

when trying to make sense of this apparently unreadable (because) unclassifiable mode of avant-garde writing. The quotation reads, in translation: 'It is by an extreme power of defiance that certain very rare beings, who have everything to expect and everything to fear from one another, can always recognize each other.'³⁹⁾ Perhaps, then, it is only a certain kind of *defiant* reader who is able to 'enter' the Sollersian text? And, to state the obvious, such a reader is not one who rejects or says 'no' to Sollers' *l'écriture percurrente* because of its seeming difficulty. The defiant reader is rather one who reads Sollers in a different *situation* and with a different attitude from the reader who expects an immediate ideological recognition effect on encountering any fictional text - including even a difficult one. The defiant reader is patently not a *reactive* reader; that is, the half-knowing one who resents being faced with a seemingly obscure endless stream of writing with no punctuation. The defiant reader is one who does not succumb to resentment when confronted with experimental avant-garde writing. Indeed, the defiant reader is the reader who goes against the reaction and reductionism of the ideology of reading which, again, is based on the expectation of a more or less immediate recognition effect. The defiant reader resists the latter expectation and is able to engage in a transaction with the Sollersian text which is composed from a situation of writing which defies the comprehension of the reactive reader. The Sollersian text, comprising as it does an open and plural intertextual field, invites a mode of appropriation quite different from the imaginary one which characterizes the conventional mode of entry to the nineteenth-century classical realist text and its experimental progeny in the twentieth century. Sollers, thus, in Barthes' phrase, 'refuses to inherit'.⁴⁰⁾ Sollers characterizes this refusal like this:

39) André Breton, *Nadja* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1928), p, 201, note 1.

40) Roland Barthes, 'The Refusal to Inherit', in *Writer Sollers*, op. cit., pp. 69-74.

I only know what I know because I write. A writer is someone who sometimes succeeds in putting himself in the impossible situation of undoing all family ties. This undoing of family ties is only experience consuming the fundamental belief in the possibility of incest.

...

The undoing of all family ties, which also includes the dissolution of all imaginary groupings and, thus, of identifications, introduces the writer...to a radical solitude of language, a sexual solitude...the two solitudes being equivalent and irreducible.⁴¹⁾

For Barthes, Sollers' refusal to inherit the past of French classical and realist writing 'is an act of denial, aimed at casting off the natural right of the old texts. It renders out of date the concepts of *subject, reality, expression, description, story, meaning*, according to which these texts were constructed and read'.⁴²⁾ Sollers' denial has two main aspects: the rejection of the *readability* of the inherited selective tradition of French literature and the dismissal of *representation* as the *raison d'être* of literary writing. To understand the Sollersian text, then, demands that the reader approach it from a social position, marked by a radical solitude of language, which is commensurate with but irreducible to Sollers' changing positions as a writer. This is the stance indeed of Barthes *vis-à-vis* the work of Sollers throughout his *Sollers Écrivain*. For Barthes, as Sollers' avowed *compagnon de route*, is adamant: the writer in contemporary society is abandoned by both the old social classes and is unknown by new ones. Hence he is more and more alone. In 'Dialogue' (the last short piece which Barthes devoted to Sollers but which is published first in *Sollers Écrivain*) Barthes says:

...the writer is alone, abandoned...His fall is all the more serious since he lives today in a society in which solitude itself, in itself, is considered a fault. We accept particularisms, but not singularities; types but not individuals.⁴³⁾

41) Philippe Sollers, 'Je sais pourquoi je jouis', *Tel Quel*, No. 90, Winter 1981, p. 7.

42) Roland Barthes. 'The Refusal to Inherit', op. cit., p. 71.

For Barthes the interpretation and judgement of Sollers' work is fraught with difficulties and risks, the very evaluative enterprise itself being a testimony to the necessity to change the norms of criticism in and through the actual process of critical writing. Barthes holds to this position because he was well aware that there is no constituted critical metalanguage waiting to be put to use on Sollers' texts. Faced with the puzzle and challenge of the Sollersian text the critic needs to dissent from the traditional norms and expectations of criticism. It is surely not a coincidence in this connection to note that the Italian translation of *Sollers Écrivain* has the subtitle '*la dissidenza della scrittura*' (see note 22 above).

At the end of his 'Introduction' to the translation of Sollers' *L'Écriture et l'expérience des limites* the American critic David Hayman writes that 'Sollers, like Derrida, like Barthes, and even Kristeva, to say nothing of Stephen Heath writing on Sollers, is writing *through* his subject towards facets of his own project. The reader is now free to turn back to the originals for a post-Sollersian reading, a *logic-al* one'.⁴⁴⁾ Similarly, Barthes in *Sollers Écrivain* is writing through his subject, Sollers, and the Sollersian texts post-*Drame*, towards his own

43) Roland Barthes, 'Dialogue', in *Writer Sollers*, op. cit., p. 37.

44) David Hayman, 'Introduction' to *Writing and the Experience of Limits*, op. cit. p. xxviii. Hayman has also written on Sollers *H* in 'Nodality or Plot Displaced: The Dynamics of Sollers' *H*', in *Sub-Stance*, No. 43, Vol. XIII, No. 2, 1984, pp. 54-65. Hayman has also conducted substantial interviews with Sollers. See 'An Interview with Philippe Sollers', *The Iowa Review*, Vol 5, No. 4, Fall, 1974, pp. 25-54. This interview was reprinted in *TriQuarterly* 38, Winter, 1977, pp. 54-72 and in David Hayman and Elliot Anderson (eds), *In the Wake of the Wake*, op. cit., p. 122-41. This interview has also been translated into French by Philippe Mikriamos with the title 'Flashback: Premier entretien' (1975) and appear as chapter VI in the lengthy interviews Hayman conducted with Sollers published in *Visions à New York*, op. cit. For another interview with Sollers in English see Shushi Kao, 'Paradise Lost? An Interview with Philippe Sollers', in *Sub-Stance*, No. 30, Vol X, No. 1, 1981, pp. 31-50. See an interview which Sollers gave with Catherine Francblin on the subject of twentieth-century painting in *Flash Art*, No. 129, Summer 1986, pp. 64-5.

project as critic *qua* being Soller's *compagnon de route*.⁴⁵) But the difference between the reader reading Hayman's translation of *L'Écriture et l'expérience des limites* and the same reader faced with the English translation of *Sollers Écrivain*, is that, in the case of the latter, s/he is not 'free' to turn to a reading of Sollers' avant-garde texts from *Drame* onwards because these works are still not available in English translation. There is a major problem here regarding the reception of Sollers' work in the English-speaking world. The problem is that since the texts of *l'écriture percurrente - H* (1973), *Paradis* (1981) and *Paradis II* (1986) - Sollers has continued to add substantially to his *oeuvre*⁴⁶) only one of which works has

45) For studies of Barthes in English published up to the appearance in English translation of *Sollers Écrivain* see Philip Thody, *Roland Barthes: A Conservative Estimate* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1977); George R. Wasserman, *Roland Barthes* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981); Annette Lavers, *Roland Barthes: Structuralism and After* (London: Methuen, 1982/Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); Jonathan Culler, *Barthes* (London: Fontana, 1983); and J. G. Merquior, *From Prague to Paris: A Critique of Structuralist and Post-Structuralist Thought* (London: Verso, 1986), Chapter 4.

46) Works of Sollers not already mentioned either in the main text or in footnotes above are: *Portrait du joueur* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'folio', 1987); *Le Coeur absolu* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1987); *Les Surprises de Fragonard* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1987); *Les Folie Françaises* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 1988); *Les Ambassadeurs* (Paris: La Différence, coll. 'Hors collection', 1989); *Rodin: dessins érotiques, en coll ; avec A. Kirili* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard); *Les Folies françaises* (Paris : Editions Gallimard, 1988); *De Kooning, vite*, 2 vols (Paris : La Différence); *Le Lys d'or* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1989); *Carnets de nuit* (Paris : Plon, coll. 'Carnets', 1989); *Sade contre L'Être suprême* (Paris : Quai Voltaire, 1989 and 1992); *Face aux ténèbres : Chronique de la folie de William Styron* (Paris : Gallimard, 1990); *(Photos licencieuses de la Belle Epoque* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1990); *La Fête à Venise* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 1991); *Improvisations* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'folio', 1991); *Louis Cane : Catalogue raisonné de la sculpture VI* (Paris : La Différence, coll. 'Hors collection', 1991); *Le Rire de Rome : entretiens avec Frans de Haes* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'L'Infini', 1992); *Le Secret* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1993); *La Guerre de goût* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard coll.

been translated into English, *La Fête à Venise*⁴⁷⁾ Not surprisingly, as with *Femmes*, this work was undoubtedly selected for translation because it exploits realist literary discourse and therefore is *readable* and so a translation would for no other reason than this find an audience.

Also in recent years Sollers has received a higher profile in the English-speaking intellectual world on account of a number of studies which have been published on the history of *Tel Quel* through to *L'Infini*.⁴⁸⁾ Since the turn of the

'Blanche', 1994); *Le Secret* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'folio', 1995); *Cesar à Venise* (Paris : Éditions du Regard, 1995); *La cavalier du Louvre : Vivant Denon* (Paris : Éditions Plon, 1995); *Le paradis de Cézanne* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'L'Art et l'écrivain', 1995); *Les passions de Francis Bacon* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Monographies', 1996); *Picasso, le héros* (Paris : Cercle d'Art, coll. 'Repères contemporain', 1996); *Sade contre l'être suprême précède de Sade dans le temps* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 1996); *Studio* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Beaux papiers', 1997); *Casanova l'admirable* (Paris : Éditions Plon, 1999); *L'année du Tigre : journal de l'année 1988* (Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1999); *Le dessins de Marcel Proust* (Paris : Stock, 1999). *Un Amour Américain* (Paris : Mille et Une Nuit, coll. 'La petite collection', 1999) *Passion fixe* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 2000); *La Divine Comédie* (Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 2000); *Francis Ponge* (Paris : Seghers, coll. 'Poètes d'aujourd'hui', 2001); *Eloge de L'Infini* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 2001); *Etoile des Amants* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 2002); *Liberté au XIII siècle* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'folio', 2002); and *Le Divine Comédie* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, coll. 'Blanche', 2002)

47) Philippe Sollers, *Watteau in Venice: A Novel*, trans. by Alberto Manguel (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1994).

48) Articles in journals on *Tel Quel*: Mary Ann Caws, 'Tel Quel: Text and Revolution', *Diacritics*, Spring 1973, pp. 2-8; Veronica Forrest-Thomson, 'Necessary Artifice: Form and Theory in the Poetry of Tel Quel', *Language and Style*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 3-26; Leon S. Roudiez, 'Twelve Points from Tel Quel', *L'Esprit créateur*, Vol. XIV, No. 4, Winter 1974, pp. 291-303; Robert Hefner, 'The Tel Quel Ideology: Material Practice upon Material Practice', *Sub-Stance*, No. 8, Winter 1974, pp. 127-38; Lawrence Kritzman, 'The Changing Political Ideology of Tel Quel', *French Civilization*, Vol. 3, 1978, pp. 405-21; Stephen Bann, 'The Career of Tel Quel: Tel Quel becomes L'Infini', *Comparative Criticism*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1984, pp. 327-39; Danielle Marx-Scouras, 'The

1970s the academic literature on Sollers in English has also increased.⁴⁹⁾ But an

Dissident Politics of *Tel Quel*, *L'Esprit créateur*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, Summer 1987, pp. 101-8; See also the Ph.D study by Danielle Marx-Scouras, *Toward a 'New Culture': Il Politecnico, Tel Quel and Cultural Renewal* (Columbia University, 1981). *Parallax: a journal of metadiscursive theory and cultural practices* devoted a whole issue to *Tel Quel/L'Infini*: cf. Vol 4, No. 1 'The avant-garde and after: from *Tel Quel* to *L'Infini*', January 1998. In this issue see, especially, Philippe Sollers, 'On *Tel Quel*', pp. 2-6; Julia Kristeva, 'The Samurais *tel quels*', pp. 7-11; Philippe Forest, 'From *Tel Quel* to *L'Infini*', pp. 75-82; Patrick Ffrench, 'Terror or How to have Relations with *Tel Quel*', pp. 83-7. Books on *Tel Quel*: Niilo Kauppi, *The Making of an Avant-Garde: Tel Quel* (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1994); Patrick Ffrench, *The Time of Theory: A History of Tel Quel [1960-1983]* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Danielle Marx-Scouras, *The Cultural Politics of Tel Quel: Literature and the Left in the Wake of Engagement* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996). Reader: Patrick Ffrench and Roland-François Lack (eds), *The Tel Quel Reader* op. cit.

- 49) Reference should be made again here to the chapter on Sollers in Stephen Heath's *The Nouveau Roman*, op. cit. and the essays in translation by Derrida on *Nombres* and Kristeva on *H* (see note 14 above). Sollers was been treated as a significant writer in twentieth-century French literature by Leon S. Roudiez in his *French Fiction Today* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1972), Chapter 14, but also in Chapter 15 on Jean Ricardou. Roudiez has also discussed Sollers in relation to *Tel Quel* in 'Twelve Points from *Tel Quel*', op. cit. Sollers' *Nombres* is considered by Roland A. Champagne in his 'Un Déclenchement: The Revolutionary Implications of Philippe Sollers' *Nombres* for Logocentric Western Culture', *Sub-Stance*, No. 7, Fall 1973, pp. 101-11. See also Champagne's doctoral dissertation on the reception of Sollers' works up to the early 1970s (already referred to in note 28 above): *The Texts and Readers of Philippe Sollers' Creative Works from 1957-1973* (Ohio State University 1974). Champagne published an essay derived from his doctoral study entitled 'The Evolving Art of Literary Criticism: Reading the Texts of Philippe Sollers from 1957-1973', in Philip Grant (ed.), *French Literary Criticism* (South Carolina, 1978), pp. 187-96. Another doctoral study on Sollers from the end of the 1970s is Katherine Kurk's *Consummation of the Text: A Study of Philippe Sollers* (University of Kentucky, 1979). See also Betty McGraw, 'Philippe Sollers and the Scene of Writing', *American Journal of Semiotics*, Vol. III, No. 2, 1984, pp. 97-107. *Paradis* was considered by Hilary Clark in her Ph.D. study *The Idea of a Fictional Encyclopaedia: Finnegans Wake*,

English translation of Philippe Forest's critical study in French of Sollers has yet to appear (duly updated) in English.⁵⁰ Even with this higher intellectual profile the monolingual English-speaking reader of *Sollers Écrivain* is still confined to a *pre-Sollersian* reading. The logic of this situation for the reader who does not know French sufficiently to engage with Sollers' avant-garde texts is that *Sollers Écrivain* has the status of a *pre-text*, that is a text of criticism which assumes the reader is acquainted with the fictional texts, their author, and the conditions of production and reception which the critical text is about. But, as the reader is not, then the critical text takes on a life of its own at the same time that it invites the reader to engage with its object-texts. This was the case with Stephen Heath's pioneering study of the *nouvea roman* at the beginning of the 1970s, which has been symptomatically characterized then as a 'pre-text in Frenglais'.

Mention of Heath's book on the *nouveau roman* returns us to the moment

Paradis, The Cantos (University of British Columbia, 1985). Malcolm Charles Pollard, *The Novels of Philippe Sollers: Narrative and the Visual* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1994). More recently see Pollard's 'Philippe Sollers: contract and counter-contract', *Parallax*, Vol 4, No. 1, 1998, pp. 35-46.

50) Philippe Forest, *Philippe Sollers* (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, coll. 'Les Contemporains', 1992). Forest's study concludes with a brief chapter on *La Fête à Venise*, pp. 329-37. Forest has also published a major study of the history of *Tel Quel: Histoire de Tel Quel 1960-82* (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 1995). See also Nina Zivancevic, *Recherche Philippe Sollers* (Paris : Blandin Neol, 1992); Catherine Clement, *Philippe Sollers: Biographie* (Paris : Juillard, 1995); Pascal Louvrier, *Philippe Sollers : mode d'emploi* (Paris : Éditions du Rocher, coll. 'Littérature', 1996; and Gérard Cortanze, *Philippe Sollers : Vérités and legendes* (Paris: Éditions du Chêne, 2000). In German see Beeke Dummer, *Von der Narration Zur Description: Generative Textkonstitution bei Jean Ricardou, Claude Simon und Philippe Sollers* (Gruner, B.R. Publishing Co, 1988); Beate Sprenger, *Neoavantgardistische Theorienbildung in Italien und Frankreich: Das Emanzipatorische Literatureconcept von Edoardo Sanguineti und Philippe Sollers*; Ilana Hammerman, *Formen des Erzählens in der Prosa der Gegenwart: Am Beispiel von Philippe Sollers, Robert Pinget und Claude Simon* and Brigitte Chardin, *Sollers, Moravia*.

when Colin MacCabe (*a compagnon de route* of Heath at the time at Cambridge University) wrote his 'Situation' text in which, to repeat, he emphasized that, 'The interrogation needed to enter these texts (those of Barthes, Sollers and Kristeva) is a self-interrogation'.⁵¹⁾ This is also what Hayman means when he speaks of the critic 'writing *through* his subject towards facets of his own project'. It is also – and crucially – what Barthes' means by insisting on Sollers being a writer in the affirmative association 'Sollers Writer' – that is one who practices this form of self-interrogation and writing through his elected topics towards composing, decomposing and recomposing his own writerly identity. *L'écriture percurrente* is the practice of writerly self-interrogation at the limits of virtual writerly experience. As Barthes was able to identify, the solitude involved in this percurrent practice of writing is far removed from the lazy consumption of socially reductive images of Sollers circulating in the mass media. This is why, Barthes exhorted in the late 1980s *vis-à-vis* Sollers, '...a time comes when social images must be *called back to order*'.⁵²⁾ This reordering of the socially reductive images of Sollers is again necessary in the face of the devastating critical striptease job carried out on Sollers in the public sphere by the late Pierre Bourdieu, himself the erstwhile controversial doyen of French sociology.

In a deliberate exposure of Sollers published in *Liberation* in January 1995 entitled '*Sollers tel quel*' Bourdieu accuses Sollers of being a pseudo-writer who has only produced the simulacrum of literature worth the name.⁵³⁾ For Bourdieu, Sollers bears a false air of culture and, being a latter-day Tartuffe-like figure without scruples, only *mimes* the gestures of great writers. Far from Sollers'

51) Colin MacCabe, 'Situation', op. cit.

52) Roland Barthes, *Writer Sollers*, op. cit., p. 37.

53) Pierre Bourdieu, '*Sollers tel quel*', *Liberation*, 27 January 1995 republished in *Contre-feux: Propos pour servir à la résistance contre l'invasion néo-libérale* (Paris : Éditions LIBRE-RAISONS D'AGIR, 1998), pp. 18-20.

refusal to inherit the past of French classical, romantic, realist and even twentieth-century avant-garde literature being given the status of the ultimate transgressive act, Bourdieu accuses him of prostituting two centuries of struggle for the autonomy of serious literature. In promulgating a cult of transgression Sollers, Bourdieu says, has cynically reduced literary libertinage to its erotic dimension. Bourdieu's Sollers is really only a laughable media star who has compromised a truly radical political critique of the society of the spectacle. The image of Sollers, a *vedette* of the Parisian literary and media scenes, seems to be captured in what Philip Roth says about him in a review of the English translation of *Femmes*:

Anybody out for a good time should read Philippe Sollers. He's the sort of intellectual clown we don't breed in America — urbane, bestial, candid, effervescent, an irrepressible ejaculator of farcical wisdom, a master of good-natured malice, a kind of happy, lively, benign, Celine. (cf. the back cover of the dust-jacket)

But, contrary to Roth's rather ingratiating and mischievous image of Sollers, Bourdieu insists that he is the victim of all the illusions and disillusiones of the French intellectual scene and political life. The reality of Sollers' presenting himself as an *exception*, for Bourdieu, is that he is only the most banal example of the statistically average because 'he is the idealtypic incarnation of the individual and collective history of the ambitions of a whole generation of writers⁵⁴⁾ who have sold out in one way or other to the system. Sollers' originality — for Bourdieu still thinks Sollers has one — is to have made himself into the theoretician of the virtue of the denial of intellectual treason.

In defence of Sollers it can be said that Bourdieu's acid delegitimation of Sollers is an outright caricature because he fails to deal, at all, with Sollers' *writings*. Against Bourdieu's superficial imagism in a Parisian left-wing daily there

54) Ibid.

is Barthes' assertion — which again needs reasserted — of 'Sollers Writer'. It is surprising that such a master of ideology-critique as Bourdieu commits himself the ideological fallacy of dealing in images at the expense of conceding any apparent meaningful dimension to Sollers' practice as a creative writer and critic. Bourdieu's act of critical *ressentiment* directed against Sollers bears out the view that 'Despised or admired, Sollers is...a target for those who contest his image for want of having read his works'.⁵⁵⁾ Indirectly Sollers offers his own defence when he says that 'a good biography requires, at the same time, distance and precision'.⁵⁶⁾ Likewise any practice of criticism which has integrity requires knowledge of text and context, the writer and his works. In the case of Sollers this means Sollers *qua écrivain-scripteur*, that is Sollers the writer, 'Sollers *Écrivain*' indeed, who is produced in and through the practice of writing. Bourdieu's scornful attitude towards Sollers can be countered noting what Adorno said about the undialectical trait of all cultural practices cut off from the experience of their object:

Topological thinking, which know the place of every phenomenon and the essence of none, is secretly related to the paranoid system of delusions which is cut off from experience of the object...No theory, not even that which is true, is safe from perversion into delusion once it has renounced a spontaneous relation to the object. Dialectics must guard against this no less than against enthrallment in the cultural object...The dialectical critic must both participate in culture and not participate.⁵⁷⁾

There are implications of this understanding for the translator of Sollers' works. To his credit Philip Thody is aware of the key problem which the translator

55) Gregory Park, 'Le point de vue de Philippe Sollers', <http://www.mygale.org/gregfran/Sollers5.html> 'Méprisé ou admiré, Sollers...est une cible pour ceux qui lui contestent son image, à défaut de savoir lire ses livres'.

56) Philippe Sollers quoted in Gregory Park, *ibid*: 'Une bonne biographie nécessite à la fois de la distance et de la précision.'

57) Theodor W. Adorno, 'Cultural Criticism', in *Prisms*, trans. by Samuel and Shierry Weber (London: Neville Spearman, 1967), p. 31.

faces when approaching the texts of Sollers - and indeed of the French intellectuals who were associated with *Tel Quel*. The translator confronts a dilemma, a stark choice: either to produce a *semantic* translation which attempts to reproduce the sense and syntax (or apparent non-sense and deviant syntax) of the source text in the target text or s/he endeavours to render a *communicative* translation of the source text placing the emphasis in the translation on the readability of the final target text.⁵⁸⁾ Thody understands that with a semantic (that is more or less literal) translation 'the English version tends to present the uninitiated reader with a text that is almost as difficult as the original French'.⁵⁹⁾ The danger of the alternative for Thody is that the translator, in aiming to produce a text which says what s/he thinks the French means, traduces the meaning of the original for the sake of the communicative clarity of the English translation. There is no rule of thumb solution to this dilemma. The actual practice of translation involves a complex negotiation between semantic detail and precision and communicative clarity and intelligibility, between placing the emphasis on the meaning of the source text or the readability of the target translation. What is certain, for Thody, is that 'It would - and this is the problem...be misleading to translate Barthes into ordinary language. For this would presuppose that you can separate the thing said from the way of saying; and this is an I'dea which the whole of Barthes' thinking about literature...sought to reject'.⁶⁰⁾ Aware of the difficulties involved in

58) On this distinction see Peter Newmark, *Approaches to Translation* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, Language and Teaching Methodology Series, 1981), especially 'Communicative and Semantic Translation (I)'; Thought, Speech and Translation; and 'Communicative and Semantic Translation (II)', pp. 38-56, 57-61 and 62-79 respectively. See also his *A Textbook of Translation* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1988), Chapter 5 and passim.

59) Philip Thody, 'Introduction' to *Writer Sollers*, op. cit., p. 5. Thody's lengthy 'Introduction' to his translation of *Sollers Écrivain* greatly aids the reader unacquainted with the avant-garde texts of Sollers which Barthes engages with in this work. (Note: Thody's 'Introduction' is 30 pp with 2 pp of notes; the six essays of Barthes make up a total of 64 pp.)

producing a felicitous rendering, which is both cognizant of the meaning of *Sollers Écrivain* and sensitive to the need to communicate Barthes' ideas in as clear readable English as possible, Thody's *modus vivendi* is to have endeavoured to produce, as he puts it, a 'creative tension' between the two approaches. His preference, though, is towards the communicative pole of the translation spectrum.

The aim of this paper has been to consider the question why is it that *Sollers Écrivain* took so long to appear in English translation after Barthes' death in March 1980? A second question implicated in the first is why is that, still, Sollers' texts of *l'écriture percurrent* have not been translated into English? My purpose, in answering these two questions, has been threefold: (1) to offer a critical response to Sollers' avant-garde writings; (2) to consider the mode of reading pertinent to engaging with Sollers' radical apparently non-expressive texts of 'percurrent writing'; and (3) also to give attention to the problems involved in translating them.

60) Ibid, p. 29.

《ABSTRACT》

Roland Barthes의 Sollers *Écrivain*에 관한 논의 및 Phillippe Sollers의 *l'écriture percurrent*의 문학적 수용의 문제*

Alec Gordon

본 논고를 통해 필자는 프랑스의 아방가르드 작가인 Phillippe Sollers(Phillipe Joyaux의 필명, 1936~)에 대한 Roland Barthes의 짧은 평론, *Sollers Écrivain* (1979)의 영역본 출판이 Barthes의 사후에 이루어질 정도로 긴 시간이 걸린 이유에 대해서 고찰해보고자 한다. 아울러 이 문제와 관련하여 본 논고에서는 *H*(1984), *Paradise I*(1981), *Paradise II*(1986)와 같이 *l'écriture percurrent* (percurrent writing : 비종결 형식의 글쓰기) 형식으로 쓰여진 Sollers의 작품들에 대한 영역 작업이 아직 이루어지지 못하고 있는 이유에 대한 논의도 이루어질 것이다.

언급한 논제들에 대한 답변을 위해서는 영역 작업이 이루어진 몇 안되는 Sollers의 작품들—*The Challenge*(1957/66), *A Strange Solitude*(1959/61), *The Park* (1961/68), *Women*(1983/90), *Watteau in Venice*(1991/94)—의 문학적 수용에 대한 고찰과 그의 후기 아방가르드 텍스트들에 대한 영역이 아직 이루어지지 않은 이유에 대한 설명이 필요할 것으로 판단된다.

이 두 논제들에 대한 답변을 제시하는 과정에서의 필자의 목적은 세 가지로 나누어 볼 수 있다. 첫째로 Sollers의 아방가르드 작품들에 대한 비평적 관점을 제시하고자 하며, 두 번째로 구체적 의미를 내포하지 않는 과격한 ‘비종결 형식의 글쓰기’로 쓰여진 Sollers의 텍스트를 다루는 데 있어 필요한 독법을 고찰해보고자 하며, 그리고 마지막으로 Sollers의 작품들을 번역하는 과정

* 영문초록을 국문으로 번역해 준 학생 조교 김용기에게 고마움을 전합니다.

에서 직면하게 되는 여러 문제들에 대한 주의를 환기시키고자 한다.

Sollers의 아방가르드 텍스트를 비평적 관점에서 살펴보았을 때 그의 '비종결 형식의 글쓰기'는 '시각적' 구두점의 생략과 엄격하게 반복되는 운율이라는 두가지 원리를 특징으로 한다. '비종결 형식의 글쓰기'는 무의식적 글쓰기, 단어의 분리, 자장가 운율, 에피퍼니, 수사적 기교, 생략, 운율적 설화법, 언어의 성징(性徵), 격언 사용, 눈에 띄지 않게 하기, 철학적 빙백 및 공상적 전환 등과 같은 형태의 여러 작문법이 혼합된 형태로 Sollers 자신이 '강화된 발화법'라고 부르는 형태의 글쓰기이다.

Sollers의 작품 읽기와 관련된 필자의 입장은 반발적이거나 쉽게 흥분하지 않을 수 있는 대담한 독자들만이 그의 텍스트를 기꺼이 받아들일 수 있다는 것이다. Sollers의 자유로운 글쓰기는 즉각적인 의식적 효과를 기대하는 형태의 독법은 거부하고 있기 때문이다.

본 논고는 '비종결 형식의 글쓰기'에 따른 Sollers의 텍스트를 영어로 옮기려는 번역가들이 직면할 수 있는 딜레마에 대한 논의로 마무리된다. 논의의 요점은 번역가들은 이 경우 뚜렷한 선택의 문제를 대하게 되는데, 이는 해당 텍스트의 의미와 구문 형태 다시 말해, 텍스트의 낯선 부분과 비정상적인 구문형태를 피역(被譯) 언어의 텍스트로 재생하는 의미론적 번역 방식을 따를 것인가, 아니면 최종 번역 텍스트가 그 언어로 제대로 읽혀질 수 있느냐에 중점을 두는 의사 소통 중심의 번역 방식을 따를 것인가의 문제이다.