

Table of contents

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Pages v–x of

Translators through History: Revised edition

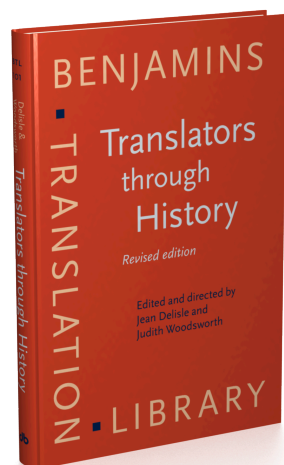
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*No higher service can be rendered to literature
than to transport the masterpieces of the human mind
from one language to another.*

Germaine de Staël (1766–1817)

French-speaking Swiss author and thinker

*The history of the different civilizations is the history
of their translations. Each civilization, as each soul,
is different, unique. Translation is our way to face
this otherness of the universe and history.*

Octavio Paz (1914–98)

Mexican writer, poet, and diplomat,
winner of the 1990 Nobel Prize for Literature

*Translation is not a matter of words only:
it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture.*

Anthony Burgess (1917–93)

English author, poet, playwright,
linguist, critic and translator

Cover photo (paperback edition)

Émilie du Châtelet (1706–49)

The marquise du Châtelet, née Émilie de Breteuil, was fluent in English, Italian and Latin. She translated the *Aeneid* and other classical works into French, though no examples have survived. She showed great interest in the abstract sciences, devoting herself to the study of mathematics as shown in this portrait. She was the first to translate and comment on Isaac Newton's *The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* (written in Latin). Completed shortly before her death, the translation was published posthumously by Voltaire, her lover of fifteen years.

Source: Portrait by Maurice Quentin de La Tour (1704–88), photographed by Philippe Sébert. The painting now hangs in the Château de Breteuil, near Paris, owned and managed by Madame du Châtelet's descendant, Henri-François le Tonnelier, Marquis de Breteuil. Used with permission.

Table of contents

Table of illustrations	XI
Foreword to the second edition	XIII
Preface	XIX
Introduction	XXIII
 CHAPTER 1	
Translators and the invention of alphabets	3
Ulfila, evangelist to the Goths	4
Mesrop Mashtots and the flowering of Armenian culture	6
Cyril and Methodius among the Slavs	9
James Evans and the Cree of Canada	12
 CHAPTER 2	
Translators and the development of national languages	21
A language for England	22
The emancipation of French	31
Martin Luther: artisan of the German language	38
The flowering of the Swedish language	43
The evolution of the Gbaya language in Cameroon	46
Hebrew: a modern language for Israel	50
 CHAPTER 3	
Translators and the emergence of national literatures	61
Joost van den Vondel and the Dutch Golden Age	63
Translating Shakespeare to/on the European Continent	68
Changing sides: the case of Ireland	72
Speaking intimately to the Scottish soul – in translation	76
Jorge Luis Borges and the birth of Argentine literature	81
Translation and cultural exchange in African literatures	84

CHAPTER 4

Translators and the dissemination of knowledge 95

China: importing knowledge through translation 98

India: at the crossroads of translation 102

Baghdad: centre of Arabic translation 106

Medieval Spain: cultural exchange and rebirth 109

The Nordic countries: breaking down the barriers of isolation 114

Machine translation: machines as translators? 117

CHAPTER 5

Translators and the reins of power 127

The Balfour Declaration: "homeland" or "national home"? 129

Medieval translation enterprises from Baghdad to Western Europe 130

Toward multiple centres of power: the case of France 133

Translation as subversion: Italy and the former Soviet Union 138

Conquest and colonization in the New World 142

Women translators: England, the Continent and North America 143

When translators wield power 147

Reframing translation in the twenty-first century 148

CHAPTER 6

Translators and the spread of religions 153

Judaism: the oral and written word from ancient to modern times 155

Christianity: religious texts in the languages of the world 160

Islam: the Koran, untranslatable yet abundantly translated 172

Hinduism: the case of the Bhagavad Gita 176

Buddhism: the spread of the religion across East Asia 178

Translating the sacred texts of the East 179

CHAPTER 7

Translators and the transmission of cultural values 187

The translator's letter home 188

The Koranic Orient and religious pluralism 193

Elizabethan England: translating with a purpose 196

A Huguenot in England: the emergence of European consciousness 200

Revolutionary France: serving the cause 202

France's infatuation with the Gothic novel 205

The impact of translated thought: a Chinese example 209

American science fiction and the birth of a genre in France 212

CHAPTER 8

Translators and the production of dictionaries 223

Monolingual dictionaries: from clay tablets to paper dictionaries 223

The dictionary across cultures 224

The Middle Ages, or the dawn of structured lexicography 227

The dictionary in Europe: from the Renaissance to the present 230

Bilingual and multilingual dictionaries 233

Terminological dictionaries: from specialized glossaries
to computerized term banks 237

The dictionary's journey 242

CHAPTER 9

Interpreters and the making of history 247

Evolving forms and methods of interpreting 249

Interpreters in the service of religion 256

Exploration and conquest 261

War and peace 266

Interpreting diplomats – diplomatic interpreters 274

APPENDIX I

Description of illustrations 285

APPENDIX II

Contributors, translators and proofreaders 291**Works cited** 297**Index of names** 323**About the authors** 337

