

A Translation Study of *Silentium!* by Wolf Haas

by

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ABSTRACT

Wolfgang Haas is an award-winning Austrian author known primarily for his entertaining and quirky detective novels which follow the misadventures of Simon Brenner, an Austrian private investigator. These novels are notable for their subtle and not-so-subtle critiques of contemporary Austrian society and culture, their sometimes grisly content, and their unique and colloquial use of the Austrian variety of the German language. Haas has received numerous literary awards in the German-speaking world and attributes his success to the unique way he tells his stories, rather than the stories themselves. Of the seven Brenner novels that have been published thus far, only one is available in English translation, and he remains virtually unknown in the English-speaking world. This thesis includes a brief biography of Haas and an overview of his career, an analysis of his unique writing style and the problems they pose for a translator, and an English translation of the first two chapters of the novel *Silentium!* (1999).

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the many individuals who promote the German language through newspapers, books, music, and films. Never stop creating.

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CHAPTER 1

WOLF HAAS AND HIS WORK

Wolf Haas was born on December 14, 1960 in Maria Alm, a small Austrian village located approximately forty-five kilometers southwest of the city of Salzburg. Both of his parents worked as waiters during his childhood. When he was ten years old, he moved to Salzburg in order to attend a private Catholic boarding school, the Borromäum. His years at the school strongly influenced the setting of his novel *Silentium!*, which is partially set at a private Salzburg boarding school run by the Catholic church¹. After graduating from the Borromäum in 1978, he began studying psychology at the University of Salzburg, a major which he later abandoned in favor of German studies and linguistics. He completed his linguistics degree with a dissertation entitled "Sprachtheoretische Grundlagen der Konkreten Poesie (Linguistic and Theoretical Fundamentals of Concrete Poetry)" and subsequently moved to Swansea, Wales, where he spent two years working as a lecturer at Swansea University. In 1990 he returned to Austria and began a successful career as an advertising copywriter, primarily for radio commercials.

Haas's first full-length novel, *Auferstehung der Toten (Resurrection of the Dead)*, which introduced the detective character Simon Brenner, was published in 1996 after being rejected by a number of different publishing houses². It received both critical and popular acclaim, winning the 1997 Deutscher Krimi Preis³ (German Literary Award for

¹ *Der Blick einfach gewaltig*

² *Der Mann hinter . . . Wolf Haas*

³ A full list of Haas's awards can be found in Appendix B.

Detective Fiction) and selling tens of thousands of copies. This unexpected success allowed Haas to become a full-time writer of crime novels, and he has since written a total of seven books following the exploits of Simon Brenner. Each entry in the Brenner Series has been well-received by the public and in a 2009 interview on the television program *Wir sind Kaiser (We are Emperors)*, Haas stated that his books have sold over a million copies in Austria and Germany⁴. When one considers that most of his sales occur in Austria and that Austria has a population of roughly eight million people, approximately one Austrian in eight has read (or at the very least purchased) one of his novels. Three of the Brenner novels have been adapted into financially and critically successful films. Haas co-wrote the screenplay for each film along with director Wolfgang Murnberger and lead actor Josef Hader.

The Brenner books contain a number of unique characteristics which set them apart from other "mainstream" detective novels in the German-speaking world. The first aspect that the reader notices is the humorous and creative use of the German language; Haas writes in a thoroughly colloquial, thoroughly Austrian, and subtly sarcastic style that is unmistakably his own. He always rejects the literary past tense (which consists of a single verb) in favor of the conversational past tense (which consists of two verbs). As one can surmise from their respective names, the literary past tense is used primarily in literature and the conversational past tense is used in day-to-day life in all of the German-speaking countries. Simply by replacing one past tense with another, Haas allows the narrator of the novels to speak in a familiar and conversational tone and brings him closer to the "man on the street," an arguably large portion of his potential readership. As a

⁴ *Wir sind Kaiser*

result, the Brenner novels read like an old friend recounting a story to the reader in an informal setting, such as a restaurant or a bar. A large number of the narrative sentences in the books contain deliberate "errors," errors which frequently occur in spoken German but never in written German, enhancing the informality of the narration. One of the most common of these errors concerns sentences devoid of all verbs, a phenomenon common in both spoken German and spoken English but "forbidden" in writing in both languages. Haas violates other rules of German grammar at will, using "incorrect" syntax and punctuation throughout his novels. Haas describes his fascination with writing in a taboo style in a 2011 interview with *Die Welt*:

Irgendwann habe ich einfach so geschrieben, wie man angeblich nicht schreiben darf, wie es mir aber am meisten Spaß gemacht hat. Das war vielleicht auch eine Art spätpubertäre Aktion gegen ein fantasiertes oder auch reales Establishment, das darüber entscheidet, wie Bücher zu sein haben.⁵

The relative lack of plot and character development is another hallmark of the Brenner novels. Whereas many detective novels focus on the interaction and dialogue between the detective and witnesses or suspects, the Brenner series focuses primarily on the unique narrative voice created by Haas, relegating both plot and characters to fulfill secondary functions:

Ich glaube, dass ich beim Brenner von Buch zu Buch den Manierismus der Sprache verringert habe. Beim ersten Roman war ich von dieser neu

⁵ *Früher habe ich das Lesen gehasst*

"At some point I just wrote the way that you're apparently not supposed to, but the way that was the most fun for me. Maybe it was also a kind of holdover from adolescence, a rebellion against an imagined or a real establishment that makes decisions about how books are supposed to be."

All translations from German into English are my own unless otherwise indicated.

entdeckten Sprache so okkupiert, dass mir der Plot relativ egal war. Mit jedem weiteren Buch habe ich ein bisschen mehr darauf geachtet. Für mein Gefühl halten sich Plot und Sprache beim letzten Brenner am besten die Waage.⁶

The protagonist of the series, private detective and former police officer Simon Brenner, experiences little character development as the series progresses. He serves as little more than a plot device, a way of giving a sense of focus to the narration which frequently employs a stream-of-consciousness style that usually has no relevance to the situation at hand. The character of Simon Brenner exists only through the Narrator's voice, and even if the reader accepts the Narrator as a "real" character in a fictional world, it is quite possible that the stories s/he tells are invented and simply a form of entertainment. The substance, humor, and personality of the Brenner series all derive from the way the stories are told, rather than from the stories themselves.

Haas intended the sixth Brenner novel, *Das ewige Leben (Eternal Life)*, to be the last in the series, and even took the liberty of abruptly and unexpectedly killing off the narrator—the character chiefly responsible for the unique tone and voice of the series—in the book's final pages. Freed from the stylistic structure of the Brenner series, Haas decided to write the experimental novel *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren (The Weather Fifteen Years Ago)*. The entirety of the work is an interview between a literary critic and a fictional Wolf Haas, with the form ABABAB throughout. The fictional Wolf Haas has

⁶ "I think that, from book to book, I eased up on the unique linguistic mannerisms in the Brenner series. With the first book, I was so preoccupied with this newly-discovered way of speaking that I wasn't all that concerned with the plot. With each further book, I paid attention to it a little bit more. To my mind, the last Brenner [*Der Brenner und der Liebe Gott*] does the best job of maintaining the balance between the plot and the language." *Ibid.*

just completed the fictional novel *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*, and as the two discuss the plot, characters, and themes of the fictional novel in non-chronological order, the reader is able to piece together all of its elements and reconstruct the fictional book, as well as the events that inspired its writing. Telling the story in this unique way allows Haas to create four individual narrative layers. The first layer is akin to any other work of fiction—the reader is aware of the fact that s/he is reading a fictional work by a real author. The second layer consists of the structure of the book held in the reader's hands—a dialogue between a fictional book critic and a fictional version of the real author. The third layer is the fictional book *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*, written by the fictional Wolf Haas. The last layer is represented by the "real world" of the fictional *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*; the characters in the fictional work are based off of "real world" characters in Haas's fictional world. It is easier to understand this convoluted narrative interplay by working backwards:

4th layer: (fictional world) Vittorio and Anni, the two main characters of the fictional *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*, meet each other and fall in love.

3rd layer: (fictional world) The fictional Wolf Haas researches Vittorio's and Anni's story and writes the fictional book *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*, dramatizing various elements of their lives, how they met, and how they fell in love.

2nd layer: (fictional world) The fictional Wolf Haas gives an interview with a fictional literary critic from Germany discussing his recent fictional novel *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*, and the people and events that inspired him to write it.

1st layer: (real world) The real Wolf Haas writes a real book entitled *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*, which consists entirely of an interview between a fictional Wolf Haas and a fictional German literary critic discussing his fictional book *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*.

It is the complex interplay between these various narrative layers that sets this book apart from his other work. According to Haas, *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren* is his most popular, financially successful, and critically-acclaimed novel by far.

Wolf Haas's linguistic and narrative experiments in literature have been extremely successful, earning him the admiration of both fans and literary critics alike. His sometimes peculiar approaches to telling stories in novel ways, coupled with a dedication to the preservation and dissemination of Austrian German, are his two most defining characteristics as an author, the latter unmistakably identifying him and his works as products of Austrian society and culture. The next chapter will discuss what problems arise when trying to translate a work that is so deeply embedded within one language and culture and the translation decisions I have made in order to make *Silentium!* accessible to an American audience.

CHAPTER TWO

LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND TRANSLATION

II.1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding Wolf Haas's unique cultural and linguistic place within the German-speaking countries is the key to analyzing his work and writing style. Due to the rich political history of the German-speaking peoples, the relationship between Germany and Austria is a long and complicated one, filled with countless exchanges of people, goods, and ideas. The theme of "Austria vs. Germany" plays a large role in the Brenner novels, and, to a lesser extent, in *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*. This chapter will discuss the connections that exist between language and culture, as well as the problems that arise when attempting to transfer the Austrian-specific elements found in Haas's work into another language and culture for a new audience.

Language and culture are intimately bound to one another and it is impossible to analyze discourse of any kind without knowing the cultural context behind it. Claire Kramsch, whose book *Language and Culture* seeks to provide an introduction to the complex interplay between the two title entities, states that language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality. We use language to express our thoughts, feelings, and emotions to others; we use written language to pass on our knowledge to future generations, creating a unique linguistic space which is detached from yet still related to the spoken language; our use of language defines who we are, not only to identify ourselves as belonging to a member of a certain group, but also to identify others and

exclude them in minor or major ways. The connections that exist between language and culture are powerful, meaningful, and ubiquitous.⁷

One of the most basic uses of language involves the creation of "linguistic insiders": people who, by virtue of their language or the particular way they use it, are perceived as belonging to one specific group of *Homo sapiens*. According to evolutionary biologist Mark Pagel, the primary reason for why languages differ from one group to another can be attributed to the creation of exclusion; we want to ensure that our best ideas and innovations are easily communicated to our closest relatives and friends, the members of our immediate community, but we also want to prevent rival individuals and groups from benefitting from our accumulated knowledge.⁸ By viewing the culture of early *Homo sapiens* in this light, he draws the seemingly paradoxical conclusion that languages exist in order to hinder communication between different groups of people. This is still true in our modern world: if two individuals speak a language that is known to them but not to others, they may use that language to convey information to each other, information which they may not want "outsiders" to understand. This idea of exclusion also holds true at the levels of accent and dialect, with individuals choosing to speak a certain way depending on the situation at hand: South Carolina native Stephen Colbert, for example, made a conscious decision as a child to rid himself of his southern accent in order to not seem unintelligent when speaking with others.⁹ Wolf Haas actively exploits this aspect of language in his novels, using Austrian German in order to not only set himself apart from other German-speaking writers, but also to elevate that variety of

⁷ *Language and Culture*

⁸ *How Language Transformed Humanity*

⁹ *60 Minutes Stephen Colbert*

German to a more literary plane. By doing so, he proudly marks himself as an "outsider" within the larger German-speaking community while also identifying himself as a linguistic insider with his fellow countrymen, championing the literary use of Austrian German.

II.2 AUSTRIA VS. GERMANY

The extremely complex and centuries-old political, socio-economic, and linguistic exchange between the present-day nations of Austria and Germany constitutes a major theme of Haas's novels, and also represents a major obstacle for the translator. The majority of Austrians are familiar with the history that both unites them with and separates their own country from their neighbor to the north, while also remaining keenly aware of the fact that Germany dominates Austria in nearly every single arena of the modern world: a greater land area, a significantly larger population, a higher gross domestic product, a better-developed infrastructure, abundance of natural resources, implementation of technology, research in the sciences, strength of international influence, higher educational attainment of the population, etc. Television programs and films that are financed and produced by Germany are far more common in Austria than those created by Austrians are in Germany. When international films are dubbed or subtitled into German, the variety of German selected for the task is, with almost no exceptions, Standard German (*Hochdeutsch*) and never Standard Austrian German (*Österreichisches Deutsch*).¹⁰ Austrian children who grow up speaking one of the hundreds of different Austrian dialects will also grow up watching German-made films

¹⁰ *Dubbing Practice in Germany: Procedures and Aesthetic Implications*

and television shows, in addition to (mostly) American films and television programs which have been dubbed into Standard German. Thus, from a very young age, Austrians are very aware of the fact that there exists another German-speaking country that is responsible for the production of the majority of broadcast entertainment in the German-speaking world and who have quite different speech patterns. This is also the primary reason for the "bilingual" abilities of the Austrian population: Austrians live their lives speaking one variety of German, which differs from Standard German in sometimes dramatically different ways, while also being constantly exposed to Standard German in the media. Films which are financially successful in Germany nearly always cross the border with similar results; the reverse, however, rarely occurs, and many Germans lack even basic familiarity with productions hailing from their neighbor to the south. This media dominance is present in Austria even where Austrian films are concerned: Austrian films which utilize an Austrian dialect include *Hochdeutsche Untertitel* (Standard German subtitles), but do not include subtitles that accurately represent the dialect being spoken on the screen. As a result of this cultural dominance of Germany over Austria, Austrians have attempted to differentiate themselves from the Germans in a variety of ways, and many Austrians become irritated or even upset when they are mistaken for a German, feeling that their uniqueness and independence has not been properly acknowledged. This Austrian desire to maintain a separate and unique identity has not always been successful, as evidenced by the widely-held (and false) belief that Adolf Hitler and Fritz Lang were Germans and not Austrians.

Hochdeutsch and *Österreichisches Deutsch* differ from one another at all levels: vocabulary, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, pronunciation, etc. These differences can be

major and drastically affect comprehension or relatively minor, allowing speakers of different dialects to understand each other with ease. The contrasts in the vocabulary between these two major varieties of German are significant enough to warrant both online and print dictionaries that are bilingual *Hochdeutsch-Österreichisches Deutsch*.¹¹ The most striking difference between them is not, however, the words used by each variety but rather the way that the same word is pronounced by two different speakers. In general, Austrian German tends to reduce the amount of sounds in a given word. The Standard German word *ich*, for example, is almost always reduced to *i* in most colloquial Austrian speech (some Austrian dialects pronounce the final sound as /x/ as opposed to the standard /ç/). There are also a number of sound correspondences (depending on the dialect in question) which affect a large number of words in the language, for instance /ai/ changing to /oa/, rendering the Standard German word *heiß* as *hoafß*. There exist too many pronunciation differences to mention here, but a sample sentence in both varieties serves the purpose of illustrating how different the two can be:

Hochdeutsch: Hallo! Ich heiße Paul und ich komme aus Wien. Weißt du, wie kalt es draußen ist?

Österreichisches Deutsch: Seas! I bin da Baul un' kumm vo Wean.

Woaßt', wie koit's drauße' is'?

The result of this bilingualism ensures that, when an Austrian reads a document written in Standard German in her/his head, s/he invariably reads it in her/his native dialect. Wolf Haas takes advantage of this (mostly) unconscious process by writing German that contains Austrianisms at the levels of grammar and vocabulary, but he never

¹¹ *Wie sagt man in Österreich? Wörterbuch des Österreichischen Deutsch* and *Ostarrichi.org*

seeks to accurately represent the pronunciation of the spoken word in writing; *i.e.*, the word *ich* always remains unchanged and is never written as *i*. By doing so, he is remaining neutral (in terms of pronunciation) at an Austria-wide level, allowing each Austrian to read his novels in her/his own dialect without difficulty, something which would not be possible had he chosen the shorter form, which is not in use in all Austrian dialects. This way of writing also allows readers from Germany to access the book, since they do not need to reconstruct a plethora of missing letters. There are many other subtleties in his use of Austrian German and writing style which further characterize him as a product and proponent of Austrian language and culture.

II.3 HAAS'S LANGUAGE

It is Wolf Haas's mastery of the German language that is responsible for the success and resonance of the Brenner series with a wider readership in the German-speaking world. A user-submitted review from the website KrimiCouch.de provides a German reaction to Haas's work:

Nach ungefähr dem halben Buch ertappte ich mich dabei, dass ich selbst Sätze im Haas'schen Modus nicht nur dachte, sondern auch verwendete. Dabei macht Haas alles, was als nicht angemessen gilt: Halbsätze ohne Verben, kommentieren der eigenen Rede, was oft mit 'praktisch', 'weil' und 'quasi' eingeleitet wird—also gnadenlose Wortwiederholungen—direkte Leseransprache in flapsigem Ton, undundund.

Dieser Irrwitz, diese Lakonie, dieser dreiste Verstoß gegen jedwede literarische Schreibregeln—ansteckend, aufwühlend, begeisternd. Dabei ist der Kriminalfall nicht das Besondere, er tritt hinter die Form zurück. Immer wieder streut Haas Schlenker und Ausfälle gegen Institutionen ein. Das liest sich witzig und äußerst unterhaltsam.¹²

This extensive use of colloquially Austrian, non-standard sentence structure and a stream-of-consciousness narration characterize Haas's writing style. A large number of the sentences that occur in the book lack verbs, which is typical of colloquial speech in both English and German, though this is rarely seen in formal writing in either language. On the occasions when colloquial speech is transferred to the page, it is almost exclusively done with dialogue in an effort to reproduce the informal speech of a work's characters, and it is very rarely done with the narrative sections of a work. Haas reverses this paradigm, generally having his characters speak in relatively standard German while the narration itself is thoroughly colloquial in both structure and tone, lacking verbs and subjects or containing grammatical errors:

«Und hat er Ihnen auch von seinem eigenen Familienleben erzählt?»	"And did he also tell you about his own personal family life?"
«Ist das so aufregend?» Da hat der	"Is it really that interesting?" Brenner

¹² "After about half the book, I caught myself not only thinking, but also using sentences in the Haasian style. Haas does everything that is regarded as being inappropriate: half sentences without verbs, commenting on his own speech, which frequently begins with the words 'pretty much,' 'because,' and 'kind of—so it's a merciless repetition of words—directly addressing the reader in a flippant tone, and so on. The absurdity, the concise way of speaking, the brazen challenge of all of the literary rules of writing—contagious, provocative, delightful. In so doing, the mystery itself isn't the main focus, it blends into the background of the literary form. Haas frequently intersperses detours and allegations of failure against institutions. That makes for a humorous and thoroughly entertaining read.

<p>Brenner sich ein bißchen dümmer gestellt, als er war. Weil daß der Präfekt Fitz gern Priester geworden wäre und nicht ganz freiwillig geheiratet hat, haben im Marianum schon ein bißchen die Spatzen von den Dächern gezwitschert.</p>	<p>was pretending to be dumber than he actually was. Because the fact that Prefect Fitz had really wanted to become a priest and hadn't married entirely of his own free will was frequently discussed through the grapevines of the <i>Marianum</i>.</p>
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<p>Aber weil ich gerade sage sauber.</p>	<p>But now that I mention clean.</p>
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There exist a large number of conjunctions in German which require that the conjugated verb be placed at the very end of the sentence or clause, a rule which Haas unpredictably follows, as shown by the example above (*weil* being one of the conjunctions requiring the verb *sage* to be the very last element in the statement). This grammatically incorrect sentence is typical of informal speech and gives the Narrator a conversational and even jocular tone. The sentence strikes the Austrian reader as unusual for a written work, but perfectly acceptable for colloquial speech. An "equivalent" example in English concerns the use of "good" vs. "well"; the former is an adjective and the latter an adverb, but colloquial speech frequently treats the word "good" as both, a grammatical error which would usually occur only in the dialogue portions of a novel and never in the narrative ones. As a result of this incorrect informality, great difficulties arise when attempting to translate such grammatically incorrect sentences into English; since English lacks the verb-at-the-end rule, there is no way to "violate" it while also creating a sentence that creates a perfectly equivalent effect for the English-speaking reader. Although changing

the position of the verb in the English would be possible, it would cause the sentence to sound completely unnatural and awkward, which does not occur in the original; although the German sentence is atypical for the written word, it sounds neither unnatural nor awkward. Placing the verb "mention" anywhere else in the English sentence would be completely unacceptable to any American reader; in this case, violating the rules of verb placement in German is tolerable for the Austrian reader, but the same is not true for the English language and the American reader. It is therefore impossible to translate this aspect of Haas's writing perfectly into English, due to the fact that the structures of the two languages are sufficiently different to prevent the effortless transfer of violations of the rules of grammar.

Aber Internat noch einmal ganz was
anderes.

But again, boarding school's something
totally different.

Here the Standard German sentence would read: "Aber ein Internat ist noch einmal ganz was anderes." Haas has left out the all-important verb, in addition to the rather less important indefinite article, both of which are provided by the intuition of the native speaker. In my translation of this passage and others, I have sought to maintain the elements of the original that contribute to the novel's overall informal tone, including leaving out verbs and indefinite articles where the context provides the necessary information.

Wolf Haas's use of the conversational past tense also differentiates him from the vast majority of other German and Austrian authors. As in a few other European

languages such as French and Italian, German maintains two distinct tenses used to talk about past events that occurred only once, one being used primarily in speech (German: *das Perfekt*/French: *le passé composé*/Italian: *il passato prossimo*) and the other chiefly in writing (*das Präteritum*/*le passé simple*/*il passato remoto*). The spoken past tense consists of a conjugated helping verb, either "to be" or "to have" (the choice depends upon the primary verb in the sentence), in addition to a past participle, whereas the written past tense consists of a single conjugated verb. Although the dialects of northern Germany make frequent use of both of these tenses in both formal as well as informal speech, southern German and Austrian dialects almost never use the *Präteritum* for any day-to-day situation, preferring the *Perfekt* construction for nearly every single verb in the language. Anecdotally, using the *Präteritum* in speech in place of the *Perfekt* in Austria is one of the many shibboleths available to distinguish a (Northern) German from an Austrian.¹³ However, the vast majority of written works in German, regardless of the specific variety of German involved, almost exclusively use the *Präteritum* (the past tense consisting of a single word) for the purposes of narration, while the *Perfekt* is reserved for the dialogue of the characters. An excerpt of Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* illustrates this dichotomy; verbs in the *Perfekt* are in bold while those in the *Präteritum* are italicized:

»**Haben** Sie auch nur ein Wort **verstanden**?« *fragte* der Prokurist die Eltern,
»er macht sich doch wohl nicht einen Narren aus uns?« »Um Gottes willen«,
rief die Mutter schon unter weinen, »er ist vielleicht schwerkrank, und wir
quälen ihn. Grete! Grete!« *schrie* sie dann. »Mutter?« *rief* die Schwester von

¹³ German Wikipedia *Österreichisches Deutsch*

der anderen Seite. Sie *verständigten* sich durch Gregors Zimmer. »Du mußt augenblicklich zum Arzt. Gregor ist krank. Rasch um den Arzt. **Hast** du Gregor jetzt **reden hören**?«¹⁴

Haas rejects the time-honored conventions regarding the use of these two past tenses and invariably uses the *Perfekt* for both dialogue as well as narration, causing the narrative text to read like the colloquial speech of the average Austrian. Although English possesses many different tenses for speaking about past events (I ate/I did eat/I used to eat/I was eating/I have eaten/I had eaten/I have been eating/I had been eating), none of these can be interchanged haphazardly and maintain the meaning of the original sentence, i.e., "I ate a frankfurter" vs. "I have eaten a frankfurter." However, the two primary German past tenses **can** be interchanged and preserve the same meaning, the only difference between the two being one of culturally-specific linguistic register. Because there exists no parallel in English, this represents yet another aspect of Haas's language which does not lend itself easily to translation while maintaining all of the elements found in the original.

Another colloquialism that appears quite frequently in the book concerns the use of subordinate clauses. Standard German forbids two words that introduce subordinate clauses from occurring next to one another, requiring each one to introduce its own separate subordinate clause. An example of this can be found early in the first chapter:

¹⁴ "Did you understand even a single word?" the manager asked the parents, "Is he playing the fool with us?" "For God's sake," cried the mother, already in tears, "perhaps he's very ill, and we're upsetting him. Grete! Grete!" she yelled at that point. "Mother?" called the sister from the other side. They were making themselves understood through Gregor's room. "You must go to the doctor right away. Gregor is sick. Hurry to the doctor. Did you hear Gregor speak just now?" (Translated by Ian Johnston)

<p>Weil wenn du mit zwanzig, dreißig Halbwüchsigen in eine Klasse eingesperrt bist, kommst du natürlich schon auf Gedanken, daß du den einen oder anderen Schüler, der sowieso nichts begreift, gern gegen ein Duftbäumchen eintauschen würdest.</p>	<p>Because when you get locked into a classroom with twenty or thirty preteens, you're definitely going to get some ideas, like wanting to take one of the students who's never going to learn anything anyway and then trading him for an air freshener tree.</p>
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The elements in question are the first two words, both of which introduce subordinate clauses and which must therefore be written separately from one another. The same sentence in Standard German would read: "Weil du natürlich schon auf Gedanken kommst, wenn du mit zwanzig, dreißig Halbwüchsigen in eine Klasse eingesperrt bist . . ." The rather interesting thing about this atypical use of subordinate clauses is that it mirrors colloquial American English more closely than the Standard German would, as evidenced in my translation of the passage, a natural-sounding rendition of the original into English.

The Narrator's use of the conversational past tense imparts him with a more real and "face-to-face" personality. This aspect is mentioned as being one of the strengths of Haas's work in a reader-submitted review concerning his first Brenner novel,

Auferstehung der Toten (Resurrection of the Dead):

Die Erzählerperspektive macht etwas ganz Besonderes aus diesen Brenner-Romanen. Es wirkt, wie wenn einer eine Dorfposse am Wirtshaustisch erzählt, etwas schrullig, immer wieder kommentierend und mit speziellem

Humor gewürzt. Gleichzeitig erzählt die Geschichte von erschütternden menschlichen Dramen. Diese Kombination ist im ersten Moment etwas befremdlich, doch von Seite zu Seite steigt das Suchtpotential dieser Krimis. Ein absolutes Muss für jeden, der offen ist für eine österreichische Bewusstseinsweiterung.¹⁵

This review from a German reader speaks to the success of the Brenner novels in both Austria as well as in Germany, a country where they are received as an unusual, quirky, but entertaining alternative to the crime novels written in Standard German. It is precisely Haas's Austrian flair that ensures their success in both countries; Austrians appreciate them because they support and promote the written use of the Austrian variety of German outside of Austria and Germans appreciate them because they present them with a seldom-encountered way of using the German language for original literary purposes.

II.4 HAAS'S STYLE

In order to produce a translation that creates with its new audience a resonance that echoes the original, the defining characteristics of the author and the work must be identified. The original work owes its success to the reception of its plot, characters, setting, and writing style, all of which must be reproduced in one way or another for a translation to be as true as possible to its source. While it is a relatively easy task to

¹⁵ "The narrative perspective makes these Brenner novels something quite special. It's as if you're listening to someone recount a village farce in a quirky kind of way, always commenting on it and spicing it up with a particular humor. At the same time, the story is about harrowing human dramas. This combination is a bit disconcerting at first, but the novels get more and more addicting from page to page. An absolute must for everyone who is open to an Austrian expansion of consciousness."

reproduce the plot and characters of the novel *Silentium!*, it is a bit more difficult to reproduce the setting with 100% "equivalence," as the intended Austrian reader knows much more about the geographical, historical, and cultural allusions made throughout the book than the reader of a translation into English. Even more difficult to reproduce is Haas's unique and unconventional writing style, characterized by a thoroughly colloquial and Austrian variety of the German language.

The only constant characters in the Brenner novels are Simon Brenner and the mysterious Narrator, each with their own quirky attributes and thought processes. The protagonist of the Brenner series, private detective Simon Brenner, acts as somewhat of an anti-hero in the course of the novels. Brenner is a stocky former police officer who does not get along well with other law enforcement officers when he must interact with them, and as soon as other characters discover that he makes his living as a private detective, they tend to be suspicious and guarded with their words, making it more difficult for him to obtain the information which is necessary to solve a case. He has an innate distrust of authority figures, a characteristic that stems from the many cases of corruption he witnessed while working with the Austrian police. As Helga Schreckenberger, a German professor specializing in Austrian literature, explains, the detective characters of the "hard-boiled school" are the basis for many of Simon Brenner's characteristics:

Wolf Haas created a [hero similar to Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe] with his Simon Brenner, who has left the police department after nineteen years of service, tired of the presumptuous authority and prejudices of his superior. His choice to work as a private detective seems rather a necessity than a true

calling. Like the private eyes of the hard-boiled school, Brenner lives on the margin of society. He has no fixed address or regular income, but constantly moves around taking on odd jobs to make ends meet. He also has no respect for authority, wealth, power, social standing, or institutions. His lack of ambition and his awkward decency enable him to expose people, situations, and institutions for what they are without regard for personal consequences. Like the private eye of the hard-boiled novel, Brenner embodies individualism, independence, and stubborn integrity, which come with the price of financial instability and lack of any type of permanent relationship.

These personality traits often place Brenner at odds with the other characters, who sometimes seek to neutralize or manipulate him by offering him things which would motivate another character into compliance, but which seem to have little or no effect on the socially awkward Brenner. Solving the case at hand remains his primary concern, though he is sometimes distracted by other events and characters crossing his path while he is investigating. Even though Brenner is the protagonist of the series, his dialogue and interaction with other characters is minimal when compared to the main character: the Narrator.

The mysterious, unnamed, omnipresent but ever invisible and enigmatic Narrator largely follows Brenner's point of view throughout the course of the novels. He not only knows every move that Brenner makes, but he is also privy to his inner thoughts and feelings, letting the reader know how Brenner perceives a situation while also commenting on what the Narrator himself thinks not only of the events of the story, but also on Brenner's thoughts and actions. Although he is intimately familiar with

everything Brenner thinks and does, he never explains to the reader why this is the case and he never interacts with any character in the Brenner novels until *Das ewige Leben* (*Eternal Life*), where he is unexpectedly and brutally murdered. The Narrator also describes events which Brenner does not witness himself, such as in the third chapter when two young pupils discover the mutilated remains of a human body. In the film adaptations of the Brenner novels, original lines from the novels are used in voice-overs, provided by the Austrian entertainer Herr Hermes. The decision to have a male read the part of the Narrator rather than a female, in addition to the fact that the Narrator refers to Austrian-specific words with the phrase "bei uns in Österreich sagt man," is a strong indicator that Haas imagines his Narrator to be an Austrian male. The Narrator character constitutes the most frequent source of societal criticisms, usually in an ironic or sarcastic manner:

<p>Wenn heute zum Beispiel ein Richter ernannt wird, dann schnüffelt die Staatspolizei auch vorher ein bißchen in seinem Privatleben herum, ob er nicht zu viele Abgründe hat, wo man sagen müßte, sein Hobby macht ihn vielleicht erpreßbar, weil Videoclub immer verdächtig, oder sagen wir Minderjährige, solche Dinge, oder meinetwegen sadistische Tendenz, wo</p>	<p>Today when a new judge is going to be appointed, the police sniff around a bit in his private life beforehand to make sure there aren't any blemishes that would make someone say, "His hobby might make him susceptible to blackmail." Because strip clubs always suspicious, or let's say minors, that sort of thing, or for all I care, sadistic tendencies that might make you</p>
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man vielleicht sagt, als Richter über-qualifiziert.

say that, for a judge, he's over-qualified.

In this passage concerning the nature of judges, for example, it is obvious that the Narrator (and most likely the majority of the intended readers) is not particularly fond of the Austrian judicial system. The Narrator's rather tongue-in-cheek way of criticizing the judiciary represents yet another aspect that characterizes Haas's work: subtly humorous critiques of the flaws in modern Austrian society. That the reader is never provided with any specific information about the Narrator is a deliberate story-telling device on Haas's part; by keeping his Narrator mysterious and faceless, the reader is more easily able to project her/his own image and voice onto the character. The Narrator's relaxed and colloquial speech imparts him with a familiar tone and an "Everyman" persona which resonates with Haas's wider readership.

In the film adaptation of *Silentium!*, Wolf Haas has a dialogue-free cameo role in two different scenes as one of the teachers/priests working at the Marianum. In his first scene, he is eating lunch in the school's dining hall with the other teachers/priests, and is only visible for a few seconds. In his next appearance, he is sitting alone in a stationary bus writing in a notebook. The camera switches to his point of view and reveals that he has written the words "Jetzt ist schon wieder was passiert," the opening sentence of the first six Brenner novels which derives from the narration of the Narrator. Haas seems to enjoy incorporating fictional versions of himself into his work or adaptations thereof, as evidenced by his extensive use of a fictional Wolf Haas in *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*.

Haas could be using his brief cameo in the film to hint to the audience that he imagines *himself* to be the mysterious Narrator in the Brenner novels.

II.4 HAAS'S AUSTRIA

Place plays a powerful and significant role in the Brenner series. Each Brenner novel is set in a different village or city in Austria, concretizing the Austrianness of the books while inadvertently making them more difficult to access for an audience unfamiliar with the locales which Brenner visits while investigating his cases. Haas assumes a deeper knowledge of Austrian geography which is available to the Austrian reader and creates a very anchored sense of place, which is not necessarily true for non-Austrian readers. In his work *Place: A Short Introduction*, Tim Cresswell argues that places "[do] not have meanings that are natural and obvious but ones that are created . . ." Haas experiments and toys with the notion of place by staging his crime novels in familiar locales; the juxtaposition of the beautiful cities and scenery with the grisly deeds of the antagonists constitute another unique aspect of Haas's style, as explained by Helga Schreckenberger:

Haas's Austria is not the idyllic place of unspoiled beauty and innocence, but a country with its share of contemporary issues, problems, and shortcomings. Haas underscores this through his selections of the crimes scenes. It is quite evident that the settings for the murders in each novel are chosen to challenge conventional images of Austria [. . .] As the murders are supposed to pose an enigma for the detective and the reader, they typically occur in unusual places that enhance their mysteriousness or render them especially sacrilegious...

[T]hey are often chosen to disturb and disrupt the reader's sense of security... Haas's selection of crime scenes seems similarly motivated in that they represent the stereotypical tourist-Austria which is marketed all over the world.

Haas seeks not only to Austrianize his novels in both language and setting, but also to challenge the notions of what define the places where his novels take place and the social mores of his characters, often reflections of the larger Austrian culture and society. For the intended reader, these dichotomies serve the purpose of unnerving him or her, accessing the peaceful and picturesque locations and the memories and emotions associated with them and then injecting a vile dose of human wickedness into the mix. Superficially, an American reader would have many similar preconceived images and ideas concerning various places in Austria, particularly Salzburg, though the specific geographical knowledge associated therewith would not be present.

Haas's intended reader has a knowledge of the German language, and very possibly speaks one of the numerous Austrian dialects as his or her native tongue; the reader most likely lives in Austria or is at the very least familiar with the geopolitical and linguistic differences that separate Austria from Germany. Compared to the other Brenner novels, the setting of *Silentium!* presents the translator writing for an American audience with relatively few problems. The entirety of the novel takes place in the city of Salzburg, which is far better known than some of the locales featured in the other Brenner books, for example Klöch in der Steiermark or Zell am See, both rather small and obscure Austrian villages (the population of the former is roughly 10,000 and the latter 1,200).

The average American reader is, at the very least, familiar with Salzburg due to the success and popularity of the musical and film *The Sound of Music*, which was filmed on location and featured many of the city's famous landmarks and surrounding countryside. There are many times in the novel, however, where Haas assumes a deeper knowledge of the geography and landmarks of the city since he is writing for an Austrian audience; the majority of Austrians have either spent time in Salzburg or have heard about the city from friends, family, or teachers at various points in their lives. As a result, the Austrian reader has access to cultural, historical, and personal information regarding the city of Salzburg which is, to a large extent, unavailable to the average American reader. One instance of this occurs early in the second chapter:

<p>Der Dr. Prader hat samt Frau und vier Kindern in einer Villa auf dem Mönchsberg gelebt, praktisch beste Adresse, weil mitten in der Stadt und doch auf dem Berg.</p>	<p>Dr. Prader lived with his wife and four children in a mansion on top of the Mönchsberg; pretty much the best address you could have because it was in the middle of the city but still on top of a mountain.</p>
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<p>Mit dem Dr. Prader könnte ich ja einmal reden, hat sich der Brenner gedacht, besser, als immer nur im Kreis gehen. Aber das hat er sich leichter vorgestellt, als es war. Weil auf dem Weg zum Dr. Prader hat er zuerst einmal die Touristenschwärme in</p>	<p>"Maybe I could actually have a decent talk with Dr. Prader," Brenner thought; better than just going around in circles. But that was easier said than done. Because on the way to Dr. Prader's he had to plow through the swarms of tourists in</p>
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der Altstadt durchpflügen müssen. Passiert
ist ihm nichts, der Brenner sowieso sehr
robust, aber auf die Art ist er bestimmt bei
zehntausend Japanern ins Fotoalbum
hineingekommen.

the Old Town quarter. Nothing happened to
him because Brenner's a pretty sturdy guy,
after all, but by taking that route he
definitely made it into the photo albums of
ten thousand Japanese tourists.

This brief passage presents the reader with a number of geographical and cultural references: the original audience is well aware of the fact that one of the defining markers of the skyline of Salzburg is the Mönchsberg (literally: Monk's Mountain), a small mountain located directly next to the historic Old Town quarter of the city which is also home to Salzburg's most famous landmark, the white and picturesque Hohensalzburg Castle. This area of the city contains some of the most expensive pieces of real estate in the city because of its beautiful and exclusive location, a piece of information which appears later in the chapter when Brenner conducts his interview with Dr. Prader, a resident of the Mönchsberg. The next reference concerns the "swarms of tourists" that create an obstacle for Brenner as he makes his way towards the top of the mountain. Salzburg's economy relies heavily on the tourism industry; the number of visitors peaks during the summer, but the city experiences a constant stream of tourists during the entire year, a large portion of whom hail from Asia, primarily from Japan and China.

The Salzburg Festival (Die Salzburger Festspiele), an annual event featuring performances of music, operas, and plays mentioned by Schreckenberger, also forms an important background element of the novel, since many of its characters are involved with or motivated by the happenings of the festival; it is, however, not very well-known

outside of the German-speaking countries and Europe, which presents an American reader with several difficulties. If the translator assumes knowledge of the English-speaking reader which he or she does not possess, a rather important part of the novel will be lost on him or her. A footnote often serves the purpose of providing the reader with information that is not present in the original text (since it is assumed that the original target audience is familiar with it), though this often produces a halting effect, causing the reader to be more aware of the fact that he or she is reading a translation. A third option involves adding explanatory lines which do not appear in the original, either as part of the foreword to the reader or as additional text written into individual paragraphs. Another editorial choice would consist in preserving the text as it stands, providing no additional information to the reader of the translation, which has two undesirable effects: either the equivalent effect and important elements of the story become lost or the reader is left feeling that the story is somehow incomplete or disjointed. Although it would be possible to transplant the story to an English-speaking location, to do so would violate the nature and essence of Haas's novels since they are so intimately connected with the Austrian culture.

II.6 THEORIES OF TRANSLATION AND EQUIVALENT EFFECT

"Traduttore, traditore." The literal translation of this old Italian saying into English is "Translator, traitor." This adage, learned early on in a translator's career and oft-repeated by colleagues and mentors, contains quite a bit of information if one knows where to look. A freer translation into English would be "To translate is to betray," which is itself a "betrayal" of the precise meaning of the original two words. However it is

translated, the core idea remains: as soon as something is translated from one language into another, it has ceased to be what it originally was. The Italian adage consists of two words which each contain four syllables, both of which have the following syllable structure: xxXx xxXx. Both words are nearly identical in their pronunciation, the only difference being the vowel in the second syllable of each. If we use the first translation of "Translator, traitor" we have accurately translated both of the individual words but none of the rhythm of the original, since the words differ more from each other in English than they do in Italian and the syllable structure is not parallel as it is in the original: Xxx Xx. Translating two simple nouns from one Indo-European language into another has caused a loss of information. Although there exist numerous theories of translation (several of which sometimes contradict each other), I have chosen to focus on three key theories that I found most helpful while translating *Silentium!*

St. Jerome, an early translator of the Bible, believed that texts should not be translated "word-for-word" but "sense-for-sense." Jerome argued that literally translating a text word-for-word produced a ridiculous translation which obfuscated the meaning of the original. By translating sense-for-sense, the overall meaning of the original can be carried over into a new language without sounding absurd or awkward. If one were to translate the simple German sentence "Heute Nachmittag sind zwei Menschen bei einem Autounfall ums Leben gekommen" literally into English, the result would be strange and unintelligible:

**Heute Nachmittag sind zwei Menschen bei einem Autounfall ums Leben
gekommen.**

**Today Aftermidday are two People by an Autouncase around-the Life
come.**

Two people perished in a car accident this afternoon. (sense-for-sense)

The sense-for-sense approach, on the other hand, produces a clear and natural-sounding translation which preserves all of the important elements found in the original text. In the context of translating *Silentium!*, this approach provides several advantages: since German sentence structure differs from that of English, translating sense-for-sense eliminates the awkwardness that arises when translating word-for-word. Another advantage concerns the use of Austrian German within the work itself: it is impossible to perfectly translate the colloquial and idiomatic Austrian German found in Haas's work into English, but it is possible to recreate the general tone and colloquial nature of the novel, which I have tried to accomplish in my translation.

Martin Luther was the next major figure to introduce a new idea into translation studies. Like St. Jerome, he believed that texts should be translated sense-for-sense rather than word-for-word, a philosophy which partially guided his extremely influential translation of the Bible into German. His translation was quite controversial at the time and was a powerful political statement against the Catholic Church: by offering the content of the Bible to ordinary people in their native language, he ended the stranglehold of power which had until then been held by the educated and elite priestly caste; for the first time, average churchgoers could read the words of the Bible for themselves and make their own judgments and interpretations. His translation succeeded beyond his wildest dreams, being used as a reference for translations into other European languages and helping to create a standardized form of the German language. The positive reception

of his translation can in large part be attributed to his philosophy involving the concept of the target audience:

Man muß die Mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf der Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markt drum fragen, und denselbigen auf das Maul sehen, wie sie reden und darnach dolmetschen; da verstehen sie es denn und merken, daß man Deutsch mit ihnen redet.¹⁶

Luther believed that the Bible should be rendered into clear, ordinary German that could be easily understood by the people. He was aware not only of the linguistic differences between his source languages and his native German, but also of his target audience. His imagined reader guided him in his translation process from beginning to end, a concept which has been part of translation ever since.

In translating *Silentium!*, I have written for my own (imagined) target audience: educated (American) English-speaking readers with an interest in foreign crime novels. This aided me in making several translation decisions, such as "translating" brand names of snacks which are popular in Austria but completely unknown in the United States; here I have provided American brands which are as well-known and popular in the United States as the original brands are in Austria. The fact that these specific brands play absolutely no role in the novel facilitated my decision to adapt them for my audience. I was also greatly influenced by Steven T. Murray's (AKA Reg Keeland) translations of Stieg Larsson's *Millennium* series (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, etc.). Larsson's novels are set in modern Sweden and Murray makes no attempt to "transplant" them to

¹⁶ "You must ask the mother at home, the children in the street, the ordinary man in the market [sic] and look at their mouths, how they speak, and translate that way; *then* they'll understand and see that you're speaking to them in German." (Translated by Jeremy Munday)

any locale in the English-speaking world; the reader is aware from the first page that the book is set in Sweden and that the characters are really speaking Swedish. Units of measurement are always given in the original metric units since Sweden exclusively uses the metric system. I have followed a similar course while translating *Silentium!*: I have maintained the original setting of the book (Salzburg, Austria), the original units of measurement (metric), and have changed only the language which the characters are speaking (German). My target audience knows that my translation is just that—a translation. In addition to the basic translation theories of sense-for-sense and target audience, I have also incorporated the more recent theory of equivalent effect, the overall impression a work leaves upon its reader.

The idea of "equivalent effect" in translation circles was the successor to the tired debate concerning free vs. literal translation that had been discussed for centuries prior to the 1950s and 1960s¹⁷. In his 1959 paper entitled "On linguistic aspects of translation," Roman Jakobson introduced his concept of "equivalent effect": "The translator recodes and transmits a message received from another source. Thus translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes". Taking this basic definition and applying it to a written work as a whole, the linguistic, emotional, and intellectual stimulation that the reader of a translated novel experiences should be "equivalent" to that experienced by a reader of the original. Jakobson is careful to point out, however, that "there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code units," stating that producing a perfectly "equivalent" translation is, in essence, an impossible task. Since different languages define and codify their respective worlds in such an enormous variety of ways, there rarely exists either a

¹⁷ *Introducing Translation Studies*

translated word or sentence which is either perfectly identical or perfectly equivalent to the original. One of the examples given by Jakobson is the Old Russian word "бѣра/brata", meaning "(precisely two) brothers." Most modern European languages, including English and German, possess only the singular and the plural, creating two distinct categories: "(precisely one) brother" and "(at least two, but possibly more than two) brothers." Similar to modern Slovene and modern Arabic, Old Russian possessed the dual number, a special grammatical category which changes the form of a noun when it refers to precisely two entities. Even something as simple as counting physical objects turns out to be a rather complicated task when travelling between different languages, since they categorize aspects of the world in unique and varied ways which only unpredictably coincide with one another. Jakobson states that it is far easier to translate "бѣра" into English (or into any other language which does not possess the dual number) than to translate "brothers" into a language which does differentiate the dual from the plural; when completing the former, only one word is necessary to convey all of the meaning of the original, namely, the numeral "two." The latter task, however, is complicated by the fact that the translator is immediately forced to make a decision concerning the number of brothers; since the ambiguity of the word prevents a simple one-to-one translation into, for example, Arabic, it is impossible to translate the word correctly without knowing the additional information about the number of brothers involved. The translator must choose from "(precisely two) brothers" (Slovene: 'brata'), "(more than two) brothers" (Slovene: 'brati'), or the awkward "(either [precisely two] or [more than two]) brothers" (Slovene: 'ali brata ali brati'). These different distinctions which are mandatory in some languages but not in others ensure that the translator must

search out the additional information that is necessary to produce an accurate translation. According to Claude Piron, a former translator for the United Nations and the World Health Organization, eighty to ninety percent of a professional translator's time is devoted to this kind of linguistic detective work.

Aside from the obvious problems that stem from the varying grammatical systems employed by different languages, the process of creating a successful equivalent effect, as best as the translator can manage, raises other issues. The English reader of "brothers" is not concerned with whether two or three or four brothers are involved in a novel or short story or play since the grammar of the language does not require such a distinction to be made. Producing the equivalent effect of the English word "brothers" for a speaker of dual/plural language is both impossible as well as undesirable, since it is extremely unlikely that it was the author's intention to be deliberately ambiguous when writing about the number of male siblings possessed by a character. David Bellos, a translator of English and French, believes the whole enterprise of equivalent effect to be mired in subjectivity and of little practical use to someone pursuing translation work:

An obvious trouble with the idea of an equivalent effect is that there's no scale available for measuring equivalence. "Effects," especially holistic impressions left by extended works, can't be extracted from people and measured against one another. Nor can any one reader give an independent measure of the effects made on her by two language versions of the same text. That's because a reading of a text always happens in a language—not in between. What counts as a satisfactory match is a judgment call, and is never

fixed. The only certainty is that a match cannot be the same as the thing that it matches.

Bellos maintains that it is not very reasonable to strive for an equivalent effect, but rather for the best match possible. Since languages are inextricably bound up with the cultures from which they stem, it is not always feasible to create an effect that the bilingual reader would find to be "equivalent" between the original and its translation.

Despite Bellos's objections, I have taken Jakobson's concept of equivalent effect and applied it to my translation as completely as possible. My own impressions of *Silentium!* and the way it speaks to me, as well as recreating the (conjecturable) effect on a native reader have all guided my translation process. Just as two different translators will translate the same work in two different ways, each one reflecting the translator's own sense of voice and style, I am aware that my translation is a product of Paul Geisler, and I am certain that, should anyone else translate *Silentium!* into English, the end result will be the same, but different.

Although Bellos states that the reading of a text always happens in a language and not in between, there are, in fact, a number of different situations where a reader may decide to read the same text in two different languages. Anyone who wishes to learn a new language has access to thousands of books with side-by-side translations, juxtaposing the original language with a translation into another, which allows the reader to closely follow the text of the foreign language even if s/he is not terribly familiar with it. It is also quite common for a translator to read previous translations of a text when preparing her/his own updated version, relying on the skill or learning from the mistakes of her/his predecessors. Translators also frequently consult translations into other, usually

related languages; for instance, an English-Danish translator may consult an existing Swedish or Norwegian translation in order to solve a linguistic problem, receive inspiration, or refine what s/he has already produced. All of these situations allow a reader to read the same text in two or three or four different languages and provide the reader with the opportunity to make judgment calls about which translation has best succeeded in producing the elusive equivalent effect.

I have employed the principles of sense-for-sense translation and equivalent effect while translating *Silentium!*, while also remaining aware of my target audience. Attempting to maintain the colloquial tone of the original as much as possible, I have used colloquial (American) English in place of Haas's Austrian German. Since it was not always possible to translate all of the colloquial aspects of the novel's language into English (*e.g.* the use of the spoken past tense as opposed to the literary past tense), I have rendered some passages into non-standard English (*e.g.* using an adjective instead of the required adverb) even though the original passage does not contain such an "error":

Der Dr. Prader hat ihm dann erklärt, daß es	Then Dr. Prader explained to him that that
das nicht nur bei der Kirche gibt, sondern	sort of thing doesn't just exist with priests
ganz ähnlich auch im staatlichen Bereich.	and bishops, but also works pretty similar
	in the secular arena.

By analyzing the work as a whole and identifying its unique linguistic aspects, I have made translation decisions that preserve the core aspects of the work as closely as possible in English. The next section contains my translation of the first two chapters of *Silentium!*

Silentium!
by Wolf Haas

translated by Paul Geisler

Chapter One

Now something's happened again. And in the Marianum of all places, where you would like to believe that a ten-year old enters the building as a farm boy and, eight years later, comes out as a priest half-ready to lead a mass. No wonder no one suspected anything for so long. Because it's actually inconceivable that something like that could happen in the cleanest boarding school in all Salzburg, of all places.

But now that I mention clean. Of course that's not meant to be taken in the strictly hygienic sense of the word. Because it had always been a little stinky in the boarding school, that's to say that the sweat of boarding school boys—not always like a rose garden. And when the people down at the Marianum suddenly needed a detective, it was the strange aromas in particular that the P.I. noticed the first few days. Because a boarding school like that has aromas that you won't find anywhere else.

School-age children always stink, of course, no question there, the teachers there even get a bonus for having to put up with it and I totally support that. Because when you get locked into a classroom with twenty or thirty preteens, you're definitely going to get some ideas, like wanting to take one of the students who's never going to learn anything anyway and then trading him for an air freshener tree.

But again, boarding school's something totally different. When Brenner arrived at the Marianum and moved into the empty assistant prefect's room, the aroma immediately

reminded him of the old police barracks. Nineteen years as a police officer before he had become a P.I. and after that, everything is bound to remind you of the force for the rest of your life.

And believe it or not, each and every floor in that huge, old boarding school fortress had its own unique aroma. But it was actually pretty difficult to determine the exact source of the individual smells. The kitchen and cafeteria were, of course, on the ground floor, but the rancid smells of food wafted throughout the entire building, and even though they had stuck the new church house on the highest floor, four stories away from the kitchen, it still often smelled like a roadside diner.

The church on the top floor was, architecturally speaking, a masterpiece. Ten years ago they had put a super modern bird's nest-style building on top of the old monastery walls and as you entered it, you almost had to kick the bucket because the church ceiling was made entirely of glass, like heaven was practically within your reach. But in terms of olfaction—rather problematic. Because for some reason it sucked up all of the fumes from the kitchen.

But unbelievable how quickly a person gets used to new smells and by the third day, Brenner didn't even really notice them anymore. Of course, not a problem; after all, he hadn't been hired by the head of the boarding school to carry out aroma analysis. The seminary dean didn't need a detective to investigate the aromas! But listen up to what I'm going to tell you.

Brenner wasn't normally that sensitive when it came to smells. If you had been with the police force for nineteen years, then you would've also had enough opportunities to rid yourself of such sensitivities. And Brenner had never really been the over-

sophisticated type. Even relating to his appearance and physique. A stocky chunk of a man with a face whose pockmarks were its smoothest landmarks, due to the fact that two long wrinkles cut centimeters deep into his cheeks. That's to say it was rather easy to answer the million-dollar question about whether or not we're dealing with a former member of the Austrian fuzz or a famous French connoisseur of fine perfume.

The fact that he was so preoccupied with the aromas in the Marianum, of all places, that's something that, how should I put it? I don't want to sugarcoat anything. That's just how Brenner was. It was something that had frequently presented a bit of an obstacle for him while investigating: always the unimportant stuff first. It was a disease that Brenner just couldn't shake off. Never being able to see the forest through the trees. While he was in the force his superiors had attempted to drive it out of him but to no avail; Brenner didn't change his method by even one single millimeter. And the worst thing about it is it's contagious. I'm just now noticing that I also started with the least important details. Because when you have four dead bodies after all is said and done, you really don't need to spend an eternity dealing with the aromas. But now that I'm already talking about them, I'll tell you really quick how it came about that the aromas interested old Brenner so much.

Right on his first day in the Marianum the young seminary dean asked Brenner to come to his office at ten o'clock that evening. Listen up, it's easy to understand: the seminary dean is the boss and the prefects are the underbosses. Brenner had wondered at the beginning how such a young man could already be a priest while also being the boss of the bishopric's special school for aspiring priests—kind of an awkward assignment. But the young dean did his thing well, with dignity and everything. And it was also him

who had said, "All right, it can't go on like this, a detective has to come and figure it all out."

As soon as his digital watch (a farewell present that had been given to him by his colleagues three years ago) beeped 10:00 P.M., Brenner knocked on the door. But it wasn't the dean who opened it since he wasn't in his office all by himself. It was the old prefect with the cleft lip who opened it, the same man who, earlier that afternoon, had shown Brenner to the empty assistant prefect's room on the third floor. He had a full beard that was gray and well trimmed and kept you from noticing the cleft lip right away. But trying to cover up imperfections is always a devilish affair; it's like with bald men who comb their last few hairs forward which only makes them look even balder than they already are. Or for all I care like criminals who try to act extra inconspicuous who get cuffed all the same, just because you say to a police officer, "Nice weather we're having today."

It was true that you could barely see the cleft lip through the beard but that just made his speech impediment even more noticeable. As a child, probably surgeries and everything, but now the old prefect spoke a little strangely, sort of like people with dentures who have already put them inside a glass of Polident for the night. It also seemed to Brenner that he had a bit of a stutter, which he noticed as he introduced the second prefect in the dean's office, "Uh-this is our uh-uh-Sport Prefect uh-Fitz."

The sport prefect's wiry hairs wobbled like antenna wires as he shook his hand, as if they were also trying to greet him. Brenner noticed that, in contrast to the other two, he wasn't wearing black priestly robes with a silver pin-on cross, just a pair of blue jeans and a white shirt. Easy explanation for that: he wasn't a priest, just a layman working as a

prefect. And because the sport prefect was sitting between the dean and the prefect with the cleft lip, a strange image arose in front of Brenner, the best word for it sounds kind of like "sympathetic." On the left a guy in black, on the right a guy in black, and in the middle a guy in white. Yes! Symmetric! And they were almost as stiff as the old oil paintings that dimmed the halls of the *Marianum* so much, with their oily aromas mixing with the cooking oil and the floor oil and all of them greasing up the air like in a museum.

Brenner definitely wouldn't have noticed it if there hadn't been that inscription with golden letters shining above their three heads:

"Silentium!"

The inscription was located directly on the wall of the dean's office and for that reason the whole scene looked, at least for the time being, like something from another world. But then again, he had already seen the inscription during the day, in all the hallways and classrooms and even in the locker rooms. The students in the school were warned with every step they took: "Silentium!" here, "Silentium!" there. And I have to say that I completely sympathize with that because in an all-boys' school, you absolutely have to make sure that the noise level doesn't become overwhelming; there's so much shouting and screaming all day long that as a teacher, it could easily happen that you get so exasperated that you fire away into a noisy corner but the yells of students as they go to break are so loud they drown out the sounds of your machine gun.

Now the people down at the *Marianum* smothered that out right from the get-go; they had said, "We're not even going to let that get started," and most of the time students were only allowed to whisper and the rest of the time total and complete Silentium. It's definitely kind of creepy when you're surrounded by a few hundred kids who don't make

a single peep. And maybe that was also part of the reason why the aromas had stood out so much.

Now here's an interesting connection: the sport prefect was the most important man when it came to ensuring Silentium. It's not like in politics or on TV where people say, "The stupidest guy should be in charge of sports," quite the opposite; at an all-boys' boarding school sports— almost the most important thing. Because of course an adolescent has such an unbelievable amount of energy and it all has to go somewhere, otherwise he gets so edgy that you could write "Silentium!" down on the walls a hundred times but without sports it would be hopeless, because without any form of exercise you wouldn't be surprised to discover that he had torn the kitchen maid to pieces.

But this evening the young dean was playing the role of the kitchen maid, that is to say, he had set the conference table and made it completely disappear under a sea of delicacies: a family pack of peanuts, a family pack of potato chips, a family pack of pretzel sticks, a family pack of salted snacks, a family pack of Goldfish, a family pack of Triscuit crackers. Because I think that if you're not allowed to have your own family, you at least want to eat an entire family pack of something every now and then, sort of like binge eating.

As Brenner watched the young Holiness-in-Chief tear open one family pack after another, he remembered that he had once read a message on the side of a condom vending machine in the police cafeteria in Linz, "Cheap family pack." Kind of a bad choice of words because, of course, you want to use that product to prevent the creation of a family. Just to be on the safe side, Brenner decided to pop a few peanuts into his

mouth so that he wouldn't say anything. Because in the presence of two priests maybe not the most appropriate comment.

And there we go again seeing how helpful an inscription on a wall can be. Because without the golden "Silentium!" constantly warning him from the wall, that story definitely would've come rolling off his tongue. He noticed that the artist had designed the script very beautifully, really graceful letters and all, but for the "t" in the middle he hadn't used a real letter but had instead subtly slipped in a simple cross.

If you're not going to make the comment about the condoms then it can easily happen that you don't say anything at all. And the three prefects weren't saying anything, either. But believe it or not, there still wasn't any Silentium because the crackers were getting crunched between everyone's teeth, creating enough noise to rival the din of a ten year-old's birthday party.

The young dean finally asked, "Would you care for a beer?"

The prefect with the cleft lip splayed out all ten of his fingers and turned his hands back and forth a few times, as if he were still undecided how to answer that question. But then his strange voice squeaked out the words, "Uh-one uh-swallow couldn't uh-hurt."

Uh-one uh-swallow! For a moment Brenner thought that it was some special sort of priestly formality where you add an "uh" to every word to make things last longer. But the real reason why the "uh" had come about was, of course, because of his stutter. Because there's one thing you can't forget. Today you can repair cleft lips, no problem, but the prefect was definitely over sixty and back then they had trained only the worst cobblers to become surgeons. You had to consider yourself one of the lucky ones if the

knife didn't slip out of their hands too many times while they were performing the surgery.

While the young dean was schlepping the beer crate into the office, Brenner noticed that, in spite of his youth, he was a little soft and delicate. All in all a tall, good-looking man with black hair and skin as white as an actor out of a silent film. When the bishop had assigned him to the *Marianum* a few years ago, there was even talk that it was because of the overly pious women in the parish. Because back then they had flocked to the newly anointed father like lambs to the slaughter. And there you could've imagined that it wasn't an altar they were lining up for, it was a beach on the Adriatic, and it wasn't a priest, it was a tour guide at a vacation resort, and it wasn't always just the Body of Christ that got worshipped, but also the Body of His Representative that got thrown into the mix.

But like I said, that was years ago and in the meantime he had made history for being the youngest dean at the *Marianum*. Hard to believe how that man had developed. His only weakness was perhaps that his appetite had developed along the same unbelievable lines. During Lent he could, of course, always get his weight back under control, and you could spend hours talking to him about the latest Weight Watchers diet, but he just couldn't get rid of his overall flabbiness.

His problem was that he just sinned too much here and there: one time he sinned with chocolate, and then he sinned with ice cream, and today, for example, he was sinning big time with the beer and crackers. Because his Grace was guzzling down the beer so quickly you could barely glance at it before it disappeared.

"The crackers make me thirsty," he nodded, as if he had to convince himself of what he was saying, and then he topped everyone off. But I think it wasn't just the crackers. It was also a little bit due to the uncomfortable topic that was trying to escape his lips. He finally had to tell Brenner why he had wanted him to come and investigate. But first he had to put the glass of beer to his lips again, unbelievable how much he could guzzle down.

But slowly he came out with it and told Brenner what he expected of him. But he had to start the whole story with Adam and Eve because Brenner had had no idea that a new bishop was going to be appointed soon.

"Of course, we are very proud," he stressed, "that the pope's desired candidate is someone who once walked the halls of our school."

"We're very proud," nodded the prefect with the cleft lip. I'm not sure exactly how, but suddenly no "uh"s came before any of his words, maybe because enjoying the beer had allowed him to relax a bit.

"Although modesty requires us to say," chimed in sport prefect Fitz as he bent over a bit, that is to say, modestly. And out of sheer modesty he forgot to say what modesty required them to say.

"Yes, of course," nodded the young dean, because he knew exactly what his colleague wanted to say, pretty much blind understanding. And Brenner also somehow found out what Fitz was talking about as the evening went on. But there was really no need for them to be proud because all of the bishops of Salzburg for generations, if not centuries had, more or less, attended the Marianum. Even those who chose a career outside of the church had become everything from mayor to governor and back.

And then of course there was the other issue and pride. Or let's just put it this way: the other thing that you couldn't possibly have been proud of.

"The aromas!" said the prefect with the cleft lip, his index finger pointed skyward.

And I think that's the real reason for why Brenner spent the next few days so interested in the aromas of the boarding school. Because the old prefect must have already been feeling the beer when his hauntingly nasal voice kept repeating the words "The aromas!" like a stage hypnotist.

Prefect Fitz carried out the empty crate, but not because of the aromas. Because believe it or not, he came back with a genuine little beer keg. And down at the Marianum they had a sophisticated set of manners. They didn't drink the draft beer out of the same glasses as they had the bottled beer; the sport prefect instead brought in four beer steins, gray and liter-sized with the coat of arms of the Capuchin monastery on each of them. That must have been a gift from a visiting Capuchin abbot because at the Marianum, of course, only world-savvy priests with black suits, none of those frock-clad friars.

As soon as the steins were full the four men clinked their glasses together and then Brenner asked, "What kinds of aromas?"

The dean and the sport prefect looked at him with such a dumbfounded look that Brenner thought for a moment that in his stupor he had blurted out his anecdote about the family pack of condoms after all. He embarrassingly placed the stein to his lips, but prefect Fitz had poured the beer in so haphazardly that half of it was foam, and as Brenner was wiping the foam out of his eyes he caught sight of the inscription above the dean's head, right on the golden cross in the middle of the word "Silentium!"

And then he realized, of course, that the prefect's speech impediment caused a few extra sounds where there should have been some Silentium instead.

"What kinds of rumors?" he asked in the exact same tone, as if he had already said it right the first time.

"Rumors," said Sport Prefect Fitz. He also had a unique way of speaking, but he didn't have a stuttering problem. "Only rumors!" You couldn't help but notice that, of the three teachers present, he had the lowest alcohol tolerance. It's entirely possible that those who are ordained in the priesthood have a bit of an advantage when it comes to the devilish drink, because the young dean was sitting there in his chair just as stiffly as when Brenner had entered the office. For the prefect with the cleft lip, all you could say was that his extra "uh"s came and went as they pleased but other than that, there wasn't the slightest hint of inebriation.

"What kinds of rumors?" asked Brenner again. It wasn't usually such a strength of his, asking such precise questions so directly; he had always preferred to occupy himself with trivial things. And I'd venture to say that the alcohol had helped him with this new method of interrogation. Because alcohol definitely turns out to be quite helpful when you need to stubbornly repeat the same question over and over again for as long as it takes.

But the prefect with the cleft lip didn't answer him. And Sport Prefect Fitz also just sat there and shook his left leg like he was working a sewing machine or like a man who's been trapped in a corner. And the dean also wasn't saying anything. It seemed to Brenner as if he were talking to a wall. Because at least the wall was saying something, no matter how stubbornly and holier-than-thou, "Silentium!"

But as soon as Brenner had found out about all of the rumors, he finally understood why the three teachers had needed half the night to drink themselves away before they could finally spit them all out. At four a.m. he finally knew everything: he knew that Monsignor Schorn had been a spiritual at the Marianum thirty years ago and he even knew what a spiritual was.

Listen up, it's really not that difficult to understand: the dean's the boss, the prefect's the educator, and the spiritual's the one responsible for matters of the soul. Because it often happened that a prefect had to be really strict and people started saying, "It's actually not good for the development of the child's soul if he has to go to his prefect for confession." Sort of a trust issue. That's why the spiritual existed; he did meditation with music, meditation with pictures, confessions in the privacy of your own room, that sort of thing.

In theory, a boy could go to the spiritual and complain about one of the prefects and the spiritual wouldn't have punished him at all, he would've just offered understanding. For the youngest of the students, he was an especially important contact person because the prefects were often quite strict. I don't want to say that they were psychotic and frightening, like you might find in religious sects, but strict. Very strict, in fact. And exactly in those situations, the spiritual acted as a sort of sanctuary, extremely important, you don't know the half of it. There were a few ten year-old students who ran to the spiritual every night and even made up sins in their heads just so they could have a reason for bringing him up to their rooms and confessing to him. Or let's put it this way: to have meditation with pictures and cuddle music or to hold hands to fight off the feeling of homesickness.

"Aromas!" squeaked out the old prefect with the cleft lip every now and again. But at four in the morning, long after they had started on the Rocca di Papa schnapps, the young dean had confessed everything to Brenner. And that was basically all that he had to tell. Because a former student had been bringing up stories about Monsignor Schorn. And now, of all times, after the pope had said, "Let's appoint Schorn as Bishop."

The old prefect pointed out that you also had to understand the spiritual's side of it: the nature of his duties brought him into closer contact with the boys. And this former student—probably just upset because Spiritual Schorn had mentioned his hygiene problems once in passing. Sometimes kids can be frighteningly vengeful and remember off-handed comments like that for years and decades and then slander you just because you maybe said one time, "Water's there for washing."

"It's all the psychiatrist's fault," Sport Prefect Fitz claimed. Because this former student hadn't come up with the ideas for his stories all by himself. But there were marital issues and his wife had said, "Try going and talking to a psychiatrist." Then of course, the pressure to perform and he started believing that he had to remember every last detail from thirty years ago, that is to say, his hygiene lesson in the basement showers with Spiritual Schorn.

In the Marianum today, each individual grade has its own shower rooms on each floor, but back then there were only the forty shower stalls way in the back of the cellar of the boarding school. And it was there that the spiritual had to tell this particular student, "You know what? You're a really nice boy, pretty blond hair and all, but you've got some hygiene problems!"

But the spiritual always the empathetic type; he had told him in such a way that no one would ever find out about it because that would've been as embarrassing as anything for a ten year-old boy. He would've been the laughing stock of the entire class, no question about it. Then the spiritual said, "Next Sunday, while everyone else is at mass, I'm going to go down to the showers with you and show you how to properly wash yourself."

Something like that is always kind of awkward and the prefect with the cleft lip was definitely right when he said that someone had to show boys how to do such things.

"How are you supposed to determine exactly what happened when it happened twenty-eight years ago?" he kept saying. "Especially when you consider the fact that the person concerned can't even remember it clearly."

Because then it emerged that the person concerned had only remembered things a little bit at a time during the sessions with his psychiatrist.

"Psychiatrists are also just businessmen," Sport Prefect Fitz chimed in. "They're not going to ruin their business by allowing their patients to remember everything all at once. Instead he has to come for years and years and is only allowed to remember things piecemeal. They run their business exactly like dentists who force you to make eight appointments to take care of a single filling. Or like that Russian pole vaulter."

Because there had once been a Russian pole vaulter who had improved his world record by just one single centimeter each time he set it even though he had been able to jump several centimeters higher during practice, just so he could keep getting the million-dollar prize every single time.

That was just around the time when the discussion in the dean's office got a little bit out of hand. As it slowly started to get light out, Brenner started on his way back. In and of itself not that long of a walk to the top of the third floor, but for some stupid reason he had to keep asking the handrails which way he was supposed to go. And for some stupid reason he kept thinking about that pole vaulter who had no problem reaching higher places, even without stairs.

And for some reason it seemed to him that the entire sleepy Marianum reeked of beer. You've got to know that Brenner was from Puntigam, where that Puntigamer beer comes from. Of course, he couldn't forget for the rest of his life how it felt when the air pressure fell and all of Puntigam reeked of beer. And it was exactly that smell that Brenner had in his nose as he was walking back home to the third floor.

In his assistant prefect's bed he thought about the three teachers some more; about the young dean with the squishy face, about the prefect with the gray beard and the cleft lip, and about the sport prefect, who had loudly jiggled his nervous knee the whole time. Or actually, it wasn't his knee that was loud, it was the key ring in his front pocket. Because as a prefect you definitely have a key for everything: classrooms, study rooms, basement doors, church, kitchen, apartment, car and so on and so forth. The result was a key ring that would make even the most hardened of prison guards jealous.

Brenner heard the soft ringing while he was still asleep. Or let's put it this way: the boarding school bell suddenly went off like a grenade. Because every morning at 6:00, the same merciless motto: "Thou shalt not squander the day which the Lord hath given thee." Of course Brenner fell asleep again right away, but at 6:20 it rang again for Bible Study, then at 6:40 for mass, and again at 7:15 for breakfast. It was at that point

that he finally couldn't fall asleep anymore. But he was still too exhausted to actually get out of bed.

"Aromas," Brenner thought to himself as the aroma of warm milk from breakfast wafted into his room. And the next moment he knew everything all over again. His memory didn't come back to him piecemeal but with one powerful punch.

All at once Brenner remembered, in his assistant prefect's bed, exactly what the former student had remembered bit by bit on the psychiatrist's couch. The time when, instead of going to Sunday Mass, he and the spiritual went down into the basement all by themselves.

Brenner remembered all at once that it had taken an entire year before the student had remembered how, as a ten year-old boy, he had gotten undressed down in the basement.

And it was only after another year went by that it suddenly came to him that the spiritual had said that, this time only, he was allowed to take off his underwear, since normally he was only allowed to do that inside a shower stall.

And one year later he remembered that the spiritual had also gotten a little undressed for the hygiene lesson.

And only two months ago he had remembered the word that he had said to the spiritual. Because at the beginning there was complete Silentium as the spiritual was taking off his black priestly sweater with the pin-on cross. And as he was unbuttoning his white priestly shirt, which had been covering up a bunch of black priestly chest hair, still complete Silentium. And after he had taken off his white priestly undershirt and his black

priestly shoes and his black priestly pants, he stood there in his socks and underwear in total Silentium in the basement showers next to the naked child.

"Ahoy!" the ten year-old boy suddenly shouted out loud, just like the pirates on TV when they spot land. It took twenty-eight years to remember this one innocent word that he had shouted out to the heavenly water faucets as loud as he could. "Ahoy!"

Because before, the priest had only ever turned bread into flesh and wine into blood, but now the priestly underwear had turned itself into a sailboat! Into a magnificent yacht with full-blown sails fit for a millionaire ready to cross the Atlantic.

And the spiritual turned on the faucets of all forty showers until the tile floor was completely flooded and then sailed his magnificent underwear ship through the hallways of the forty shower stalls with the little hygiene piglet on his lap acting as first mate.

You can already see that that's where the memory gets a little bit hazy.

That's why the dean had said, "We have to find out if there's any substance to what he says, before the appointment of the new bishop." And the prefect with the cleft lip had said, "Who knows what else he'll remember as time goes on?" And the sport prefect had said, "If we get started with all of that, it's probably never going to stop; the Russian pole vaulter only ever raised the bar a centimeter at a time and made millions of dollars from it. But even Adidas would consider that much money chump change compared to what you'd have to pay a psychiatrist just to excavate a few memories."

"A shower definitely couldn't do any harm," Brenner thought to himself in his assistant prefect's room. And then a wonderful discovery. The warm water was scalding hot and never-ending. Then he showered for so long that I have to say, probably set a little world record himself. Because showering for a long time was sometimes just what

Brenner needed to solve some of his problems. But in the case of Monsignor Schorn, candidate for bishop, naturally the beginning of all of his problems.

Chapter Two

And now that old adage, "You'd forget your head if it wasn't attached to you." And believe it or not, Brenner spent the next few days wandering around in circles; not looking for his head, but just to get some fresh air and exercise.

Because at the Marianum Park they had a wonderful track for cross-country running and the prefects always went there after each meal to take a walk to help their digestion, almost like a ritual. Brenner didn't really get much out of them then because people are always sluggish after eating. But anyway, now he finally knew the name of the former student who had come out with the rumors and that he worked as a conservator in the bishopric archive.

At first they just wouldn't spit out his name. Of course completely appropriate that they wanted to handle the matter discreetly but on the other hand, what had the ecclesiastic gentlemen been expecting of the detective? You can't just hire one and then not tell him the name of the person he has to investigate.

The sport prefect finally gave him a hint, "He has the same first name as the most famous son of our city." Actually, that was more than a hint. Because a long time ago they had had this famous wunderkind in Salzburg who did a lot of stuff with music: operas, symphonies, and so on and so forth, and of course Brenner guessed it right away.

"No," laughed the sport prefect, "not Wolfgang. He also had a middle name. A Latin one."

"The student had a middle name in Latin?"

"No, but the same name, just in German."

Ok, before you think about it for too long, the name was Gottlieb. It's not rocket science and Brenner also guessed what it was. And while he was at it, he also managed to tickle out the name of the psychiatrist that Gottlieb had been seeing and who had helped him set the remembering-as-little-as-possible-for-as-long-as-possible world record. Dr. Prader lived with his wife and four children in a mansion on top of the Mönchsberg; pretty much the best address you could have because it was in the middle of the city but still on top of a mountain. And here's something interesting: Dr. Prader was also an alumnus of the *Marianum* and had been the classmate of his patient, which meant they were both thirty-eight years old.

"Maybe I could actually have a decent talk with Dr. Prader," Brenner thought; better than just going around in circles. But that was easier said than done. Because on the way to Dr. Prader's he had to plow through the swarms of tourists in the Old Town quarter. Nothing happened to him because Brenner's a pretty sturdy guy, after all, but by taking that route he definitely made it into the photo albums of ten thousand Japanese tourists.

And believe it or not, with Dr. Prader he started going around in circles again. Because when you live in a place as wonderful as the Mönchsberg, you go for a daily walk through the beautiful forest and fields; you hear the birds chirping above you and the choir practicing from the Festival Hall below you. The Great Festival Hall of Salzburg had been built directly into the bedrock of the Mönchsberg, just like it says in the Bible: always build on rock, never on sand.

When Brenner showed up at Dr. Prader's house, he decided to join him on his morning walk. But on top of the Mönchsberg he took a stroll that was completely

different from the ones he had been taking at the Marianum, with the tall wire fences all around the park. Not electrically charged fences, of course, like you would find in Argentina or Chile where it can often get pretty political; the fences at the Marianum were just tall, with maybe just a hint of barbed wire. But it's interesting: a wire fence is mostly see-through, but it still obscures the view a little.

In contrast, the view from the Mönchsberg was just phenomenal. A really picturesque thing that put most postcards to shame. In the middle of the city the two mountains; you stand on the Mönchsberg and see the Kapuzinerberg looking over at you and in the valley between the two of you, a thousand churches and monasteries strung out along the sparkling green Salzach. You have to imagine it like a gemstone necklace dangling between the sumptuous breasts of an Oktoberfest waitress; pretty much the peak of nature's achievements.

There had even been this one travel writer from a few centuries back who had said, "Most beautiful city in the world." And he traveled far and wide because, just like we watch nature films on TV today and back then, of course, no TV at all, but they did have people who traveled around and told others about where the most beautiful places were. And when he eventually came to Salzburg, of course he headed straight to the top of the Mönchsberg, then the view down onto the church spires, then off into the countryside, and out into the world; his jaw definitely dropped open, no doubt about it.

He even put it in writing, "Most beautiful city in the world!" As soon as the city's politicians had read that, of course they immediately said, "You know what? It'd be good advertising to name the spot where he stood on the Mönchsberg 'Humboldt's Terrace.'" There you go, Humboldt, that's what the guy's name was.

And Humboldt's Terrace turned out to be the place where Dr. Prader finally stood still for a bit. He was wiry like a cross-country skier, almost a little like the opposite of the squishy dean, and you would've thought he was a mountaineer instead of a psychiatrist. Hiking up the hill had definitely made Brenner start sweating a little bit since he was ten years older than him and was trying to keep up with his quick Salzburg pace.

"You've got a beautiful place here," wheezed Brenner as he leaned over a barrier that was blocking an almost one hundred meter drop straight to the bottom.

"The terrace is very popular—"

"I can understand that."

"—for suicides."

Because of course the irony of fate that people who want to commit suicide always search out the most beautiful high ground. It's exactly like with the Eiffel Tower where French people often travel a few hundred kilometers just so they can fall to their deaths. The Belgians, the Dutch, the Germans—also the Eiffel Tower. But with the Germans there's an even split and a lot of them say, "Humboldt's Terrace has more class, and I can also speak the language."

"You're not allowed to bring an unstable person up here," Brenner said, trying to show understanding.

Dr. Prader nodded thoughtfully. He was one of those people who have all but died out today. Because only rarely do you find a person who's truly sincere, someone who isn't putting on a façade.

"Who told you that I was the one that Gottlieb had trusted with his memories?"

"Sport Prefect Fitz." And now, before the private detective and the mind detective could start up a real conversation there had to be just a small measure of building trust.

"Prefect Fitz holds you in high esteem," Brenner began. "The way you manage your four children while at the same also taking care of your old schoolmate for years. And you're also a volunteer parole officer on top of all that."

"That bird-of-paradise was that talkative?"

"Ha, bird-of-paradise," Brenner grinned, because you really couldn't have described the sport prefect with that wiry haircut any better than that. And of course the best way of building trust that exists in this world—speaking badly of someone behind his back.

"And did he also tell you about his own personal family life?"

"Is it really that interesting?" Brenner was pretending to be dumber than he actually was. Because the fact that Prefect Fitz had really wanted to become a priest and hadn't married entirely of his own free will was frequently discussed through the grapevines of the Marianum.

Listen up: the fact that he hadn't been ordained goes back to a tragic accident. Once upon a time, Prefect Fitz had been the most diligent student destined for the priesthood. But the horrible irony of fate kicked in; it was exactly his diligence that really screwed him over. Because one week he had completely devoted all of his time to his studies and didn't play any sports.

And of course, the devil never sleeps, and there had always been those hypocritical student temptresses who just had to attend mass at the house church for the aspiring priests, of all places. Already pretty malicious because there were enough

churches in Salzburg and that's why I don't understand why such a blonde creature had to go to the house church for priests, of all places. A student of art history, apparently because of Baroque churches, interested in Fischer von Erlach and that sort of thing. At least that's what she always claimed, after Fitz the aspiring priest had confronted her after the fact. But sometimes bad luck just catches up with you; one single moment of physical contact with the little thing and immediately pregnant and POOF! The dream's over. At first he tried to deny everything but then of course POOF! The dream's over because the head teacher of the priests said, "You have to marry her."

That's the story that Brenner already knew. But for a detective always very interesting of course, to hear the same story from two sides and get all the contradictions. That's why he let Dr. Prader tell him the story all over again.

But in this case there weren't any contradictions at all because Dr. Prader had the exact same version, that is to say, a few art history students were interested in the house church for priests, then the hormones and bam-bam-bam and POOF! The dreams of becoming a priest were over.

"Maybe that's why he overdoes it so much with the adoration of women," Brenner considered. Because one time he stupidly asked Prefect Fitz why an all-boys boarding school was named Marianum, of all things; that is to say, wouldn't that be more appropriate for an all-girls school?

"And what did he say?" grinned Dr. Prader.

Brenner shrugged his shoulders, "He gave a long-winded lecture about the Holy Virgin. I wasn't really listening to him all that closely, but the words 'woman's worth' came up a bunch of times."

"He should go ahead and tell that to his wife," said Dr. Prader, almost as humorlessly as the sport prefect himself.

They were already starting on the way back, and it must have been a shorter path because Brenner was wondering at how quickly they had arrived back at Dr. Prader's house. Well, "house" is putting it the wrong way. Mansion. Now that he was on the other side of the house, Brenner noticed for the first time what a magnificent house, that is to say mansion, it was. Dr. Prader had stopped in front of the stony garden wall that was so high that you couldn't see what was behind it, but the treetops gave you a bit of an impression of the little garden that was there, a little piece of paradise.

And Dr. Prader must have guessed the thoughts going through Brenner's mind a little bit, "We can only afford to pay the rent on the house because we rent it out to festival guests the entire summer."

"And where do you live then?"

"We move into the broom closet with our four children."

"And the landlord lets you do that?" Brenner asked. Because Salzburg—not only world-renowned beauty, Salzburg landlords world-renowned cutthroats, too.

"We're lucky there. The landlord is also my wife's employer."

"The Bishop's Office." That was also something Brenner had found out from Prefect Fitz.

"That's why the rent is so affordable for us."

"And for your festival subletters it's probably less affordable."

"In two months, they pay us so much," smiled Dr. Prader, "that we can pay the rent for the entire year with what we make from them."

"That's practical."

"At least for us. And our guests never question whether or not something's affordable. They just want the best that the market has to offer."

"And here I always thought that the Mönchsberg only housed real estate moguls from Munich who had used their black-market money to steal half of it away."

Because Brenner had been stationed in Salzburg for years and had lived in an apartment given to him by the police with cheap rent and everything; there he had never actually had a reason to complain. But it was from back then that he knew that the Mönchsberg was basically only inhabited by bums in their caves and real estate moguls in their bunkers.

"I maybe wouldn't describe it in terms that extreme," smiled Dr. Prader. "But we definitely have an illustrious neighborhood here."

"And when you come out of your house and some tourist is admiring your fairytale castle, the thing you'd like to do most is explain to him that you're not one of those moguls from Munich."

Brenner was marveling at the way he was talking, pretty much sympathetic like a spiritual. And that after having lived only a few days in the assistant prefect's room. Because down at the Marianum, of course, he always had to approach people carefully and indirectly, always being really considerate and all, kind of like when someone shakes your hand so gently and smoothly out of consideration for you, you think you're shaking a dead fish.

Suddenly it seemed to Brenner that he looked a bit slimy when compared to the trim and chiseled mountain guide. That is to say, high time for him to speak frankly with Dr. Prader.

"Did you know that Monsignor Schorn is the preferred candidate to take over the post of bishop? That's why I'm supposed to find out if your patient's stories are really true. Maybe you could help me out with that."

"Yes and no."

"I know that the whole doctor-patient confidentiality thing makes it a bit awkward."

"No. I'm not a doctor. Gottlieb is my friend. I'm only trying to help a friend."

"But you're still in doubt about whether or not you're going to help me?"

"My 'no' was to your first question. I didn't know that Monsignor Schorn was being considered for the post of bishop."

"And the 'yes' — "

"—means that I'd be happy to help you as much as I can. I'm definitely not subject to any doctor-patient confidentiality in the legal sense."

"Well, I also wasn't supposed to tell you that thing about the bishop."

"*Res silentii*," nodded Dr. Prader. "I know."

"I don't really know what that means," Brenner had to admit.

Then Dr. Prader explained to him that that sort of thing doesn't just exist with priests and bishops, but also pretty similar in the secular arena. Today when a new judge is going to be appointed, the police sniff around a bit in his private life beforehand to make sure there aren't any blemishes that would make someone say, "His hobby might

make him susceptible to blackmail." Because strip clubs always suspicious, or let's say minors, that sort of thing, or for all I care, sadistic tendencies that would make you think that for a judge, he's over-qualified.

"With your friend, his memories sprang back to life after decades of silence. How is something like that possible?"

"I've been giving him therapy sessions for several years."

"So you're not a doctor, you're a psychologist?"

"No, I'm a stay-at-home dad. My wife makes the money and I take care of our four children. That's why I'm not a practicing therapist."

"Except with your friend. Do you believe that his allegations are really true?"

The bells of a church rang out four times. And then six times.

"That's the university church," Dr. Prader explained to Brenner.

Then a different bell rang out four times and a somewhat lighter one six.

"The cathedral."

Then the bells of the priest church house rang out, then the Franciscan Church, St. Peter's and the Church of the Ursulines almost at the same time, then the Cajetan Church, then from behind the mountain the Maxglan Church, and directly from the mountain the bells from the Nonntal Church and again directly below them St. Blaise's Church, then right from the top of Mönchsberg the bells of the Palottine church; always four strikes for the full hour and then six more. When all the bell towers were ringing out at once, it wasn't easy for you keep up with counting all of them; but of course, it's six

o'clock everywhere because the couple of centimeters that separate two churches in Salzburg definitely don't constitute a new time zone.

"You would almost like to think that it's six o'clock," said Brenner, very dry humor. But the bells of a straggler church immediately chimed in and drowned out his words, which caused the air to tremble for a bit.

"Yes and no," said Dr. Prader. But that wasn't philosophic doubt about whether or not it was really six o'clock, just the answer to Brenner's previous question about whether Monsignor Schorn had really, how should I put it? Messed around with Gottlieb a little bit.

"Yes, I do believe that his claims are true and accurate," he explained. "And no, I don't believe that it's the whole truth."

"Like with that Russian pole vaulter."

"Come again?"

Brenner told him Sport Prefect Fitz's story about pole vaulters and therapists which made him laugh for a bit. "What I mean by that is," he said through Dr. Prader's laughter, "is it going to take some more time until Gottlieb comes to terms with the entire past?"

"Yes and no."

Brenner wondered if he had asked two questions at once again or if it was just that imprecise "yes and no" that he had gotten to know at the Marianum and that he was already sick of.

"A person's problems don't always have to lie in the past." Dr. Prader pointed at the open roof of the Festival Hall beneath them. Because it had a beautiful design and to

let the stage air out, they could just open up the roof of the Felsenreitschule. "Of course you know who Gottlieb's father-in-law is."

"Yes and no," said Brenner, because that was a typically Brenner thing to do; he liked it so much that he had to say it right back to him.

But at that point in time he had absolutely no idea that Gottlieb's father was the vice president of the Salzburg Festival, of all people. He found that out for the first time during his chat with Dr. Prader.

"You mean it's not always the father that's the problem," Brenner wanted to know right away as clearly as possible, "because having such an important father-in-law is maybe an even bigger problem?"

"Yes."

"And no," mouthed Brenner silently along with him. But nothing there, "yes" was all that Dr. Prader had said, and it seemed to Brenner as if the missing "no" had torn a genuine hole in the air, and had a bit of a hallucination that he got ripped into the hole in the air like in a horror movie. And I honestly have to say, that's really how it turned out to be.

CONCLUSION

Translating *Silentium!* presented me with a variety of obstacles to overcome and a plethora of translation decisions to make. Identifying the key components of the novel as well as writing for a specific target audience provided me with a solid base for decision making, though I often encountered tricky passages or was forced to choose between two "equally" good translations into English. The role of place plays a significant role in all of Haas's work and I felt that "transplanting" the novel to an English-speaking locale would detract from or dilute the novel's uniqueness; Haas is a proud Austrian author who writes in Austrian German for an Austrian audience and sets his novels in Austrian towns and cities. My intended reader has at least a superficial knowledge of Austria and Salzburg and, should s/he come across an unfamiliar place name, would be more than willing to perform a quick Google search in order to discover its position within the greater Salzburg area and receive the same geographic information as a native reader. Of course, it was not possible to translate the words, images, and emotions associated with certain places; those culture-specific aspects remain beyond the scope of translation without the use of extensive footnotes, and even then cannot be fully conveyed to a reader who has not visited those locations personally. I chose not to include any footnotes because they tend to distract a reader from the novel itself and make her/him painfully aware of the fact that s/he is not reading the original.

Haas's language and style proved much more difficult to translate. Analyzing the Narrator's voice and trying to recreate it in English presented the greatest obstacle; the Narrator's extensive use of Austrian German immediately identifies him as a product of

Austria as opposed to Germany, an extremely important marker of identity for Austrians. Austrians appreciate Haas's work for its use and promotion of the Austrian vernacular and also perceive him as being "one of us", while Germans enjoy reading a work that is unique, different, or just plain "Austrian"—"one of them." This "insider vs. outsider" motif resonates strongly for both German and Austrian readers, and also represents one of Haas's most frequently encountered themes. Trying to recreate an "equivalent" use of language in English was both challenging as well as impossible; the extremely long and complex relationship between Germany and Austria does not have an "equivalent" anywhere in the English-speaking world. One example from the novel involves the use of names: spoken Austrian German (and *Silentium!*) always attaches the definite article to all personal names, first and last, whereas Standard German forbids such a practice. This aspect of the novel, which occurs every single time a personal name is mentioned, presents us with a perfect example of untranslatability when moving between (Austrian) German and English. The use of the definite article with personal names instantly identifies the Narrator as a Bavarian or an Austrian and also imparts him with a relaxed and colloquial tone; this specific information about the Narrator cannot be conveyed in an English translation, since including the definite article before names is not a common practice anywhere in the Anglosphere and would result in awkward-sounding English. Taking this and other linguistic aspects into consideration, I performed a general reanalysis of the language which largely guided my translation process: instead of maintaining the "Austrian vs. German" distinction in English (which is not possible), I viewed the language in *Silentium!* as "Standard vs. Non-standard/Colloquial." The Narrator in my translation therefore uses non-standard English, such as omitting implied

verbs from sentences or using an adjective where Standard English requires an adverb. Choosing this avenue of translation facilitated my work and allowed me to produce something equivalent—not perfectly, but roughly so. The reader of my translation will immediately realize that it contains "mistakes", mistakes which I have deliberately included in order to impart a colloquial voice to the Narrator, a key aspect of the novel which must be present in any translation.

The film adaptations of Haas's work also provide fertile ground for academic inquiry into the fundamental characteristics of the Brenner series. Although an in-depth analysis of the films and how they compare to the books goes beyond the scope of this thesis, there are a few interesting features worth mentioning here. Wolf Haas co-wrote the screenplays to all three of the film adaptations along with the director, Wolfgang Murnberger, and the lead actor, Josef Hader, all of whom are Austrian. Each film adaptation features numerous lines taken word-for-word from the corresponding book, lines spoken by the mysterious Narrator. Herr Hermes provides the voice of the Narrator in these adaptations and speaks the lines slowly and deliberately, with a deep voice and an Austrian accent. When the characters interact with one another on screen, they speak with thick Austrian dialects that allow Austrians to identify the specific region or city that each character calls home, while also hindering easy comprehension on the part of non-Austrians; these dialects are sometimes so impenetrable to the outsider that Austrian DVDs typically include "Hochdeutsche Untertitel" (High/Standard German subtitles), fully spelling out all words and replacing Austrian-specific vocabulary with the Standard German equivalent (*e.g.* Austrian *Schädelweh* vs. German *Kopfschmerzen*). The deliberate decision to have the actors speak in dialects specific to Austria is a statement

that the Austrian film industry is alive and well, and also further strengthens the Austria vs. Germany motif that plays such a significant part in Haas's work. A closer analysis of the film adaptations of the Brenner novels as they relate to language, culture, place, and international audiences would provide the basis for further inquiry and research into Haas's work, which I hope to pursue in the near future.

My analysis of Wolf Haas's work and writing, as well as my research into various aspects of translation, have allowed me produce an English translation of the first two chapters of *Silentium!* which strongly echo the original in terms of both content and style. Though it was not always possible for me to capture the "perfect" translation (sometimes even after spending minutes or hours trying to translate one single word or phrase), I feel that my translation embodies the tone and spirit of the original work as closely as I am able to recreate it. I intend to translate the rest of the novel and submit it to American publishers in order to introduce Haas to a new readership base outside of Austria and the German-speaking world.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF WORKS BY WOLF HAAS

Simon Brenner Series:

Auferstehung der Toten. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1996. Print.

Der Knochenmann. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1997. Print.

Komm, süßer Tod. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1998. Print.

Silentium! Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1999. Print.

Wie die Tiere. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2001. Print.

Das ewige Leben. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2003. Print.

Der Brenner und der liebe Gott. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2009. Print.

Other Works:

Sprachtheoretische Grundlagen der konkreten Poesie. Stuttgart: H.-D. Heinz

Akademischer Verlag, 1990. Print.

Die Liebe in den Zeiten des Cola-Rauschs. Wien: Verlag Tauschzentrale, 1993.

Print.

Ausgebremst. Der Roman zur Formel 1. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1998.

Print.

Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2006. Print.

Die Gans im Gegenteil. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2010. Print.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF LITERARY AWARDS RECEIVED BY WOLF HAAS

- 1997** Deutscher Krimi Preis für *Auferstehung der Toten*
- 1999** Deutscher Krimi Preis für *Komm, süßer Tod*
- 1999** Hörspiel des Jahres in Österreich: *Auferstehung der Toten*
- 2000** Burgdorfer Krimipreis
- 2000** Deutscher Krimi Preis für *Silentium!*
- 2000** Hörspiel des Jahres in Österreich: *Der Knochenmann*
- 2004** Literaturpreis der Stadt Wien
- 2006** Wilhelm-Raabe-Literaturpreis der Stadt Braunschweig für *Das Wetter vor
15 Jahren*
- 2006** Hörspiel des Jahres in Österreich: *Das ewige Leben*
- 2010** Vierter Platz in der KrimiWelt-Bestenliste des Jahres 2009 für *Der Brenner
und der liebe Gott*
- 2013** Bremer Literaturpreis für *Verteidigung der Missionarsstellung*