Outside The Stranger? English Retranslations of Camus’ L’Étranger

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To date, Camus’ L’Étranger has undergone four translations into English. Known as The Stranger in North America and The Outsider in Great Britain, it is very familiar to the English-speaking world. This novel of alienation, of the absurd, is often the first novel read in French by second-language learners in intermediate to advanced-level French courses, partially due to its short length and the relative facility of the language. In the US and Canada, the novel is often required reading in the last years of high school or in university, where, naturally enough, it is usually read in translation. Our goal is to look closely at the four texts, attempting to discern which factors are altered in the translation and subsequent retranslations and to determine what prompted the retranslations.

Albert Camus was twenty-nine when he wrote L’Étranger, published in Paris in 1942, which he closely followed with Le Mythe de Sisyphe. He revised the novel in 1947 and made additional revisions between 1949 and 1953, increasing its already marked concision. First translated into English by Stuart Gilbert in 1946 as The Outsider (London), it was published concurrently in New York as The Stranger. Over time, Camus’ novel established itself as a respected, canonic text, as did Gilbert’s translation, remaining unchallenged for thirty-six years. By 1985, this rendering had sold over three million copies. In 1982, Joseph Laredo published his retranslation, The Outsider, in London. At the same time, a first American translation by Kate Griffith, in Washington, D.C., based on an annotated—and censored!—French edition of Camus’ novel published in the US1, thereby eliminating the legal difficulty of publishing an American translation. Finally, the late poet Matthew Ward published another translation, The Stranger, in New York in 1988.

A first difference between the translations appears at the level of paratext. The two translated titles of the work are not, however, widely divergent. The Random House Webster’s dictionary (1997) defines “stranger” as “3. a person who does not belong to the family, group or community; an outsider”, including a note: “ Stranger may apply to one who does not belong to some group—social professional, national, etc. [...]”. And it defines “outsider” as “a person not of a particular group”. Thus, while “outsider” contains a smaller extension than “stranger”, both terms convey the idea—central in the novel—of not belonging, of exclusion. Also at the level of paratext are the obvious differences between British (Gilbert, Laredo) and American spelling (Griffith, Ward): colour and color (US), etc.

Sartre, in his “Explication de L’Étranger” (1947), describes Meursault’s detachment in terms of “décalage, divorce et dépaysement”. Each new gesture, each new object corresponds to a new sentence. This somewhat disjointed style makes for an apparent lack of causality between Camus’ sentences, as Sartre remarked: “une phrase de L’Étranger c’est une île”. Gilbert’s translation, however, was published before Camus’ revisions to his novel (and Sartre’s essay), which must account for at least some of Gilbert’s wordier style. Camus has stated that American novel writing techniques aided him in his quest to “describe a man with no apparent conscience” (“décrire un homme sans conscience apparente”). Was Matthew Ward, who acknowledges Sartre’s essay in his translator’s note, perhaps more at ease with the concision required to convey these American techniques?

Examining the four English translators of the novel, however briefly, may help clarify some of their choices – and lessen their “invisibility”. An important mid-twentieth-century literary figure, Stuart Gilbert also translated Camus’ La Peste and works by Saint-Exupéry, Malraux, Sartre, Simenon and Cocteau, among others, and corresponded with TS Eliot, Malraux, Richard Ellmann. A graduate of Hertford College at Oxford, he advised James Joyce on the Auguste Morel translation of Ulysses, wrote a critical work entitled James Joyce’s Ulysses and edited the first volume of Joyce’s letters. The first English translation of L’Étranger was penned by a sixty-three year old distinguished man of letters. Set

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2. Fletcher, 1986 mentions that the British title “even inspired Colin Wilson’s popular exposition of existentialism, also called The Outsider”, p. 14.
4. Ibid., p. 137.
5. Ibid., op. cit., p. 142.
6. Rey, 1972, p. 60.
aside from the source text, it reads as both elegant and poetic English prose, with a distinctly British flavour. To suit his own prose, he confidently restructures the paragraph and sentence divisions. For instance, simple French sentences characterizing Camus’ intuitive or sensorial mode of expression are altered, so that Gilbert’s text appears more “connected”, with longer (and thus fewer) sentences. Camus’ first two paragraphs (reproduced in the first excerpt – Texte A – with all four translations in Fascicule des textes de référence) contain 21 sentences; Gilbert spreads them out over three paragraphs, with a total of 16 sentences. The connecting links give the impression of causality (absent in the French): Gilbert adds two semi-colons and a colon in the first paragraph alone. This novel, said to have been considered revolutionary in its departure from traditional narrative techniques, is “domesticated” by Gilbert, possibly in an effort to acclimatize the work to readers of English. For instance, when writing of the rather self-evident customs of keeping the vigil and wearing the armband in mourning, Gilbert adds glosses, such as “keeping the usual vigil beside the body” and “a mourning band”, both of which are left unexplained by both later translators Laredo and Ward. Gilbert also uses many Briticisms, which we examine later, that domesticate his translation. Without the advantage of Camus’ revisions to L’Étranger, Gilbert has a wordier text; more seriously, in his work Meursault’s personality seems to shift, with the narrator becoming an explanatory confider rather than the detached observer described by Camus and mentioned by Sartre: “L’Étranger n’est pas un livre qui explique”7. Yet while Gilbert’s narrator appears somewhat verbose, both Gilbert’s and Laredo’s translations, in the first two paragraphs contain about the same number of words8.

In 1982, Joseph Laredo, a graduate of Trinity College at Cambridge, retranslated the novel. By this time, L’Étranger had become a canonic text, implying that this translator, and any subsequent one, could anticipate that his or her work would be held up to scrutiny. Concurrently, in the US, Kate Griffith began the first American translation of L’Étranger. In her preface she describes the translation as a collaborative work with three undergraduate students, a rather audacious undertaking for presumably inexperienced translators. Unfortunately, the results belie carelessness. Spelling errors abound9: the foreword of the book is misspelt as “forward”, “discrepancy” is written as “dcrepency”, “parricide” as “parracide”, etc. Moreover, basic translation errors

8. Fletcher, p. 17.
proliferate: “Un corps inerte” (Camus, p. 95) is rendered as “a motionless corpse” (Griffith, p. 50) and “les plis de sa robe” (Camus, p. 180) is rendered as “the folds of his gown” (Griffith, p. 96), when Camus is describing a priest’s cassock. This work was never reviewed in any major periodical, national newspaper or scholarly journal.

The late Matthew Ward, translator of the most recent version (New York, 1988), had translated works by Colette, Barthes, Picasso, Sartre and others. The poet and critic, thirty-seven years old at the time of the translation, had been educated at Stanford, at University College in Dublin, where he was a Fulbright Scholar, and at Columbia. He won the PEN translation prize in 1989. Although Laredo’s translation was only six years old, due to considerations of copyright it was unavailable to American readers. It was also considered markedly British and colloquial, as we will soon see. Knopf commissioned a new translation.

Ward’s is a systematic translation, one that inspires the confidence of the reader early on. Translating references of *tutoiement* into English is not always a straightforward task. Here Raymond Sintès has convinced Meursault to write a letter to a woman for him: “Je savais bien que tu connaissais la vie. Je ne me suis pas aperçu d’abord qu’il me tutoyait” (Camus, p. 54). “He said, ‘I could tell you knew about these things.’ I didn’t notice at first, but he had stopped calling me ‘monsieur’” (Ward, p. 33). This conforms to the original French text, as Sintès really does drop the “monsieur”. Laredo circumvents the problem by adding a detail that doesn’t appear in the French: “I didn’t notice at first, but he was calling me by my first name” (Laredo, p. 36). Gilbert’s rendering, however, with its markedly British flavour, may give today’s reader a jolt: “I could tell you was a brainy sort, old boy, and you know what’s what.’ At first I hardly noticed that ‘old boy’” (Gilbert, p. 41).

Gilbert’s 1946 translation reveals several other Briticisms. Referring to the query of Marie, his girlfriend, Meursault says: “I said I didn’t mind; if she was keen on it, we’d get married” (Gilbert, p. 52). And describing a conversation with his employer, Meursault states: “[He] told me that I always shilly-shal- lied” (Gilbert, p. 52). His choice of words seems more appropriate for the United Kingdom than for Algiers. Laredo’s translation is characteristically direct: “[He] told me that I always evaded the question” (Laredo, p. 44), from the French “[Il] m’a dit que je répondais toujours à côté” (Camus, p. 69). Here Ward’s version succeeds in being more idiomatic than Laredo’s: “[He] looked upset and told me that I never gave him a straight answer” (Ward, p. 41). Is Laredo perhaps reacting to Gilbert’s flights of fancy, providing a scrupulously close rendering, whereas Ward, who surely would have been aware of the
Laredo translation, feels comfortable experimenting more freely? While the first translator seems to have taken great strides to acclimatize readers to the foreign text, Laredo veers off in the opposite direction, adhering to the source text so closely that at times his rendering appears awkward. Ward tends to find expressions that fit idiomatically, where Laredo clings to the original: “J’allais lui dire qu’il avait tort de s’obstiner” (Camus, p. 107). Laredo translates this as: “I was about to tell him that he was wrong to insist,” whereas Ward comes up with the more idiomatic: “I was about to tell him he was wrong to dwell on it” (Ward, p. 69).

Laredo’s rendering also reveals other Briticisms, although less highbrow in nature than Gilbert’s. For instance: “I said I didn’t mind and we could do if she wanted to” (Laredo, p. 44). This seems to comply with Meursault’s rather taciturn nature. But Laredo’s prose occasionally startles the reader. He speaks of “white coffee” (Laredo, p. 14) for “café au lait” (Camus, p. 17), somehow unsettling in a novel set in a French-speaking country. At times Laredo’s Briticisms convey a working-class tone. Here Meursault is reporting on the words of Sintès: “I was a man of the world and I could help him and afterwards he’d be my mate” (Laredo, 33). The colloquial nature of Laredo’s version—which in itself is compatible with Camus’ prose—marks it as British.

Gilbert’s translation, however, steers off in the opposite direction and some of his characters appear very refined indeed: “Masson a dit qu’on avait mangé très tôt, et que c’était naturel parce que l’heure du déjeuner, c’était l’heure où l’on avait faim” (Camus, p. 84). “Masson remarked that we’d have a very early lunch, but really lunch was a movable feast, you had it when you felt like it” (Gilbert, 66). This allusion to Hemingway, which functions as an inside joke, is indicative of Gilbert’s highbrow rendering. Laredo’s is more straightforward: “Masson said we’d eaten very early and that was quite natural because the time to have lunch was when you felt hungry” (Laredo, p. 53).

Another marking characteristic of Gilbert’s translation is that he uses the pronoun “one” to render “on”, awkward to the contemporary reader, where Laredo and Ward tend to favour the more colloquial “you”. When Marie and Meursault meet up soon after the funeral to go out to the beach, Camus writes: “On devinait ses seins durs” (Camus, p. 57), which Gilbert renders as “One could see the outline of her firm little breasts” (Gilbert, p. 43). Laredo’s reads more naturally to the contemporary reader, “You could see the shape of her firm breasts” (Laredo, p. 37). In the above Gilbert quotation, note the “little” added to qualify the description of Marie’s breasts. This seems to indicate his discomfort at describing any kind of sexuality, proceeding as it does the follo-
wing: “j’ai eu très envie d’elle” (Camus, p. 57); “I couldn’t take my eyes off her” (Gilbert, p. 41). Laredo’s rendering is markedly British: “I really fancied her” (Laredo, p. 37). Ward here is more straightforward: “I wanted her so bad” (Ward, p. 34). While there is nothing particularly shocking in Camus’ prose, at least from a contemporary point of view, both British translators shy away from its frank earthiness.

The first English translation of the novel also contains several instances of étoffement, making for a wordier, more explanatory text. Gilbert has clearly appropriated the text, crafting prose that reveals a style all his own. In Part II, the narrator describes his first days in prison: “En réalité, je n’étais pas réellement en prison les premiers jours : j’attendais vaguement quelque événement nouveau” (Camus, p. 113). Meursault’s feeling of otherness, even dreaminess, his vague anticipation, is rendered by Gilbert as: “In point of fact, during those early days, I was hardly conscious of being in prison; I had always a vague hope that something would turn up, some agreeable surprise”. (Gilbert, p. 89). The bolded terms indicate his own interpretation, tantamount to embroidery. The strange, other-worldly aspect of not really being in prison is described by Gilbert’s Meursault in intellectual and analytical terms: he is “hardly conscious” of it, explains Gilbert. And Camus’ text does not actually speak of “hope”. The “agreeable surprise” of which the British-sounding narrator writes, in the source text is a matter-of-fact, apathetic waiting for something to happen. Here Gilbert’s narrator again appears less taciturn, more upper-crust. Laredo’s Meursault seems more matter-of-fact: “In actual fact I wasn’t actually in prison the first few days: I was vaguely waiting for something to happen” (Laredo, p 71).

Gilbert’s étoffement occasionally distorts Camus’ text. When Marie asks Meursault what Paris was like, he declares: “C’est sale. Il y a des pigeons et des cours noires” (Camus, p. 70). In the first translation, the taciturn protagonist becomes talkative and emphatic: “A dingy sort of town, to my mind. Masses of pigeons and dark courtyards” (Gilbert, p. 54). It is quite a jump from speaking of “cours noires” to portraying the city of light as “dingy”. The description of the concierge at the old age home is transformed from a nonchalant “Il s’est interrompu” (Camus, p. 14) to “He put back the screwdriver in his pocket and stared at me” (Gilbert, p. 6). A pattern emerges in Gilbert’s translation: he writes illustrative sentences explaining rather than directly translating the original. These flesh out the novel as he sees it, not necessarily how Camus wrote it. While Gilbert is consistent in his own writing style, a reader comparing his translation with the original is likely to get a different picture of the protago-
nist. He continually explains and interprets more than Camus does, at least in his revised edition. For instance, when the restaurant owner Céleste has finished testifying, we learn: “Il avait l’air de me demander ce qu’il pouvait encore faire” (Camus, p. 145). “It was exactly as if he’d said: ‘Well, I’ve done my best for you, old man. I’m afraid it hasn’t helped much. I’m sorry’” (Gilbert, p. 116). And this departs from the disjointed quality of the French.

Not only does the minor character of Céleste seem more apologetic in Gilbert’s translation, but Meursault does as well. The dialogue of Meursault’s Gilbert skews the character to some extent. Gilbert’s use of modalizers helps make Meursault appear more apologetic and hesitant. When the narrator asks his boss for two days off to attend his mother’s funeral (textes de référence, Excerpt A), Camus writes: “Mais il n’avait pas l’air content” (Camus A2), which Gilbert’s Meursault renders more timidly as “I had an idea he looked annoyed (Gilbert 2/a). The protagonist continues: ‘Je lui ai même dit: ‘Ce n’est pas de ma faute.’ Il n’a pas répondu” (Camus A2). Gilbert renders this as “and I said, without thinking: ‘Sorry, sir, but it’s not my fault, you know.’” (Gilbert 2/a). As Sartre says, referring to Camus, “son roman veut être d’une stérilité magnifique” 10. The apparent validity of Gilbert’s version, to non-readers of French, causes a problem. Yet without having Camus’ unrevised text as a basis for comparison we must temper any accusations of Gilbert’s skewing of the text.

Laredo’s protagonist is less talkative and less emphatic, like Camus’, but in his apparent faithfulness to the source text the translator falls into a few traps, coming up with at least one calque: “Après l’enterrement au contraire, ce sera une affaire classée et tout aura revêtu une allure plus officielle” (Extrait A3). “After the funeral though, the death will be a classified fact and the whole thing will have assumed a more official aura” (Laredo, 3/b). “Classified fact” and “aura” are calques of “affaire classée” and “allure”. Here Gilbert succeeds in being more idiomatic: “The funeral will bring it home to me, put an official seal on it, so to speak…” (Gilbert, 3/a).

One of the most significant and startling differences between the Gilbert translation and Camus’ original, is the translator’s insertion of dialogue where Camus has written discours indirect libre. Describing the restaurant owner’s testimony at Meursault’s trial, the narrator describes the scene unemotionally, flatly: “L’avocat général lui a demandé si je payais régulièrement ma pension. Céleste a ri et il a déclaré: ‘C’étaient des détails entre nous’” (Camus, p. 144). Gilbert’s text is more colourful, and he specifies elements Camus left open.

10. Sartre, op. cit., p. 129.
“The Prosecutor asked him if I always settled my monthly bill at his restaurant when he presented it. Céleste laughed. "Oh, he paid on the nail, all right. But the bills were just details-like, between him and me" (Gilbert, p. 115). By increasing the amount of direct speech, Gilbert adds a liveliness to Céleste’s testimony that never appears in the original. Also during Céleste’s testimony, we learn: “[on lui a demandé] s’il avait remarqué que j’étais renfermé et il a reconnu seulement que je ne parlais pas pour ne rien dire.” (Camus, p. 143-144) “Was I a secretive sort of man?” “No,” he answered, “I shouldn’t call him that. But he isn’t one to waste his breath, like a lot of folks.” (Gilbert, p. 115). Thus Gilbert’s translation takes on a chattier dimension that renders the work less strange.

Gilbert also inserts dialogue when Meursault and Emmanuel are running after a truck to catch a ride. “Emmanuel riait à perdre haleine’ (Camus, p. 45). “Emmanuel chuckled, and panted in my ear, ‘we’ve made it’” (Gilbert, p. 31). And when Sintès manages to convince the narrator to write a letter for him, Meursault reports: “Alors il m’a déclaré que justement, il voulait me demander un conseil au sujet de cette affaire, que moi, j’étais un homme, je connaissais la vie, que je pouvais l’aider et qu’ensuite il serait mon copain” (Camus, p. 49). “As a matter of fact, I rather want to ask your advice about something; it’s connected with this business. You’ve knocked around the world a bit, and I daresay you can help me. And then I’ll be your pal for life; I never forget anyone who does me a good turn” (Gilbert, p. 36). Here the marked Briticisms (in bold) and added wordiness transform Camus’ laconic reporting of the facts. The matter-of-fact “il serait mon copain”, offhandedly reported by Meursault, here becomes the declaration of a bond forged. Gilbert imparts a flowing quality to the narration that runs counter to Camus’ intentions. Sartre specifically notes Camus’ technique of integrating dialogue into the story, calling actual dialogue “le moment de l’explication, de la signification ; lui donner une place privilégiée, ce serait admettre que les significations existent”11. Gilbert’s insertions of sometimes animated dialogue thus make for a less alienated narration there where Camus has deliberately created an offhand voice by means of discours indirect libre. His Meursault seems friendlier, more talkative, less alienated; in fact, he seems less of a “stranger”. In the above examples, Gilbert alters Camus’ philosophical project, and his own illustrative sentences explain the original, rather than directly translate it. Seen in this light, Gilbert’s work seems more effective as a piece of literature than as philosophy.

Gilbert’s embroidery at times leads to occasional factual errors, as Eric

Plessis points out\textsuperscript{12}. For example, when Meursault describes the nurse who had been on duty in the mortuary he describes “une infirmière arabe en sarreau blanc, un foulard de couleur vive sur la tête” (Camus, p. 14). Gilbert renders this as “An Arab woman—a nurse, I supposed—was sitting beside the bier; she was wearing a blue smock and had a rather gaudy scarf wound round her hair (Gilbert, p. 5). Notably, the colour of the smock is transformed from white to blue, and a brightly coloured scarf has been judged by the translator to be “gaudy”.

Camus’ novel is also remarkable for its predominant use of the passé composé, a verb tense associated with spoken language, one that implies a link to the present of narration. This use of the passé composé would fall into what Émile Benveniste calls “discours”, which he opposes to “récit historique”, told in the passé simple, the usual tense for storytelling – largely absent in Camus’ novel. Similarly, Harald Weinrich opposes “monde commenté” (predominant in L’Étranger) and “monde raconté”. The distinction between the passé composé and the passé simple is one for which English has no equivalent. The novel begins in the passé composé, a sign of modernity that accentuates the solitude of each sentence and makes the hero appear more removed. Sartre claims: “C’est pour accentuer la solitude de chaque unité phrastique que M. Camus a choisi de faire son récit au parfait composé” (Sartre, p. 142-143). Do the translators compensate in other ways for this phenomenon, impossible to reproduce?

Camus’ use of poetic language is dealt with in various ways by the translators (Textes de référence, Excerpt B). When the court rises and Meursault is taken back to the prison in a van, Camus describes: “cette rumeur du ciel avant que la nuit bascule sur le port” (Excerpt B2), which Griffith renders as “the sudden surge of nightfall as it spills over the port” (Griffith, Excerpt B2/c). Yet “surge of nightfall spilling” eliminates the sound of nightfall described by “cette rumeur du ciel”, and her rendering doesn’t manage to correctly convey the referential meaning, let alone the poetry. “Rumeur” is rendered as “rustling” by Gilbert (Gilbert, Excerpt B2/a), and as “hum” by Ward (Ward, Excerpt B2/d).

Camus writes (at the end of this excerpt): “tout cela recomposait pour moi un itinéraire d’aveugle, que je connaissais bien avant d’entrer en prison,” (Camus, Excerpt B2), which Griffith translates as “all of this reconstructed for me an itinerary that I groped through blindly, reacquainting myself with every object before entering the prison” (Griffith, p. Excerpt B2/c). The verb

\textsuperscript{12}Plessis, 207.
“groped” here is a cliché: its only purpose is to collocate with “blindly”. Gilbert opts for “All these sounds made my return to prison like a blind man’s journey along a route whose every inch he knows by heart” (Gilbert, Excerpt B2/a), managing characteristically to play with the order of the words.

Finally, Camus writes: “Comme si les chemins familiers tracés dans les ciels d’été pouvaient mener aussi bien aux prisons qu’aux sommeils innocents,” (Excerpt B3) which Gilbert renders as “And so I learned that familiar paths traced in the dusk of summer evenings may lead as well to prisons as to innocent, untroubled sleep” (Gilbert, Excerpt B3/a). The “untroubled” is another addition by Gilbert, and “dusk”, while logical enough in the context, simply isn’t present in the French. Here, aside from the referential meaning, Ward captures the significance of the prose: “as if familiar paths traced in summer skies could lead as easily to prison as to the sleep of the innocent” (Ward, Excerpt B3/d).

Ward takes some risks in his translation, many of which involve embracing foreign elements in the translation. He writes in his translator’s note:

> No sentence in French literature in English translation is better known than the opening sentence of *The Stranger*. It has become a sacred cow of sorts, and I have changed it. In his notebooks Camus recorded the observation that “The curious feeling the son has for his mother constitutes all his sensibility.” And Sartre, in his “Explication de *L’Étranger*,” goes out of his way to point out Meursault’s use of the child’s word “Maman” when speaking of his mother. (Ward, p. vii)

While the other translators favoured the more colourless, bland and perhaps inaccurate “Mother” [died today], Ward recasts his as: “Maman died today”. He affirms: “To use the more removed, adult ‘Mother’ is, I believe, to change the nature of Meursault’s curious feeling for her. It is to change his very sensibility” (Ward, p. vii). This latest translation is the one that most openly embraces foreign elements from the source text.

Gilbert’s more immediate narration, although a highly readable (if dated) version of Camus’ novel, makes for a more approachable protagonist and falsifies Meursault’s sense of remoteness, a man Sartre says exemplifies a “silence viril”\(^\text{13}\). Even considering Laredo’s more recent translation, an updated translation was apropos. Each version reveals different aspects of the time and place in which the translation was written, as well as individual proclivities and idio-

\(^{13}\) Sartre, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
syncrasies of the translators themselves. Gilbert’s, crafting a style all his own, is the work of an English gentleman. Laredo’s scrupulous adherence to the original, a certainly competent, painstaking rendering, is at times unidiomatic. Griffith’s undertaking with her students remains at the level of an academic exercise. Finally, Ward’s careful prose seems to let a poetry into the English translation that had not been seen since Gilbert’s work, but without Gilbert’s reticence and additions.

Richard Howard, in his introduction to his retranslation of Gide’s *L’Immoraliste* affirms:

> [...] all translations date, certain works never do [...] It is my experience that a first translation errs on the side of pusillanimity, plays safe [...] It is [the translator’s] peculiar privilege, even his obligation, in his own day and age, to sally forth, to be inordinate instead of placating or merely plausible.¹⁴

Does Stuart Gilbert’s translation “play safe”? Certainly he seems to be domesticating the text, making it perhaps more accessible for a mid-twentieth century British reader. But in doing so he seems to falsify what Sartre had called the sense of “décalage, divorce et dépaysement.” In our increasingly shrinking universe, are we today more receptive of “alterity”? Does this partially account for the success of Ward’s translation? The New Yorker called his Meursault “more alien and diffident – than Gilbert’s explanatory confider of the British version”¹⁵. Certainly Ward is not afraid to keep the French flavour of the text, when he writes, for instance, of “neighborhood fêtes” (Ward, p. 82) for “fêtes de quartier” (Camus, p. 130). Ward has said, “All translations date, even Pope’s translation of Homer. In fairness to Gilbert, his is over 40 years old. I bow in his direction – and hope that my translation will bring a new generation to the great Camus novel”¹⁶.

By casting aside Gilbert’s markedly British rendering, now peppered with expressions likely to be unfamiliar to young, especially North American readers, Ward manages to craft a text that is mid-Atlantic in flavour. His translation is in a position to influence young minds reading the novel for the first time. This most recent English version is finally more accessible than the Gilbert, or even the updated Laredo version could hope to be. The poetic lan-

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¹⁵. Wilson, 1946, p. 119.
guage translated by a poet isn’t “lost”, but rather recreated to make for a living text as opposed to a relic. *Pourquoi donc retraduire?* Ward’s translation maintains the vitality of a work that – in English – would otherwise be waning. “Outside The Stranger?” The latest translation is one which certainly is in keeping – linguistically, spiritually and philosophically – with *L’Étranger*.

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