

Title: Translation as Literary Authorship in Rewritings of Guy de Maupassant by Tolstoi, Bunin, and Babel'

Author: Cassio de Oliveira, Portland State University

Abstract:

Lev Tolstoi, Ivan Bunin, and Isaak Babel' all engaged in translations and, more broadly, rewriting of works by the French author Guy de Maupassant. Translation is deeply enmeshed in what André Lefevere calls poetics, defined both as "an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols" and "a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole" (Lefevere 26). Tolstoi (in *What is Art?* and elsewhere) and Babel' (in the short story "Guy de Maupassant") respectively translate stories by Maupassant and fictionalize the act of translation. Both authors also creatively reinterpret (or, in the case of Babel's narrator, misinterpret) Maupassant's texts by rewriting key sections of his stories. In the story "Bernard," written in France on the last year of his life, Bunin extensively quotes from Maupassant's *Sur l'eau*, engaging in a dialogue with the French author while repurposing the text for his own meditation on literary creation. Using Lefevere's dual concept of poetics as a starting point, this paper analyzes Tolstoi's, Bunin's, and Babel's creative rewritings of Maupassant, arguing that they collectively manifest an alternative conception of authorship founded, paradoxically, on translation.

Works Cited:

Lefevere, André. *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.