierry and Barbin, 1683); *Le Plutus et les Nuées d'Aristophane* (Paris: Thierry and Barbin, 1684); *Les Comédies de Térence*, 3 vols (Paris: Thierry and Barbin, 1688); *L'Iliade; L'Odyssée d'Homère*, 3 vols (Paris: Rigaud, 1716).

scholar of Greek and Latin.[14] Dacier also played a key role in downplaying the significance of her gender: although she made her female identity clear, publishing her works under her name and referring to it on a few occasions,[15] unlike many of her female counterparts, she did not make her female sex or a female cause central to her authorial persona and work.[16] This approach proved effective: Dacier was often singled out by contemporaries for her exceptional

[14] Her position was nevertheless at times precarious, especially given that her family was Protestant, as is evident from her strategic use of dedications. On this, see Itti, pp. 60–75, pp. 88–111.

[15] In her very first publication she includes a preface in which she corrects foolish old men who think her father should not have raised her as a scholar. Dacier [Le Fèvre], 'Préface', *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni* (Paris: Mabre-Cramoisy, 1675), np. She also makes her gender explicit in the final pages of her *Iliade* Preface in which she explains that her maternal grief over the death of her daughter, Henriette Suzanne, has delayed her translation of the *Odyssey*. Dacier, *L'Iliade*, I, 70.

[16] This is also noted by Fern Farnham, *Madam Dacier: Scholar and Humanist* (Monterey, CA: Angel Press, 1976), p. 168; Eliane Itti, *Madame Dacier, femme et savante du Grand Siècle (1645–1720)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2012); p. 11; Rosie Wyles, 'Ménage's Learned Ladies: Anne Dacier (1647–1720) and Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)', in *Women Classical Scholars*, ed. by Rosie Wyles and Edith Hall (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 61–77 (p. 74); Carol Pal, *Republic of Women: Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 271; and van Dijk, p. 198.

learning, and has since been catalogued in histories of classical scholars and thinkers.[17] She tends not to be incorporated into the canon of French seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century 'women writers' which normally includes women writing in feminized genres or those who were vocal about the female cause.[18]

However, for all that she was accepted as a *savante*, the rhetoric and techniques she used for quarrelling in the Homer Quarrel — agonistic and non-conciliatory — have proven more problematic, both in her immediate reception and more recently. Described by the *Journal Littéraire* in 1715 as 'polémique' and 'didactique' and elsewhere criticized for causticity, her quarrelling method was in line with the rhetoric deployed by other (male) Ancients: *ad hominem* attacks, sarcasm, line-by-line refutations.[19] Her rhetoric contrasted

[17] See, for instance, Gilles Ménage, *Historia Mulierum Philosopharum* [The History of Women Philosophers] (Lyon: Rigaud, 1690) and Wyles, pp. 61–77. For recent reception, see Wyles and Hall; Pal, pp. 266–86; and Karen Green, 'Early eighteenth-century debates: from Anne Dacier to Catharine Trotter Cockburn', in *A History of Women's Political Thought in Europe, 1700–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 14–42.

[18] Anne Dacier does not feature in either of the eighteenth-century chapters of *A History of Women's Writing in France*, ed. by Sonya Stephens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and is only mentioned in passing in the chapter on the seventeenth century (p. 66). She is not mentioned at all in either of the chapters dedicated to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century women writers, and is only referenced in passing (p. 278) in the chapter on seventeenth-century comedy in *The Cambridge History of French Literature*, ed. by William Burgwinkle, Nicholas Hammond and Emma Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[19] *Journal Littéraire*, VI (1715), 113.

starkly with that of her chief adversary in the French *Querelle*, La Motte, who used the moderate and polite discourse associated with the Moderns. As Suzanna van Dijk has argued, Dacier's quarrelling voice was seen to be ill-suited to her female gender; such reactions can be traced to a degree during her lifetime and in a more pronounced way after her death.[20] Indeed, the quarrelling or polemical aspect of her interventions resulted in her role in the *Querelle d'Homère* being played down: an *ethos* of modesty, which had only flickered briefly in her own writing, was emphasized in the memorials and accounts of her life produced shortly after her death.[21]

To a certain extent, more recent critics have also struggled with her rhetoric, and have demonstrated discomfort either by apologizing for it,[22] or by arguing that she gradually toned down her confrontational stance as the *Querelle d'Homère* progressed, citing her seemingly more moderate *Odyssée* translation of 1716 and its Preface, which followed her apparent reconciliation with La Motte.[23] The critical discomfort regarding her antagonistic approach is particularly manifest in relation to her polemic with Pope, namely her *Réflexions sur la première partie de la préface de Mr Pope*. This text has been approached psychologically, rather than rhetorically,[24] and deemed a regrettable appendix to her career, misguidedly dashed

[20] van Dijk, pp. 218–19.

[21] See Itti p. 313; and van Dijk, pp. 219–20.

[22] Farnham, p. 150.

[23] Farnham, p. 179; van Dijk, pp. 216–17; and Wyles, p. 74.

[24] For example, she is characterized as 'stubborn' by Joseph M. Levine in *The Battle of the Books: Literature and History in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 220; 'angry' by Steven Shankman in *Pope's Iliad: Homer in the Age of Passion*

off in her old age.[25] It has also been described as erroneous.[26] The principal reason the *Réflexions* have been downplayed is the assumption that the translation by Perelle of Pope's Preface into French that Dacier was relying on was faulty. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy between Pope's arguments and Dacier's more selective representation of them, and the critical trend has used such discrepancies to bolster the point that Dacier had misunderstood Pope and that her *Réflexions* are therefore invalidated. Pope was also a less obvious opponent than La Motte and other Moderns, given that he was on the Ancient side in the English context, making her attack seem all the more ill-judged. With some exceptions, this is the standard interpretation in both Pope Studies and studies of the *Querelle d'Homère*.[27]

I shall take a different approach, arguing that we can read Dacier's attack on Pope as a case of deliberate, rather than misguided, misrepresentation. As was pointed out in 1931 in an early enquiry into the Pope–Dacier quarrel by Émile Audra, and as this article further argues, apart from one single error, Perelle's translation was mostly accurate.[28] Perelle's apparently

(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 83; and 'closed' in G. S. Santangelo, *Madame Dacier, una filologa nella 'crisi' (1672–1720)* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1984), p. 467.

[25] Farnham, pp. 180–04; Shankman, pp. 83–84; Levine, pp. 218–22.

[26] Howard D. Weinbrot, '"What Must the World Think of Me?", p. 197; Rosie Wyles, 'Aristophanes and the French Translations of Anne Dacier', in *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Aristophanes*, ed. by Philip Walsh (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 195–216 (p. 207).

[27] A more nuanced, though brief, interpretation is offered by Noémi Hepp, *Homère en France* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1968), p. 643; by Éric Foulon, 'La critique de l'*Iliade* d'Anne Dacier dans l'*Iliade* d'Alexander Pope', *Littératures Classiques*, 2 (2010), 157–92 (p. 159); and by Itti, p. 304.

[28] Émile Audra, *L'Influence française dans l'œuvre de Pope* (Paris: Champion, 1931), p. 60.

'faulty' translation, does not, therefore, account for the discrepancies between Pope's arguments in his Preface and Dacier's representations of them in her *Réflexions*. By analysing Dacier's rhetoric throughout the French Quarrel, we see that the misrepresentation of Pope's arguments present in her *Réflexions* does not necessarily belie her misunderstanding. It is in fact typical of the agonistic strategies of persuasion she deploys elsewhere. Taking these strategies seriously sheds new light on how Dacier was willing to challenge the rhetorical norms expected of her sex and stresses the importance she placed on the Quarrel for her legacy. It also shows that Dacier's disagreements with Pope were meaningful.

I shall suggest that one such rhetorical strategy she used against Pope was translation. I argue that we can read parts of Dacier's *Réflexions* as a translation of Pope's Preface: she re-phrases Pope's words in French, interpreting them the process, and thus enacting what Roman Jakobson describes as interlingual translation.[29] Approaching her *Réflexions* as a translation enables us to grasp their rhetorical force. Although some scholars in Translation Studies today urge us to move beyond distinctions between translation, versions and adaptations, with 'fidelity' to the original text a complex and fraught concept, such distinctions, particularly as they relate to questions of accuracy and value in translation, mattered hugely in the Homer Quarrel.[30] And these are the implicit standards to which Dacier is held by critics who dismiss her *Réflexions* for being based on a faulty translation. Dacier was fervently on the side of the functionalist and the foreignizing in her classical translation practice: unlike the Moderns, who preferred to assimilate classical texts to French taste, she insisted on a scholarly approach that

[29] Roman Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' (1959), reprinted in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 3rd edn (New York: Routledge: 2012), pp. 126–31 (p. 127).

[30] Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 3rd edn (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 81–82.

remained close to the original text.[31] In her attack on Pope, however, she deployed a very different sort of translation practice, which we might call polemical, rhetorical or political, in that she uses it to express dissent from the original.[32] She deliberately changes Pope's text to make her own attacks against him more authoritative without making it clear that this is what she is doing. The irony is that this 'free' approach was not the sort of practice she was known for: she thus exploits her renown as a 'faithful' and meticulous translator to disguise her distortion of Pope's words to authorize her text.

In the first section of the article, I shall analyse the rhetoric Dacier deployed throughout the *Querelle* to better contextualize her polemic with Pope, which will then form the subject of the second section; in the final part I shall address the rhetoric and impact of the English translation of her *Réflexions*. Dacier's quarrel with Pope is unique in her repertoire for the way she mobilized translation as a weapon against him, but the agonistic rhetoric this reveals is consistent with her method of quarrelling throughout the Homer Quarrel. By taking such an

[31] See, for instance, the preface to her translation of Aristophanes's *Plutus* and *The Clouds*, where she writes: 'ce qui empesche aujourd'hui la pluspart des hommes de goûter les Ouvrages des Anciens, c'est qu'on ne veut jamais perdre de vûë son siecle et qu'on veut le reonnoistre en tout' (np). On her translation philosophy, see Julie Candler Hayes, 'Meaning and Modernity: Anne Dacier and the Homer Debate', in *Translation, Subjectivity and Culture in France and England, 1600–1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 121–40.

[32] For an overview, see Chantal Gagnon, 'Political Translation', in *Handbook of Translation Studies*, ed. by Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer, 4 vols (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2010), I, pp. 252–56. See also *The Culture of Translation in Early Modern England and France,* ed. by Rowan Tomlinson and Tania Demetriou (Ashgate: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 1–21.

overview, we also come to understand how far she stakes her reputation on victory, so that as the last word in which she sought to *have* the last word, the *Réflexions* represent the culmination of her career. Focusing on the role of a polemical translation in a polemic about translation thus gives us an insight not only into Dacier's rhetorical strategies and the mechanics of the Quarrel, but also into the place of translation. Translation Studies has long shown us that for all that translation is a process of transmitting and sharing knowledge, it is rife with complexities that mar that process. Structurally, it is fractured by uneven practices governing who is translated and by whom. Translators' decisions bear ideological biases. Translation can at times be a vehicle for disinformation, usually in the sense that a text is falsely presented as being a translation. Recent work on the Reformation and Counter-Reformation has also placed translation within a polemical framework.[33] My focus here draws in particular on this last strand to consider the role of translation in polemical exchange. Building on 'quarrels' research which emphasises the existence of conflict in the Republic of Letters, often vaunted as a harmonious, collaborative entity, I suggest that translation was not only an enabling, communicative device within this Republic, as it is usually characterised, but also a fracturing and threatening means of disinformation.[34]

[33] See, for instance, Jaime Goodrich, *Faithful Translators: Authorship, Gender, and Religion in Early Modern England* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2014), pp. 20–21; and Simona Munari, 'Translation, Re-Writing and Censorship during the Counter-Reformation', in *Translation and the Book Trade in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Wilson Lee and Perez Fernandez (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 185–200.

[34] Kate E. Tunstall, '"Ne nous engageons point dans des querelles": un projet de guerre perpétuelle?', *Revue de Synthèse*, 137 (2016), 345–72 (p. 372).

I: Gender and Rhetoric in the *Querelle d'Homère*

By 1719, when Dacier published her *Réflexions* against Pope, Homer and how to translate him had been the subject of a significant controversy in Paris. Three years after the publication of Dacier's 1711 prose translation of the *Iliad*, accompanied by a preface praising Homer, La Motte published a truncated translation of the *Iliad* in verse, reducing Homer's twenty-four books to twelve, with a preface in which he was openly critical of the ancient poet. Such criticism was nothing new in France: Homer had already been a subject of debate in the late seventeenth-century Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns. Dacier explicitly addressed this previous criticism in the Preface to her 1711 translation. The primary issues of contention persisted: Homer's rusticity, crude manners and morals, his paganism, and his style, namely his repetitions and the plot structure. La Motte's work reignited the controversy. Dacier responded with *Des causes de la corruption du goust* (1714),[35] a forensically detailed refutation that reiterated the arguments she made in her *Iliad* Preface and attacked La Motte's Preface and his translation. La Motte replied to this with his *Réflexions sur la critique* (1715–6).[36] After a number of other interventions, including by Jean Boivin and the Abbé Terrasson,[37] peace was

[35] Anne Dacier, *Des Causes de la Corruption du Goust* (Paris: Rigaud, 1714). References hereafter will be given in-text.

[36] Antoine Houdar de la Motte, *Réflexions sur la Critique*, 3 vols (Paris: Dupuis, 1715); all these parts were then published in an augmented single volume as *Réflexions sur la Critique, second édition corrigée et augmentée* (Paris: Dupuis, 1716). References hereafter will be given to this second edition in-text.

[37] [François Gacon] *Homère vengé ou Reponse à Monsieur de la Motte sur l'Iliade* (Paris: Ganeau, 1715); Jean Boivin, *Apologie d'Homère et Bouclier d'Achille* (Paris: Jouenne,

apparently restored between Dacier and La Motte in April 1716.[38] However, the Ancient, Jean Hardouin, then offered an interpretation of Homer's gods in his *Apologie d'Homère* (1716)[39] that Dacier could not condone, leading her to pen a second refutation after her *Odyssée* (1716), explicitly intended (at that point) to be her last word in the Quarrel, the *Homère defendu contre l'Apologie du R. P. Hardouin ou Suite des Causes de la Corruption du goust* (1716).[40]

Important recent criticism on early modern *querelles* has not only revealed their cultural significance, but has also focused on the difference between the irenic (consensus-orientated) dispute, with its root in *disputatio* and the practice of offering the for and against in argument, and the agonistic (combat-orientated) *querelle* (*querela*) which implies 'defending a point of view and winning the argument', as Jean-Jacques Lecercle puts it.[41] Critics have shown how the self-conscious conceptualization of a quarrel as either irenic or agonistic was fundamental to the ethics and *ethos* of the quarreler.[42] This distinction is particularly relevant in relation to Ancients and Moderns because the Moderns promoted a feminized moderation and dialogue

1715); Abbé Terrasson, *Dissertation critique sur L'Iliade d'Homère*, 2 vols (Paris: Fournier, 1715); Etienne Fourmont, *Examen pacifique de la querelle de Madame Dacier et Monsieur de la Motte*, 2 vols (Paris: Rollin, 1716).

[38] See Farnham, p. 179.

[39] Jean Hardouin, *Apologie d'Homère* (Paris: Rigaud, 1716).

[40] Dacier, *Homère defendu contre l'Apologie du R. P. Hardouin ou Suite des Causes de la Corruption du Goust* (Paris: Coignard, 1716).

[41] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, 'Dispute, Quarrel, Interpellation', *Paragraph*, 40 (2017), 5–27 (p. 6).

[42] Tunstall, pp. 345–72.

and the Ancients favoured male-gendered one-sided methods, satire and *ad hominem* attacks.[43] Critical attention has also been brought to the strategic use of a quarrel in an author's career.[44]

Drawing on these approaches, in this section I argue that Dacier's conception of quarrelling, as it is revealed in her interventions in the 1714–16 *Querelle d'Homère* in particular, is agonistic and that this agonism is disguised under a posture of instruction. She deliberately adopts male-gendered techniques to strengthen her attack: it is an example of what Mary Beard describes as the 'trouser suit' approach, an acknowledgement that the 'cultural template' for a powerful person is male, so that in order to be powerful, one needs to adopt male-gendered attributes.[45] I shall argue for the need to recognize that her interventions in the Quarrel were strategic: she stakes her reputation on victory. Her *Réflexions* against Pope, published in 1719, three years after her avowed last word of 1716, come then as a sort of postscript to the core Quarrel, but the agonistic framework I trace in this section offers a way of reading that final text which integrates it into her *œuvre* as the text in which she sought to win the debate.

As with many early modern *querelles*, Dacier and La Motte self-reflexively explored *how* to quarrel, as seen in their different translations of the *Iliad*, which constitute the first round of texts in the *Querelle d'Homère*. The controversial question of Achilles' anger after the death

[43] On La Motte's rhetoric and its influence on literary criticism, see Béatrice Guion, "Une dispute honnête': la polémique selon les Modernes', *Littératures Classiques*, 59 (2006), 157–72; and Larry F. Norman, 'La Querelle des anciens et des modernes, ou la métamorphose de la critique', *Littératures Classiques*, 86 (2015), 95–114

[44] See Georges Forestier and Claude Bourqui, 'Comment Molière inventa la querelle de *L'école des femmes*...', in *Le Temps des querelles*, ed. Hostiou and Viala, pp. 185–97.

[45] Mary Beard, *Women and Power: A Manifesto* (London: Profile, 2017), pp. 53–54.

of Patroclus in Book 22 allows for self-reflexive positioning on the question of combat. Dacier is sensitive to Achilles' suffering at Patroclus's death: she argues that Achilles' anger is poetically justified; she also defends his desecration of Hector's corpse. In contrast, the scene between Achilles and Hector is one of the main episodes that La Motte changes. He signals this change in the Preface where he describes Achilles' behaviour as 'défectueuse', citing its incompatibility with contemporary mores (*L'Iliade*, p. clxvii). His translation of Achilles' actions also injects more moral judgement than is present in the original or Dacier's rendering: 'À quel excès alors la vengeance l'égare! | Ce n'est plus un Héros, c'est un tigre barbare' (p. 184). Dacier, in contrast, does not censure the anger, but argues that Homer does not glorify Achilles and that for reasons of poetics, his depiction should be respected: 'Homere, comme je l'ay desja dit souvent, ne donne pas ce caractere d'Achille comme un caractere moralement bon, mais comme un caractere vicieux et qui n'est bon que poëtiquement (*L'Iliade*, III, 545). That aesthetics should trump ethics is no surprise given the Ancient defence of antiquity's differences, but Dacier is quick to point out that her 'aesthetic' preference for Homer is not, as it is with La Motte, a personal reaction, but one that it is based on learning. Being able to interpret Achilles' anger correctly, is, for Dacier, a sign of being a 'lecteur instruit': 'il a revestu ce caractere d'Achille d'une valeur estonnante mais c'est pour le rendre plus éclatant et non pas plus loüable […]. Il n'y a donc point d'illusion dans le Poëte et jamais cette illusion prétenduë ne passa jusqu'au Lecteur bien instruit' (*Causes*, p. 271). La Motte aligns right judgement with moral readings; Dacier pairs right judgement with learning.

In the next round of texts, Dacier's *Causes de la corruption du goust* and La Motte's *Réflexions sur la critique*, this distinction between a premise of learning and of (personal) morality becomes intimately connected to their authorial postures. In the *Causes*, Dacier twins military metaphors with a posture of reluctance. She figures her position and her language as that of combat, but does so using *recusatio*: 'la douleur de voir ce Poëte si indignement traité,

m'a fait résoudre à le deffendre, quoyque cette sorte d'ouvrage soit tres opposé à mon humeur, car je suis tres paresseuse et tres pacifique, et le seul nom de guerre me fait peur' (*Causes*, pp. 3–4). This *recusatio* is repeated a few pages later as she identifies with 'les guerriers les moins braves' of Homer's poem: 'je suis à peu près comme ces guerriers' (p. 12). Even within this *recusatio*, the reference points are male warriors: she steers clear of the Amazons or other female military figures, such as Bellona, used by other women writers. Her self-representation as 'pacifique' must in part be accounted for by the hostility she anticipated as a female quarreler.[46] However, Dacier does not herself give her gender as a reason for her posture of reluctance, but rather stresses learning: she disapproves of polemic that is vehement and personal, and instead posits her own method of quarrelling as instructive. In the *Causes* she explains:

> Mais pour ne pas faire de cet Ouvrage un de ces ouvrages purement polemiques, et que je hais parce qu'ils me paroissent plus propres à divertir les Lecteurs qu'à instruire, je tascheray de me tirer de cette voye commune de dispute et de faire une espece de Traité qui fera une recherche des *Causes de la Corruption du Goust*. (*Causes*, p.14)

The *praeteritio* that opens the passage here reveals a reluctance to be associated with the ordinary mode, 'cette voye commune'. Dacier's insistence on instruction is of course itself a claim to morality, based as it is on the classical adage that promotes the usefulness of literature, *plaire et instruire*. But unlike La Motte's, her morality is grounded in a tradition of learning,

[46] This posturing is evident throughout her work: for instance in the 1711 edition of the *Iliad*, she writes: 'Il ne m'appartient point de parler de guerre, cela est trop au-dessus de moi' (p. li).

rather than a personal response: she claims her restraint derives from her reputation as a distinguished scholar. In so doing, she both stresses that learning underpins her approach and uses her accepted authority as a *savante* to justify a text which is actually polemical, to disguise her agonism. Because, despite these claims to a more educational form of argument as opposed to 'pure polemic', the argumentative techniques used in the *Causes* recall the conventions of sixteenth-century (religious) polemic.[47] A mere fourteen pages are devoted to a treatise on the decline of taste and the remaining six hundred and fourteen are an attentive line by line refutation of her target text, La Motte's Preface and translation. Dacier is far from 'pacifique' and 'moins brave' in this text.

We see evidence of her warrior approach in her co-opting of the sort of misogynist rhetoric typically used by male Ancients against women. Dacier echoes many of Boileau's gendered attacks against Scudéry, especially his attacks against the effeminacy of her novel heroes, in *her* attacks against *La Motte*: in her *Causes* she accuses La Motte of the same effeminacy (p. 27), and states that he was too influenced by novels in his approach to Homer (p. 97), having already herself criticized novels for their sentimentalizing of ancient myth and history in her *Iliad* Preface (*L'Iliade*, I, 26). She also discredits La Motte's authority by comparing him to 'femmes peu instruites des beautés de la Poësie' (*Causes*, p. 51). Such an approach also extends to the representation of Homer's female figures: on the controversial question of how to approach Jupiter's violence against Juno, attacked by La Motte as indecent (*Réflexions*, p. 50), Dacier remains true to Homer's text, citing authenticity (*Causes*, p. 352).[48] She also criticizes La Motte's portrayal of Minerva, to whom La Motte gives more agency by amplifying her speeches, by employing the gendered terms typically used to satirize women:

[47] See Emily Butterworth, *Poisoned Words: Slander and Satire in Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Legenda, 2006), p. 4.

[48] These translators used Latinised names for the divinities.

'Voila un plaisant langage pour Minerve. Une precieuse ridicule ne sçauroit mieux s'exprimer.' (*Causes*, p. 477). She thus pre-empts any such attack being used against her.

As van Dijk argues, Dacier's confrontational approach sometimes posed a challenge for the reading and literary public: journalists noted the differences between her approach and La Motte's. On occasion, they criticized her forthright and ruthless tone, and at times, it was made clear that this tone was inappropriate for a woman.[49] However, it was primarily after her death that her polemical tone *and* her gender became the source of criticism. For instance, Cartaud de la Vilate wrote: 'On dit à cette occasion que M. de la Mothe écrivoit comme une femme galante qui auroit de l'esprit et que Madame Dacier écrivoit comme un pédant.'[50] Such criticism also signals, perversely, the success of her attack, since she is seen as the 'man' in this debate.

La Motte's ethics of reciprocity, his approach of a 'femme galante', and his promotion of consensus are especially evident in the second edition of the *Réflexions sur la critique*, which he had re-published after his reconciliation with Dacier in 1716. At the end, instead of adding his promised fourth part in which he would have extended his quarrel, he inserted a short italicised passage declaring:

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[49] For instance, 'j'aurois voulu qu'une Dame eût paru une Dame dans ses Ouvrages, qu'elle eût par tout répandu les fleurs et les grâces, et par conséquent qu'elle ne fût pas entrée dans les sentiments d'un Savant offensé.' *Journal Littéraire*, VI (1715), 466. Quoted in van Dijk, p. 211.

[50] Cartaud de la Vilate, *Essai historique et philosophique sur le goût* (Paris: Maudouyt, 1736), p. 158. Quoted in Simon-Augustin Irailh *Querelles Littéraires ou mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des révolutions de la république des lettres*, 2 vols (Paris: Durand, 1761), II, 311.

> Voilà la dispute finie entre Madame Dacier, Monsieur Boivin et moi ; et le fruit de nôtre dispute est une amitié sincère et reciproque, dont ils me permettront de me faire honneur devant le Public. […] Il faut que les disputes des Gens de Lettres ressemblent à ces conversations animées où apres des avis différens et soûtenus de part et d'autre avec toute la vivacité qui en fait le charme, on se sépare et s'embrassant et souvent plus amis que si l'on avoit été froidement d'accord. (pp. 296–96)

La Motte mixes public and private here, and suggests that private friendships have resolved a public dispute. He presents the resolution of the Quarrel as being one of agreement ('to agree to disagree') which is a form of consensus; 'warm', 'lively', 'charming': harmony reigns. La Motte's ethics are based on identification, both between reader and text — as his main issue with Homer is, as we saw, the difference between ancient and contemporary morals — and, as is evident in this passage, between peers. In terms of pragmatic linguistics, La Motte's gesture here can be seen to be as dismissive as it is reconciliatory, but it retains the appearance of consensus.

Dacier's own representation of the resolution of her conflict with La Motte, a few months after his declaration of peace, makes for a stark contrast and confirms her resistance to the social niceties that dismiss the Quarrel; she will not reduce its stakes. The text she published immediately after their 'reconciliation' was her *Odyssée* translation. Fern Farnham sees this last text as offering a conciliatory gesture to La Motte; I suggest instead that her *Odyssée* Preface and the 'last word' it anticipates, her *Homère defendu* against Jean Hardouin, demonstrate her agonistic approach.[51] In the *Odyssée* Preface she does not declare the Quarrel

[51] Farnham, p. 179.

over, but instead she meets La Motte's overtures with silence, not mentioning him once throughout its ninety-four pages (silence can, after all, be a disdainful response). While she refrains from mentioning the Quarrel itself until the final eight pages, the main subject of her Preface — epic poetry — allows her to revisit many of her arguments from a different angle. At the end, far from offering a neutral gesture of consensus, she reflects on the effect of the Quarrel on Homer's reception, suggesting 'ce Poëte de mesme est sorti avec un nouvel esclat de toutes ces querelles, et de ces guerres qu'on luy a faites'.[52] If Homer emerges as newly brilliant then so, implicitly, does his champion defender: Dacier. She shows little evidence of ending the Quarrel as she then launches an attack on Perrault and finishes the one which she started in her *Causes* against Terrasson. The 'reconciliation' with La Motte simply means she no longer names him.

At the end of the *Odyssée* Preface she then targets her (intended) final opponent, Jean Hardouin and anticipates her next move in the Quarrel, her *Homère defendu*. She figures her refutation of Hardouin's text as her last battle:

> Un autre combat m'appelle, il faut refuter l'Apologie que le R.P Hardouin, un des plus sçavants hommes du siecle, vient de faire de ce Poëte. […] Ma Réponse ne se fera pas longtemps attendre et j'ose esperer que les amateurs d'Homere ou plustost les amateurs de la raison, la verront avec quelque plaisir. Je finis-là ma carriere. (pp. 91–2)

She then amplifies the announcement of her retirement contained in 'je finis-là ma carriere', and the use of metaphors of violence, with an (unreferenced) quotation from Virgil's *Aeneid* 5.484: 'hic caestus artemque repono' ('here I lay down my boxing gloves and my art'). These

[52] Dacier, 'Préface', in *L'Odyssée*, I, 4–92 (p. 86).

lines in Virgil's *Aeneid* are spoken by Entellus, the aging champion boxer goaded back to the ring for a final fight against the young Dares. Entellus is prevented from beating the young man to death and on receiving the award for the fight, a bull, he announces his retirement, 'hic *victor* caestus artemque repono' ('here, as *victor*, I lay down my boxing gloves and my art').[53] Dacier's removal of the term 'victor' might be an example of her reluctance to appear too polemical. However, it is also a rhetorical trick because the learned reader will fill in the missing word and thus crown her as victor. This self-conscious closing of her engagement in the Homer Quarrel with an image of competition, in which the line between sport and violence is crossed, picks up on the 'guerrier' with which she opened it in the *Causes*, confirming the consistency of her approach. It also confirms the crucial connection between the Quarrel and her career by showing that both should be ended together. Dacier was less conciliatory in her Homer Quarrel texts than critics have suggested because winning mattered to her reputation. She adopted an agonistic approach, wearing the armour of her learning. Her confrontational *Réflexions* can thus be seen as a coherent culmination of her *œuvre*, as I shall now explore.

II. Having the Last Word: Pope, Perelle and Dacier's *Réflexions*

While this Quarrel raged in Paris, its English equivalent, the Battle of the Books, took place during the early part of the eighteenth century in London. Some attention has been paid to the impact of Dacier's *Réflexions sur la première partie de la préface de Mr Pope* of 1719, her response to Pope's *Iliad* Preface of 1715, on Pope and its place in the wider context of the

[53] See the *Ad Usum Delphini* Latin edition, *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera, interpretatione et notis illustravit Carolus Ruaeus,... ad usum serenissimi Delphini* (Paris: Bernard, 1675), p. 478.

French *Querelle* and the English Battle of the Books.[54] This text was not their first interaction. Pope had made significant use of Dacier's 1711 translation of the *Iliad* when producing his 1715 translation: as Weinbrot, Joseph Levine and Douglas Knight have shown, Pope consulted both her French version and the 1712 translation of it into blank verse in English by John Ozell.[55] Pope did not always follow or agree with Dacier's interpretations, as Éric Foulon has argued, although he does credit Dacier with authority in the notes he wrote to accompany his translation.[56] Pope was also less reluctant to criticize aspects of Homer than Dacier was and, unlike her, was not always squarely on the side of the Ancients.[57]

Although Pope read Dacier's work, it is unlikely that Dacier read more than the partial Preface of his *Iliad* she had in translation by Perelle and so was not aware of his more generous

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[54] Weinbrot, 'Alexander Pope and Madame Dacier's Homer'; Weinbrot, '"What Must the World Think of Me?"'; *Ancients and Moderns in Europe: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by Alexis Tadié and Paddy Bullard (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016); Larry H. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient*: *Literature and History in Early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp. 215–18; and Tadié, 'Peut-on traduire les Querelles?', in *Le Temps des querelles*, ed. by Hostiou and Viala, pp. 211–26.

[55] Levine, pp. 181–218; Weinbrot, '"What Must the World think of Me?"'; and Douglas Knight, *Pope and the Heroic Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), p. 58. John Ozell, *The Iliad of Homer […] Done from the French by Mr Ozell* (London: 1712). Pope made different drafts of the Preface, and gave Dacier more credit in discarded versions: see Douglas Knight, 'The Development of Pope's Iliad Preface: A Study of the Manuscripts', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 16 (1955), 237–46.

[56] Foulon, p. 192.

[57] Levine, p. 209.

comments towards her,[58] even though she acknowledges in her *Réflexions* that she has heard much about Pope's translation of Homer's epic.[59] Pope's Preface and his *Essay on Homer* which follows it had also been summarized in detail in French in the 1716 *Journal Littéraire*, although Dacier does not refer to this summary in her *Réflexions*.[60] Pope was also aware of her *Réflexions*: he was given a copy of Dacier's second edition containing her *Réflexions* in February 1723 (Dacier had died in 1720); her *Réflexions* were then translated into English by a certain Thomas Parnell and published by Edmund Curll in 1724. Although Pope had already, in 1723, protested in his private correspondence about the accusations her *Réflexions* contained, the circulation of the English translation prompted him to publicly refute Dacier's *Réflexions* in the Postscript he attached to his translation of the *Odyssey* of 1725.[61] He argues that he and Dacier were on the same side in their admiration for Homer. With regard to her response to his Preface, he accuses her of 'paraphrase', of 'read[ing] partially' and of too much haste; his main accusation, however, is that her principal 'error' lay in 'depending on injurious and unskillful translations'.[62] In this section, I shall argue that the translator's errors have been overstated and do not explain the differences between Dacier's text and Pope's original. Instead, as I will then

[58] Foulon, p. 159.

[59] Pope's *Essay on Criticism* had also been translated into French and was reviewed favourably in a number of Journals. See Weinbrot, '"What Must the World Think of Me?"', p. 185.

[60] *Journal Littéraire*, VIII (1716), 1–42.

[61] *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. by G. Sherburn (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956), II, 157, n. 2. See Weinbrot, 'Alexander Pope and Madame Dacier's Homer', p. 1.

[62] Pope, 'Postscript', *The Odyssey*, p. 246, p. 269, p. 245.

show, these differences reveal Dacier's substantive objections to Pope's Homer and her agonistic method of conveying them.

Alexis Tadié has argued for the importance of heeding the intermediary translations in this cross-Channel dispute.[63] However, little attention has been paid to the role of Perelle's translation as intermediary between Pope's Preface and Dacier's *Réflexions*. Although Perelle makes some small, insignificant changes to the original and there are a couple of minor infelicities, in general it is, as Audra pointed out in 1931, accurate.[64] Perelle is clear in conveying all of the main elements of Pope's argument in his translation. There is one significant error, which caused confusion and prompted Dacier to accuse Pope of a lack of sense. This error is also the reason Pope and subsequent critics have accused Dacier of basing her *Réflexions* on a faulty translation. In his introductory discussion of Homer's genius of invention, Pope writes: 'he open'd new and boundless Walks for his Imagination and created a World for himself in the Invention of Fable' (np). Instead of 'World', Perelle has 'monde mouvant': 'il créa pour son usage un monde mouvant, en inventant La Fable'.[65] In the second edition of this translation, printed in 1728, the author of the *avertissement* alerts us to the fact that this was a printer's error and not the translator's: it is meant to read 'monde nouveau',

[63] Tadié has focused on the role of Ozell's translation as an intermediary text between Dacier's *Iliade* and Pope's *Iliad*. 'Peut-on traduire les Querelles?', pp. 217–20.

[64] There is another minor error, involving the mistranslation of a second clause with a negative (Pope: 'constantly laying their Accusation against Homer' (np); Perelle: 'ne portent point leur accusation contre Homere'), but it is not of significance in that it does not influence Dacier's reading. [Perelle], p. 12.

[65] [Perelle], p. 8.

'new world'.[66] This was one of a few sentences that Dacier quotes directly in her *Réflexions*, to which she responds with the 'Qu'est-ce que cela signifie? […] [C]'est une idée alambiquée que je ne sçaurois ni développer ni entendre' (*Réflexions*, np). Pope picks up on this translation error in his Postscript: 'Madam Dacier justly wonders at this nonsense in me; and I, in the Translator.'[67] However, this is the sole inaccuracy that makes its way into Dacier's refutation, and even Pope acknowledges that the problem is not the translation alone but also Dacier's selective quotation of his arguments: 'It happens that the first of these [the 'blunders' Dacier exposes] is in part the Translator's, and in part her own, without any share of mine'.[68] While Perelle does sometimes shift word order or simplify a passage, this is without significant effect on the original meaning and/or on Dacier's response. If anything, Perelle makes more of the (already substantial) praise for Homer that characterizes Pope's Preface: there are at least five occasions when he amplifies Pope's praise, enough to suggest an intention on his part to create a positive overall impression of the ancient author.[69]

Given that the translation Dacier was using was reliable, I suggest that her (mis)representation of Pope's text must therefore be seen as a strategy to better serve her argument. Such a view is supported by a comparison between the texts by Pope, Perelle and Dacier and by the rhetorical similarities that can be traced between the *Réflexions* and her

[66] [Anon.], 'Avertissement', 'Traduction de la premiere partie de la Preface de l'Homere Anglois de Monsieur Pope', in [Anon.] *Remarques sur Homère, avec la traduction de le préface de l'Homère Anglois de M. Pope; et d'un Essai sur la Vie et les Écrits de ce Poëte par le même Auteur* (Paris: Martin, 1728), pp. 50–102 (p. 50).

[67] Pope, 'Postscript', *The Odyssey*, p. 248.

[68] Ibid.

[69] [Perelle], p. 9 (two instances); p. 25; p. 26; p. 28.

earlier interventions in the Homer Quarrel. But even before we delve into these comparisons, it is evident that Dacier intended her seventeen-page *Réflexions* to be read both as an integral part of her arguments in the Quarrel and as the culmination of her career. She draws attention to it on the title page of the second edition of her *Iliade* and opens the *Réflexions* in a way that stresses continuity: 'Après l'avoir assez heureusement defendu contre les critiques de tant de censeurs aveugles, qui l'ont condamné sans le connoistre, je me sens obligée de le defendre encore contre les reproches d'un homme plus esclairé' (np).

In terms of rhetoric, she uses two techniques for re-articulating Pope's words: at times she deploys what Emily Butterworth describes in her work on polemic as an appropriative and disfiguring use of quotation (when she quotes Perelle's translation), where ideas are taken out of context or only partially represented.[70] More commonly, she uses what Pope calls 'paraphrase'. This is a term used in English to connote rewriting but also, specifically, imitative or loose translations (with either positive or negative inflection).[71] In the first section of her *Réflexions*, she implements both 'paraphrase' or translation and distortion of context to misrepresent Pope's words. This is the section in which she refutes the three similes Pope uses to describe Homer's poem: he compares it to a 'wild paradise', a 'copious nursery' and a 'mighty tree'. Dacier lists the similes in sequence, which is to take them out of context: in Pope's Preface, the first two are mentioned early on in the context of Homer's unparalleled genius and the tree simile is reserved until the end of the first half of the Preface, to counterbalance some of the criticisms of Homer that Pope attributed to others. It is worth considering Perelle's translation to understand the extent of Dacier's re-wording:

[70] Butterworth, pp. 82–83.

[71] See, for example, John Dryden's Preface to *Ovid's Epistles* (London: Tonson, 1680).

> Pope: Our Author's Work is a wild Paradise, where if we cannot see all the Beauties so distinctly as in an order'd Garden, it is only because the Number of them is infinitely greater. (np)
>
> Perelle: L'ouvrage d'Homere est un Paradis brute [*sic*], où l'on rencontre des beautez de toute espece, en si grand nombre, qu'il ne faut pas s'étonner, si elles ne se présentent pas aussi distinctement que celles d'un Jardin simétrisé. (p. 5)

'Paradis brute' (*sic*) for 'wild paradise' is perhaps a slightly unusual choice for a landscape; the summary of Pope's Preface in the *Journal littéraire* translates this as 'paradis sauvage'.[72] 'Brute' also has connotations, according to Furetière, of being draft-like, 'un ouvrage qui est en brouillon qu'on n'a pas le loisir de limer et de polir'.[73] However, given the other connotations of 'sauvage', as a term used to describe the people of the Americas who, according to Furetière are 'des hommes errans […] sans Religion, sans Loix et sans Police', it is possible that Perelle, who, as I have shown, tended towards more explicit praise and defence of Homer, wanted to avoid suggestions of 'savage' which was often used by the Moderns to criticize Homer's time.[74]

Unlike Perelle, Dacier makes Pope seem like a Modern. Pope's simile is taken out of context and becomes: 'tantost il nous dit que son poëme est un jardin brute [*sic*] où l'on

[72] *Journal Littéraire*, VIII (1716), 4.

[73] Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel* (The Hague: Leers, 1690).

[74] See Larry F. Norman, 'Homère transplanté: luxuriance antique ou classicisme moderne?', in *Révolutions homériques*, ed. by Glenn W. Most, Larry F. Norman, and Sophie Rabau (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2009), pp. 83–98.

rencontre des beautez de toute espece et en si grand nombre qu'il ne faut pas s'estonner si elles ne se presentent pas aussi distinctement que dans un jardin symmetrisé […]' (np). Her version, while very close to Perelle's translation, has shifted the positively-inflected term, 'paradis', to a much more commonplace 'jardin'. Larry Norman has deftly shown that in the context of the English sublime, Pope's comparison of Homer's work to a 'wild paradise', which draws on Joseph Addison, differs from the French Moderns' accusations of wildness.[75] It instead allows Pope to champion Homer's 'primitivism'.[76] Dacier, however, was not engaging with these subtleties: describing Homer's *Iliad* as irregular was an insult, *tout court*, and echoed criticisms of the Moderns. Her paraphrase of 'jardin' thus mistranslates Pope's words to remove any positive connotation, to align him with the Moderns more clearly and thus to emphasize her objection to Pope's point about Homer's asymmetry.

Similar strategies are also evident in her response to the tree simile:

> Pope: A work of this kind seems like a mighty Tree […] and they who find the justest Faults have only said, that a few Branches (which run luxuriant thro' a Richness of nature) might be lopp'd into Form to give it a more regular Appearance. (np)
>
> Perelle: Un ouvrage de cette nature peut fort bien être comparé à un arbre […] et si l'on y peut raisonnablement trouver quelque défaut, c'est d'avoir poussé trop de branches, qu'il seroit nécessaire de couper pour lui donner une forme plus réguliere et ce défaut même ne vient que de sa trop grande fécondité. (p. 33)

[75] Joseph Addison, *Spectator,* 3 September 1711, np.

[76] Norman, 'Homère transplanté', pp. 96–98.

> Dacier: Enfin il nous le represente sous l'idée d'un arbre, […] mais qui pousse trop de branches qu'il seroit necessaire de couper pour luy donner une forme plus reguliere. (np)

She removes any notion that this 'fault' also derives from a strength, the 'fécondité' (Perelle) or 'richness' (Pope), and represents this point as if it were a criticism. Where Pope distances the criticism from being his own (as does Perelle with the 'on'), Dacier credits Pope with authority: 'il nous le represente'. The distortion of Pope's original is then redoubled in the summary of the three similes she offers:

> selon M. Pope, le poëme d'Homere est donc un amas confus de beautez qui n'ont ni ordre ni symmetrie; un plant où l'on ne trouve que des semences et rien de parfait ni de formé et une production chargée de beaucoup de choses inutiles qu'il faudroit retrancher et qui estouffent ou defigurent celles qui meritent d'estre conservées. (np)

As Shankman argues, this further serves to align Pope with the Moderns because 'amas' deliberately echoes Perrault's disparaging description of Homer's poems.[77] Similar techniques of misrepresentation, taking words out of context, and attributing to him the opinions of others, were also present in her attack against La Motte in the *Causes*, lending weight to the argument

[77] Perrault describes Homer's poems as follows: '[ils] ne sont autre chose qu'un amas, qu'une collection de plusieurs petits poëmes de divers autheurs qu'on a joints ensemble'. Charles Perrault, *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes*, 4 vols (Paris: Coignard, 1692), III, 32–33. See Shankman, p. 84.

that we might see such techniques as intentional and consistent with her usual rhetorical strategies.[78]

Dacier then closes her final text of the Homer Quarrel with an agonistic gesture that builds on her previous interventions: an *ad hominem* attack which is facilitated by her learning. Having used direct quotation from Perelle's translation to confront Pope on two particular details (his sloppy use of Aristotle, a point he conceded, and the — erroneous — 'monde mouvant' translation), at the end of this text she makes the attack personal. She amplifies the Quarrel's significance for Pope, making it difficult for him to dismiss its stakes as La Motte had done. She accuses Pope of thinking himself capable of reforming the men of his country because he is a 'reformateur d'Homere' (np). She quotes an episode from Plutarch's *Life of Alcibiades*, which had been translated by her husband, André Dacier, into French, in which Alcibiades mocks the pretensions of his schoolmaster: 'Eh mon ami, luy dit-il, tu es capable de corriger Homere et tu t'amuses à enseigner des enfants, que ne t'occupes-tu à former des hommes?' (np). She then closes her text thus: 'Voila une grande ressource pour un Estat!' (np). Her personal attack here on Pope is, once again, couched in learned references. Weinbrot has suggested that this was a knowing political attack on Pope, motivated by a sectarian religious anxiety. The Daciers had converted to Catholicism in 1685 as religious toleration ended in France; she thus knew, Weinbrot suggests, how to present a damning case against Pope, who was in a precarious position as a minority Catholic in a Protestant nation.[79] Pope's sensitivity to this attack in particular is demonstrated by the defence with which he closes his Postscript: 'Far therefore from the Genius for which Madam Dacier mistook me, my whole desire is but

[78] See for instance *Causes*, pp. 38–39.

[79] Weinbrot, '"What Must the World Think of Me"', p. 202. On the controversy surrounding the Daciers' conversion, see Itti, pp. 145–65.

to preserve the humble character of a faithful Translator and a quiet Subject'.[80] The success of this attack relies on Pope's personal circumstances, but its logic also exemplifies Dacier's strategies as quarreler. Not only does she heighten the stakes for Pope to validate her own investment in the Quarrel and its relationship to her reputation and legacy, but she also positions Pope as agonistic both as a reforming translator of Homer and in his politics by implying he lacks consensus with the political status quo in England. By framing his quarrelling technique as being akin to her own he also becomes an opponent she can beat: unlike La Motte, he cannot reduce and reconcile their Quarrel with social finesse.

At the heart of Dacier's attack is an analogy between fidelity as a translator and as a subject, as indeed Pope understood. The power of her rhetoric in these closing sentences derives from her exploitation of her own renowned fidelity as a translator. 'Fidelity' was not a term she used: Dacier tended to avoid using any single term to describe either her or La Motte's practice (perhaps to dodge the correlative association of being the opposite of *belles* and *infidèles*). Yet, throughout her career, she implicitly laid claim to this fidelity and accuracy through her scholarly posture and her accusations against La Motte: 'Appelle-t-on cela traduire, ou est-ce corriger Homere?' (*Causes*, p. 408). But the premise underlying the analogy she uses to attack Pope is paradoxical: she sets up accuracy in translation as important by paralleling it with political fidelity, while simultaneously not practising such fidelity vis-à-vis Pope's words. In the *Réflexions*, therefore, there is a dissonance between the role of precise translations in her arguments and its place in practice. The dissonance is rhetorically effective because it exploits the authority Dacier already possesses: readers trust Dacier's *ethos* as a translator who vaunts precision and accuracy; readers are encouraged then to trust that she has been careful in rendering Pope's (translated) words into her own French. Her mistranslation is used effectively and authoritatively as a weapon, making the translation of Pope's original words into her

[80] Pope, 'Postscript', *The Odyssey*, p. 251.

French version one of the ways in which she attacks him. Not only, therefore, was translation a weapon in their exchange, but she then sharpened her attack by engaging translation metaphors against Pope: divesting fidelity of its usually gendered association with 'beauty', she turns it into a political metaphor to destabilize Pope's already vulnerable situation in England and accuse him of political infidelity.

III: 'Postscripts'

Dacier's *Réflexions* in French were not, however, either the last words attributed to her in the Homer Quarrel, or the last word in the Quarrel itself. As Weinbrot has shown, Dacier's text was seized upon with glee by detractors of Pope in the aftermath of the Jacobite risings in Protestant England.[81] This is particularly evident, he shows, in the 1724 translation of Dacier's *Réflexions* into English by a certain Parnell (perhaps a pseudonym of the publisher Curll) which was reissued in the pamphlet *The Popiad* in 1728, and twice again in 1737 and 1745. This translation and its public circulation may have prompted Pope to defend himself publicly against Dacier in his *Odyssey* Postscript in 1725. Analysing Parnell's translation alongside Dacier's *Réflexions* and Pope's Preface complements Weinbrot's reading of it as an attack on Pope, but also redirects attention to the rhetorical strategies present in that attack. Curll's publication, like Dacier's, was designed to do maximum damage; this is achieved by mixing quotation from Pope's original with Dacier's 'translations' by removing all typographical and textual distinction between them. Parnell sometimes quotes directly from Pope's Preface, showing his familiarity with it and indicating these quotations with italics; sometimes, however, he includes as italicised quotations from Pope what are in fact his own translations

[81] Weinbrot, '"What Must the World Think of Me"', p. 191.

of Dacier's damaging mistranslations. For instance, regarding the three similes, he uses Pope's original for 'wild paradise' and for the nursery image, but for the tree, which we examined above, he deliberately mixes Pope's words with Dacier's version, where it bolsters her arguments against Pope: 'a mighty tree which rises from the most vigorous Seed is improved with industry, flourishes and produced the finest Fruits, but bears too many Branches which might be lopped into form, to give it a more regular appearance.'[82] The first clause is Pope's; the second is a translation of Dacier's 'translation': 'mais qui pousse trop de branches qu'il seroit necessaire de couper pour luy donner une forme plus reguliere' (np). Parnell also keeps the erroneous quotation of 'moving world' even though a comparison with the original shows this to be wrong. Retaining it maintains the force of Dacier's criticism. Although the disinformation lies here in the misattribution of the text, and not, as in Dacier's case, in modificatory translation, translation acts as accomplice because it disguises the misattribution and makes the version appear authoritative. Parnell's text functioned as a different sort of intermediary to that of Perelle: where Perelle's translation was the basis for Dacier's text, it was only the *publication* of Parnell's translation which might have prompted Pope to defend himself, and the text Pope engages with in his Postscript is Dacier's original *Réflexions* (he quotes her in French, in italics). However, in both Dacier's translation of Pope's words into her French *Réflexions*, and in Parnell's translation of her *Réflexions* into English, we see, in different ways, how translation was used polemically against an opponent. Dacier exploits her authority as a translator to make her attack more effective; Parnell uses translation to facilitate misattribution.

The irony is that the translation so reputed to be faulty in this nexus of works — of Pope's Preface by Perelle — was not that faulty, and nor was it the act (or rather acts) of

[82] Parnell, p. 3.

translation that caused most damage to Pope. And yet Pope's primary accusation against Dacier is that she relied on a faulty translation, even though his response to Dacier's text in his *Odyssey* Postscript, the last word in their quarrel, is subtle in that he also recognizes her agency. It is surely the main accusation because it is the most tangible and empirical refutation. It is a refutation that also has the added benefit of discrediting her, as Pope can accuse her of not reading his Preface in the original, which was exactly the crime of which she accused La Motte in relation to Homer. Furthermore, accusing the translation of his text of inaccuracy serves to distance his original from the political implications raised by Dacier's polemic, and blaming the translator may have reflected his reluctance to be too critical of Dacier both because of her reputation and because of her gender.[83] The effect of Pope's accusation, however, has been to implicitly shape much of the reaction to the *Réflexions* in modern scholarship, in such a way that Dacier's agency and complex method have been obscured. The fact that Dacier's voice in this text and her other interventions in the Quarrel have often been approached psychologically rather than rhetorically speaks of the (ongoing) difficulties women face as polemicists, in terms of being taken seriously, reminding us that her exclusion from a canon of women writers reveals a bias towards who might count as a 'woman writer' which flattens the complexities of the gender dynamics at play in her work and that of the women included in such a canon. The assumption that errors in the intermediary translation must explain the discrepancies between Dacier's text and that of Pope attests not only to that difficulty but also to the relatively recent downgrading of the status of translation, which is no longer seen as an important agent in

[83] He asserts 'this is a temper that every polite man should overlook in a Lady.' Pope, 'Postscript', *The Odyssey*, p. 248. On this, see Carolyn D. Williams, *Pope, Homer and Manliness: Some Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Classical Learning* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 147–53.

intellectual life as it was in the early modern period.[84] Dacier's death created the historical circumstances that allowed Pope to have the last word in their exchange, but that does not necessarily mean he has to be granted the last word: particularly if doing so also misconstrues Dacier's *Réflexions*, her last word in the Quarrel.

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[84] On this difference, see Terence Cave, 'Epilogue', in *The Culture of Translation in Early Modern England and France*, ed. by Demetriou and Tomlinson, pp. 191–200 (p. 192).